



the blue bench

A GOOD TIME IS A SAFE TIME- PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SPACES WITH ALCOHOL: RESOURCE GUIDE

WHO CAN HELP?

- The Blue Bench Hotline (English and Spanish): 303-322-7273
 - Contact Hospital Advocates through this hotline
- The Blue Bench's Resource Line (English and Spanish): 303-329-9922
- Colorado Crisis Counselors 24/7: 1-844-493-TALK (8255)
- Suicide Hotline: (988)
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
- National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

THE BLUE BENCH COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ENCOURAGE YOUR FAVORITE ESTABLISHMENT TO GET SAFE BARS CERTIFIED!

Safe Bars– A workshop for preventing or reducing sexual violence in alcohol serving establishments

<https://thebluebench.org/communityeducation/our-programs/safe-bars.html>

OTHER COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- **Uniting in Action** – Developed in collaboration with high school students, educators, and this workshop empowers high schoolers in their role in shaping community responses to sexual violence.
- **Let's Talk About It** – This middle school program focuses on healthy relationships, boundaries, and skill-building to become an active bystander for middle school youth.
- **SHIELD (Sexual Harassment Intervention Education and Leadership Development)** – Partnering with local businesses/corporations to offer workplace harassment training
- **Knowledge is Power**– An overview of the problem of sexual violence and techniques that bystanders can use to keep their communities safer
- **YES (Youth Empowerment and Safety)**– A program for parents and youth-serving professionals to learn how to identify and prevent sexual violence against young people.

Email communityed@thebluebench.org to learn more or to schedule a program.



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BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

DIRECT

- Assertively addressing the person engaging in harassing behavior
- Intervening with one or both people and acknowledging that there is (*or may be*) a problem.

DELEGATE

- Get someone else who can intervene

DISTRACT

- Disrupting the energy of the interaction using a distraction
- Divert attention away from the person being harassed
- Interrupt the situation temporarily
- Create distance between the person engaging in harassing behavior and their target

DOCUMENT

- Capture evidence and share with target of harassment or relevant investigators
- DO NOT share documentation on social media

DELAY

- Offer support to the person being harassed after the incident, discuss potential next steps and empower them to take further action if they want to

PERSONAL SAFETY STRATEGIES

BEFORE YOU GO OUT

- **Have a plan.** Know how you're getting there and back. *Before* the night begins, decide on your transportation, whether it's a designated driver, rideshare, or yourself. Also, set up check-ins with a friend, so someone knows where you'll be.
- **Increase your group size.** There's safety in numbers. Try to go out with a group whenever you can or go to events where meeting new people is a goal.
- **Charge your phone and enable location sharing.** Make sure your phone is fully charged and that trusted friends or family can see your location.
- **Eat beforehand.** Having food in your system can help you pace yourself and make safer choices.



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AT THE BAR/CLUB

- **Watch your drink.** Never leave it unattended, and don't accept drinks from strangers unless it's directly handed to you by the bartender or server.
- **Stay with your friends or make friends with others at the bar so they know you're there. You can also stay close to a bartender you like.** Set up a buddy system so no one gets left alone.
- **Set boundaries.** If someone is making you uncomfortable, it's okay to be direct, walk away, or ask a friend or staff member for help.

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR

- **Pressure to drink.** If someone is pushing, you to drink more than you want.
- **Someone is drinking less than you.** If their drinks look smaller, lighter, or if they're pretending to drink could be a sign they're trying to stay in control.
- **Isolation tactics.** Be cautious if someone is trying to separate you from your group or get you alone.
- **Hovering or unwanted attention.** If someone is lingering too close or won't take a hint, trust your instincts and create distance.

IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE

- **Trust your instincts,** remove yourself from the situation. Your intuition is your greatest strength in keeping yourself safe.
- **Ask for help from staff/security.** Bar staff are there to keep you and others safe while drinking.
- **Get home safely.** Utilize rideshare services if it is not safe for you to drive yourself.
 - Make sure that you are using these services safely. Know where you are going and, if possible, let someone know the details of your trip.
 - Never just put someone who is incapacitated into a rideshare without making sure they are getting safely where they need to go.
 - It is also good practice to ask someone if there is someone you can call for them rather than just putting them in a strange car.

IF YOU THINK YOUR DRINK HAS BEEN SPIKED

- **Notify staff immediately.** They should be able to take action to keep you safe
- **Seek medical help as soon as possible.** These drugs typically leave the body quickly and if you want to collect evidence it must be done right away.



