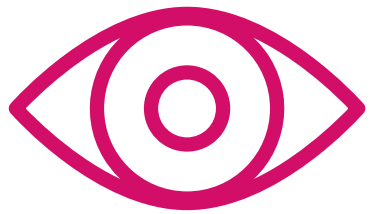




## Bystander Effect

# What is a bystander?

- Anyone who sees, hears or has knowledge of an incident but isn't directly involved



- Every interaction is a potential intervention
- By just being 'present', this can prevent or deter a continuation of the event

# What can a bystander do?

Bystanders can both escalate and defuse a situation

Scenario

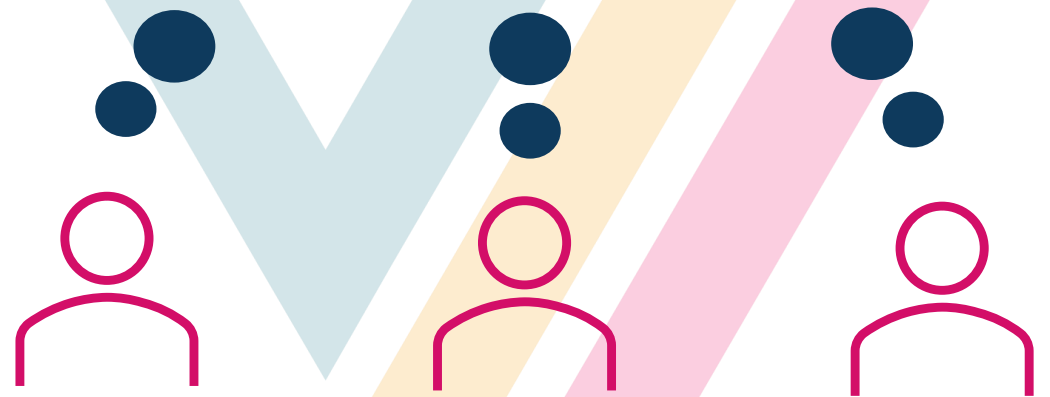
1. Two young people are squaring up to each other outside the gates after school
2. A crowd of bystanders gathers
3. The crowd are creating a barrier around the pupils
4. At this point, if either of those pupils decided they didn't want to fight, how easy is it for them to get out of it?

In this scenario, the bystanders have influence over the outcome

# Pluralistic Ignorance

When a majority of group members privately reject a behaviour or situation, but incorrectly assume that most others within the group accept it, and therefore go along with it

