

Common Myths

“It’s just adolescent behavior—a stage people go through.”

Wrong: Looking the other way or normalizing bullying and harassment results in continued or escalated incidents of harassment. Adolescents who harass may abuse children or spouses in later years.

“It’ll just get worse if I tell someone.”

Wrong: Research clearly shows that when adults in authority get involved, the harassment and bullying stop. Silence about bullying and harassment is an act of fear. It takes courage to stand up for yourself and intelligence to seek help from others.

“Victims have to learn to stand up for themselves.”

Wrong: If victims of harassment have the courage and wisdom to tell someone they need help, they deserve to receive it.

“Victims should hit back harder.”

Wrong: Getting physical only invites escalation of bullying and harassment and increases the potential for serious physical harm.

Check it out!

For more information go to:

- The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities www.sacsc.ca.

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The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities

Be S.M.A.R.T.

Stay safe

- Think ahead. Do what you need to do to stay out of harm’s way.
- Avoid places and situations that place you at risk.

Make connections

- Develop friendships with people whom you view as trustworthy and who share your interests.

Always stand up for yourself

- Walk with your head up and make eye contact with others.
- Keep your cool.
- Don’t allow the words or actions of others to hurt you.
- Use straight talk. Tell the harasser to stop.

Realize your options

- You didn’t cause this problem.
- Suffering in silence only gives the person harassing you more opportunity to continue or increase harmful behaviors.
- Reacting by getting physical, getting friends to return the harassment, or ignoring the harassment only makes it worse.

Talk it out

- Talk to trusted friends or adults about how you want the negative situation to be resolved.
- Get help if and when needed.
- When it’s over, let it go. Dwelling on negative incidents takes away from your enjoyment of life.

Bullying is everybody’s problem—



Do you have the courage to stop it?

A resource for senior high students

Bullying is not a relationship of mutual consent

Did you know?

- By age 24, 60 percent of identified bullies have at least one criminal conviction.
- Bullying is one of the most under-reported problems in schools and communities today.
- Bullying incidents occur once every seven minutes.
- Even when humor is used, the reason for any bullying is to hurt or put down others.

What happens to victims?

- Learning is reduced because of difficulty concentrating.
- The ability to analyze and remember diminishes.
- Depression occurs.
- Self-esteem is lowered.
- Illness and absenteeism increase.

What can people who bully expect?

Bullies can expect

- less chance of finishing high school;
- problems holding jobs or maintaining relationships;
- higher probability that their children will become bullies themselves; and/or
- less respect from other people, especially as those who bully get older.

What is bullying?

Bullying is

- a repeated pattern of unprovoked, aggressive behaviors (physical, verbal or psychological) carried out by an individual or group that results in harm or hurt;
- always unwelcome, unwanted and uncomfortable to the person(s) against whom it is directed.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is

- unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other behaviors of a sexual nature that intimidate, coerce, humiliate, or in any way create a hostile work or school environment or that make submission a condition for work or study.

Some examples of sexual harassment include

- unwelcome leering and sexual propositions;
- sexual slurs, threats, derogatory comments or unwelcome graphic comments about a person's body; and
- unwelcome sexual jokes, gestures, touches, cornering or blocking normal physical movement in sexually suggestive ways.

Why don't people report bullying?

People don't report bullying and harassment because they

- blame themselves;
- feel helpless, powerless;
- worry they'll be labeled a "loser" or a "snitch";
- fear retaliation;
- don't think it will change anything;
- don't think others will listen or help;
- feel embarrassed;
- don't trust the system; and/or
- don't realize that reporting is an act of courage.

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What to do if you are bullied or harassed

- Tell the harasser to stop or get someone you trust to tell them to stop.
- Write out and keep notes that detail exactly what has happened:
 - dates, times, places;
 - people involved, witnesses; and
 - what was said/done.
- Tell a trusted adult in authority. Share your notes with that person.
- Approach someone else if the person you ask first doesn't help. Be persistent and don't give up.

Flirting or sexual harassment?

<i>Flirting</i>		<i>Harassment</i>
good		bad
flattered	<i>Feelings</i>	angry
attractive		ugly
in control		powerless
wanted		unwanted
equal		unequal
reciprocal	<i>Power</i>	one-sided
validating		demeaning
welcome		unwelcome
legal		illegal
positive		negative
self-image	<i>Results</i>	self-image
compliments		hurts/harms
openness		distrust
good		poor
performance		performance