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SEXUAL HARASSMENT



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WHY DISCUSS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

- To help individuals understand their rights and responsibilities.
- To create a culture of accountability.
- To build safe, respectful, and inclusive environments.
- To enhance efficiency and performance in educational and professional settings.
- To protect personal and institutional reputations.



PART ONE

WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

- Persistent unwanted physical, verbal, or nonverbal behavior causing discomfort, threat, humiliation, or mental distress.

- Harassment occurs in schools, homes, workplaces, social media, and other public settings.

- Harassment is commonly known as “bullying” in schools.



COMMON BULLYING ACTIONS AT SCHOOL

- Repeatedly calling unofficial names, causing humiliation.
- Taking, using, or discarding others' personal items without permission.
- Making repeated negative comments about appearance, culture, family, lifestyle, or behavior.
- Popular or forceful person telling others not to be friends with you.
- Threats or physical actions like tripping, pushing, hitting, kicking, or spitting.
- Public mockery, exclusion from groups, or activities.
- Spreading rumors or gossiping.
- Posting pictures or videos without permission.

TASK FOR FOLLOWING SCENARIOS

Identify which scenario represents physical, verbal, and/or nonverbal forms of harassment.

Note that the intention of a person doing the action does not matter. What matters is the negative impact of that action on the person concerned.

The first step in the solution is for everyone to recognize and acknowledge that harassment is an abuse of power and that mutual respect between all people is critical.

SCENARIO 1

NOTE: In all of the scenarios in this training the name used do not refer or relate to any specific living person.

Elora is a Form 3 student who is very quiet in class. Inez and her crew are classmates of Elora, and they take her things like pens, notices, and even her fetched and stored water without her permission. Elora cries, but she is scared to say anything to them. Cressida is Elora's friend. Cressida is not happy with Inez and her friend's behavior towards Elora, so she reports them to her class teacher. Inez and her crew are punished. Days later Elora finds all her books soaked in a bucket of water. She does not know for sure who did this; however, she suspects it is Inez and her crew getting revenge on her for her friend Cressida telling on them to the teacher.

Who is the victim, and who is the perpetuator?

What else could Cressida have done?

How can Elora protect herself moving forward?

SCENARIO 2

Herbert is from poor family in Sumbawanga. He is a Form 2 student performing very well in class, especially as compared to his performance when he was in Form 1. His fellow students have been wondering about his transformation, because they believe that there is no way that a boy from a poor family with limited studying materials can perform better than those who come from wealthier families and have an abundance of studying materials. Herbert's classmates believe that since he is from Sumbawanga (a region commonly known for its superstition beliefs), he might be a witch who may even be magically stealing their knowledge through their books which they have been lending to him. As a result, Herbert's classmates stop helping him and start spreading rumors that Herbert is indeed a witch. They threaten him that if he does not stop "stealing their knowledge," they will set him on fire. Herbert is so scared and distressed that he is planning not to return to school after this coming holiday.

What are the negative impacts of this harassment?

Is Herbert right to want to leave school? Yes or no, and why? What would you advise Herbert to do?

Why is Herbert being harassed? Are his classmates right in making their threats?

SCENARIO 3

Bradford started experiencing the appearance of unusual white patches on his face, hands, and other parts of his body. His friends noticed and called him names like “leopard” and “chameleon” due to his changing skin color. They decided to no longer sit close to Bradford as they didn’t want to “catch” whatever he had. Bradford felt embarrassed and depressed. He believed that he might turn into an animal soon. Bradford was then taken to hospital where he was diagnosed with a disease called vitiligo. The doctor explained that vitiligo is an autoimmune disorder that causes skin cells to stop producing melanin, which results in the skin turning a milky-white color in certain areas. The doctor made it clear that vitiligo cannot be transmitted to other people, nor can it turn a person into an animal. Bradford was relieved; however, he still worried about other people’s misperceptions. He asked his doctor to educate his friends and community, so the doctor visited Bradford’s school and home community and educated everyone about vitiligo. After that, Bradford felt confident again and participated well in class and social activities. He was successful and well-respected and went on to become a successful businessman.

Why was Bradford bullied? What were the negative impacts of this harassment?

Why did Bradford ask the doctor to educate his friends and community about vitiligo?

What was the importance of this education and how did it affect Bradford’s life trajectory?

