

Fraternal Health & Safety Initiative

Bystander Intervention Scenarios



ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

It is Thursday evening and you and another brother are studying in your room at your chapter house. There are two brothers, Jake and Steve, talking outside your door about a couple of the members of your chapter's new member class who they think haven't proved themselves worthy enough to initiate. Neither you, nor the brother you are studying with are officers but you are both active in the chapter. You both stop studying and look at each other since it is hard to miss the conversation going on in the hallway.

Just as both of you are about to shrug it off and go back to studying, you hear Jake say to Steve that he's going to call the two new members to come over for some "one-on-one time". Neither Jake, nor Steve are officers of the chapter; and, frankly, both of them have been known to take things too far in the past. It is a policy in the chapter that any activities with the new members has to be planned in advance and approved by the new member education committee.

About ten minutes later you hear aggressive shouting in the hallway as the two new members arrive at the house. Jake calls them "unworthy maggots". Jake goes on to tell them, "Tonight is going to be hell for you both!" Steve then adds, "You two need to prove yourselves by downing this bottle of vodka."

Using the STOP Model, walk through this case and discuss each of the steps on how you could intervene.

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WHAT IS WRONG WITH ALEX?

Alex is a sophomore in your chapter and lately has been acting strange and staying fairly isolated. Alex has come back to the chapter house drunk several times on weekdays lately. Additionally, Alex has been making a bunch of noise late at night, waking members up, and making a mess by vomiting in the communal bathroom. Chapter members have asked Alex if everything is alright, but Alex does not want to talk about what is going on.

Further, you have two classes with Alex which Alex has not been attending much. When Alex does attend, Alex acts aloof and clearly is not paying attention. It has gotten to the point where several chapter members are talking about Alex behind Alex's back in very non-supportive ways.

Tonight you are up late hanging out in your room when you hear Alex yelling in the hallway and you are pretty sure Alex is drunk again. One of the other members yells at Alex to shut up. Alex goes nuts and starts banging on members' doors saying, "No one understands what I'm going through." When the members do not come to the door, you then hear Alex say, "Screw you all, I'm getting the hell out of here." You crack your door open wide enough to see Alex with car keys and head to the door.

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IS CHRIS SAFE TO LEAVE?

You and a few other members are at a local bar enjoying yourselves when you see another member Chris sitting at a table with someone. Earlier, you heard Chris talking excitedly with another member about meeting up with someone later for a first date. It is obvious to you that both parties have already been drinking, as they appear to be demonstrating signs of intoxication. You point them out to the others at your table, and go back to talking. Over the next half hour you see a waitress bring two rounds of shots and a couple of beers to Chris and the date.

Although you can't hear all of the conversation you can see that Chris is getting pretty drunk and the date Chris is with is suggesting that they both do another shot. Chris takes the shot. Then, Chris heads for the bathroom, stumbling a bit and bumping into a couple of people along the way. The date Chris is with seems not to notice, orders a couple of more shots, and quickly pays the tab. A few minutes later, Chris arrives back at the table still wobbling a bit, grabs a coat and turns to leave with the date. The date points out the shots and says let's have one more for the road. Chris protests a bit at first. Then, with the date's insistence, Chris throws back the shot. The two lock arms and start walking toward the door.

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DATE PARTY COSTUMES OUT OF HAND!

Dave is the social chair for Alpha Beta Fraternity and Chrissy is the social chair for Gamma Alpha Sorority. The chapters are co-hosting a Halloween party. Both chapters do a lot of events together over the year. The party has been going on for about 45 minutes when both social chairs congratulate each other on how well the event is going. There are some hilarious costumes, and it seems like everyone is having a great time.

All of the sudden, two couples come through the door. The men are dressed as Native American "warriors" complete with face paint, tomahawks, and fake bloody scalps. The two men are yelling a "war chant" and screaming as they come through the door. The women are dressed as sexy Native American "squaws", wearing very short skirts and showing full cleavage.

Immediately, several people at the party pull out their phones and start taking pictures.

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THE FIGHT

On Thursday night, John a popular brother in the chapter comes back to the house around 10 p.m. with blood on his shirt and a big bruise under his right eye. He is immediately approached by a group of brothers just back from the bars and he shares that he was out at Finnegan's Bar where he got into an argument with a member of another Fraternity. He shares that as the argument progressed, the other guy "sucker punched" him in the face. Before he could retaliate, a bouncer grabbed him and threw him out of the bar.

The brothers are furious and they demand revenge. They start making plans to go back to the bar as a group to settle things.

For use with fraternities: *You are the Vice President of the chapter and you were just hanging out with another brother when you witnessed this entire scene. Neither of you have been drinking that night but you believe everyone else is fairly intoxicated. You know the president of the chapter is not there because he is away at a leadership conference.*

For use with sororities: *You are the Vice President of the fraternity chapter's friend and the two of you were hanging out when you witnessed this entire scene. Neither of you have been drinking that night but you believe everyone else is fairly intoxicated. You know the president of the chapter is not there because he is away at a leadership conference.*

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“MEAN GIRL” SISTERS IN ACTION

It is the night of bid day and your sorority has just welcomed a new member class. You thought recruitment had gone well and your sorority easily met quota. As you are coming out of the restroom, you overhear three members of the junior class talking about the new class. Specifically, you heard references to several of the new sisters being labeled by these women as overweight, not stylish enough for your chapter, and that none of the fraternities are going to want to hang out with your chapter now.

As the conversation continues, they mention six of the new members by name and the Juniors say that they are going to call them aside and “retrain them” on how they need to look and act moving forward as a member of your sorority. Chrissy, one of the sisters involved, says, “we’ll just need to “fat shame” them and teach them how to dress the part. It’s the only way to avoid totally being embarrassed by them and losing all social standing. If they don’t shape up right away, we’ll need to make sure that they drop.”

At this point, you make a sound alerting them to your presence. The three sisters stop their conversation and stare coldly at you as you walk by them.

Using the STOP Model, walk through this case and discuss each of the steps on how you could intervene.