

The Scottish Intervention Initiative

Facilitator Handbook SESSION 6: Practical Intervention

Dr. Melanie McCarry

Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities
University of Strathclyde

With thanks to Rachel Fenton and Helen Mott for the development of the original
Intervention Initiative materials upon which this is based.

Good Facilitation & Discussion Tips for Facilitators- Recap

- Confidentiality
- Appropriate language
- Attendance
- Leaving the room

Disclosure

- Acknowledge
- Listen, Believe, Reassure
- Inform

Session 6 (6 of 8): Practical Intervention


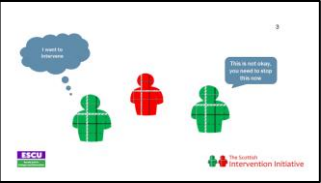
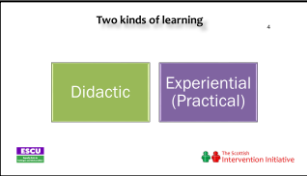
Objectives for this session:


- To develop familiarity with intervention strategies
- To feel safe and comfortable practising intervention behaviours
- To practise intervention behaviours (from scripts) in order to be able to intervene ‘in real life’


Session plan ONE HOUR to one and a half hours

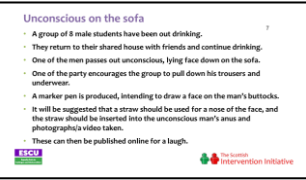
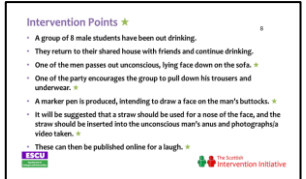
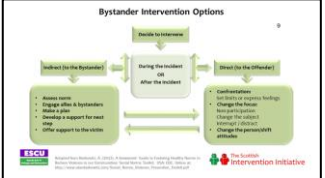
What you need to know as facilitator before the session begins	
Read the 'Good facilitation' resource:	
Read the "Successful Role Play" guide	
Bring icebreaker exercises	

Resources you need for this session	
PowerPoint slides	
Internet connection for web links	
White board / flipchart	
Pens	
Handout: <i>Unconscious on Sofa</i> scripted role-play. Multiple copies of the four versions.	
Handout: Intervention Strategies & Options	

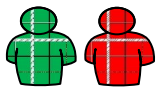
Focus/Activity	What to say	Facilitator – info only	Resources
Introduction	Over the course of the last five sessions together, there has hopefully been a lot of thinking and learning going on. We have learned a lot of facts about how to intervene. But mostly the learning has all been in our heads – it has been theoretical.		<p style="text-align: center;">Slide 1 & Slide 2</p> 
experiential vs didactic learning	<p>The aim of this programme is to give you the skills to move from here – [referring to the green person thinking about intervening]</p> <p>[Click to animate]</p> <p>To here – making a successful intervention.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Slide 3: “I want to intervene”(animated slide)</p> 
	<p>The final part of this programme focuses on building your skills for being active bystanders. You could learn about these skills by listening to a presentation, or reading lists of helpful words to use when you want to intervene – and I will be giving out handouts with suggestions for helpful words and phrases. But these are all examples of only one kind of learning – didactic learning. When we think about developing any kind of skills, we know that as well as didactic learning we need experiential learning. Which is learning by doing.</p> <p>We know that sometimes people say they wanted to intervene in a situation but were nervous and felt they didn’t know what to say or how to say it, so they kept quiet, and regretted it. This programme recognises that ‘knowing what to say’ in theory is only one step, and to develop confidence that it will be ok, people need to have the chance to practise saying the words out loud so that they come naturally.</p> <p>Learning specific communication skills is very similar to learning other kinds of skill. If you wanted to perform a song in a talent contest, you’d want to learn the song beforehand, not just by watching other people singing it but by practising, yourself.</p> <p>In these next three sessions we’ll be focusing on practising intervention skills. Today we’ll be working from some scripts that have already been written for us which give models for successful intervention.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Slide 4: two kinds of learning</p> 

