

Active Bystanders at Laneway Festival

A festival is a community, so when one person experiences rude, creepy or intrusive behaviour, that's everyone's problem.

You can make a choice to support our strong stance against harassment when you're at Laneway. How?

By becoming an active bystander and getting ready to: **check in, step in, step up, and shape up!** If you see something that concerns you, we encourage you to:

- **check in** by assessing a situation for safety before taking any action
- **step in** by helping to diffuse a situation and
- **step up** by calling out the behaviour and letting us know
- **shape up** by challenging your mates on harmful words or actions

Want to help? Be smart, act safely

If you notice something's up, figure out what the best way to respond is before you intervene so you don't end up adding to the problem. Ask yourself three questions:

What's going on?

We all know that gut feeling when something's not right, but double check your instincts. Is something dodgy definitely happening? What's making you concerned? Get a second opinion from a mate if you're not sure.

Is it safe?

The biggest rule here put safety first, and make sure that if you intervene, it will be helpful and not harmful. Even if what you're seeing makes you angry, take a step back and think about safety. If a fight starts, nobody will thank you!

We all have better options than 'just ignore it.' If it looks safe to do so, you could approach them directly. If not, you could call **1800 LANEWAY (or text 0404 242 555)** with a description of what you've seen. If a situation looks like it's already getting out of hand, for example if there are more than three people involved already, then a call, text or letting a member of security staff know will be much more effective than escalating the situation.

What type of action is best?

Once you've decided that you're going to take action and that it's safe to do so, look at the steps below and consider your options. Remember that every situation is different.

Check in, Step in, Step up and Shape up

Check in

Check in with a simple greeting or look, directed at the person or people you think are being targeted. Easy! If it's loud, you can try a thumbs up or making eye contact instead. Be neutral and friendly. Remember, it's not about taking over the situation. You're offering support and showing that you're keeping an eye out for them! If there's no problem and they're all good, you've lost nothing.

Step in

Once you've checked in, you might need to step in, but remember: safety first.

Distraction is a subtle, low-risk and fun way to step in. You can sneakily derail harassment by interrupting it. **Try to ignore the harasser and focus on whoever is being targeted.** Read the situation to help diffuse it.

You could:

- Strike up a conversation. It can be about anything!
- Get in the way. Dance between them or create a distraction.
- Offer to walk away with them, go and get some water, or call them over to join your group - handy as code for 'let's move away from this situation'

Step up

If someone does ask you to intervene directly, then after checking that it's safe to do so, use non-confrontational body language to let the harasser know that their behaviour is not okay.

The most important thing here is to keep it short and succinct. You're not starting an argument or a debate. Aggro is not going to help and could make the person who was targeted feel even more unsafe. Make your point and then move away, perhaps with the person who's been targeted if that's appropriate.

If you are asked for other practical help and it's safe to assist, make an effort to do so. Remember, they might be feeling embarrassed or distressed and just need someone to stand with for a little while.

You could:

- Offer to help them find security
- Ask if they'd like you to call **1800 LANEWAY (or text 0404 242 555)** with them
- Go and inform a member of staff about what you've seen
- Other practical help: Do they need a first aider? Have they lost their mates and need help to find them?

Remember, it's not your job to fix everything, but five minutes out of your day might make a huge difference. Oh, and if they want to be left alone, always respect that!

Shape up

Nobody wants drama, but the truth is, the standard we walk past is the standard we accept. If you see or hear your mate talking or acting out of line but you ignore it, what message does this send? Words matter as much as actions.

A one-on-one 'shape up' chat with your mate is one of the most important ways to challenge harassment, and in the first instance will always be more effective than a group call out. Think about: naming what problem is, the impact it is having and how you think they could change it.

Don't make excuses, be a role model instead.

The best thing about being an active bystander? It's infectious! Showing that it's possible to check in with minimal fuss shows others exactly how easy it can be.

So, Remember:

Check in, step in, step up and shape up!

We want Laneway to be safe and fun for everyone, so we all have a role to play.

Produced in partnership with [Good Night Out Campaign](#).