

Co-op Placement Boss Scenario Activity

Activity

Resource:

Gender-Based Violence Prevention Education
Resources

Grade(s): 7 8 9

Boss at my co-op placement is always making comments about my dress. Should I just ignore it?

H&PE Curriculum Connections

Grade 7: A1.1, A1.2, A1.4, A1.5, A1.6, D2.2, D2.4

Grade 8: A1.1, A1.2, A1.4, A1.5, A1.6, D2.2, D2.3, D3.2

Grade 9: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, C2.2, C2.3, C3.3

What Is It All About?

Everyone has a right to work in a healthy, safe, respectful, and equal environment that is free of harassment. Dealing with this type of sexual harassment can be particularly difficult for youth as they develop their sense of self, confidence, and skills for succeeding in the workplace. This Draw the Line scenario explores the nature of youth–adult workplace relationships and the power structures that exist that may prevent youth from taking action when they are subjected to unwanted attention.

During this activity, students identify the feelings and emotions of the person in the scenario, taking note of the emotional impacts of workplace sexual harassment. This scenario teaches students about the difficulties of navigating power imbalances and why victims and bystanders often feel powerless. By connecting with the emotional impact of the harassment, the students will learn the importance of being empathetic and supportive bystanders.

The video used for this activity has two parts.

In Part 1 of the video, Julie Lalonde presents the complexity of the issue presented in the Draw the Line Co-op Placement Boss scenario including:

- Why these types of situations are emotionally complex for youth to navigate as they develop their sense of self, confidence, and workplace skills
- The power structures in these situations that discourage individuals from speaking up about sexual harassment

In Part 2 of the video, Julie summarizes the key lessons from the Draw the Line Co-op Placement Boss scenario.

What Do We Need?

- [Link to the Co-op Placement Boss scenario video](#) and projection equipment
- [Draw the Line Co-op Placement Boss scenario card](#) or poster, or a projected copy of the card
- Guided discussion questions:
 - What does it mean to “trust your gut”? Why is it important to pay attention to your “gut” feelings?
 - Why are these types of situations complex?
 - What does it mean to be a supportive friend?
 - Why is it important to respond to these situations when you see them happening to others?
 - Why is it important to make sure you have a person’s consent before you take action to support them in resolving their situation?
 - How can you respond if someone sends you a message that makes you feel uncomfortable?

- Chart paper or shared electronic document
- **Student Worksheet**
- Refer to **Ophea’s Gender-Based Violence Prevention Education Resource Database** for additional resources.

Opportunities for Assessment

During the Minds On, observe small-group conversation in order to assess student understanding of power structures and the hierarchy of authority and use this to inform next steps.

During the Action, use students’ responses on the Student Worksheet to assess their understanding of self-identity, the complexity of emotions, the critical role of bystanders, and how to apply strategies to respond to such situations.

During the Consolidation, use the written follow-up dialogue exchange and the student Exit Card to assess student understanding of strategies that may be used to respond to such situations.

How Is It Done?

Minds On

Have students work in small groups, and share the Draw The Line Co-op Placement Boss scenario card with them. Have students use their Student Worksheet (or a shared document, sticky notes, chart paper, or Graffiti Wall) and deconstruct and capture their ideas in response to the following questions:

1. What do you think that the person may be feeling when they say, “It really creeps me out.”? (e.g., feeling uncomfortable, in danger, grossed out, disgusted)
2. Assume you are the person who has received this text. What do you mean by “Ok, and?” Finish the thought. (e.g., “What?”, “Why does this bother you?”, “How can I help?”, “What should I do?”, “Have you mentioned it to a co-worker or supervisor?”)
3. What is the problem in this scenario? (e.g., workplace harassment, coercion, grooming, exploitation) Why do you think this person is messaging you instead of talking to their boss? (e.g., power structure, fear or reprisal, concern for future, confused about feelings, trusting a good friend)
4. What does it mean to “trust your gut”? Why is it important to pay attention to your “gut” feelings?

