# Green Dot Overview

Green Dot is a program focused on bystander intervention. It is a research based program that is informed by a variety of disciplines, including research and theories “across the domains of sexual violence, psychology, diffusion of innovation/social diffusion, bystander dynamics, adult learning/learning transfer, and communications.”1 The program has been evaluated in studies, and has been proven to be effective in a variety of settings, including universities. A study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that student interpersonal violence victimization rates were 17% lower at a university implementing the Green Dot program compared to universities with no bystander intervention program.2

Green Dot uses a metaphor of Green and Red Dots. Red Dots represent an act of power-based personal violence, including forms of sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, and stalking. Green Dots represent an action or choice that helps to promote safety and communicate that violence is not tolerated in our community. This can include someone stepping in to help someone, creating a distraction to diffuse an unsafe situation, or telling someone else about the situation so they can take the appropriate actions.

These dots do not represent people, instead they represent specific behaviors or actions. Green Dot’s goal is to help empower people to consider what their Green Dots are; how can they incorporate actions and behaviors into their daily lives that help to protect others and create a culture of safety and respect. By providing people with the needed skills and tools, Green Dots can outnumber the Red Dots on our campus. Green Dot is built on the belief that individual safety is a community responsibility, thus focusing on building up a community of people who are change agents.

Green Dot provides people with tools and skills to help be an upstander. There are two main categories of these tools: Reactive Green Dots and Proactive Green Dots. Reactive Green Dots are choices and actions where people get involved when they see potentially harmful situations. The skills taught regarding Reactive Green Dots can all be condensed into the three D’s: Direct, Delegate, and Distract. Proactive Green Dots are choices and actions that shift the culture and norms in our communities in order to create a safer community for everyone. Green Dot equips participants to reinforce two norms in our community, that violence and harassment will not be tolerated and that every community member must do their part to create a community of safety and respect. As Green Dot’s slogan says, “No one has to everything, but everyone has to do something.”

Information in the overview section was compiled from:

Edwards, Dorothy J. (2017) *An Overview of the Green Dot Curriculum.* Alteristic.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is Green Dot?

Green Dot is a program focused on bystander intervention. It is a research based program that is informed by a variety of disciplines, including research and theories “across the domains of sexual violence, psychology, diffusion of innovation/social diffusion, bystander dynamics, adult learning/learning transfer, and communications.”1 It uses a metaphor of Green Dots (an action or choice that promotes safety and an intolerance for violence) and Red Dots (an act of power-based personal violence), with the ultimate goal being that Green Dots will outnumber Red Dots on our campus, which will help keep everyone who live, works, and learns at our university safe.1

## What are Red Dots?

Red Dots represent an act of power-based personal violence, including forms of sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, and stalking. When someone performs a sex act with the other person’s consent, someone shows up unwanted outside someone’s work or class, and someone hits or verbally degrades their partner is just a few examples. It doesn’t represent a person, but a single act of interpersonal violence.1

## What are Green Dots?

Green Dots represent an action or choice that helps to promote safety and communicate that violence is not tolerated in our community. This can include someone stepping in to help someone, create a distraction to diffuse an unsafe situation, or telling someone else about the situation so they can take the appropriate actions. Green Dots do not represent people, but actions people take in their daily lives to make their community safer.1

## What are Reactive Green Dots?

Reactive Green Dots are choices and actions where people get involved when they see potentially harmful situations. The Green Dot program provides a variety of tools and skills to get involved and help someone in a situation that could become an act of interpersonal violence. Those skills can all be condensed into the three D’s: Direct, Delegate, and Distract.1

## What are Proactive Green Dots?

Proactive Green Dots are choices and actions that shift the culture and norms in our communities in order to create a safer community for everyone. The program equips participants to reinforce two norms in our community, that violence and harassment will not be tolerated and that every community member must do their part to create a community of safety and respect.1

## What are some examples of Green Dots?\

There are many ways you can incorporate Green Dots into your daily lives. Some examples of Green Dots are asking someone if they’re okay, stepping in if you see an unsafe situation, causing a distraction like spilling a drink or saying you lost your keys to diffuse a situation, or asking someone else to help such as an RA or supervisor, and many other ways you can live the Green Dot.

## List of Green Dot Examples

* Attending a Green Dot training and other Green Dot events!
* Encouraging friends, classmates, or members of a student organization you are a part of to attend a Green Dot training
* Asking someone if they are okay if you think they may need help
* Making plans with your friends to help keep each other safe when you are going to an event or party
* Asking someone if they want to go with you to use the restroom, get drinks or food, take a picture, go home, etc. to help them get away from a potentially harmful situation
* Making sure a friend who is intoxicated gets home safe
* Spilling your drink, saying you lost your keys, or otherwise distracting to diffuse the situation
* Finding an RA, professor, staff member, coach, or friend to help you access the situation and take appropriate action
* Learning about important resources on campus and in the community, and helping someone connect with those resources if they need help
* Following the UNI Office of Compliance and Equity Management social media accounts, and sharing posts so your friends can learn about Green Dot too
* Putting a sticker on your water bottle or laptop to show others you support the program and as a conversation starter
* Speaking up if you hear victim-blaming statements, degrading or offensive language, or an inappropriate joke
* Talking to your friends about bystander intervention and why it’s important to you
* Attending awareness or educational events to learn more about this important issue