Focus/Activity	What to say	Facilitator –info only	Resources
Confident communicators vs confidence gaps	<p>We'll be practising how the words flow and what it feels like to be in an active bystander situation. Just like preparing to sing a song to friends, you'll be learning & rehearsing skills so that when you find yourself in a situation that calls on you to act, you will be confident & familiar with what to say & how it feels to be an active bystander.</p> <p>You are all confident and skilled communicators already in your everyday lives. You all also have experience of negotiating, managing conflict, putting your point of view across. In these sessions we're going to use the research evidence to practice the most effective and safe ways to be active bystanders.</p>		No Slide
Acknowledging anxiety	<p>In further sessions, we'll be developing your skills to think on your feet and use your own words in interventions. But before we start on today's practice, it's really important to make sure everyone is relaxed and comfortable with doing some role-play.</p>	<p>Your skills as a facilitator are absolutely key here. Setting the scene for a 'safe space' for participants to practice and develop their communication skills relies on them feeling comfortable and that they can trust you to guide them. People can feel anxious, awkward or reluctant to take part in role play but with your help participants can overcome these worries and enjoy the practical process of learning intervention skills.</p>	<p>Slide 5: Stages</p> 
Creating a safe space for learning – acceptance of value of role-play	<p>Let's start by talking about role-play and how you feel about it. Does everyone understand from what I was saying earlier, why it's a really important part of this programme to rehearse and practise out loud strategies for intervening?</p> <p>[if yes] That's good, we're all agreed. Now let's look at what we need to do to make everyone feel comfortable and get the most out of the session.</p>	<p>Hopefully you will have agreement but if there are very resistant participants who say they don't "see the point" of role-play then make space for discussion here. You might want to ask how many in the room could put their hand on heart and say they are confident that they are ready, now, to intervene the next time they find themselves in a situation – use an example e.g. seeing a friend verbally abuse their partner; challenging a friend who's told them about plans to coerce someone into sex after a party. If there is someone who feels they are fully confident, welcome this & point out that others in the group are not at that stage yet, & would benefit greatly from observing their skills.</p>	

Focus/Activity	What to say	Facilitator	Resources
Addressing anxiety	<p>ASK THE GROUP :When I say “role-play” to you, how does it make you feel? [Expecting: anxious, worried, negative, embarrassed, fake, babyish – you can write suggestions on the board if time] You are not alone! Many people don’t like to feel they are being asked to perform in front of others and that’s perfectly normal.</p> <p>Remember that this is a skills training session. Some students & business people (medical/ dental students, management trainees) have to learn communication skills before they can qualify & get promotion. They do this using role-play because it’s a very effective way of learning. The difference is, at the end of their learning they are assessed or graded & will have to ‘pass’ an assessment in order to be promoted or appointed.</p> <p>In this programme, nobody will be judging or recording our role-play sessions. They are purely for your benefit. Everyone’s going to practise together & we know from feedback that it can feel like a weird thing to do at first, but in fact people really enjoy and benefit from this part of the programme.</p>		
Safe space – ground rules	<p>We’ve been starting all our sessions by remembering the ground rules for this programme. The most important ground rule for today is Confidentiality – this is a safe space and we keep everything we talk about here between ourselves. Also we use appropriate and respectful language between ourselves.</p>	Note the content warning here	<p>Slide 6: Our ground rules</p> 
	<p>Some of the role plays were written by students and the language is quite explicit – but don’t feel obliged to use words or phrases that you’re not comfortable with.</p> <p>Another useful rule for doing group work is to make sure the environment is a supportive one. If you are working on a role-play with others, make sure that any feedback that you give is positive & constructive.</p> <p>Today we’re going to be looking at a role-play script about sexual assault. Many of us have experienced sexual assault, abuse or rape & most of us will know someone close to us who has. We know that role-plays are a really powerful way of learning how to be a confident bystander but we don’t want anyone to feel that they have to take part in a role-play that could be upsetting. If you think you need to leave the session now or if you need to leave the session at any point later, please contact me/the course leader immediately afterwards to let us know how you are & give you support. Also remember that the handouts from session 2 have details about help and support</p>		

Focus/Activity	What to say	Facilitator –info only	Resources
<p>First scripted role-play – “unconscious on sofa”</p>	<p>So now we’re ready to look at a role-play script. I’m going to hand out a script that’s been written, based on a real event that happened among students in Italy. It ended in tragedy. There was a court case and all the perpetrators were convicted of sexual assault with prison sentences. The victim later committed suicide.</p> <p>What we are going to do here is take a look at the process of a bad event unfolding, and we’re going to look at different points at which some of the bystanders could have intervened, in different ways.</p> <p>ASK THE GROUP: Thinking about points of intervention that we looked at in the last session, if you were present here where are the key points that you could intervene? And what could you do?</p>		<p>Slide 7: Unconscious on the sofa [animated slide]</p> 
	<p>There are several intervention points, at the time of the event and also afterwards. Let’s remind ourselves of some of the techniques for intervention and think about what might work in a situation like this.</p> <p>Go through each intervention point and ask: (GO BACK TO SCRIPT) What would or what could you do here? What type of an intervention would it be?</p>	<p>You are consolidating their knowledge encouraging students to identify & use actual examples of interventions so they can become familiar with & adopt a range of options</p>	<p>Slide 8: unconscious on sofa (w intervention points)</p> 
<p>Reminder: bystander techniques</p>			<p>Slide 9 : bystander techniques</p> 

