

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

### WHAT IT IS

According to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, sexual harassment is defined as:

- Verbal abuse, unwelcome remarks, looks, jokes, innuendos, or taunting about a person's clothing, body or sexual activities.
- Displaying pornographic pictures.
- Leering, ogling or obscene gestures.
- Demanding sexual favours accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning one's job.
- Rape (Assault)

In addition, the B.C. Human Rights Code states that sexual harassment is considered to be discrimination on the basis of sex, which is illegal.

### HOW IT IS EXPRESSED

Sexual harassment is expressed verbally, physically and psychologically.

### WHO DOES IT

Sexual harassment crosses all marital, racial, class and sexual orientation boundaries.

### WHERE IT HAPPENS

- 90% of working women report receiving unwanted sexual attention on the job.
- A Canadian university study found that, in order to avoid sexual harassment, 1 in 6 female graduate students had altered study plans, avoided taking a class from someone or choosing a particular thesis supervisor.

### MYTHS

- Women invite sexual harassment by their behavior and /or dress.
- Women often make false claims.
- Women who hate men or have no sense of humor.
- Sexual harassment is normal and harmless male behavior.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Confront the harasser assertively (if you feel safe/strong enough.)
- Group confrontation with the support of peers, family and/or friends.
- Document incidents.
- Talk to others you know and trust.
- Find out if anyone else has experienced harassment from the same person.
- Report to your school principal, who is legally responsible for harassment that takes place on school grounds.
- Report the incidents to the police.
- Make a complaint to the B.C. Human Rights Coalition or the Canadian Rights Commission (or just call for advice).
- Get legal council
- Call your local Rape Crisis Centre for counseling and guidance.