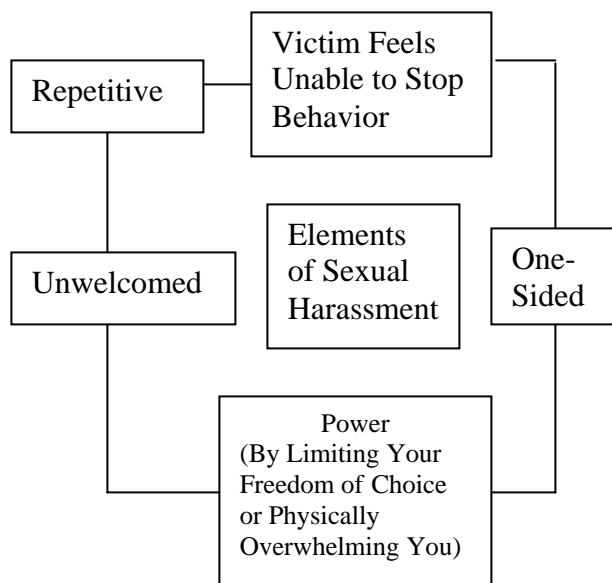


Stopping Sexual Harassment

How to break the Cycle of Harassment:

- Tell the person to stop.
- Get help by telling an adult.



You can break the cycle at any point.

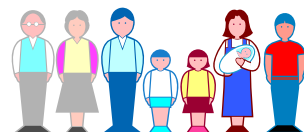
Where is there additional information or assistance?

For Students

- Your principal or assistant principal
- Your teacher, school counselor, school nurse, school social worker, school psychologist, or pupil personnel worker

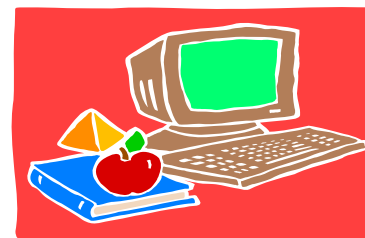
For Parents

- The Equity Assurance and Compliance Branch
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
410-767-0428
[http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/equity+ assurance/](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/equity+assurance/)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
150 S. Independence Mall West
Suite 372, Public Lodge Bldg.
Philadelphia, PA 19106-911
215-861-4441
- Maryland Commission for Women
45 Calvert Street, Room B22
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
1-877-868-2196
<http://www.marylandwomen.org>



**A publication of the
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**Dr. Joe A. Hairston
Superintendent**



Developed in cooperation with the
State of Maryland

Maryland State Board of Education
Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

Sexual Harassment In Schools



Adapted from a document of the
Maryland State Department of Education
Equity Assurance Branch
Maryland Commission for Women
by
The Office of School Counseling
and
The Equal Employment Opportunity Office
Baltimore County Public Schools

Secondary Version

September 2008

Information for Parent/Guardian



Sexual harassment is unwanted and unwelcomed behavior of a sexual nature which interferes with a student's life. Students have the right to learn, study, work, achieve, and participate in school activities in a comfortable and supportive atmosphere. Under federal and state laws and policies, sexual harassment is illegal and is prohibited in school settings.

We understand that sexual harassment is an emotionally charged and sensitive topic. By providing information to students about sexual harassment and how to prevent it, we hope to promote healthy attitudes among students based on mutual respect and their understanding of the uniqueness of every individual.

Too often students will ignore sexual harassment incidents because they do not want to get someone in trouble or have others think they are overreacting. Let your child know that you take harassment seriously and want to hear about it.

Baltimore County Public Schools wants to collaborate with you in informing students about their rights and responsibilities related to the prevention of sexual harassment. The following information has been prepared to be shared with young people.

What is sexual harassment?

When someone behaves toward you in a way that makes you feel threatened, offended, embarrassed, or uncomfortable because you are male or female.



What are some examples of behavior that may be considered **sexual harassment**?

- Staring or leering at parts of someone else's body.
- Making comments, gestures, or jokes of a sexual nature.
- Displaying sexual pictures or objects in another person's presence, spreading rumors, or commenting about someone's sexual behavior.
- Calling another names based on one's gender.
- Using repeated pressure for dates or unwanted sexual activity after being told to stop.
- Cornering another and forcing a sexual response.
- Touching, grabbing, pinching, or brushing against someone on purpose.
- Asking for sexual favors in exchange for grades, promotions, or participation in school activities.

The following are examples of sexual assault. Sexual assault is a crime which must be reported to the police. Sexual assault is different from sexual harassment.

- Date or acquaintance rape
- Physical sexual assault

What are my responsibilities and rights related to sexual harassment?

Students are legally protected against sexual harassment by a federal law prohibiting discrimination in schools on the basis of sex. Sexual assault is also covered under the Criminal Code of Maryland. You have a right to participate in all school and classroom activities in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. You also have a responsibility not to engage in sexual behaviors that are unwelcomed or offensive to others.

How do I know when sexual harassment may be occurring?

Am I being harassed?

Am I harassing someone?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the behavior embarrassing to someone because that person is a male or a female?
- Is the behavior unwelcomed by anyone involved?
- Does the behavior make you or any other person feel uncomfortable?
- Does the behavior interfere with anyone's ability to learn or to participate in school or classroom activities?
- Does the behavior happen over and over?
- Would you ever want this behavior directed toward a member of your family or toward a friend?

- Does the behavior involve one person trying to have some kind of power over another person?

What should I do if I believe I am being sexually harassed?

You can do a number of things:

- Take assertive action. Get help as needed. Ignoring sexual harassment is not an effective way to stop it.
- Whenever possible, tell the harasser verbally or in writing what the specific behaviors are that you find offensive. Tell him or her to stop the behaviors immediately.
- Report the offensive behavior to a teacher, school counselor, school social worker, school nurse, or school administrator.
- Inform your parents/guardians.
- Keep a detailed written record of the harassing behavior to share with school officials who investigate your complaint.
- Find out about your school system's policy and procedures for handling sexual harassment issues. Follow those procedures as stated in the Baltimore County Public Schools *Student Handbook*.
- If not satisfied with the resolution of your concerns, contact one of the appropriate organizations listed in this brochure.