SCENARIO 4

Riya is a responsible leader in secondary school. However, her fellow irresponsible students hate her because she reported them for their bad behavior as per school rules and regulations. Now they are being punished. Riya has started receiving threatening messages telling her that a group is planning to do something very bad to her, something she will never forget in her whole life . Riya is scared, anxious, and depressed, and she is planning to resign because she wants peace more than anything else.

Why was Riya bullied? What is the impact?

What would you advise Riya to do?

Is Riya’s decision to resign the right one? Why or why not?

SCENARIO 5

Emmaline was a Form 5 student in secondary school who gained a bit of weight. Her friends started calling her Ashabonge (“fat person”). Emmaline didn’t like this name, but she felt that she could not confront them or stand up for herself. Eventually everyone in the school, including the teachers, called her Ashabonge. Emmaline went on to study in university, and her friends from her secondary school who were in her same university continued calling her Ashabonge. She told them to stop, but since they were used to calling her that name for many years, they were comfortable with calling her that and they did not stop. They even listed her in their phone books as Ashabonge. Emmaline felt so embarrassed because other colleagues eventually started calling her Ashabonge too. She tried everything to lose weight, including skipping meals and misusing medications. All her efforts did was make her feel terrible, which further reduced her participation in class and in other social activities.

What is the problem in this scenario?

What are the negative impacts of this harassment?

What would you advise Emmaline to do?

PART TWO

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

- Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that makes a person feel uncomfortable, scared, or intimidated.

- Sexual harassment can occur at school, in the workplace, and in any other public setting.



EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

1. Exposing someone to pornographic materials.
2. Unwanted discussions about sexual topics
3. Street sexual harassment (e.g. cat calling, whistling).
4. Embarrassing someone using sexual comments.
5. Unwanted sexual comments directed towards someone on social media.

6 Persistently asking someone to go out or be in relationship after the individual has said no.

7 Spreading sexual rumors.

8 Unwanted sexual and inappropriate texts and/or emails.

9 When a person in power asks for a sexual favor in exchange for a job or better grades.

10 Unwelcome repeatedly touching, hugging, and/or kissing.

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is only done by a person with power towards who has less power (e.g employer to employee).

No, the opposite can also be considered as sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is only about sex.

No, sexual harassment can take various forms as we have seen from the scenarios.

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Victims of sexual harassment must be direct targets of the harassment.

No, victims of sexual harassment can either directly or indirectly targeted.

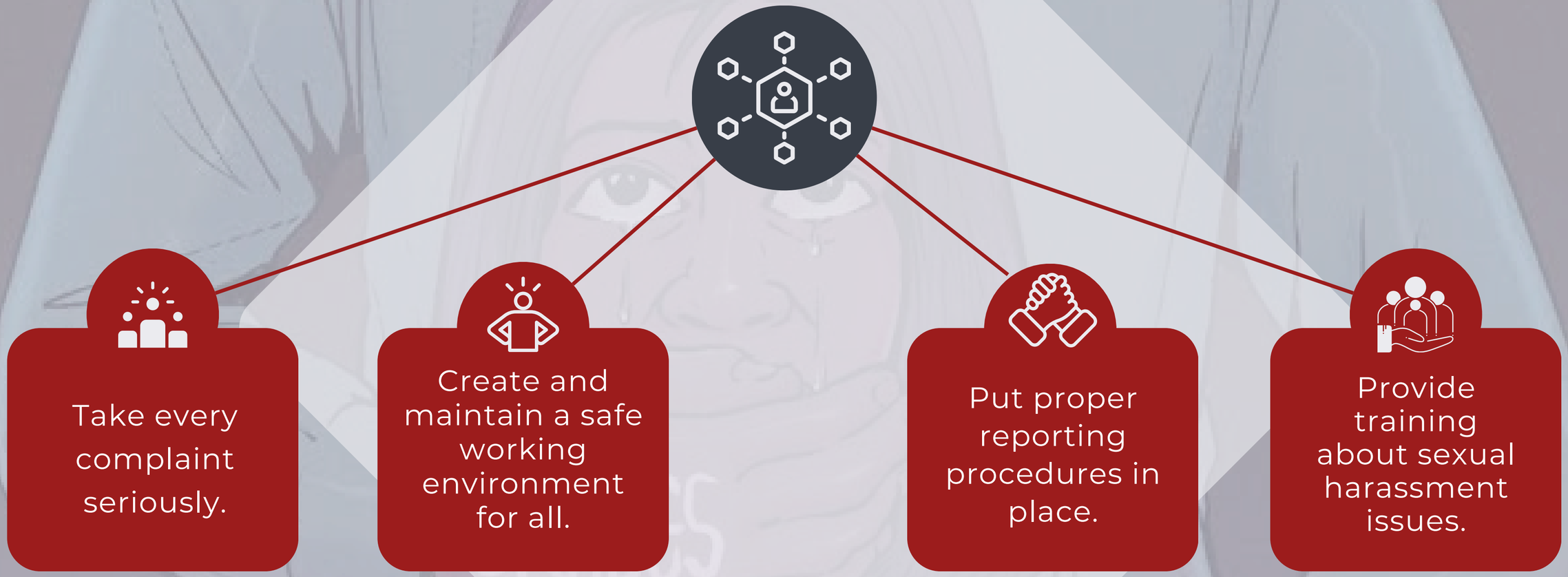
Sexual harassment is only committed by men.

