

What can I do if I feel sexually harassed or harmed by someone?

KEY WORDS

harassment | harm | support | report



If you feel sexually harassed or harmed by someone, know that you're not alone, and there are actions you can take to protect yourself. Let's go over how you can prioritise your well-being and take steps to address the situation. Some suggestions have been covered in the text "How can I recognise sexual harassment?", but you can find a more extensive guide below, to help you make the best choice for you.

Some actions that can help you in most situations:

1. Trust your feelings

If something feels wrong or makes you uncomfortable, trust your instincts. There is a reason why your gut is activated. No matter what the situation may be, it's not your fault, even if your harasser might tell you otherwise or that you were asking for it.

2. Reach out for support

Talk to someone you trust, such as a parent, friend, family member, a friend's parent, coach, teacher, school counsellor, or doctor. It's important to share your feelings and experiences with someone who can offer support and guidance.

3. Establish your boundaries

If you suspect that someone has bad intentions towards you, let them know that their behaviour is unwanted, and you want it to stop. Keep it short and speak clearly and calmly. Then, walk away, which in some cases may be enough to get them to stop.

4. Keep records of suspicious behaviour

If you're comfortable, document incidents of harassment. You can do this by saving any messages, photos, recording dates and times of certain incidents, and also taking note of any witnesses that were around. This information can be helpful if you decide to report the harassment to the police

5. Get the police involved

If you feel comfortable or that you have enough evidence, report the harassment to school authorities or law enforcement like the police. They can guide you on the appropriate steps to take and help.

6. Seek professional help

If the harassment you've experienced stresses you out, makes you feel depressed, anxious, sleep-deprived, talking to a good therapist or psychologist may help. Don't be shy to also reach out to organisations that specialize in supporting survivors of sexual harassment or assault. They can provide counselling, resources, and assistance tailored to your situation.

7. Know your rights

Familiarise yourself with your rights to live with dignity and safety in your community and inform yourself about policies that already exist to address sexual harassment.

8. Self-care

Recovering from the effect of sexual harassment requires you to take care of yourself emotionally and physically. Seek activities that bring you comfort and surround yourself with positive influences.

Many people have gone and continue to go through what you may be experiencing. Do not silence your voice, but allow it to guide you to the other side of this problem. There are numerous resources and trusted people ready to help you navigate through this difficult time.

Whether you choose to report the incident, seek counselling, or explore legal action, seeking support is not a sign of weakness but of strength. You got this!

**INCLUSION AND
STAYING SAFE**

