

BE AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

Introductions – Sport Welfare Officers

Stuart Butler
stuart.butler@kent.gov.uk



Jimmy McCormack
jimmy.mccormack@kent.gov.uk



About the Sport Welfare Officer Network

Professional network of 63 dedicated officers throughout England, main focus is to **support Club Welfare Officers**

Set up in response to the Whyte review

Funded by **Sport England** through an investment of **National Lottery money**.



Support provided by the network

- The role of the SWO is to:-
 - ✓ Provide additional, local support for club welfare officers
 - ✓ Signpost clubs to the right advice and guidance
 - ✓ Work with club welfare officers to create a safer culture within their organisation
 - ✓ Facilitate local training opportunities and events
 - ✓ Create networks so that volunteers and staff feel better connected and informed
 - ✓ Recognise, share and develop best practice
 - ✓ Help raise awareness of safeguarding and welfare for young people and adults at local events
- It is **not** the Sport Welfare Officer's role to;
 - ✓ Advise on or manage concerns – all concerns must be referred without delay in accordance with National Governing Body / Club Safeguarding Policy.





Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop

 **Mon 20 Oct 2025**
18:30 - 21:30

 **White Oak Leisure Centre, Swanley**

 **£35 per attendee**

Adult Safeguarding in Bowls and Officer Training Day

Saturday 14 Sept
10:00 - 17:00

Angel Indoor Bowls Centre, TN9 1QH

www.activekent.org/workshops





What's Happening

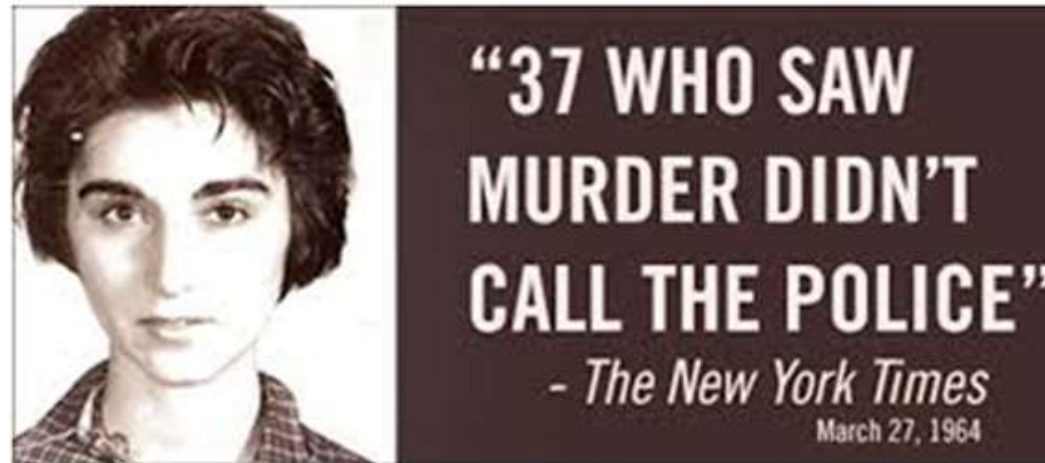
The behaviour we walk past is the behaviour we accept



The Bystander Effect

1960s – The Bystander Effect

The tragic murder of Kitty Genovese in 1964 led to research on the bystander effect by social psychologists Bibb Latané and John Darley. This research laid the foundation for understanding bystander behaviour.





The Bystander Effect - Inhibitors

- Apathy
- Tools
- Ambiguity
- Physical fear



What is an active bystander?

- Recognising that someone is being targeted
- Taking action
- Being an ally
- Getting others involved
- Reporting
- Supporting



Why bystanders don't intervene

- It may escalate the threat
- Scared
- Intimidated
- Is it wrong?
- Embarrassed
- Someone else will deal with it
- Don't know what to do
- Impact relationships
- 'It happens all the time'
- 'It's not that serious'
- Learned helplessness
- 'It's not my problem'
- How I identify and relate to the person being targeted

Issues we want to address

- Discrimination
- Parent/spectator behaviour – including coaching from sidelines
- Participant behaviour
- Abuse to officials and staff
- Covert photography and sharing online
- Cultural differences regarding support/encouragement/pressure
- Low level concerns
- Knowledge and confidence to take action



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usnQMJdFzH0>

Bystander Toolkit-The 5 D's



5 D's



• **BE DIRECT** Say something in the moment, such as telling someone to stop their harmful behaviour or that their inappropriate joke is not funny, or asking someone being harmed if they want to leave.