5. Extrapolate this scenario to your own experiences, or that of one of your peers (friend, cousin, close sibling). What type of situation might you be in where you receive text messages that make you feel uncomfortable? (e.g., roles they may have had where a hierarchy of authority was present such as volunteering, babysitting, lawn and garden work, job training, camp counsellor, student committee or club). How might this make you feel? What would you do if it were happening to you?

If time permits, have groups share some or all of their responses with the class, to help clarify or extend their thinking.

Action

Watch Part 1 of the Co-op Placement Boss scenario video.

Have students revisit their shared notes from the Minds On, adding what they learned from watching the first part of the video to reflect further on the complexity of the situation (e.g., the complexity of the person's feelings and the depth of the problem in this scenario).

Have students brainstorm possible responses to their friend to give support as well as the validation the friend is looking for. Have students then brainstorm what the follow-up text exchange might be, acknowledging the person's feelings, possible options for action, and pros and cons for each action.

Watch Part 2 of the Co-op Placement Boss scenario video. Encourage students to pay attention to the importance of intervening in a supportive and empathetic manner as a bystander. Encourage students to take notes in the section provided on their worksheet as they listen to Julie.

After watching the video, use the back of the Draw the Line card to engage students in a whole-class discussion on what messages resonated with them. Co-create a list of trusted adults and local organizations who can provide additional support.

Consolidation

Have students use their brainstorming from the Action and what they learned from watching Part 2 of the video to write a follow-up dialogue exchange. Have them write an acknowledgment of the person's feelings and possible options for action. If time permits, have groups share their text dialogue with the larger group.

Have students work individually to complete their Exit Card on the Student Worksheet or record their responses (voice or video), encouraging them to anchor their responses to their “gut” feelings and core values and to list strategies they may use to respond to such situations.

Ideas for Extension

Before the activity: Review the IDEAL Decision-making Model with students to guide their thinking about possible actions. This framework includes five steps:

- I – Identify the problem.
- D – Describe all possible solutions.
- E – Evaluate the pros and cons of each solution.
- A – Act on the best solution.
- L – Learn from the choices.

After the activity: Use the IDEAL Decision-making Model with students when exploring other [Draw the Line scenarios](#).

Review strategies for using effective means of communication, affirming oneself, setting boundaries, regulating emotions, encouraging others to take responsibility for their actions, and supporting a person in need.

Watch additional [Draw the Line videos](#), such as [Introduction to Gender-Based Violence Prevention](#) or [Introduction to Consent](#), to extend discussions about taking action.

Complete the [Coaching the Bystander](#) activity in the [Ideas for Action: Growth and Development resource](#).

Consider using additional activities from Opeha’s Ideas for Action: Growth and Development resource.

Educator Notes

- Before starting a classroom conversation, be aware that some students may have experienced situations related to the topic, either directly or indirectly, in the past or present. This includes recognizing that some students might have already experienced sexual harassment, and some might

have already been on the receiving end of the kind of text message discussed and perhaps did not respond “appropriately.” Therefore, it is important to identify resources for support (i.e., trusted adult, educator, guidance counsellor, social worker, social services, health nurse, and/or school liaison officer) that you can share discreetly or generally with students.

- Ensure students are aware of and can access referral services and resources if they need to. Consult the [**Working with Adult Team Members section**](#) in the Ideas for Action: Growth and Development resource for more information. See also Ophea’s Gender-Based Violence Prevention Education Resource Database for additional resources.
- Coordinate with school support staff (e.g., school guidance counsellor, social worker, principal) to ensure they are aware and available to support or refer students, if needed, during and after the discussion.
- Allow students to capture their feelings in a variety of ways (notes, pictures, doodles, drawings). Understand that students might have a lot of different feelings in reaction to this scenario. Help students unpack the feelings that come up and work through them in a healthy way.
- Support students with strategies for identifying and managing their emotions in ways that allow them to focus on self-care and their overall well-being.
- Review effective means of communication and how to be affirmative.
- Remind students about the Better and Best Tips applicable before, during, and after the activity (refer to [**Tips for Constructive Classroom Conversations**](#)).
- We each have a responsibility to protect children and youth from harm. As a professional educator working directly with students and supporting others doing the same, you have a duty to report when you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection.