

The Backbone Zone

Scenario Mapping

Activity Type:	Discussion-based activity
Intended Length:	30 - 40 minutes, depending upon the size of the group
Materials Needed:	Flip chart and markers, handout of scenario
Source:	National Sexual Violence Resource Center (http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications_NSVRC_Booklets_Engaging-Bystanders-in-Sexual-Violence-Prevention.pdf)

Activity Objective:

Participants will recognize how many people have the ability to do something or say something in each and every abusive situation. The exercise will also expand their concept of how many ways an individual (or community) can choose to get engaged.

Suggested Use:

While most people agree that abuse is not perpetrated in isolation, most of us still think in terms of the victim and the abuser. Few of us immediately connect these two individuals to families, friends, work, schools, faith-based organizations or any other context. This activity is incredibly helpful in identifying the huge number of people who are in a position to say something or do something. When the visual map of everyone and their interconnections are put up in a clear diagram, the feeling of isolation is lifted. This exercise can be used with a full group or can be broken into small discussion groups and then brought together again.

Activity Instructions:

Hand out the short scenario and ask one member of the audience to read it (see shareable copies). Then discuss the situation and outline the risks and benefits for Megan to say something to her boss. Next, begin to discuss who is in this scenario and whether there are other people who could take some action.

Megan is 25 years old and works in a local food store. Her 39-year-old boss often makes sexually inappropriate jokes around the staff. Most of the staff ignores him. One day he begins to flirt with a 16-year-old customer in the store. When she leaves, he laughs and asks Megan if she thinks it is OK since it is, after all, only flirting. Faced with this question, Megan says, "It is not OK. I don't think it is healthy for anyone when a 39-year-old man sends sexual messages to a 16-year-old girl."

Discussion Points:

Megan gave a powerful answer. She could have shrugged off the question, afraid perhaps, to challenge her boss. The action Megan chose to take can be framed as bystander intervention.

When one accepts the premise that everyone is a bystander, the opportunities to intervene are everywhere. List the other people in this kind of situation who could intervene:

- Other customers
- Co-workers
- Store owner
- Friends and family of the manager
- Friends and family of the 16-year-old customer
- Other stores in the area who may be familiar with the manager

Then literally map out each individual and who they are related to in the picture. Once you've exhausted talking about each individual and what they could do, step back, and observe how many people are in the picture. This is a snapshot of everyone who can say something or do something.

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