Domestic Violence – How can I make a difference?

Dr Michael Flood
University of Wollongong
mflood@uow.edu.au

Who is this guy?

- Early profeminist activism
  - Men Against Sexual Assault
  - XY (once a magazine, now a website)
- Community education and advocacy
- Academic research & teaching
The story:

- In 1964, 38 people witnessed the rape and murder of Kitty Genovese outside of her NYC apartment.
- The attack lasted for over half an hour.
- No one intervened.
Stories of intervention
Bystanders to what?
Domestic violence

• Domestic violence: violence and abuse by a person against their intimate partner or ex-partner
Domestic violence

1. Physical
   - Hitting, kicking, slapping, choking
   - Stabbing, shooting, throwing objects, other weapons
   - Threats and intimidation
   - Murder, murder-suicide

2. Sexual
   - Rape, sexual assault

3. Emotional and Verbal
   - Put-downs and verbal abuse. E.g., telling someone that they are stupid, ugly, crazy, useless. Deliberately undermining their confidence. Humiliating and degrading them.
   - Threats of violence or other punishment
   - Manipulation

4. Social and Economic
   - Controlling and isolating the partner
   - ‘Smothering’ them
   - Stalking and monitoring
   - Abusing them in company
   - Controlling money or denying money
Sexual violence

- Rape: sexual penetration without consent.

- Sexual assault: any kind of sexual touching without a person’s consent. Includes:
  - Unwanted touching
  - Attempting rape
  - Rape
Sexual harassment

• Behaviour which is sexual and unwelcome or unwanted and which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

• Sexual harassment is:
  – Sexual behaviour
  – unwanted
  – with a negative impact

One in five women experience harassment within the workplace.

Sexual harassment

- Can be:
  - Verbal
  - Non-verbal
  - Physical
  - Technological

- What is the difference between flirting and sexual harassment?
The extent of the problem: Since the age of 15

• Violence has been experienced by:
  – Close to half of all women (41%)
  – Half of all men (49%).

• Sexual violence has been experienced by:
  – Nearly one in five women (19%)
  – Close to one in twenty men (4.5%).

• Violence by a current or previous partner has been experienced by:
  – Nearly one in six women (17%)
  – About one in 20 men (5.3%).
The extent of the problem: In the last year

- Violence was experienced by:
  - About one in 20 women (5.3%, or close to half a million women)
  - About one in 12 men (8.7%, or over 700,000 men).

- Sexual violence was experienced by:
  - 1.2 per cent (comprising 102,400 women)
  - One in 200 men (0.5%, comprising 41,000 men).

- Violence by a current or previous partner was experienced by:
  - Over 130,000 women (1.5%)
  - Over 50,000 men (0.6%).
Six things you should know about violence

1. Includes a wide range of behaviours
2. Can be physical or non-physical;
3. Is linked to power and control;
4. Has serious and harmful effects on victims;
5. Has social (rather than biological) causes;
6. Can be prevented.
Bystanders

• A bystander: a person who observes or is aware of unacceptable behaviour.

  “The standard you walk past is the standard you accept.”
  Chief of Army, Lieutenant General David Morrison, AO, 13 June 2013
  “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”
  Dr Martin Luther King Jr.

• A bystander approach asks: How could we let this happen in our community? What can we do to prevent this?
Bystanders

• Individuals may be bystanders to violence and abuse in many ways.
• When someone harasses or assaults or rapes someone else, there are hundreds of comments, behaviours, and interactions which lead up to the violent or abusive act.
## The continuum of sexual harm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs &amp; attitudes</th>
<th>Comments and jokes</th>
<th>Invasions of space</th>
<th>Unwanted touch</th>
<th>Rape &amp; sexual assault</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.g., beliefs that:</td>
<td>Sexist and violence-supportive comments</td>
<td>Unwanted or uninvited sexual attention (harassment)</td>
<td>Grabbing / touching</td>
<td>Sexual penetration without consent (rape)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims are to blame</td>
<td>Inappropriate jokes and comments</td>
<td>Forced or coerced kissing</td>
<td>Sexual touching without consent (sexual assault)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence is normal</td>
<td>Looks / leers</td>
<td>Obscene calls and texts</td>
<td>Voyeurism (pervng)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The continuum of sexual harm

