

## Examples: Identification & Understanding of Sexual Harassment 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades

Work on identifying whether an incident is sexual harassment or not. The key is to identify what questions to ask to determine if harassment is going on. What pieces of information would inform whether bullying or sexual harassment is occurring, and the best way to obtain that information. Then determine what are the best possible responses to each situation (regardless if the situation is harassment or not, as students need to feel their voice matters).

### *Response Example:*

A younger male student is pushed into the girls' restroom by several older male students.  
The younger student says it was just a joke.

### Information Needed:

- Identify if the student regular spends time with the male students
- Identify who the younger student does spend time with. If they are isolated.
- Talk to all individuals who might be involved: possible witnesses, friends of victim (if there is one), girls who may have been in the restroom and possibly heard what happened.
- Then talk to victim and bullies. Get each to write down what occurred, independent of one another.
- Ask what occurred, as explicitly as possible.
- Ask the bully(ies) why they performed the behaviors they did.

### Responses:

- Ask the victim what he would like to do.
- Make sure the victim is involved in a group that supports them.
- Refer to counseling to make sure they are not being harassed in other venues. Helps to deal with self esteem issues.
- Bullies need to have consequences based on actions/behaviors that is determined by school policy.
- Bullies need counseling/program assistance to help them develop empathy for the victim(s).

- Potentially have bullies be involved with mentoring middle school or elementary school kids to help them learn positive interaction skills for weaker kids.
- Inform all parents of decisions of the school.
  - Offer assistance to parents in maintaining expectations.
  - Educate parent on policies and procedures, communication network, contacts for such situations, etc.

*Sexual Harassment Awareness Examples:*

A student is passing by a hallway when she overhears several boys talking about the physical appearance of other girls at the school. She, as a result, feels self-conscious about her own appearance, and chooses to not walk down the hallway.

A boy who struggles at athletic competitions in PE continues to be called gay by his fellow students.

- Not only is this boy experiencing gender harassment, but so is anyone who is a member of the LGBT community as it denigrates them as a group.

A teacher informs a female student that her sweater looks nice on her. She feels awkward by the statement, and uncomfortable talking to the teacher as a result of it.

A student has volunteered to take notes for another student who is absent from the class. These notes are vital to an upcoming test. When the absent student returns and asks for copies of the notes, the first student says they won't give them the notes until he/she goes out with them.

At a school evening event, a male student kisses a female student. She allows him to do so because she is concerned that she will be ostracized by others if she does not allow him to because he is more popular.

A female student has her butt grabbed by a female coach who makes a comment about how firm it is, asking her what exercises she does to get that. While the intent of the coach may have been to assess the fitness of the student, the student feels uncomfortable as a result of it.

A male student attempts to kiss a female student on the cheek, which she expresses she did not want him to do.

Boys were cheering at a girls' sports practice. They cheered about "tits" and "asses" which the girls were able to hear, but out of earshot of the adults.

As girls walk down a hallway, which students congregate at during free periods, male students make comments about their appearance.