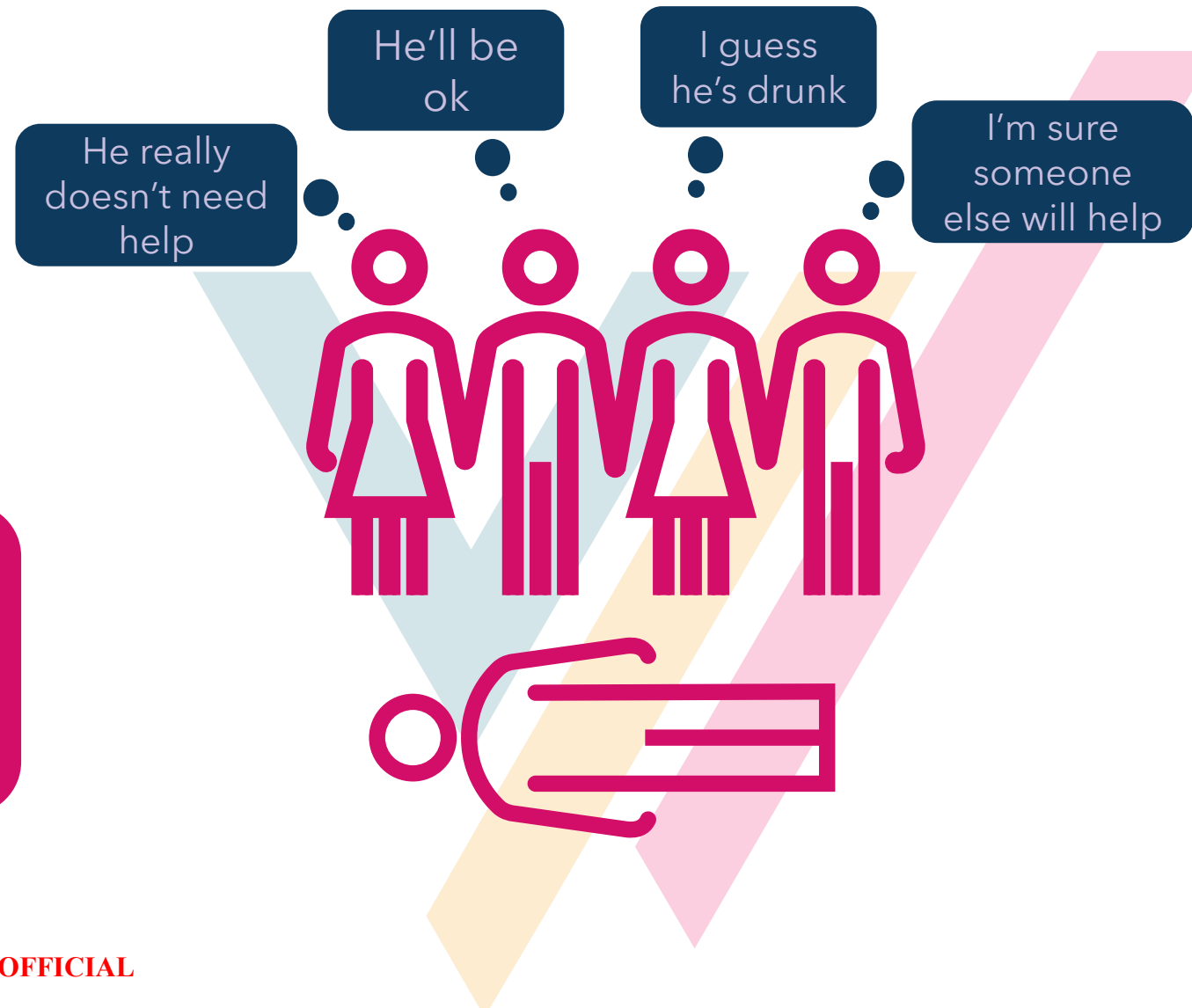
Everyone seems so happy with this behaviour.  
I wish I wasn't the only one who thinks this isn't ok



