

HOW TO HANDLE HARASSMENT IN THE HALLWAYS IN THREE MINUTES

(From the Toronto District School Board)

1. STOP the harassment.

Interrupt the comment/halt the physical harassment.

DO NOT pull students aside for confidentiality unless absolutely necessary.

Make sure all the students in the area hear your comments.

It is important that all students, whether onlookers, potential targets, or potential harassers, get the message that students are safe and protected in this school.

2. IDENTIFY the harassment.

Label the form of harassment: "You just made a harassing comment/put-down based upon race (religion, ethnicity, abilities, gender, age, sexual orientation, economic status, size, etc.)."

Do not imply that the victim is a member of that identifiable group.

A major goal is to take the "spotlight" off the target and turn the focus to the behaviour. Students should realize what was said, regardless of what was meant (e.g., kidding).

3. BROADEN the response.

Do not personalize your response at this stage: "At this school we do not harass people." "Our community does not appreciate hateful/thoughtless behaviour."

Re-identify the offensive behaviour: "This name calling can also be hurtful to others who overhear it."

"We don't do put-downs at this school" specifically includes those listening, as well as the school community in general. Even if they were "only kidding", harassers must realize the possible ramifications of their actions.

4. ASK for change in future behaviour.

Personalize the response: "Chris, please pause and think before you act."

Check in with the victim at this time: "If this continues, please tell me, and I will take further action. We want everyone to be safe at this school."

Now turn the "spotlight" on the harasser specifically, asking for accountability. Again, be sure not to treat the target like a helpless victim. Rather, plainly give them this responsibility on behalf of others.