

# The Backbone Zone

## Notice and Choose Each Day

<b>Activity Type:</b>	Discussion-based activity
<b>Intended Length:</b>	5-20 minutes, depending on the size of the group
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	Flip chart and markers, several sheets of newsprint onto which you've drawn the Continuum of Behaviors outlined below
<b>Source:</b>	National Sexual Violence Resource Center ( <a href="http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications_NSVRC_Booklets_Engaging-Bystanders-in-Sexual-Violence-Prevention.pdf">http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications_NSVRC_Booklets_Engaging-Bystanders-in-Sexual-Violence-Prevention.pdf</a> )

### Activity Objective:

Participants will expand their concept of how many times and how many ways an individual (or community) can choose to become engaged.

### Suggested Use:

This activity demonstrates the concept that we all have multiple opportunities to intervene for the prevention of sexual violence every day of our lives. This exercise is appropriate to use in multi-day trainings or as an assignment prior to the beginning of a training. The exercise works best in small groups where people can share their own stories.

### Continuum of Behaviors:

- Healthy, age- appropriate, mutually respectful & safe
- Mutually flirtatious & playful
- Age-inappropriate or non-mutual
- Harassment
- Sexually abusive & violent

### Activity Instructions:

Ask participants to think about a day in their own lives and to find examples of what they saw (or did) along the continuum of behaviors that is posted in the front of the room. Even during this observation phase, emphasize to participants that no one has to intervene in each situation, however, if they identify an immediate danger, it is necessary to call the police. Direct participants to write down examples of what they observed on the continuum of behaviors. Repeat that no one can reasonably respond to everything on their list, and ask them to consider what is feasible for them in any given situation. Advise them to think about which behaviors should be reinforced, which behaviors need an intervention, and which behaviors could be left alone.

**Discussion Points:**

As participants begin to share their ideas about the continuum of behaviors, you can point out just how many times it is possible in any given day to say or do something. Other possibilities include how to reinforce a boundary, to ask a friend about their behaviors, to echo someone in your family who had confronted a harassing behavior and so much more. You can also point out how to reinforce the positive in relationships, especially as a way to open conversations that are not always confrontational.