

A toolkit for parents, carers and other adults supporting young people

solace

1. Keep communication open and free from judgement



Create a safe, welcoming space where she can talk to you, but make it clear that she can approach any trusted adult – it doesn't have to be you. Make sure she knows she can talk about anything without fear of blame, punishment, or overreaction. If she does come to you about these issues, listen calmly, believe her and thank her for sharing this with you.

If she feels safe talking to you, she's much more likely to seek your support, ideally before any harassment gets out of hand.

2. Teach her what harassment is and that it is never her fault



Explain that harassment can include: unwanted comments about her body; sexual jokes, name-calling, rumours, or pressure; unwanted touching; unwanted messages, images or videos of a sexual nature. Make it clear that she is not in trouble and that responsibility always lies with the person carrying out the harassment.

3. Arm her with confidence, resilience and boundaries



Don't wait for something to happen to have these conversations: speak to girls about what to do if they receive unwanted attention online or in person. Do they know how they would respond? What kind of response would they be comfortable with? What would they do if they saw it happen to a friend?

Encourage girls to trust their instincts; say "no" firmly, if it feels safe to do so; leave situations that make them uncomfortable; stay with supportive friends. Confidence and preparation can help girls respond safely.

4. Take any report seriously and take action when needed



If she tells you something happened: stay calm; document what happened; contact the venue where it happened (eg, school), if appropriate; escalate, if necessary, to protect her safety.

Your response shows her she deserves support and respect.

5. Monitor and guide online activity respectfully

With the way teenagers spend their time and socialise now, parents and carers need to ask them about their day online as well as at in-person spaces like school. You can also help them keep themselves safe by discussing things like why it's important not to share personal images in certain online spaces and showing them how and when to report and block harassers.

By focusing on guidance, rather than spying, adults can establish trust and support girls to build their own confidence and resilience.