Focus/Activity	What to say	Facilitator –info only	Resources
Role-play	<p>We're going to divide into smaller groups and each group will read through the script that they have been given and it has been written with interventions</p> <p>The instructions are on the role play. Make sure you indicate the intervention points and the type of intervention first & then discuss in your group</p>	<p>Divide the room into small groups, give scripts to students so that each group has one of the 4 scripts. One student plays the role of bystander. Another student plays the main abuser. Tell them to read their script and practise the role play in small groups. As facilitator, you might want to take on a part in the first role play - after 5 minutes go around the room with each group doing their role play to the room – they will need to start by setting the scene, reading the text from the grey box.</p> <p>Ask the groups to swap role-play scripts with others until everyone has taken part in a role-play. If you have a booklet then all students will have all role plays and you will not need to pass them around.</p> <p>After that, give and encourage positive feedback, and ask for contributions from each group concerning the 'discussion points' on their scripts.</p>	Handouts: Unconscious on sofa scripted role-play (4 versions. You will need all 4 versions and several copies of each depending on the group size)
Other scripted role-plays		Make sure you leave time at the end for positive group feedback and planning for the next session	No slide
Debrief – discussion.	Well done everyone, you worked really well on these scenarios.	Use feedback to shape the next session – you can develop extra scripts or focus on specific scenarios based on the feedback from participants concerning the skills they would like to practise.	No slide
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you enjoy the experience? • What did you find difficult? • Did doing the role play help you to develop a deeper understanding of how to intervene? • Were there any particular points that you found especially difficult that you would like time to work on next time? 		No slide
	Next time we will go through some more role-plays based on common experiences in student life & we'll have the opportunity to develop intervention skills further.		No slide



Successful Role-Play for Bystander Intervention Learning

Planning for a small group learning environment that is “safe” and effective

Communication skill building requires risk taking on the part of the learner (e.g., trying out new behaviours in front of a group) so the development of a safe learning environment by the educator is critically important. The most important aim for the educator is to establish & maintain a learning environment in which:

- participation is valued
- feedback is justified and constructive
- the awkwardness of learning process is normalized
- the learning process does not highlight deficiencies or embarrass learners publicly.

These aspects of a constructive learning environment are often summarized as “safety.”

Setting up the role-play

Despite the value of using role-play in communication skills training, its use can be an unwelcome part of a session for many learners. They may have experienced poorly facilitated role-play in the past. Well-facilitated role-plays begin with a clear discussion of the ground rules. These include confidentiality in the group, that time-outs will be used to highlight points for discussion, & that the learner can call a time-out at any time to ask the group or facilitator for guidance.

It is important to open with a discussion of how role-play can be a useful teaching tool and, yet, is often challenging for learners. Asking “What are your worries about role-play?” and acknowledging that role-play can feel contrived and anxiety provoking at times can help learners more readily engage.

Moving from scripts to improvised role-play

Role-plays can be constructed in several ways, all of which have different strengths that can influence the safety & efficacy of the group. Group size is a practical consideration. For a group of 4–8 learners, using a single role-play with a facilitator who solicits feedback & input from the group can be very successful because most or all of the learners can take an active role at some point, while not feeling pressured to speak when they have little to say.

In twos or threes, small groups can take it in turn to be ‘actors’ and observers in a role-play, with observers noting techniques used in the role-play such as:

- use of body language
- distraction
- humour
- “I” statements
- encouraging empathy
- using caring and friendship as a framework
- using social norms

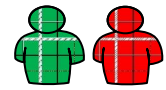
To break the ice at the beginning of a session and to increase confidence about the skills that participants have, you may want to ask participants to do a ‘bad role-play’ followed by a ‘good role-play’. A ‘bad role-play’ could include:

- being hostile or aggressive towards the target person
- not listening to what the other person is saying – not giving them room in the conversation
- using humour inappropriately

Encourage participants to use examples from their own experience of situations where they would like to develop intervention skills.

Don’t forget to explore the use of interventions that might include taking a decision to tackle a problem after the event, or to seek immediate external help if there is a situation where there is immediate risk to their own safety or someone else’s safety.

[Ref: Jackson, V. A. & Back, A. L. (2011). Teaching Communication Skills Using Role-Play: An Experience-Based Guide for Educators. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 14(6), 775-780.]



Session 6 - Scripted Role Plays

Scripted Role Play 1: Unconscious on Sofa – Part 1

Two people, each to read a part. **A = abuser B = bystander**. First, read the description of the situation.

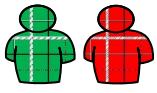
A group of 8 male students have been out drinking. They return to their shared house with friends and continue drinking. One of the men passes out unconscious, lying face down on the sofa.

