



# Peer to Peer Abuse: Sexual Harassment

## What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can also occur when a person in authority demands sexual favors or subjects a child/youth to sexual **conduct that creates an offensive, hostile, or intimidating environment.** Sexual harassment is **illegal.** Sexual harassment can include behaviors such as: making **sexual comments, jokes, gestures; name calling; commenting about a person's body or sex life; LOOKING OR STARING** at a person in a sexual manner; **touching, grabbing, pinching, or brushing up** against someone in a sexual way; **exposing oneself** or trying to expose another; **writing or sending sexual messages, notes, sexual graffiti, demeaning information or pictures; spying** on someone or using camera phones to **take pictures of someone while showing or dressing; spreading rumors;** forcing kisses or other sexual advances; forcing someone to look at **SEXUAL PICTURES OR MATERIALS.**

## Warning Signs

Avoidance or loss of interest in school, parish, or other peer activities **Changes in mood or behavior** Avoidance of discussions about school, church, or other peer activities **WITHDRAWAL FROM FRIENDS AND FAMILY** Use of inappropriate sexual comments, jokes, and / or gestures **Requests to change schools / drop out of activities and programs** General signs of distress: changes in academic performance, depressed mood, sleep / appetite problems, somatic concerns, impaired attention, social withdrawal, thoughts of self harm...

## What I Can Do

**TALK** to your children about the qualities of right relationships, **signs of risk**, and **WHAT TO DO** if they or others are being harassed. **Model appropriate behavior** **MONITOR** your child's behavior Set clear expectations for your child's behavior toward others. Don't tell or laugh at jokes that are sexually demeaning. *Use language that avoids stereotyping* individuals by gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics. If you believe that you or your child is being harassed *seek assistance.* Contact the Diocese of Grand Island Child Protection Office at (308)382-6565 or [cpo@gidiocese.org](mailto:cpo@gidiocese.org)

