


7. STAND UP TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT⁴



 40 mins

 **OUTCOME:**
Define sexual harassment, how it happens online and understand ways to protect yourself.

 **MATERIALS:**
Statements on sexual harassment offline and online (See Tool below)

-  **BE PREPARED:**
- Make sure you read through the activity to assess if it is appropriate for your culture, contexts and your group.
 - Revisit your #bravespace agreements before you begin so that everyone feels comfortable to actively take part.
 - Some of the participants might feel uncomfortable during the activity. Let them know they can take a break.

WHAT HAPPENS:

Explain to the group that this session is about sexual harassment which is a form of violence against girls and young women.

1. First you are going to explore what sexual harassment is.

- Ask everyone to stand up.
- Label one side of the space 'always' and the other side of the room 'never' and the middle 'sometimes'.
- The group should listen to the statements that you read out, and consider whether they are examples of sexual harassment.
- Move to the side that represents their answer. Ask participants why they have chosen that position and encourage people to move if they hear and agree with a different point of view.

Participants might congregate in the middle as they think that there are different scenarios when it is sometimes acceptable and sometimes not. Explain that all of the

statements are a form of sexual harassment. Many people do not notice or they think it is 'just a normal part of life', but it does hurt people and it should not be considered normal.

Try as a group to give a general definition of what sexual harassment is.

Sexual harassment is unwanted and unwelcome sexual behaviour which interferes with your life. Sexual harassment is behaviours that you do not like or want. For example when you are:

- Seated in a bus next to a man and he starts touching and caressing you.
- Passing by a group of men or boys who make inappropriate sexual comments.
- In a long queue and the boy or man next to you starts caressing your bottom.

⁴This activity has been adapted from the [WAGGGS Voices Against Violence](#) Middle Years Leader's Handbook.

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2. Ask the group if they think that sexual harassment can happen online. What type of behaviors might you encounter and in which platforms? Do you think it affects boys or girls more?

Then spread the statements on online sexual harassment around the room.

Have participants go around and read them. They should rate each of the statements from 0 to 3 depending on how serious they think the harassment is. Discuss any thoughts.

Explain that all of the statements are a form of online sexual harassment and it is always very serious. Online sexual harassment can make you feel threatened, exploited, coerced, humiliated, upset, sexualised or discriminated against, just as when it happens offline. Any of the actions can be really hurtful and impactful on the person experiencing them. Although it can happen to anyone, it affects girls and women more.

Try as a group to give a general definition of what online sexual harassment is.

Online sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual conduct on any digital platform.

It is recognised as a form of sexual violence and includes a wide range of behaviours that use digital content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages) on a variety of different platforms (private or public). (Source UK Safer Internet Centre)

For example when someone:

- Makes sexualised comments (e.g., on photos) or 'jokes' of a sexual nature
- Sends you sexual content (images, emojis, messages) without your permission
- Shares sexual images/videos of you taken without permission
- Harasses or pressures you online to share sexual images or engage in sexual behaviour or threatens you sexually online (e.g., rape threats)
- Bullies you because of your gender and/or sexual orientation
- Posts online gossip, rumours or lies about sexual behaviour naming you directly or indirectly



DISCUSS:

- How can I stop online sexual harassment? Are there any tools provided by platforms?
- Are there any actions I should take before reporting?
- Who can I talk to about it?
- Are there any laws against online sexual harassment?

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(CONTINUED)



SEARCH RESULTS

What can you do if you have experienced online sexual harassment?

1. Talk to an adult you trust: You are not alone. Speaking to someone in your family, your Guiding or Scouting group or your school will provide comfort and can help you deal with the situation.
2. Document: With the help of a parent or carer save emails, voicemails, and texts. Take screenshots and copy direct links whenever possible.
3. Block-Mute-Report: You can block accounts and you can sometimes mute accounts or even specific posts or words. You can report to the platform any abuse that violates terms of service to try to get a post taken down or an account suspended.
4. Law enforcement: Depending on the extend of the harassment, your parents or carers might consider reporting to law enforcement.
5. Secure your accounts: make accounts private, change passwords, check what personal information you have made public online.
6. Practice self-care: Remember, this is not your fault. Online sexual harassment can make you feel afraid or ashamed. It is exhausting and demoralizing. It can have an impact to your mental, emotional, and physical health. Ask for support to deal with your feelings.

[Adapted from <https://hbr.org/2020/06/youre-not-powerless-in-the-face-of-online-harassment>]

TOOLS ★

Sexual harassment statements:

Is this sexual harassment?

- Making inappropriate comments of a sexual nature
- Spreading sexy images of someone online or via a mobile
- Pinging someone's bra strap
- Groping a boy's bottom
- Groping or touching a girl's body without her permission
- Pinching someone's bottom
- Lifting up someone's skirts as they walk past
- Staring at someone suggestively or in an intimidating and sexual manner
- Whistling at someone in the street
- Shouting out something about a girl's looks as she walks by, in a way that makes her uncomfortable

Online sexual harassment statements

Rate the following actions from 0–3 based on how serious you think they are:

- Recording sexy videos of someone with their permission and sharing them online.
- Asking a girl for a money for not posting sexy images online
- Spreading rumours online about a boy's sexual activity
- Commenting on a photo of someone in their bathing suit in way that makes them uncomfortable
- Sharing online a boy's profile and calling others to sexually harass him
- Revealing publicly online someone's gender or sexual orientation
- Creating an online poll to rate how attractive the girls in your class are
- Sexually commenting on your photos online
- Taking a photo under a girl's skirt without permission and sharing it online
- Asking someone repeatedly to send explicit photos or videos