

# Tackling sexual harassment

## Script

The DVD is set in a typical high school in Australia. One of the students is doing a video presentation on her school's culture and she's investigating whether or not sexual harassment exists there.

### Scene 1: In the school canteen

Two boys walk into the canteen and one of them grabs a girl around the waist from behind. She clearly doesn't like it and she pushes him away. One of the girl's friends intervenes and tells the boy to back off.

The presenter says that what she just saw was a perfect example of sexual harassment. Some of the other students around her disagree – “no way is that harassment – that's just how he is”.

The group then starts talking about what they think is – and isn't – sexual harassment. As they start talking, one of the guys in the group leans over and puts his arm around a girl. She looks up, smiles at him and holds onto his arm.

One of the girls in the groups starts talking about the substitute science teacher, who all the guys think is 'hot'. She tells the others: “All the guys in the class would drop their pen on the floor and she would bend over to pick it up. Because she was wearing a low-cut top, the boys were always dropping their pen. It wasn't until halfway through the period that she knew what was going on. I felt so embarrassed for her.”

Two girls walk into the canteen and stand by the drink machine. They start whispering loudly about a girl sitting nearby. They call her a 'slut' because she got with a guy over the weekend “and she didn't even know his name”. They say that everyone knows she's a slut – and that's what's written about her in the girl's toilets. The girl they are talking about looks very hurt by what they're saying.

### Scene 2: The two friends

The presenter wants to film an example of a healthy 'boy-girl' relationship – two people that she knows are good friends. She shows us a couple sitting together on the steps talking. The girl tells her friend, Russ, how much she appreciated being able to call him up on the weekend and talk about a problem she was having. He responds by telling her how much he values their friendship.

Russ goes off to join up with some of his mates and when his friend walks past the group, the boys abuse her – call her a 'dog' and a 'dumb bitch'. Russ stands there but doesn't say or do anything to defend her. She runs off crying – obviously very hurt.

The boy and girl meet up later in the library. The girl is sitting with another friend. She's still very upset and tells him how hurt she is that he didn't stick up for her. She feels betrayed, that their friendship means nothing and that she's thinking of changing classes, maybe even schools.

He looks at her confused and bewildered – but also guiltily. He defends himself by saying that if he had said something then his mates would have had a go at him instead.

The presenter looks into the camera and wonders if this is an over-reaction – asking the students “what do you think?”

### Scene 3: In the library

Two boys – good friends – are talking in the library. One has his hand on the other's shoulder.

A group of boys come up to them and start to pick on one of them. They call him 'a queer' and pull at his shorts – “does that turn you on, mate”, they ask. When he tries to walk away, the boys get aggressive and push him to the ground. They tell him to stick up for himself and “be a man”!

Off-screen, a teacher calls out to them to break it up – “you know you can’t do that sort of thing in here”. The group of boys walk off and make a few parting comments at the boy who’s still on the ground, hurt and very upset.

The presenter is horrified – “that was ugly”!

## Scene 4: Alyce and David

Alyce and David are sitting together in class. The boy leans over and asks the girl if she received his text message and whether she wanted to go out with him – “after all, I hear you’re pretty good fun on a date”. It’s obvious that this isn’t the first text message she’s received from him and that it isn’t the first time he’s asked her out.

Alyce says she doesn’t want to go out with him. A friend of David’s – a girl – overhears the conversation and tells Alyce that he’s a great guy and she’d have a fun time with him. She says again that she’s not interested.

At the end of the class, Alyce talks to the teacher and asks if he can tell David to stop harassing her. The teacher tells her not to worry about, that David’s harmless and that “boys will be boys”.

As she leaves the classroom, David is standing there with some friends. He says that she should “get ready for some more messages”. His friends laugh and walk off with him.

## Scene 5: Alternative endings

We are clearly back at the end of Scene 4. The presenter speaks into the camera. “I don’t like how this ended. Let’s make some changes.” We rewind to the end of the scene see some alternative endings.

### Alternative ending 1

Alyce approaches the teacher with her problem. He tells her that what David is doing is harassment and breaks the school’s harassment policy. He calls David over, tells him that an issue has been raised and that he wants the three of them to meet at the Student Counsellor’s Office at lunchtime to discuss it further.

### Alternative ending 2

Alyce tells David that she’s not interested – “what part of no don’t you understand?” – and that she wants him to leave her alone and stop messaging her. David blusters but backs off – “OK, no more messages. But it’s your loss.”

### Alternative ending 3

Alyce is a bit intimidated by David, so one her friends stands up to him and tells him to stop sending Alyce text messages and not to keep asking her out on dates. David backs off – but tells his friends “I don’t even know why I liked her in the first place”.

### Alternative ending 4

Some of David’s friends see what he’s doing and think that his behaviour with Alyce has gone too far. They wonder what they can do about it – they suggest discussing it with their SRC or seeing what their school policy says about harassment.