

Understanding Bystander Behaviour

Year 5/6, HPE



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What is a bystander?

A bystander is someone who witnesses bullying or discrimination but is not directly involved.

Bystanders have a choice, they can either help stop the behaviour or unintentionally allow it to continue.



Types of bystander behaviour

Active bystanders

Take action to support the victim or stop the bullying, such as speaking up, getting help from an adult and comforting the victim.

Silent bystanders

Witness the situation but do nothing due to fear, uncertainty, or not knowing how to help.

Reinforcing bystanders

Encourage the bully by laughing, cheering, or joining in, which makes the bullying worse and hurts the victim further.



Active bystanders

An active bystander is someone who not only notices when something unfair or harmful is happening, but also takes action to help.

This could involve speaking up, offering support to the person being affected, or getting help from an adult or authority figure.

Active bystanders play an important role in stopping harmful behaviour and creating a safer, more respectful environment for everyone.



Silent bystanders

A silent bystander is someone who witnesses unfair or harmful behaviour but does not take any action to intervene.

They may choose to stay quiet or ignore the situation, even though they see what's happening.

Silent bystanders can unintentionally allow harmful behaviour to continue by not speaking up or offering support.



Reinforcing bystanders

A reinforcing bystander is someone who encourages or supports the harmful behaviour, either directly or indirectly, by laughing, joining in, or not stepping in to stop it.

They may not realise the impact of their actions, but their behaviour can make the situation worse.

Reinforcing bystanders contribute to the continuation of disrespectful or harmful actions.