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SAYING NO

WAYS TO SAY NO GRACEFULLY

- I'm flattered that you asked me, but I am not interested
- No, thank you
- Hmm. . . That's not going to work
- This isn't something that is going to work for me
- It's really hard for me to say no to people, but I'm practicing being braver and more honest so I'm going to say no right now
- I'm sorry, I won't be able to, but thank you for thinking of me
- I've enjoyed talking to you, but this isn't the connection I'm looking for. I wish you all the best.
- I know it can be hard to put yourself out there, but unfortunately, I'm not interested. I appreciate you asking and being respectful, though.
- I'm not into that, but you go have fun.

WAYS TO SAY "NO FOR NOW."

- I'm not available for anything like that right now
- Not tonight
- Not today
- I don't have the internal resources to pull that off
- I need to build more trust before I'd be willing to consider that
- I'll pass this time, but let me know next time

SAYING NO TO A PERSISTANT PERSON

- I know you're disappointed, but my answer hasn't changed.
- Please respect my decision.
- Please don't ask me again.
- I've told you how I feel, and it appears that you don't respect it. Is there a reason why you're disrespecting me?



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HEARING NO

HOW TO HEAR NO GRACEFULLY

Rejection is never fun, but it is an inevitability when putting yourself out there. So how can you ensure that you are someone it is safe to say no to?

Some general things to keep in mind when potentially approaching someone at a bar are:

- Expect a no! Sure, sometimes people may also be out on the town looking for connections, but many already have their own plans and agendas, and probably aren't looking to shake that up.
- Don't take it too personally. Remember that a no isn't about the askers worth – it's about the boundaries and needs of the person being asked.
- Remember that a no is clarity, not conflict.

WAYS TO RESPOND IF SOMEONE SAYS NO

- Thank you for letting me know you aren't interested
- Oh, no worries, you just seemed cool so I figured I'd give it a shot! Have a good night.
- Thanks for letting me interrupt your night for a moment, I'll let you get back to it.

RESPONDING TO REJECTION

If you find yourself struggling after a rejection:

- Take a break! Step outside, go back to your friends, or even call it a night.
- Give yourself time to feel upset/embarrassed/etc – you're only human.
- Process bigger feelings with a friend
- Remember that everyone gets rejected, it's not a personal failing

3 THINGS TO SAY TO SOMEONE WHO DISCLOSES

If someone discloses to you that they have experienced sexual violence, say these three things:

1. **"I believe you"** so they know they are not doubted, their experience is valid, and they feel safe. It combats the guilt and shame that comes from a society that often blames and doubts victims of sexual violence.
2. Tell them **"It's not your fault"** to help them let go self-blame and remind them the responsibility is only on the perpetrator.
3. Ask **"How can I help"** to empower them, while maintaining their autonomy and reassuring them you will be there for them.



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UPCOMING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

CHANGE ON TAP

[Change on Tap](#) is a month-long awareness campaign happening this November! We're partnering with bars and restaurants across metro-Denver to educate the public about the relationship between alcohol and sexual violence, eliminates the stigma around alcohol-involved sexual assault, and empowers alcohol-serving establishments to strengthen their prevention and safety.

Find more information: <https://thebluebench.org/take-action/attend-an-event/event-calendar.html/event/2025/11/01/change-on-tap-awareness-campaign>

Check out participating locations: Hogshead pub and brewery, Fiction Beer Company, Fort Greene Bar, X bar, Ratio Beerworks, and Denver Pub Crawl.

DRAG BRUNCH FUNDRAISER

Join us for a fabulous **Drag Brunch Fundraiser** benefiting The Blue Bench prevention education programs and survivor support services, like therapy, case management, resource navigation, and crisis intervention.

When: Saturday, November 8th from 12:00 to 2:00 PM

Where: X Bar (629 East Colfax Avenue Denver, CO 80203)

What to expect: A variety of mimosa flavors provided by X Bar, performers from The Athena Project, and for VIP guests, a free pint glass, bottomless mimosas, and silent auction!

Get Tickets!: [Drag Queen Brunch Fundraiser for The Blue Bench! Tickets, Sat, Nov 8, 2025 at 12:00 PM | Eventbrite](#) or <https://tinyurl.com/bddvaf3r>

YES VIRTUAL TRAINING

If you would like to learn more about child sexual abuse prevention, consider attending our 2-hour [“Youth Empowerment and Safety”](#) workshop for parents on November 19.

In this workshop, we'll cover the scope and impact of child sexual abuse and grooming, common warning signs. Practical strategies include how to talk to both adults and youth about prevention, how to minimize opportunities for abuse through supervision and monitoring, and how to respond to suspicion, discovery, or disclosure of abuse.

Register: <https://tinyurl.com/nhhyu78n>

SURVEY

If you haven't already, please take a moment to complete our program survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TBBPresentationFeedback>