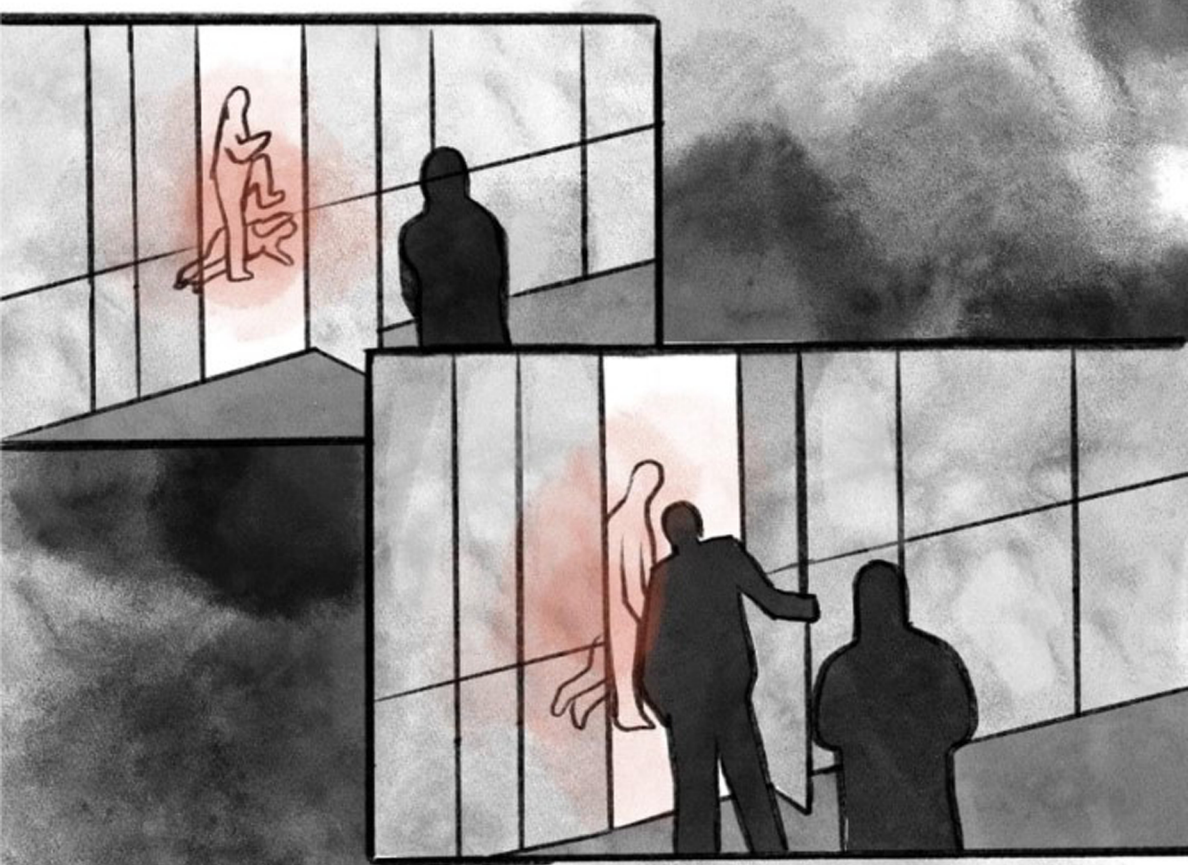


If you see someone being harassed or attacked, what can you do?



As the pandemic progresses, news of anti-Asian violence has become more widespread. In March, a man attacked a 65-year-old Filipino woman outside of an apartment building in Manhattan.

In the surveillance footage of the attack, one man inside the building watches the assault and does nothing. Another man approaches the door and shuts it.



The incident sparked a public outcry and discussion about bystander intervention.

If you see a similar situation,
what are your options?



Gabriela Mejia is a training and communications associate with Hollaback!, an organization seeking to end harassment in its many forms.

She shared with Life Kit five options bystanders can take: distract, delegate, document, delay and direct.

Pick one or more that make sense for the situation you're in and what you're comfortable with.

Distract

Cause a distraction to make the person being harassed less of a target, like asking for directions or pretending to know them.



Delegate

Ask for help from someone around you or an authority figure.



But remember, the presence of law enforcement doesn't always make people feel safer. Check with the person being harassed before calling the police in order to center their safety.

Document

Record* a video on your phone, take photos, or even write down detailed notes.




Hand over what you have to the person being harassed and let them decide what to do with it.

**Note: local laws regarding recording someone can vary.*

Debrief

Debrief with the person being harassed after the situation is over.




Hi, I saw what happened. It was not okay.

What can I do to help you feel safer?

Direct

If you feel safe doing so, talk directly to the harasser. Name what is happening and ask them to stop.

An illustration showing a woman on the left with long dark hair, wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and pants, looking towards the right with a serious expression. On the right, the back and arm of a person in a light-colored shirt are visible, with their hand on the woman's shoulder. A red speech bubble originates from the woman, containing the text: "Hey, that's not okay! Let go of them." The background is plain white.

Hey, that's not okay! Let go of them.

Knowing these steps doesn't guarantee you'll be ready to intervene if a moment comes. It takes practice and mindfulness to be an active bystander.



So practice: imagine threatening scenarios you've witnessed or might witness, and how you could respond. You can even act out fake scenarios with a friend.

Always remember that your goal is to deescalate harm, not be the hero of the story.

It should never be about you, but instead about how you can support the person being targeted.





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