# Diffusion of Responsibility

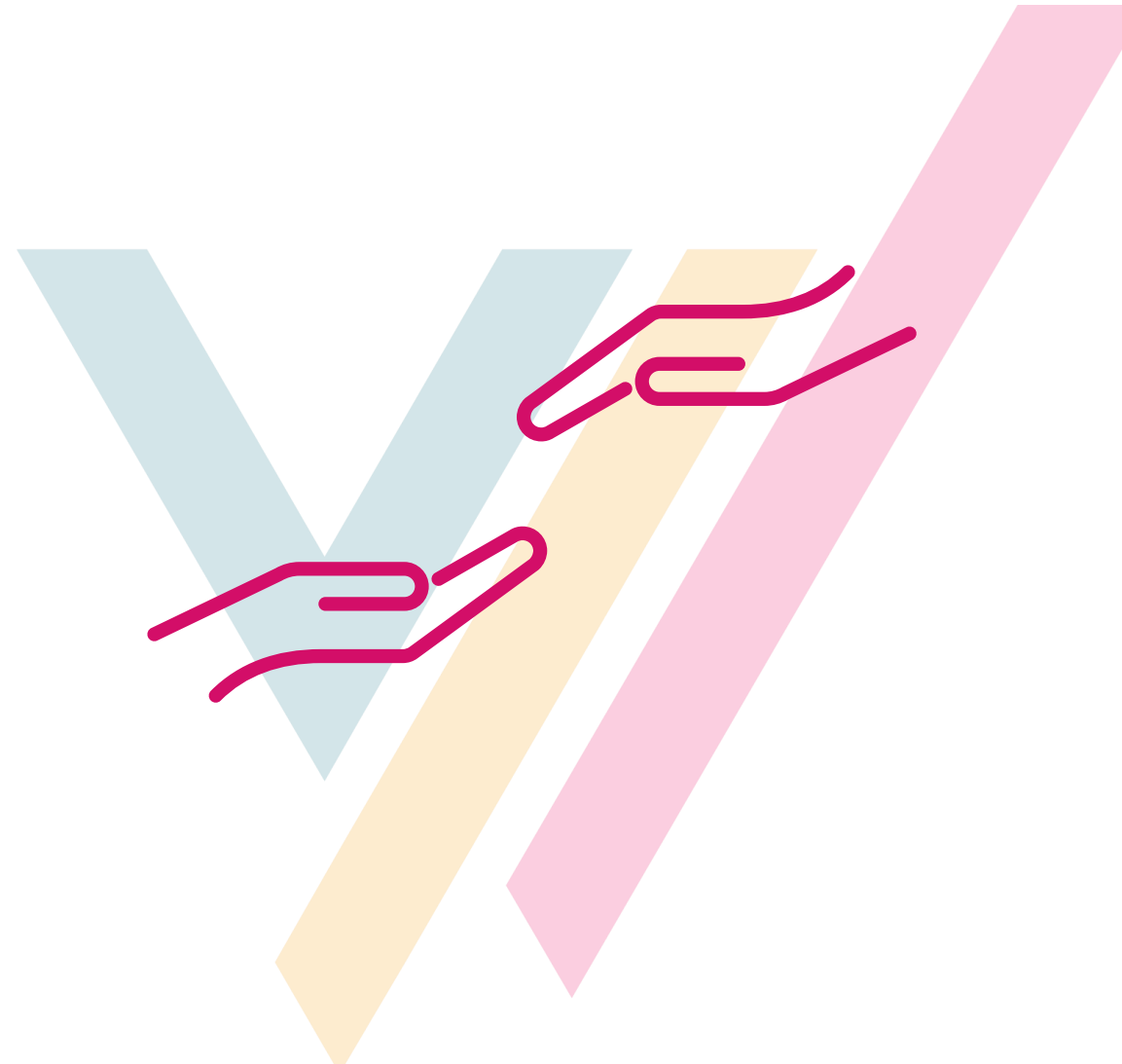
- Also referred to as 'the bystander effect'
- The theory that people are less likely to get involved if more people are present

Although bystanders may be sympathetic to others, they are more heavily influenced by the behaviour of those around them



# The 'Helper Effect'

- More recent research suggests however, that a greater number of witnesses means that a victim is more likely to be helped than not.
- Just one person helping in a situation has the effect of activating others to join in and help also.



# Stages of Bystander Intervention

1

Notice that something is happening

Someone must first have knowledge of an incident and notice what is happening

2

Recognise that there is something wrong

Individuals must be equipped with the knowledge to recognise risk factors

3

Decide that they have a personal responsibility to intervene

Building empathy and addressing attitudes to behaviour are important

4

Have the skills and confidence to act in a safe way

Confidence is key, people must believe they can succeed in their intervention

OFFICIAL

# The 5 D's



**D**irectly intervene

Speak to the offending individual if safe to do so



**D**istract

Cause a diversion, call affected person away



**D**elegate

Have someone else speak to the offending person



**D**ocument

Take note of the incident and details of when it occurred



**D**elay

Provide victim with follow-up support/resources after the incident



# Bystander Summary

- We need to provide bystanders with the ability and knowledge to recognise when an intervention may be required
- We need to understand and challenge harmful societal norms and biases that may be present.
- We need to encourage confidence in bystanders to allow them to intervene in an appropriate and safe way.



For more information and resources visit  
[Mentors in Violence Prevention in Scottish  
Schools](#)

OFFICIAL