

The Fear of Speaking Up

Are you afraid that you will suffer retaliation from the harasser? Or are you worried that people will think "you asked for it?" Perhaps you think you are somehow responsible for the harasser's behavior? If so, there are still things you can do.

Your Options

Don't Delay. Pay attention to cues or comments indicating harassment.

Say No. Tell the harasser that his or her advances are unwanted and you want them stopped.

Keep a Record. Should the harassment continue, keep track of dates, times, places and statements. List the names of any witnesses. This information can be used to support a complaint.

Talk to Others. Let the principal, supervisor of the harasser and the AA/EEO officer know what has happened.

Marshfield School Can Help

If you believe that you are being harassed, talk to someone you can trust—sooner, the better. For instance, the School's AA/EEO officer will discuss your situation and offer advice on the informal and formal procedures available to you as a student, faculty member, or administrative service and support employee. The officer also can give advice on how to handle the situation, correct the behavior and prevent retaliation. All inquiries are held in strict confidence.

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Sexual Harassment

What it is and how to deal with it.

It's a Matter of Choice

Sexual harassment means different things to different people. To some, a dirty joke is offensive; to others, it's an overt proposition. No matter what form it takes, if someone's actions make you uncomfortable, or put you in a difficult situation, you need to seek help. You don't have to put up with unwanted sexual advances, unacceptable sexual behavior, or actions that create a hostile environment for you.

Recognizing Sexual Harassment

One of the reasons sexual harassment often goes unreported is that victims are afraid they've misread the intentions. Fortunately, there are guidelines. Sexual harassment may include any unwanted attention of a sexual nature such as:

- Sexually suggestive looks or gestures
- Sexual teasing or jokes
- Sexual demeaning comments
- Deliberate touching, cornering, pinching
- Pressure for sex
- Request for sex in exchange for favors, promotions, or salary increases
- Highly personal questions
- Unwanted requests/pressure for dates
- Sexual materials posted in the workplace

Does this sound

Familiar??

Below are some examples of sexual harassment and how they might be handled. Although no two cases of sexual harassment are ever the same, this will give you an idea of what is considered unacceptable behavior.

Ann is an apprentice in a traditionally all-male job at school. Many of the men resent her being there. They think it is funny to watch her reaction as they tell obscene jokes, and leave pictures of nude women around the work station. Ann has told her principal she is offended by their behavior. He said, "Men will be men." The strain of the situation is beginning to have a negative effect on Ann's work. Ann discussed this situation with the sexual harassment officer who advises her about the matter. Sexual harassment training is immediately planned for the department.

Beth is enrolled in a regular education class. As she leaves, he tells her that if he got to know her personally outside the classroom he could help her with her job search. He then reaches out and gives her a squeeze. Upset about what just happened, Beth talks about it with other students in the class and discovers that the same teacher has recently made similar suggestions to two others. They decide to report him to the principal. The principal consults with the schools' sexual harassment officer after receiving a confidential statement from the student. After a thor-

ough investigation of the matter, the school reprimands the teacher and warns him that is such behavior occurs in the future, it could be grounds for further action.

Robert is a new support-staff employee. His supervisor has repeatedly talked to him about her personal problems. Recently, she has been pressuring him to take her out after work. He has avoided doing so. She is now telling him that his contract may not be renewed if he does not make arrangements to spend some personal time with her. Robert decides to file a complaint using the procedures on sexual harassment for administrative, service, and support staff.

Jennifer's teacher is going through a divorce. Lately, while talking about her class work, he has begun telling her about his fantasies and pressuring her into making his fantasies come true. She has refused, but now he is saying that she will never pass his class if she does not have sex with him. Jennifer is extremely depressed and fearful that her career is at stake. She is considering dropping out of class. Instead, she files a complaint under the Discrimination Grievance Procedure for students.