Moving from Inaction to Action requires that a person:
1. Observe/notice event
2. Interpret the event as a problem
3. Feel responsible for dealing with the problem
4. Possess the necessary skills to act

Noticing Events: Raising Awareness is often a first step.
- Sometimes behaviors happen so often that we just kind of shut down and stop really consciously noticing it.
- Sometimes we don’t recognize the connections between behaviors we see as problematic and behaviors we see as OK or “typical.”

Interpreting Events as Problematic.
- Sometimes behaviors happen so often that we either perceive them as “normal” or “typical.”
- Sometimes when no one around us seems to think a behavior is problematic, we begin to believe that it’s not a problem, too.
- Sometimes we believe false information about what things like “violence” really looks like, so even if we notice something, we don’t interpret it as a problem.

Feeling Responsible for Dealing with the Problem.
- When many people witness something, they all often think that someone else will do something, so no one does. This is called the Bystander Effect.
- When people recognize that they can be part of a solution, they often feel more empowered to act.
- When people recognize their own role in the problem (i.e., I know that I’ve made assumptions or said mean things that have hurt people in the past), can sometimes increase people’s sense of responsibility.
- When people recognize the impact of the issues of concern on their own life, either directly or through people they care about, they are more likely to take responsibility for trying to change things.

Possessing the Necessary Skills.
- There are many reasons that people do not take action—they can be influenced by the fact that no one around them is acting; they can be fearful of retaliation or embarrassment, or just not knowing what to do.
- Sometimes people think that taking action being an active bystander means directly confronting someone. It certainly can mean that, but it doesn’t have to.
It’s so important to recognize that there as many ways of intervening in a situation as there are people (more, even!). And whatever action someone takes is a positive thing.

- **Direct** intervention means that I will do something directly. Often, this means confronting someone about their behavior. Confrontation can include expressing concern, sharing the basis of your concerns, sharing how it makes you and others feel, asking if they understand your point of view, brainstorming what can be done, offering support for change, and planning for follow-up.
  - Understanding the difference between the Impact and the Intention is important here.
  - Even within direct intervention, there are many, many ways to intervene in a given situation.
- **Delegation** means that I will take action by asking for assistance from someone else. Recognizing who my allies and resources are is imperative for delegation.
- **Distraction** can be the Action. We can derail some problematic behaviors by distracting the person or the whole group. Sometimes we can shift the focus by reframing someone’s comments.

Whenever there is an imminent threat to someone’s safety, intervention must happen now. In other situations, though, we can sometimes have a little room to think and engage in some kind of response or intervention after-the-fact.

On-line resources for Bystander Intervention:

- [http://beyondbullies.org/programs/active-bystander-program/](http://beyondbullies.org/programs/active-bystander-program/)
- [http://www.thinkb4youspeak.com/](http://www.thinkb4youspeak.com/)