I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to address, respond to, and assist bystanders or witnesses to crimes of sexual or relationship violence. The college recognizes that fear of repercussion or retaliation may deter reporting and prohibits retaliation against an individual coming forward as a witness to a crime.

For information pertaining to sexual and other assaults on campus refer to Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3540.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Bystander: someone who observes but is not involved in something.
B. Retaliation: deliberately harm someone in response or revenge for a harm that he/she has done.

III. POLICY

At Shasta College, the safety and welfare of our students, staff and visitors are our utmost concern. As such, intervention or interruption of harmful behavior or speech that you witness is key to sexual assault prevention.

Shasta College expects all members of the campus to take reasonable action to prevent or stop any act of sexual assault, harassment, or violation of any college policy. Taking action may include reporting to local law enforcement, direct intervention, or a call to Campus Safety.

Shasta College prohibits any retaliation, coercion, threats or discrimination against an individual who intervenes, reports, or provides information on sexual or relationship violence. Any person who participates in an act of retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action. Concerns of retaliation should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator or to the Director of Campus Safety.

Shasta College encourages reporting of sexual misconduct. Any person who intervenes or reports sexual misconduct will not be subject to disciplinary action by the college.
IV. PROCEDURE

The Bystander Effect

Increasingly, it is being recognized that the solution to health and social justice problems requires that we engage bystanders – individuals who observe a problem and want to do something but don’t. Despite the importance of this issue and the fact that most people want to “do the right thing” there is a phenomenon called “bystander apathy” or the “bystander effect” that can be described as a diffusion of responsibility which suggests that the more people there are present to witness an event, the less each individual feels personally responsible for doing something. Several variables help to explain why the bystander effect occurs. These variables include:

1. **Ambiguity**: the more ambiguous the situation the less likely people will intervene

2. **Group Cohesiveness**: the need to behave in correct and socially acceptable ways, thus when other observers fail to react, individuals often take this as a signal that a response is not needed or not appropriate and

3. **Diffusion of responsibility**: This can be an obstacle for people to realize there is a need to intervene.

Bystander Intervention

Bystander intervention is a philosophy and strategy for prevention of various types of violence, including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and intimate partner violence. Bystander Intervention is based on the fact that people make decisions and continue behaviors based on the reactions they get from others.

What makes this approach different from previous approaches to sexual assault prevention? The bystander approach offers several clear benefits:

1. **Discourages victim blaming**: Breaking the silence around sexual violence is a critical strategy in prevention. Yet, often the ensuing dialogue includes questions to the victim like “How could YOU let this happen?” or “Why didn’t YOU say anything?” With bystanders as active participants, the sense of responsibility shifts away from victims and toward the family, friends and the whole community. The questions then become, “How could WE let this happen in our community?” and “How can WE learn to say something?”

2. **Offers the chance to change social norms**: With more bystander intervention, society’s collective responsibility takes on a new role. Studies show that social norms can play a significant role in violence prevention, especially in communities such as college campuses (Banyard et al., 2004). Just as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), for example, shifted social norms of our society with their slogan, “Friends don’t let friends drive drunk,” a similar shift is also possible for sexual violence: “Friends don’t let friends hurt others.”

3. **Shifts responsibility to men and women**: In previous decades, rape prevention programs focused almost exclusively on the dynamic of men as perpetrators and women as victims of sexual violence. Child sexual abuse programs began as programs teaching children to say “no” and teaching adults to listen. The bystander approach shifts this framing and engages adults as agents of change – both men and women become equals in prevention. In support of this promising practice, the Centers
for Disease Control and Prevention has funded a number of sites to develop programs to shift the responsibility of preventing child sexual abuse to the adults.

Active Bystander ABCs

There are three components to Active Bystander Intervention. We refer to them as the ABCs:

- **A = Assess for safety.** Ensure that all parties are safe, and if the situation requires calling authorities. When deciding to intervene, your personal safety should be the #1 priority. When in doubt, call for help.
- **B = Be with others.** If safe to intervene, you’re likely to have a greater influence on the parties involved when you work together with someone or several people. Your safety is increased when you stay with a group of friends that you know well.
- **C = Care for others.** If it appears that someone’s attempts to fend off the unwanted sexual advances aren’t working, we want you to feel responsible for the welfare of another human being, and offer to help— even if that person is not aware they need help. Focus on the inappropriate behavior that should be stopped.

How to Be an Active Bystander

Be an intervener! Stop these incidents before they occur, educate yourself and others, talk to and support your friends so that they will intervene as well! The best way bystanders can assist in creating an empowering climate free of interpersonal violence is to diffuse the problem behaviors before they escalate.

- Educate yourself and others about interpersonal violence, gender inequality and the causes of gender violence.
- Confront friends who make excuses for other people’s abusive behavior.
- Speak up against racist, sexist, and homophobic jokes, music, remarks, etc. Refuse to purchase any magazines, videos or music that portray women in a degrading manner or include violence against women.
- Confront abusive behavior by not remaining silent.
- Understand how your own attitudes and actions (including jokes, music you listen to, etc.) may perpetuate sexism and violence and work toward changing them.
- Gently offer your support if you suspect that someone close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted or stalked.

The Bystander Intervention Playbook

*From the University of Vermont*

- **Defensive Split** – Step in and separate two people. Let them know your concerns and reasons for intervening. Be a friend and let them know you are acting in their best interest. Make sure each person makes it home safely.
• **Pick and Roll** – Use a distraction to redirect the focus somewhere else: “Hey, I need to talk to you.” or “Hey, this party is lame. Let’s go somewhere else.”

• **The Option** – Evaluate the situation and people involved to determine your best move. You could directly intervene yourself, or alert friends of each person to come in and help. If the person reacts badly, try a different approach.

• **Full Court Press** – Recruit the help of friends of both people to step in as a group.

• **Fumblerooski** – Divert the attention of one person away from the other person. Have someone standing by to redirect the other person’s focus (see Pick and Roll). Commit a party foul (i.e. spilling your drink) if you need to.

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