



OFFICE FOR CHILD AND
YOUTH PROTECTION

ARCHDIOCESE OF
PHILADELPHIA

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

As a part of our continued efforts to provide safe, healthy environments where young people can maximize their learning potential and live fuller lives, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia has introduced a new lesson from our Safe Environment child abuse prevention program for young people. The lesson for twelfth grade students focused sexual harassment and teens.

As your teen nears graduation, they are out in the real world without your protection and supervision more and more. They may be hanging out with friends, starting to date, and even working for the first time. It is important that they know how to recognize and protect themselves from sexual harassment and abuse.

The lesson on sexual harassment focuses on acts and behaviors that are common in the lives of teens. One of the program's goals is to help young people distinguish between sexual harassment and flirting behaviors. This is accomplished by helping students identify how the different behaviors make the recipient feel. Why? Sexual harassment is always *in the eyes of the beholder*. This means whether a behavior is- or is not- sexual harassment is determined from the recipient's point of view; regardless of the intent.

Students will be provided step-by-step instructions in the event that sexual harassment occurs. First, they should tell the person to stop and let them know that his/her behaviors are making them feel uncomfortable. If that does not stop the harassment, they should keep a journal, tell an adult, and report the harassment, if needed.

It is important parents talk to their teens about appropriate behaviors, make sure they know their rights, and review what to do in a dangerous situation.

Please feel free to let us know if you have any questions.

Leslie J. Davila, M.S.
Director, Office for Child and Youth Protection
Ldavila@archphila.org

