Risk reduction methods seek to interrupt or stop an assault in progress and - despite the fact that most sexual assault survivors know their assailant - focus on strategies to use during a stranger assault.

The Aurora Center focuses on primary prevention methods, which emphasize preventing assaults in the first place.

Risk reduction often results in survivors being questioned about what they were wearing, saying or doing when sexual violence occurred. No one asks or deserves to be victimized by sexual violence, and this line of questioning puts the responsibility on the victim of a crime rather than the perpetrator.

**HOW DO I PREVENT VIOLENCE?**

**Be a good bystander.** If you recognize that there is an emergency or non-emergency situation happening, use the “3 Ds” to determine how to act.

**DO:**
- Ensure your safety
- Try to dissipate emotion
- Consider the other person’s perspective

**DON’T:**
- Get caught up in the moment
- “One-up” the person
- Patronize

**Get consent in sexual relationships.** Alcohol and other drugs are connected with sexual violence. It’s unhealthy and harmful to use alcohol as a way to “get sex.” If someone is physically or mentally incapacitated or impaired (due to alcohol or drugs or because they were asleep or unconscious) there is no consent. If physical force, manipulation, intimidation and/or threats are used, there is no consent.
If You’ve Experienced Sexual Violence

If you’re in immediate danger, call 911.

If you’ve been sexually assaulted, go someplace safe. Tell someone who will support you.

If you’re experiencing abuse or are in an unhealthy relationship, create a safety plan. A safety plan helps you plan the best way to react when you’re in danger.

If you’re experiencing any unwanted/unwelcome actions that feel threatening or cause fear, go someplace safe. Document incidents and/or send a “Do not contact ” email or letter (if it’s safe to do so).

The Aurora Center can assist you with options about how to act in different scenarios. We will listen and can help walk you through different options.

Online Safety

Tell your partner to respect your relationship boundaries. You have the right to be alone, turn off your phone and spend time with others without your partner getting angry.

Review & enable your privacy and security settings. Social networks allow the user to control how their information is shared and who has access to it.

Ask your friends if it’s ok for you to check them in on Facebook or foursquare. You never know if someone is trying to keep their location secret. Letting an abusive partner know where someone is could be dangerous.

Use a safe computer. If other people can access your computer, your browsing history may not be safe, and abusers sometimes monitor computer use.

Sources: acha.org/sexualviolence/, loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/digital-abuse; wgac.colostate.edu/primary-prevention-vs-risk-reduction; stepup.umn.edu; rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-prevention/safe-computers; nnedv.org/pages/3868-facebook-privacy-safety.html and support.twitter.com/groups/57;University of Minnesota Sexual Assault/Relationship Violence Policy (Academic/Administrative Policy 2.3.6)