No, sexual harassment can be committed by both men and women.

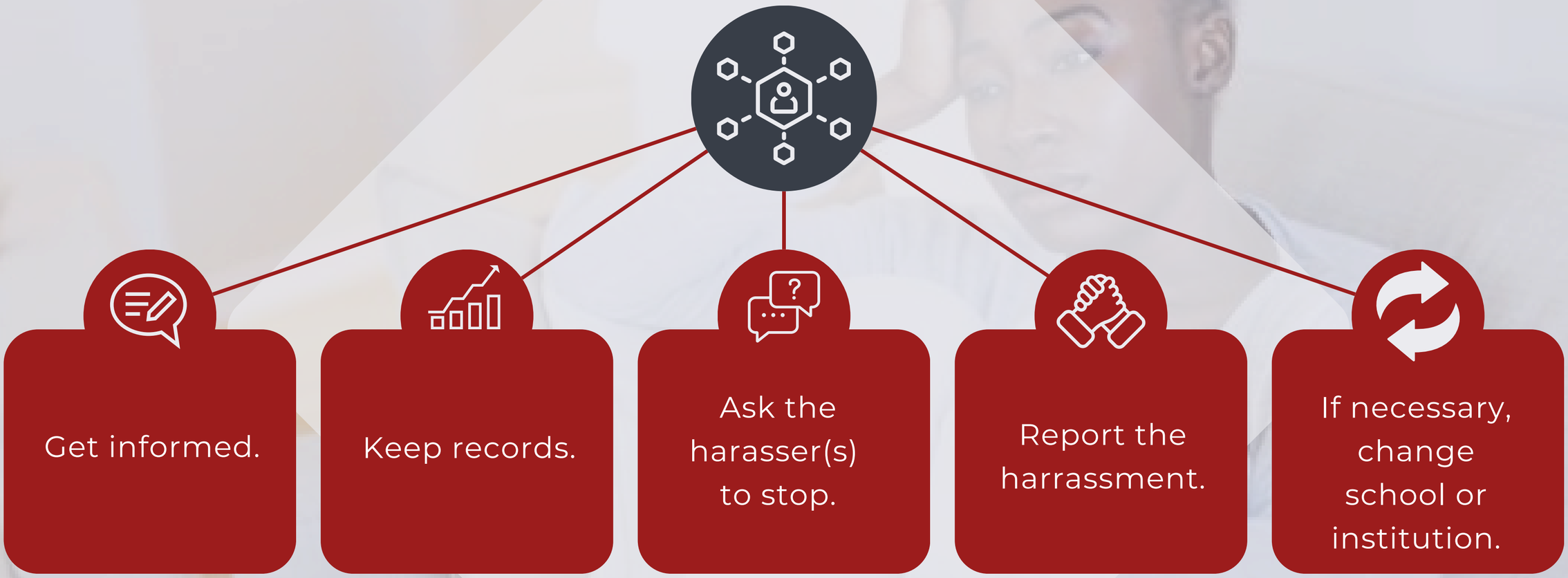


ADDRESSING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

At the School or Institutional Level



At the Individual Level

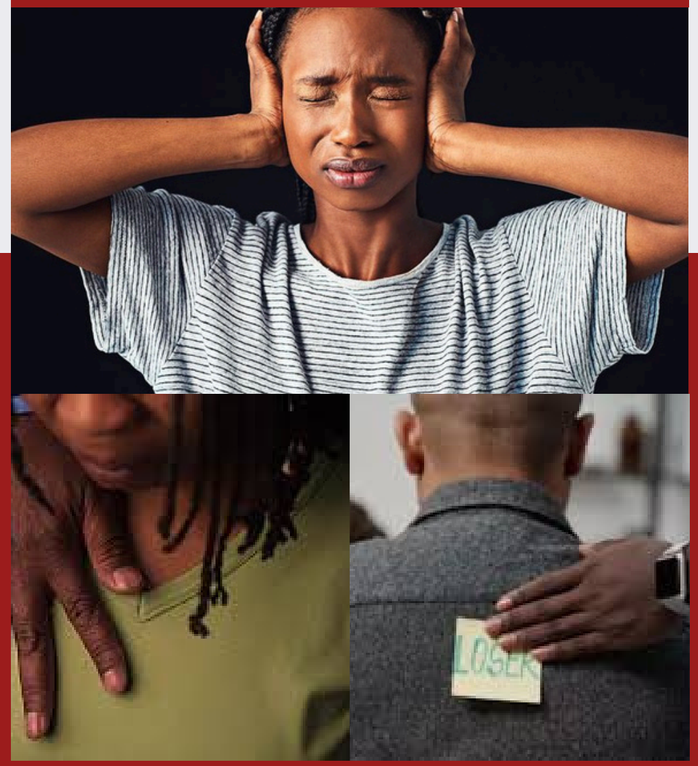


What does the law say?



- The Sexual Offenses Special Provisions Act (SOSPA) of 1998 and its amendments made in 2017 aim to eliminate acts of rape against children under 18 years old and students (punishment for the offense can be 30 years of imprisonment) and children under 10 years old (punishment can be life imprisonment).
- However, different schools, universities, and institutions have different policies and procedures in place to address sexual harassment issues. GET INFORMED.

SCENARIOS


LOSER


IS NOT
PUNISHMENT
FOR RAPE


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SCENARIO 1

Seraphine is a second-year university student. One day she received a call from her class representative saying that one of her course works was missing from her results list. Seraphine knew that she did the assignment; she had already received the result. However when she contacted the lecturer concerned, he accused her and told her that she would have to do supplementary examinations. It turns out that this lecturer had been asking Seraphine to be in a relationship with him since Seraphine was a first-year student, but she had always refused. Months later, the university introduced a sexual harassment prevention policy and trained all students and staff members. The university also introduced an anonymous reporting procedure. Seraphine reported this lecturer and after confirmation from both sides, this lecturer was suspended.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCENARIO 1

1. Who is the perpetuator of sexual harassment in this scenario?

2. What are the negative impacts of sexual harassment according to this scenario?

3. What are the roles of schools and other institutions in addressing sexual harassment issues like this?

