



**Prevention of Sexual Harassment in Secondary Schools**

**Education Session to Teachers**

# What is Sexual Harassment?

“It is a set of unwanted behaviours perceived as abusive of a physical, verbal or physical, verbal or non-verbal, and may include attempts at disruptive physical contact, requests for sexual favours with the aim or effect of obtaining advantages, blackmail and even use of force or strategies to coerce the other person's will”

Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego (CITE), 2018, p.4

# Sexual Harassment

- ❖ is a form of gender-based violence and discrimination;
- ❖ can severely limit a person's dignity and physical and moral integrity;
- ❖ can cause various impacts at individual, social, organizational and economic levels.

Matos, Machado, Morais, Rodrigues & Isaías (2022)

# Sexual Harassment in Schools

- ❖ It is a global event;
- ❖ It is a public health issue;
- ❖ It affects adolescents of both sexes, but girls are often more harassed.

Gadin & Stein, 2019; Sakellari, Berglund, Santala, Bacatum, Sousa, Aarnio, Kubiliutė, Propas & Lagin (2022); APAV, (2019)

# Sexual Harassment in numbers

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over *150 million children* and *teenagers* under the age of 18 have experienced some kind of *sexual violence*

(Ogunjimi, Oliveira, Vasconcelos & Silva, 2017)

# Sexual Harassment in numbers

About one in five children in Europe are victims of some form of sexual violence.

## INCLUDES:

sexual touching, rape, sexual harassment, grooming, exhibitionism, exploitation in prostitution and pornography, online sexual extortion and coercion...

<https://human-rights-channel.coe.int/stop-child-sexual-abuse-in-sport-en.html>

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# Sexual Harassment in numbers

Between **70% and 85%** of children know their abuser

The majority of children are **victims of people they trust**

1/3 of abused children **never tell anyone**

<https://human-rights-channel.coe.int/stop-child-sexual-abuse-in-sport-en.html>

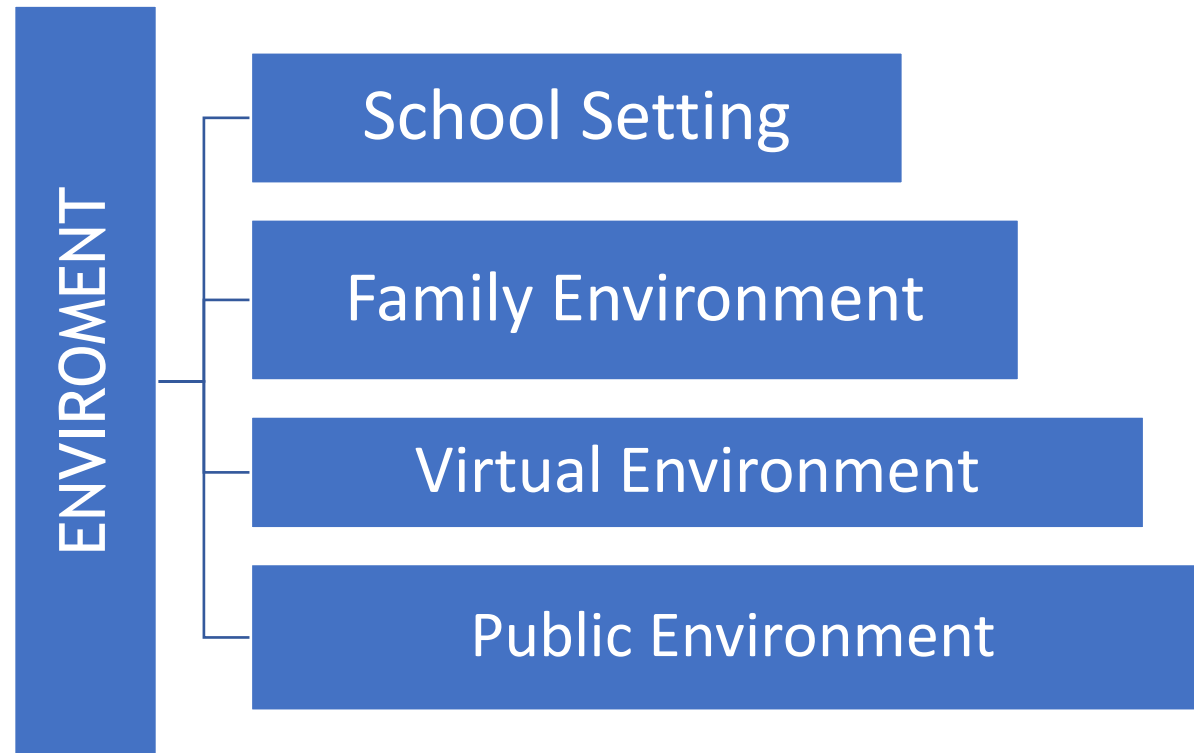
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# Sexual Harassment in numbers





# Settings where Sexual Harassment can happen



# Sexual Harassment - types

personal contact



verbal



non-verbal



physical

virtual contact



mobile phone



e-mail



social media

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# Sexual Harassment - consequences

- ❖ anxiety;
- ❖ poor physical condition;
- ❖ low life satisfaction;
- ❖ symptoms of trauma;
- ❖ fear;
- ❖ unpopularity;
- ❖ social isolation;
- ❖ shame;
- ❖ loss of confidence;
- ❖ sleep disturbances;
- ❖ eating problems;
- ❖ substance abuse;
- ❖ depression;
- ❖ guilt

# Sexual Harassment – strategies to prevent

- Create and disseminate a sexual harassment policy;
- Provide guidance on how to act when there's a complaint of sexual harassment (protocol);
- Organize a school assembly on sexual harassment, and involve students in planning and implementation;
- Disseminate information about sexual Harassment, including what it is, what the school's policy is, and what students can and should do if they are harassed or witnessed;
- Designate a teacher to manage the school's sexual harassment policy and to receive complaints;
- Provide training on sexual harassment to the school community.

# Sexual Harassment – messages

- If sexual harassment is hidden and not discussed in school, we risk normalizing it!
- The culture of an institution can inadvertently support sexual harassment and allow it to multiply;
- Usually, sexual harassment occurs in an asymmetrical gender relationship;
- There is a stigma of blaming the victim and excusing the perpetrator;
- Studies show that changing cultural norms about sexual harassment in a school can take years!

# Sexual Harassment