## How did Green Dot get here?

Green Dot has been a student-led initiative from the beginning. Students have demonstrated for many years how deeply they care about this issue by leading initiatives like poster campaigns, building partnerships with College Hill, creating a Director of Gender Violence director position within Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG), and more. As a call to more action, students specifically requested Green Dot. Green Dot was selected and funded by NISG in their 2020-2021 session, with former NISG president Elle Boeding being instrumental in the process. NISG provided money for a graduate assistant position and program costs. NISG designated the Office of Compliance and Equity Management (OCEM) to house, coordinate, and oversee the program. OCEM and NISG continue to work closely with one another as we began to implement this program at our campus, along with a wide variety of other partnerships across campus.

## Why was Green Dot selected?

There were many reasons Green Dot was selected. One reason is the program was originally designed specifically for college campuses. Green Dot is now used by colleges all over the world, including three of our peer institutions, Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville, Marshall University, and James Madison University, and Iowa State University. Another reason is Green Dot is informed by research from a variety of disciplines including information from the fields of psychology and communications, and research on bystander dynamics, sexual violence, adult learning, learning transfer, and social diffusion. Lastly, Green Dot is focused on creating long term change. One way the program does this is by utilizing staff and faculty as facilitators instead of students, which allows for less turnover and more stable growth and development. Additionally, Green Dot will focus on proactive actions and behaviors that everyone on our campus can take to create a culture of safety and respect, protecting current and future staff, faculty, and students at our university. Students will learn skills at Green Dot trainings that they can use while they are here and take with them into their communities after they graduate. These are only a few reasons Green Dot was selected.

## Is Green Dot effective?

Yes! The Green Dot program has been studied for efficiency in multiple settings, including college campuses. A study published in the American Journal of Preventative Medicine found that student interpersonal violence victimization rates were 17% lower at a university implementing the Green Dot program compared to universities with no bystander intervention program.2

## Why do we need Green Dot?

According to research conducted by the US Bureau of Justice Statistics, gender violence impacts as many as 1 in 5 women, 1 in 14 men, and 1 in 4 transgender students on college campuses each year.3 This makes it likely that each of us know someone affected by this issue. We must be working continually to ensure that our campus is a safe place for all students, faculty, and staff to learn and grow. The Green Dot program is critical in creating a campus community of safety and respect.

## Who can participate in Green Dot?

Everyone at UNI has a part to play in the Green Dot program. This program is designed to include everyone on campus, staff, faculty, and students. All of us contribute to creating a culture of respect and safety at UNI, and we can all do our part to learn how to incorporate Green Dots into our daily actions. As Green Dot’s slogan says: “No one has to do everything, but everyone has to do something.”

## What can I do to help Green Dot succeed?

You can help this program be successful in a variety of ways. After learning about the program, you can help support it by talking to others about the program with enthusiasm and explain the benefits this program will have for our UNI community. Additionally, you can support this program by attending any open meetings or sessions regarding this program, as an opportunity to learn more. Lastly, some staff and faculty have gone through training to become a facilitator, and this is a critically important part of Green Dot. By supporting these facilitators, you can help them to become better facilitators and conduct quality trainings.

## Why should I participate? Why should I care about Green Dot?

Green Dot is not for the benefit of any one person, but is for the benefit of our entire community. By creating a culture of respect and safety, everyone who works, lives, and learns at UNI can have a positive experience. When we have a safe and respectful community, everyone can succeed, learn, and grow. Panthers care about one another, and by participating in this program you can help to keep your fellow Panthers safe.

## Who do I contact regarding Green Dot?

The UNI Office of Compliance and Equity Management (OCEM) will coordinate and oversee the implementation of Green Dot in partnership with Northern Iowa Student Government and other staff, faculty, and administration on campus. If you have questions, you may reach out to the OCEM office or contact Isabella Perksen, a graduate assistant at OCEM focusing on Green Dot at bellaped@uni.edu.

# References and Additional Resources

References:

1) Edwards, Dorothy J. (2017) An Overview of the Green Dot Curriculum. Alteristic.

2) Coker, A.L., Bush, H.M., Fisher, B.S., Swan, S.C., Williams, C.M., Clear, E.R., DeGue, S. (2015) Multi-College Bystander Intervention Evaluation for Violence Prevention. American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 50(2), 295-302.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2015.08.034>

3) Krebs, C., Lindquist, C., Berzofsky, M., Shook-Sa, B., Peterson, K., Planty, M., Langton, L., Stoop, J. (2016). Campus climate survey validation study. Final technical report. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U. S. Department of Justice.

Additional Resources:

[Green Dot Website](https://alteristic.org/services/green-dot/)

[Green Dot for College Webpage](https://alteristic.org/services/green-dot/green-dot-colleges/)

[UNI Office of Compliance and Equity Management Website](https://equity.uni.edu/)