SCENARIO 2

Amalia, a Form 5 student, had been visiting her physics teacher in his office asking physics questions. She wore very short skirts and left the top buttons on her shirt open. One day Amalia visited her teacher as usual, and she started touching him. She asked him to agree to sleep with her or she threatened that would shout that he tried to rape her. Three months later, Amalia was found pregnant and HIV positive. When asked how she ended up like this, Amalia lied and said that her teacher had been asking to sleep with her in return for adding her marks to her physics examinations. Amalia stopped her studies, and her teacher was sued and sentenced to 30 imprisonment.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCENARIO 2

1. Who is the perpetuator in this story?

2. Who was harassed in this scenario?

3. What are the risk factors for the sexual harassment in this story?

SCENARIO 3

Asya has been in a relationship with Kamana for two years. They recently separated because Asya did not like Kamana's behavior of gambling and betting. Once Asya had to give Kamana money to pay his school fees because he had lost all his money gambling and betting. Kamana still wanted to be with Asya, but Asya refused because she has been warning him about this terrible habit for a long time and, finally, she was done with it -- and him. Kamana threatened Asya that if she didn’t come back to him, he would post all the pictures and videos they took when they were in relationship. Asya was extremely worried, because she knew that these photos and videos would ruin her reputation with her fellow students and mostly with her very strict parents. Asya faced the dilemma as so whether to return to a relationship in which she would not be happy or let her video and pictures be spread on social media.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCENARIO 3

1

Who is the perpetuator of the sexual harassment in this story?

2

What are the negative effects of this sexual harassment?

3

What advice would you give to Asya?