• **DISTRACT** Create a diversion, like asking participants what time it is, changing the subject, or asking one of them to help you with a task.



• **DELEGATE** Get someone else to address the concern, such as a parent, teacher, or coach, or ask a friend or party host if they can intervene.



• **DELAY** Buy time until it is safer to intervene or wait until you can have a private conversation with the individual acting inappropriately about your concerns.



• **DOCUMENT** Record the date, time, location, information about people involved, and a summary of what happened; give the information to someone with more power to act.



Thoughts ?
What would
you do ?

Remember...

- Only take action if it feels safe
- Consider your options for getting away after the intervention
- Try to remain calm – breathe
- Think about the options you have
- It's as easy as...
 - A
 - B
 - C



Think...

Before stepping in:

- **Assess for safety**
 - Remember your safety is a priority
 - Never put yourself at risk
- **Be in a group**
 - If this is not an option, report it to others who can act
- **Care for the victim**
 - Ask them if they are ok

Align with the 5 Ds



Scenarios

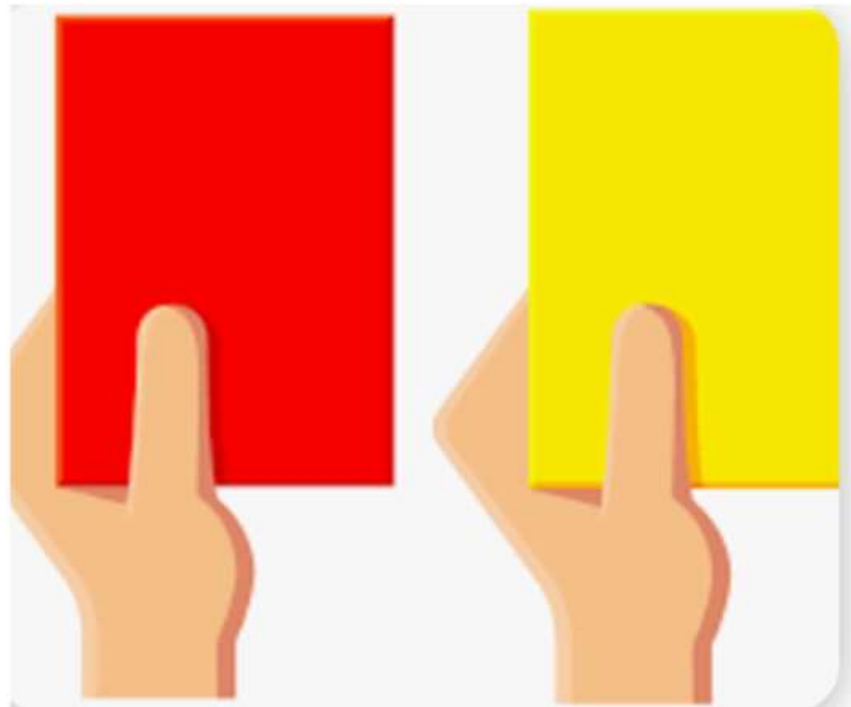
How worried are you

Would you intervene

Use the 5 D's

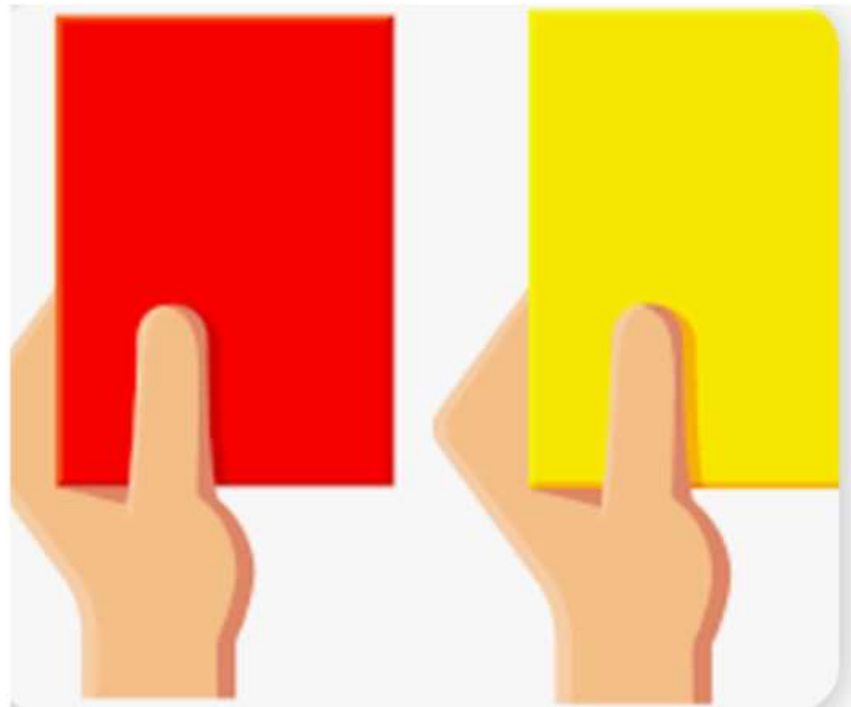
Scenario 1

- You overhear a coach telling a youth player they are fat and need to lose weight



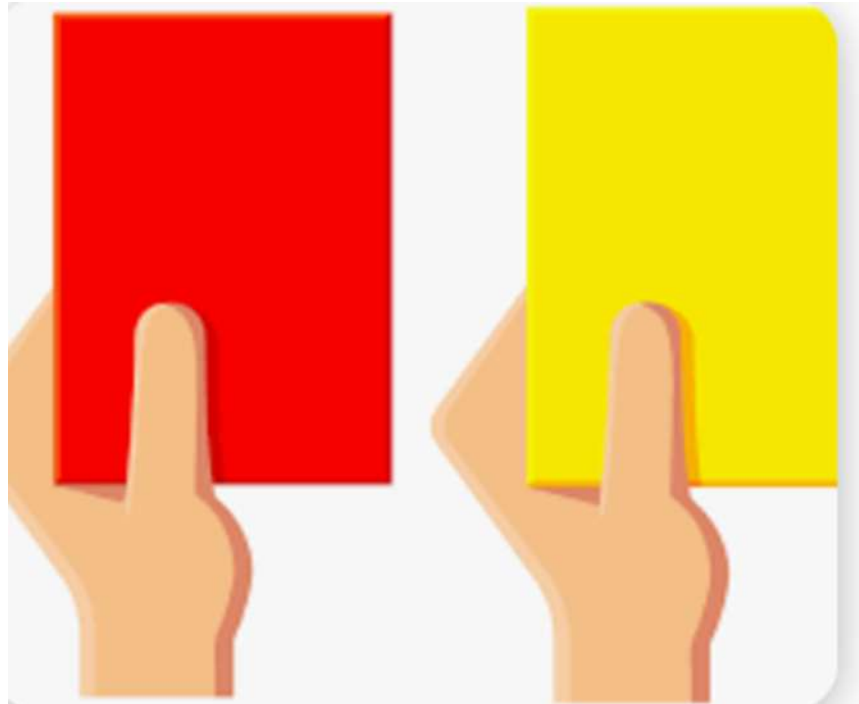
Scenario 2

You are watching a youth football match when one of the managers enters the field of play and starts abusing the referee. The referee is wearing an armband to show they are under 18 years of age.



