2. Choosing to help

**Group size**



Small groups



**Suggested timing**

25 minutes

**Method**



Discussion and group work

**What you need**

****

Large paper, sticky notes and pens

Learning objectives

* Identify factors that motivate people to help others
* Explain why people might not feel able to help
* Explain how to overcome barriers to helping others

## Overview

Many factors might stop someone from helping a person who needs first aid. They might feel they lack skills and knowledge to help or they might not feel confident or able to intervene. Explore how to overcome any barriers to helping others.

## Preparation

Share the phrase in bold below, either by writing on the board or reading it out. Hand out large paper, pens and sticky notes, enough for small group work.

Familiarise learners with the ground rules for the session or establish ground rules. Assure learners are given opportunities to ask questions and have a way to ask anonymous questions if they wish to. For guidance on how to do these things, see the [Creating a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment guidance.](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/guidance-and-support/)

## Delivering the activity

1. Share and discuss the phrase – **‘The more people who are around when an emergency happens, the less likely an individual is to act.’**

This is something learners will have explored in the [Exploring bystanders](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/helping-others/exploring-bystanders/) activity. Ask them if they remember why this is? *This is a feature of the ‘bystander effect’ – psychologists believe this is influenced by two key factors:*

* *Diffusion of responsibility – people think someone else will help.*
* *The need to behave in a socially acceptable way – people don’t want to behave differently to the rest of the group.*

1. In small groups ask learners to take a large sheet or paper and draw a wall of bricks using a marker pen. Inside each brick ask the groups to write down reasons why someone might not feel able to help. Encourage them to think about what someone who is hesitating to help might be thinking or feeling.
2. Once the groups have completed the wall of bricks, explain that they are going to use sticky notes as the ‘hammers’ that break down the wall. Hand out sticky notes to each group.
3. Ask the groups to discuss and write down how someone could overcome not feeling able to help by writing a solution on a sticky note and placing it over the corresponding brick. *You can use the example table of bricks and solutions below to support learners.*

**Bricks and solutions example table**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bricks** | **Solution** |
| They might do something wrong | In most cases it is unlikely that someone could make the situation worse. |
| It could be dangerous or a set up | We shouldn’t compromise our own safety, but we can still help from a distance. If nothing else, we can call 999 and get emergency help on its way. |
| They might get sued | When someone is acting in good faith to help save someone's life or prevent further injury there is very little risk of them being sued. |
| Someone else or someone who is more qualified will help | What if there is no one else more qualified? What if everyone is thinking the same thing? Anyone can help. |
| They’re on their own and it’s getting dark | They can call 999; that is still helping them. They could also ask other bystanders to come with them to help if it is safe to do so. |
| They don’t know what to do | Calling 999 means that the call handler will advise them of what they need to do.  They can ask the person how they can help. First aid is simple most of the time. Emotionally supporting someone is also first aid, and often helps a lot. |
| They can’t stand the sight of blood | They can tell the injured person how to help themselves without having to look/touch them and call 999. |
| The person who needs help might just be drunk | The person might be drunk, but they might still need someone to help them.  They might also have a medical condition that makes them appear drunk. |
| They’re too busy / in a hurry | Even if they just stop for a moment to see how someone is or call 999 it can make all the difference. They could also ask others to help if they really can’t stop. |

1. Ask the groups to share and discuss their ideas for overcoming barriers to helping. You could use the suggested prompt questions below:

* Do the groups see any themes emerging from their discussions?
* What might the consequences be if someone experiencing a first aid emergency doesn’t get help?
* What might motivate someone to choose to help?

## Summing up

Discuss the importance of helping others, even a small act of helping can make a huge difference. Now consider what qualities people who help have and what helping qualities the young people have by delivering the Helping qualities – practise activity on the [Choosing to help web page](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/helping-others/choosing-to-help/).