

What is sexual harassment?

Activity sheet

Look at these situations:

Situation 1:

There is a group of boys in the school yard. They gather near the entrance to the girls' toilets. They pick on some girls, but not others. Some girls tell them to get lost; some just laugh at it; some ignore it; some are really upset and affected by it.

There is one girl they always harass, and try to flick her school uniform up as she goes past. They also make sexual comments and remarks to her. They always make sure that there are no teachers around when they do this.

They have told other students that there's no harm in it – it's just a bit of fun.

Situation 2:

There is a boy who is very friendly with a group of girls. He doesn't mix with the sporty males. They call him names and pick on him whenever they can, especially in front of the girls.

He starts to avoid places where these boys hang out, so starts to spend more time alone, and away from a lot of the school facilities. Some of the girls stick up for him, but most just walk away when he is being harassed by the gang of boys.

Choose one of the cases above. Think about why the harassers are doing the action, how the harassed kids feel, what other possible actions could be taken, what the implications are for those involved and for the whole school.

Summarise your ideas on each of the questions in the spaces below. Comment on it from each of the following points of view:

The student being harassed	
One of the harassers	
A friend of the student being harassed	
A friend of the harasser	
A bystander	

A teacher on yard duty	
The parent of the student being harassed	
The parent of the student harassing others	

Discuss your ideas with your classmates. Did they come up with similar responses to yours?

Work together to discuss the following questions. Write down the major points raised by your classmates.

Why do people harass others?	
How does harassment make the target person feel?	
What are the best things a person who is being harassed can do about it?	
You see someone being harassed – what are the best things you can do?	

Now that you have considered the legal definition of sexual harassment, go back and look at the answers you gave in the quiz in the first activity sheet. Would you change your responses based on your new knowledge about the definition of sexual harassment?