- A: He's out, brilliant! Let's have some fun! We know the rule: the first one to fall asleep gets punished...
- B: What did you have in mind?
- A: Get his trousers off!
- B: That's going a bit far, he's in a bad way. Let's just leave him there.
- A: No let's get his trousers off. He'll find it funny in the morning when his arse is all over Facebook.
- B: No, you're crossing a line. We're his mates. I'd be really ****ed off if that was me. Let's dump him upstairs.

Discussion points:

When scripting this role-play our students were quite positive that somebody would definitely be determined to 'do something' to the unconscious man. They proposed a bystander could minimise the harm by suggesting a less intrusive 'punishment'. Is any kind of 'punishment' wrong? Would any kind of 'punishment' be an assault? Is this behaviour an example of 'lad culture'? Are the others in the group more likely to go along with the suggestion of 'dumping him upstairs' than 'helping him into bed and making sure he's ok'?

If you want to, have a go at thinking about other ways of managing the situation or other things the bystander could say at this point.



Scripted Role Play 2: Unconscious on Sofa – Part 2

Two people, each to read a part. **A = abuser B = bystander**. First, read the description of the situation.

A group of 8 male students have been out drinking. They return to their shared house with friends and continue drinking. One of the men passes out unconscious, lying face down on the sofa. One of the party encourages the group to pull down his trousers and underwear.

A: Brilliant, he's pulling a moonie and he doesn't even know it. Classic.

B: Yeh, hilarious. You had your fun, time to call it a night. End of. [folds arms, shakes head] Let's get him upstairs.

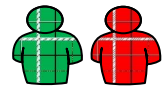
A: Well it's his fault for letting himself get so legless.

B: Whatever, let's get him upstairs.

Discussion points:

In this script the Bystander has chosen not to argue with the Abuser – he has prioritised getting his friend out of the situation.

If you want to, have a go at thinking about other ways of managing the situation or other things the bystander could say at this point. For example – does the Bystander agree with the Abuser that what happened to the victim really “his fault”? Where does blame lie? Is it possible to have a persuasive conversation with someone who has been drinking heavily? What kind of interventions could happen ‘after the event’?



Scripted Role Play 3: Unconscious on Sofa – Part 3

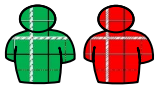
Two people, each to read a **part. A = abuser B = bystander**. First, read the description of the situation.

A group of 8 male students have been out drinking. They return to their shared house with friends and continue drinking. One of the men passes out unconscious, lying face down on the sofa. One of the party encourages the group to pull down his trousers and underwear. A marker pen is produced, intending to draw a face on the man's buttocks.

- A: This is really funny, man, let's give him a nice smiley face.
- B: [moves over to the unconscious lad, covers him up] No. Leave it. Seriously, we're not doing a good job of being mates here, we're supposed to be his mates. This isn't cool.
- A: Well you don't have to join in, mate, you can get on your high horse but we are having a laugh here. Why don't you go and do something else.
- B. I'm staying here. If you're looking for something to do, how about order us some pizza. It's time to get the poor guy upstairs – I'll do it. Order me a pizza, mate? I'll be back in a couple of minutes.

Discussion points:

When scripting this role-play our students were quite positive that somebody would definitely be determined to 'do something' to the unconscious man. They proposed a bystander could minimise the harm by suggesting a less intrusive 'punishment' such as using the pen to draw on the victim's face. Is any kind of 'punishment' wrong? Would any kind of 'punishment' be an assault? Is this behaviour an example of 'lad culture'? If having a laugh is important for lad culture, is being a good mate important too? If you want to, have a go at thinking about other ways of managing the situation or other things the bystander could say at this point.



Scripted Role Play 4: Unconscious on Sofa – Part 4

Two people, each to read a **part**. **A = abuser B = bystander**. First, read the description of the situation.

A group of 8 male students have been out drinking. They return to their shared house with friends and continue drinking. One of the men passes out unconscious, lying face down on the sofa. One of the party encourages the group to pull down his trousers and underwear. A marker pen is produced, and a face is drawn on the man's buttocks. A straw is fetched, to be inserted into the unconscious man's anus and it is suggested that photos/video be taken.

- A: I love it! This is what his Facebook page has been calling out for. Are you getting this? Let's get him to smile for the camera.
- B: [moves over to the unconscious lad, takes away the straw, covers him up] This is getting weird now. It's beyond a joke. This could be really serious, it could be a serious offence and we could get into really deep shit for it with the police and we might get kicked out of Uni. It's just not cool, let's just leave it now.
- A: Let's get some footage first.
- B. What part of 'no' don't understand? If you don't put your phone down I'm going to take it off you. I'm taking him upstairs, who is gonna help me?

Discussion points:

If you want to, have a go at thinking about other ways of managing the situation or other things the bystander could say at this point. What kind of interventions could happen 'after the event'?