- Beliefs and attitudes >> Comments and jokes >> Invasions of space >> Unwanted touch >> Rape and sexual assault

- Each of the behaviours on the continuum is an opportunity to intervene, *before* a behaviour moves further towards sexual violence.
Bystanders can…

1. Stop the perpetration of a specific incident of violence;
2. Reduce the risk of violence escalating, and prevent the physical, psychological and social harms that may result;
3. Strengthen the conditions that work against violence occurring.
Be an active bystander

- If you do not speak up or take action, then you are *consenting to* or *condoning* this behaviour.
- Inaction – whether by individuals or organisations – implies agreement.
- Speaking up and stepping in makes a difference.
What bystanders do

• Bystanders’ likelihood of involvement is shaped by a variety of factors…
• Bystanders are more likely to act if they:
  – notice there is a problem,
  – feel a responsibility to act, and
  – have the skills and confidence to act.
What bystanders do

• Issue: Whether behaviour is seen as unjust.
  – E.g., perceived thresholds for sexual harassment.
• Issue: Men’s fears of being seen as unmasculine can constrain them from intervening.
• Issue: The organisation’s systems and climate
• Other reasons people do not act: diffusion of responsibility, pluralistic ignorance, etc.
Barriers to men’s bystander action

- Support for sexist and violence-supportive attitudes and norms
- Overestimation of *other* men’s comfort with violence and their unwillingness to intervene
- Fears of others’ reactions to intervention
  - Including challenges to their masculinity or heterosexuality.
- Negative reactions to violence prevention efforts
- Lack of knowledge of or skills in intervention
- Lack of opportunity or invitation

(Flood, 2010, *Where Men Stand*)
Building respectful relationships: What you can do

1. Put your own house in order.
2. Take action among other women and men.
3. Take wider collective action.
Society teaches "DON'T GET RAPED" rather than "DON'T RAPE"
THINGS THAT CAUSE RAPE*

☐ SHORT SKIRTS
☐ BEING DRUNK
☐ FLIRTING
☐ RAPISTS
10 Top Tips to End Rape

1. Don’t put drugs in women’s drinks.
2. When you see a woman walking by herself, leave her alone.
3. If you pull over to help a woman whose car has broken down, remember not to rape her.
4. If you are in a lift and a woman gets in, don’t rape her.
5. Never creep into a woman’s home through an unlocked door or window, or spring out at her from between parked cars, or rape her.
6. USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM!
   If you are not able to stop yourself from assaulting people, ask a friend to stay with you while you are in public.
7. Don’t forget: it’s not sex with someone who’s asleep or unconscious – it’s RAPE!
8. Carry a whistle! If you are worried you might assault someone ‘by accident’ you can hand it to the person you are with, so they can call for help.
9. Don’t forget: Honesty is the best policy. If you have every intention of having sex later on with the woman you’re dating regardless of how she feels about it, tell her directly that there is every chance you will rape her. If you don’t communicate your intentions, she may take it as a sign that you do not plan to rape her and inadvertently feel safe.
10. Don’t rape.

Looking for information and ideas on how to campaign against rape?
Check out the following websites: www.thisisnotaninvitationtorapeme.co.uk
www.notever.co.uk
Start with yourself

• Don’t use violence.
• Build respectful and non-violent relations with others.
• Boycott and resist sexist and violence-supportive culture.
• Inform yourself of the realities of men’s violence against women.
Be an active and involved bystander

- Intervene in violent incidents.
- Challenge perpetrators and potential perpetrators.
- Support victims and survivors.
  - Listen
  - Believe
  - Respect
Skills in bystander intervention

• Scenarios:
  – Read the scenario aloud.
  – Read the questions aloud.
  – Discuss the scenario. (15 minutes)

• Questions:
  – Has anyone been in or known of a situation like this?
  – What do you do? How might you ethically and safely intervene?
  – What are the issues here?
Scenario 1: “Somebody help me!”

