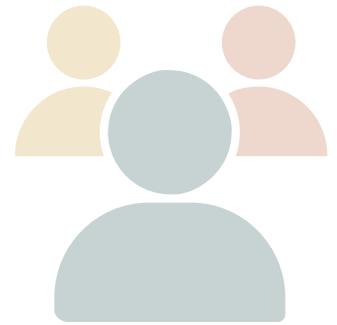


# Harassment and Violence at Work

## Understanding Barriers to Bystander Intervention

Bystanders are more likely to step in when they notice something is wrong, recognize it as harassment and violence, feel responsible to act, know what to do, and believe their actions will help.

Below are some of the common barriers that can stop people from stepping in when witnessing harassment at work. Understanding these barriers can lead to more effective bystander intervention.



### Barriers to Noticing



- Lack of information and training in the workplace
- Heavy workloads or multitasking can make it easy to miss what's happening
- Workplaces that tolerate harmful behaviours make them feel “normal” over time
- Noise or distractions can cause people to miss what's happening, even if it's right in front of them



### Barriers to Recognizing

- Ambiguous or subtle behaviours can be hard to identify without context
- Minimizing harm (“It's not a big deal”) or assuming it's a misunderstanding
- If others don't react, someone might assume it's not serious



### Barriers to Assuming Responsibility

- Believing someone else will step in
- Fearing negative career or social consequences
- Fearing being targeted by the harasser
- Thinking that taking action won't make a difference



### Barriers to Knowing What to Do

- Unclear policies or procedures can make reporting confusing
- Lack of training and information on safe and supportive intervention options



### Barriers to Deciding to Act

- Fear of backlash or other consequences
- Belief that no action will be taken by the organization
- Worrying about upsetting others or making the situation worse

**Awareness leads to *action*.**