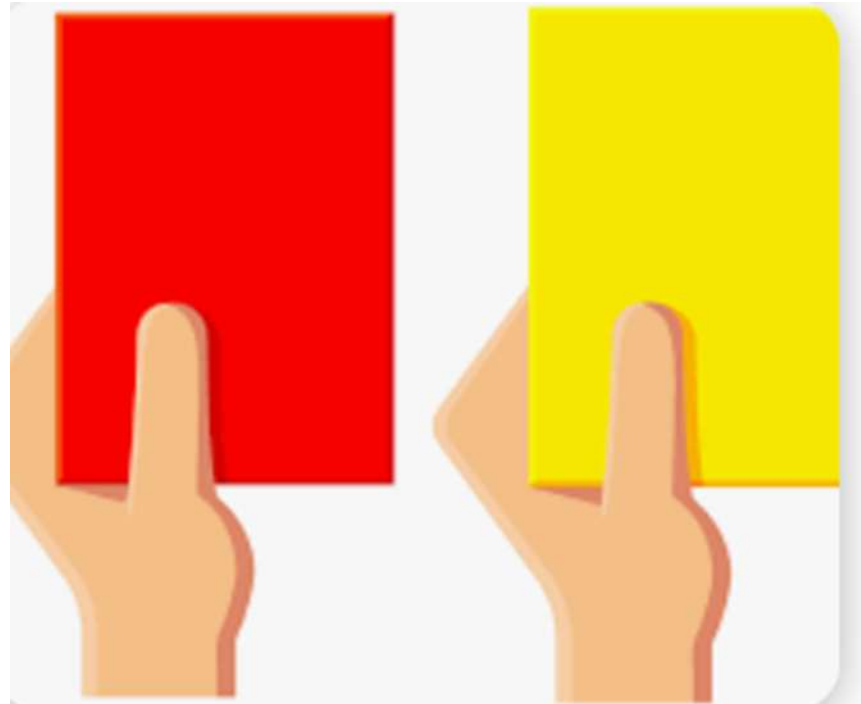
Scenario 3

You notice one of your team members taking photographs of other members under the cubicle doors with their phone.



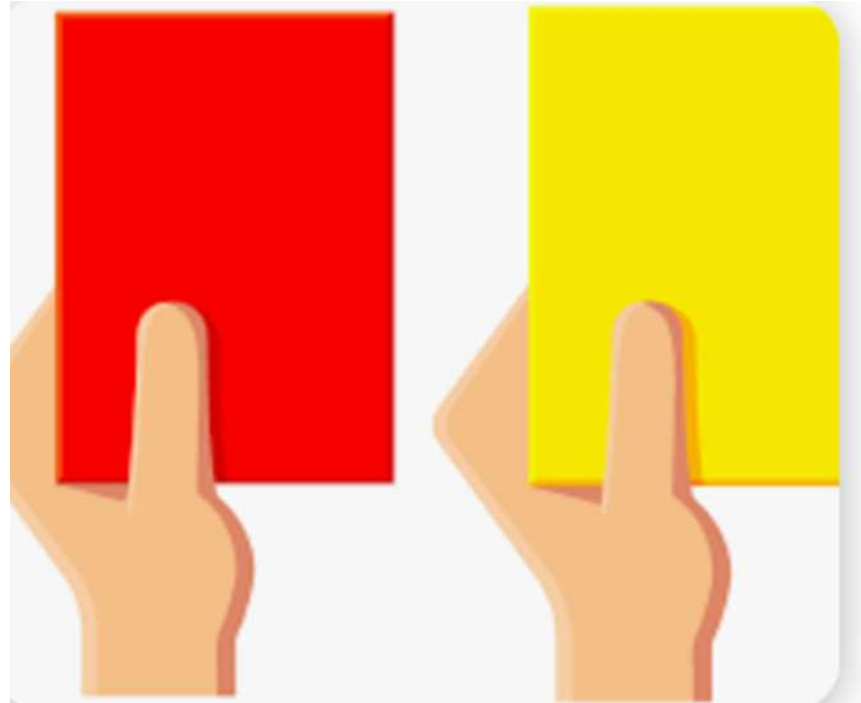
Scenario 4

Your team decides to introduce “hazing” ceremonies for all new players. One player refuses to take part and is verbally abused by the team captain. You witness this occurring.



Scenario 5

You are coaching a session with a group of school students at a public access venue. Whilst you are setting up a station a member of the public who is using the venue starts talking to the group and “coaching” them. He claims to be a qualified coach and is helping them as what they are currently doing is wrong



Ideas and Suggestions to Consider

- Code of conduct – simple, accessible and co-produced with parents with section written by children on what they want from their parents
- Respect barrier at least 2 meters away from pitch as distance can be calming, if lively spectators – make it 3m
- Abusive behaviour from spectators is a safeguarding issue – report to club safeguarding officer
- Zero tolerance approach and what this means in practice
- Survey children about their experiences of spectators – share data with whole club
- Awareness sessions – what our code of conduct means in practice
- Volunteer Respect Marshals – parents/family members take on marshal role at games/matches/events wearing bib so others know their role
- Active bystander awareness – 30 minute session on what options we have as a bystander – 5Ds
- Carding parents – using yellow/red cards for behaviour which breaches club code of conduct
- Silent support – gentle clapping only allowed at matches/games/events

Final messages...

- Sport and activity should be fun and inclusive
- You are able to bring about change
- Use the 5 Ds
- Focus on the positive
- Culture is everything
- Work together and share good practice
- There is more good in the world than bad
- Be curious not judgemental

Active Kent & Medway Conference
2025 - Feedback Form

