



WALTHAMSTOW  
SCHOOL  
FOR  
GIRLS

# Becoming an Active Bystander



## WSfG Values

- Student driven.
- Caring for others.
- Kindness.
- Doing the right thing.
- *Do we display these as often as we should or could?*



# Safety at WSfG



## What makes you feel unsafe?

- Fights or the thought of being in a fight
- Big groups inside school e.g. in toilets
- Big groups outside of school

***Picture someone important to you, someone you love, someone you care about, someone you want to protect, someone you would really struggle to be without.***

***My mum.***





THE BYSTANDER EFFECT -  
YouTube



**Would you help  
someone who was  
unwell or in trouble?**

# Kitty Genovese story

- 1964, 28 years old
- New York
- Late at night, walking home from work
- Attacked by a man with a knife
- One man shouted 'leave her alone'
- No-one else did anything for 30 minutes
- Newspapers reported 37 people didn't help, report, do anything even though they heard she was in trouble.



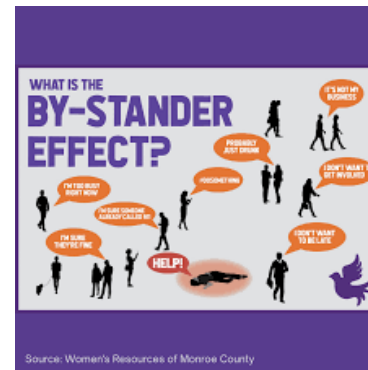
**“37 WHO SAW  
MURDER DIDN'T  
CALL THE POLICE”**

*- The New York Times*

March 27, 1964

# The Bystander Effect

- Social psychological phenomenon where people are less likely to offer help in an emergency when other people are present.
- People feel less responsibility when there are others around, assuming that someone else will step up and take action.
- Studies have shown that the larger the group of bystanders, the less likely it is that someone will offer help.
- This was demonstrated in the case of Kitty Genovese, who was murdered outside her apartment building while numerous people were nearby. Despite her cries for help, no one stepped forward to assist her.





## **The Bystander Effect**

This can mean we don't help someone who is unwell, we don't help someone who is being attacked, we don't try to stop something awful from happening.

- Every day events unfold and we are all bystanders.
- At times events might make us feel uncomfortable, we might witness discrimination, racism, sexism, bullying, arguments, physical aggression.
- We can choose to say or do something and be an active bystander, or let it go and remain a passive bystander.
- When we intervene we show that the actions and words are not right and if we continue to reinforce this within our school community we can shift boundaries of what is considered acceptable.

This may be an argument, a fight, harmful and abusive behaviour!



# *Why don't people help or do the right thing?*



- Humans are innately curious and want to observe situations out of the ordinary.
- We assume someone else will help.
- Thinking 'no-one else is doing anything so I shouldn't either'.
- Don't want to 'get involved'.
- Afraid of getting hurt.
- Worry about what will happen if we 'tell'.
- We freeze or panic.
- In a crowd people often do things they wouldn't normally do.
- Can be heightened emotionally.
- Get 'carried away'.
- In a group we can act out of character.



## **What should you do?**

- Be aware of the bystander phenomenon!
- Call out negative behaviour.
- If no-one is taking action remember this assembly and step up.
- Discretely tell an adult you trust if you think something may happen.
- If someone is in immediate danger find an adult straight away.
- Do not film or post on social media.
- You do not have to intervene yourself if you do not feel safe!
- Look out for your friends but try to be compassionate and kind to others.

It is not always easy to do the right thing but integrity is such an important personal value!

***Think back to the slide at the start - someone important to you, someone you love, someone you care about, someone you want to protect, someone you would really struggle to be without.***

***What if it was this person who needed help – would you do the right thing and help or prevent it if you could?***





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**Don't be a bystander  
– have the courage  
and integrity to help**

[Bystander Revolution: Salma Hayek | Don't Stand By - YouTube](#)