SCENARIO 4

Reggie’s mother wondered why her six-year-old son could no longer control his stool, and why he was refusing to go to school. (His fellow pupils laughed at him because he smelled bad). Reggie was taken to hospital, and the doctors reported that his anal sphincter muscles had been damaged, likely as the result of sexually abuse. When the doctor asked Reggie what had happened to him, Reggie reported that his family’s house maid has been sexually abusing him whenever he came home from school. The housemaid told Reggie not to tell his parents and that if he did the housemaid wouldn’t make good food for the family anymore. The housemaid also said that he would also stop buying Reggie sweets and toys to play with. Reggie’s parents had been so busy with their work (they left the home very early in the morning and came home very late at night), and they trusted the housemaid to take good care of Reggie. The housemaid was sued and sentenced for life imprisonment.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCENARIO 4

1. Who is the perpetuator of this sexual harassment? What are the risk factors for sexual harassment in this story?

2. What are the negative impacts of sexual harassment issues in this scenario? What is the importance of reporting sexual harassment issues like this?

3. How can proper parenting play a role in preventing and addressing sexual harassment issues?

SCENARIO 5

Dara, a 10-year-old girl, was found on her bed with her stepfather by her mother who came back from her work as a vegetable vendor early one day. The door had been left open. Her mother was shocked. When she was asked what happened, Dara replied that it has been fifth time now, and that her stepfather had threatened her that if she told her mother he would kill them both. The stepfather then confronted Dara's mother and said that she too better not say anything otherwise she would have to care for all her seven of children by herself with only with her small earnings from her vegetable business. Dara's mother decided to keep the abuse a secret. However, soon Dara's teacher started to wonder about Dara 's unusual walking patterns and her poor participation in class. She asked Dara what was wrong with her. Dara told her teacher everything, also that her mother knew everything about the abuse. Dara was taken to hospital for further diagnosis and management, and her stepfather was sued for life imprisonment.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCENARIO 5

1

Who is the perpetuator of this sexual harassment?

2

What are the negative impacts of this sexual harassment?

3

Why is it important to report such sexual harassment? Why does Dara’s mother keep quiet?