- You are heading back to your house or apartment at night. You see a couple who seem to be very drunk stumbling past. A few minutes later you hear loud noises and thumps and the woman screaming, “Somebody help me! Get away from me!”
Scenario 2: “Hey good lookin’”

- You have just finished work with some workmates, all male. There are a couple of women walking ahead of you. One of your mates says to you in a loud voice, “Check out the arse on that girl on the left. I’d like to tap that.” The women turn around, with surprise and disgust on their faces.
Scenario 3: “Just one more drink”

- You are at a party at a guy’s house. Lots of people are hanging out and drinking. You can see that the guy whose house it is is sitting in a corner with a woman. They have been kissing and fooling around. Later, you see the guy stand up and help the woman to her feet. She seems very drunk – she can barely stand and her speech is slurred. The guy starts leading her up the stairs to a bedroom.
Scenario 4: “She’s a slut”

• At the pub at the end of the week, you and a few of your friends or mates are having a drink. A couple of guys are talking about a woman they know. They say she’s had sex with a lot of guys at work, and that she’s a “slut” who’ll “do anything”.
Scenario 5: “He forced me”

• A female friend comes to you. She is shaky and upset and you can see that she has been crying. She tells you that a particular guy raped her.
Scenario 6: “I’m worried about her”

- You have realised that your teenage daughter is in an abusive relationship. You have seen that her boyfriend calls her derogatory names, controls her contact with hers, and is disrespectful and cruel.
What can I say or do?

“Do you need help?”

“Can I walk you home?”

“Are you alright?”

“Do you want me to call someone for you?”

“Should I call the police?”

“What can I do to help you?”

“Do you want me to talk to so-and-so for you?”

“Is everything OK?”
 WHEN NICOLE COULDN’T LOSE THAT DRUNK GUY I CALLED HER CELL TO GIVE HER AN OUT.

I’M THE KIND OF GUY WHO TAKES A STAND WHERE DO YOU STAND?

MEN CAN STOP RAPE
www.mencanstoprape.org
Men preventing sexism and sexual assault

 WHEN JASON WOULDN’T LEAVE MARY ALONE, I SAID: SHE’S NOT INTO YOU ANYMORE. LET IT GO.

I’M THE KIND OF GUY WHO TAKES A STAND WHERE DO YOU STAND?

MEN CAN STOP RAPE
www.mencanstoprape.org
Men preventing sexism and sexual assault
When Kate seemed too drunk to leave with Chris, I checked in with her.

I'm the kind of guy who takes a stand. Where do you stand?

Men Can Stop Rape
www.mencanstoprape.org
Men preventing sexism and sexual assault

When Karl kept harassing girls on the street, I said: Stop being a jerk.

I'm the kind of guy who takes a stand. Where do you stand?

Men Can Stop Rape
www.mencanstoprape.org
Men preventing sexism and sexual assault
SHE WAS ON HER OWN, SO I MADE MY MOVE... and told the guys hassling her to back off. They were really crossing the line.

Visit us at www.facebook.com/MakeYourMoveMissouri for tips and events to help keep your friends and community safe from sexual violence.

A message from Missouri’s Intervention in Action Project.

A GIRL THAT WASTED IS WAY EASY TO HOOK UP WITH... so I made sure her friends got her out of there. She was in no shape to be going home with some guy.

Visit us at www.facebook.com/MakeYourMoveMissouri for tips and events to help keep your friends and community safe from sexual violence.

A message from Missouri’s Intervention in Action Project.
SOME DUDE WAS HANGING ALL OVER HER, SO WE TOOK OFF ...

and got her to leave with us.
She was drunk and we didn't trust him.

Visit us at www.facebook.com/MakeYourMoveMissoula
for tips and events to help keep your friends and community
safe from sexual violence.

A message from Missoula's Intervention in Action Project.

HE WAS ACTING ALL SWEET, OFFERING HER A RIDE ...

but it just didn't feel right.
So my friends and I stepped in
and got her out of the bar.

Visit us at www.facebook.com/MakeYourMoveMissoula
for tips and events to help keep your friends and community
safe from sexual violence.

A message from Missoula's Intervention in Action Project.
Be an active bystander cont’d

- Be an egalitarian role model.
- Challenge the social norms and inequalities which sustain men’s violence against women.
What can I say or do?

“What you said earlier really bothered me…”

“I don't like what you just did.”

“I know you well enough to know that you would not want to hurt someone…”

“I wonder if you realize how that feels/comes across.”

“How would you feel if someone did that to your sister?”

“I am saying something because I care about you…”
Be an active bystander cont’d

• Challenge violence-supportive or sexist comments and jokes:
  – Make your concern plain.
  – Personalise the violence or injustice.
  – Provide information.
  – Convey your feelings and principles.
  – Use humour,
  – Ask for an explanation.
  – Remind him of his ‘best self’.
  – Invite group pressure.
These are girls.

