

Scenario 1.

You are watching a very close grassroots game on a Sunday.

Among the spectators is a person you have got to know over the past couple of years and who you have become friendly with.

They have always been passionate, but today they are more animated than you have seen them before. They are pacing the sideline openly passing comment on the game, yelling constant instructions to players, and aggressively questioning and criticising decisions made by the players and the referee.

You have not heard any abusive or discriminatory language, but your friend's behaviour is negatively impacting the enjoyment of those watching and those involved in the game itself.



Scenario 1. Facilitator notes – good practice examples

Prompt questions

Tackle.

- It is appropriate to say something - even if the behaviour isn't abusive or illegal, it's still harmful.
- Choose a moment to speak privately and calmly with the person focussing on de-escalation. E.g.
 - **"Are you okay? You don't seem yourself today?"**
 - **"I know you care about the team, but I think the shouting is putting a lot of pressure on the players and ref."**
 - **"the atmosphere feels a bit intense – I feel like everyone would enjoy it more if there was less shouting"**
- You might not feel it appropriate to confront somebody in the moment perhaps a word at half-time or after the game is more effective using calm, **"I feel"** statements: **"I feel like it's getting too much and I'm not sure others are enjoying it."**

What would you say to open a conversation?

What might be stopping other people from saying something in this situation?

Would it be different if you didn't know the person?

Would it be different if they did use abusive or discriminatory language? If "yes" how would you act?

Assist.

- Check in with others who may be affected (e.g., parents, players, officials or spectators)
- Signal support with comments like, **"you're doing great"** to a player or to an official
- If someone expresses discomfort, take it seriously and explore how they'd like to address it
- Reassure others that it's okay to ask someone to tone it down – football is for everyone to enjoy

Have you seen or experienced similar behaviour before? What happened, and what did you learn from it?

Pass.

- If behaviour continues or escalates, report it to a match official, welfare/safeguarding officer, steward / marshal, club official or county FA
- Are there others around who are better placed to have a chat with the person (e.g. a closer friend, a partner etc)
- If it becomes a regular issue at matches, raise it through the club's welfare/safeguarding officer