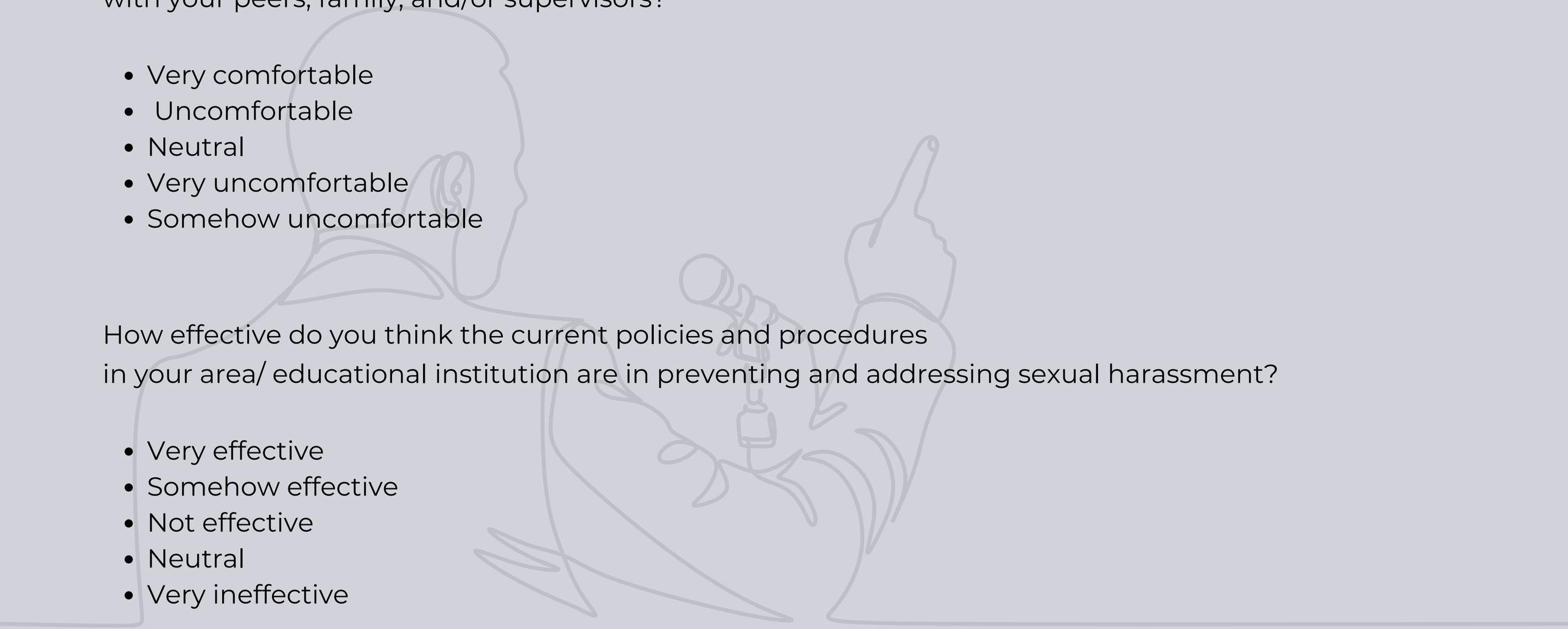
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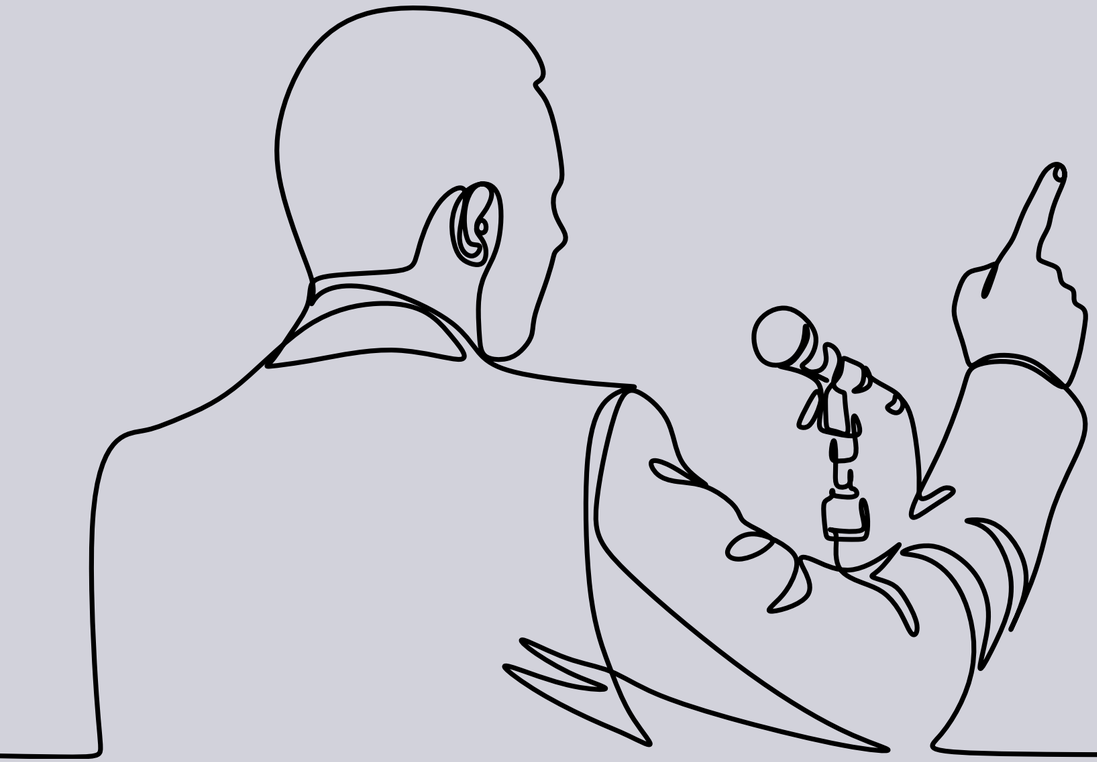
How comfortable do you feel discussing issues related to sexual harassment
with your peers, family, and/or supervisors?

- Very comfortable
- Uncomfortable
- Neutral
- Very uncomfortable
- Somehow uncomfortable

How effective do you think the current policies and procedures
in your area/ educational institution are in preventing and addressing sexual harassment?

- Very effective
- Somehow effective
- Not effective
- Neutral
- Very ineffective





Do you have sexual harassment policies in your organization/ school?

- Yes
- No

How should bystanders respond when they witness incidents of sexual harassment?

- Intervene and address the situation directly.
- Report the incident to the authority.
- Offer support to the victim.
- Ignore the situation
- Other (what ideas do you have?)

What additional measures or changes would you suggest to improve the prevention and handling of sexual harassment in your educational and/or workplace institution?

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THANK YOU



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