These are athletes who lost a game.

Sexist and homophobic words are violent and they’re everybody’s problem.

Everybody has a backbone. Use yours.

This is a pussy.

This is a guy walking away from a fight.

Sexist and homophobic words are violent and they’re everybody’s problem.

Everybody has a backbone. Use yours.
This is a hoe.

This is a bitch.

This is a girl who likes your boyfriend.
SEXIST AND HOMOPHOBIC WORDS ARE VIOLENT AND THEY'RE EVERYBODY'S PROBLEM.

Everybody has a backbone. Use yours.

This is a girl who speaks her mind.
SEXIST AND HOMOPHOBIC WORDS ARE VIOLENT AND THEY'RE EVERYBODY'S PROBLEM.

Everybody has a backbone. Use yours.
Personal strategies for strength, support, and inspiration

• Be bold.
• Learn a language for speaking about violence against women.
  – Speak from the heart
• Get comfortable with the F-word and the G-word.
• Find and build communities of support.
• Hold yourself and others to standards which are higher, but not impossible. Walk the walk.
• Acknowledge your mistakes.
• Celebrate your successes.
• Remind yourself of what you are for.
  – And of how you and others benefit from non-violence and gender equality.
• Make use of resources. Do your homework.
Beyond individual interventions
Preventing violence against women in institutions / organisations

• The principle of prevention: The most effective way to prevent violence against women (VAW) is to address its underlying causes and conditions.

• Above all, by:
  1. Promoting gender-equitable roles and relations
  2. Building respectful (non-violent) social norms and practices
  3. Improving access to resources and systems of support
Preventing violence against women in the workplace

• There is only a small body of research on the effectiveness of workplace-based prevention.
• But key principles of best (better) practice are clear...

94% of employees agree employers should take a leadership role in educating their workforce about respectful relationships between men and women.

Effective approaches

- **Are comprehensive**: Address all aspects of the system.
  - Take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting gender equality and a respectful workplace culture.
- **Involve primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions**
- **Are intensive**: Interactive learning opportunities, sustained over time, with multiple points of contact with reinforcing messages;
- **Are relevant to the context and participants**:
  - Based on an audit of the workplace.
- **Are based on positive messages**: Build on and reinforce healthy behaviors and norms.
- Rely on **effective leadership**
  - Especially from senior men
- Etc.
Building respectful relationships: An organisational example

Figure 1. Example of a Comprehensive Campus-Based Primary Prevention Strategy for Sexual Violence Perpetration

- **Individual**
  - Build bystander intervention and healthy relationship skills and establish positive norms about gender, sexuality, and violence with evidence-informed interactive, multi-session intervention for incoming students

- **Peer/Partner**
  - Coach-implemented intervention for male athletes addressing hyper-masculine peer norms that support or facilitate sexual violence
  - Dorm-based intervention that reinforces positive norms and skills related to bystander behavior and healthy sexuality

- **Organization**
  - Engage campus leadership to promote culture of safety and respect
  - Social marketing campaign to address norms related to sexual violence, gender, sexuality
  - Hot spot mapping to identify and monitor unsafe areas on campus

- **Community**
  - Community initiatives to implement/enforce alcohol policy efforts to reduce excessive alcohol use or problem outlets
  - Strengthen/support enforcement, response, and reporting policies on- and off-campus

Consistent Messages Across Campus Policies and Programs
Adapting bystander intervention for the workplace

• Give greater emphasis to work and organisational climates.
• Encourage bystanders to be agents of organisational change.
• Empower bystanders in their workplaces.
• Establish well-functioning voice systems in organisations.
• Adopt other management strategies to encourage whistle blowing.
Increasing bystander capacity

• Increase people’s knowledge of the problem and awareness of its impact.
• Increase people’s skills to intervene effectively.
• Increase the perceived benefits of intervening and reduce the perceived costs.
• Increase organisational support for intervention – through cultures, programs, and leadership
Take-home points

• **You** have a role to play in preventing violence.
  – There are many opportunities all day long to make a difference in small ways.
  – There are many ways to speak up or take action, not just one “right” way.

• Your institutions must adopt comprehensive prevention strategies.
Resources: Bystander intervention