

Original article

# Impact of Sexual Harassment Victimization by Peers on Subsequent Adolescent Victimization and Adjustment: A Longitudinal Study

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** To examine gender differences in prevalence and types of sexual harassment victimization experienced in grade 9 and how it contributes to relationship victimization and psychological adjustment 2.5 years later.

**Methods:** A total of 1734 students from 23 schools completed self-report surveys at entry to grade 9 and end of grade 11. Self-report data were collected on victimization experiences (sexual harassment, physical dating violence, peer violence, and relational victimization) and adjustment (emotional distress, problem substance use, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, maladaptive dieting, feeling unsafe at school, and perpetration of violent delinquency). Separate analyses by sex were prespecified.

**Results:** Sexual harassment victimization was common among boys (42.4%) and girls (44.1%) in grade 9, with girls reporting more sexual jokes, comments, and unwanted touch than among boys, and with boys reporting more homosexual slurs or receiving unwanted sexual content. For girls, sexual harassment victimization in grade 9 was associated with elevated risk of self-harm, suicidal thoughts, maladaptive dieting, early dating, substance use, and feeling unsafe at school. A similar pattern of risk was found for boys, with the exception of dieting and self-harm behaviors. Adjusted odds ratios (AOR) indicated these students were significantly more likely than nonharassed students to report victimization by peers and dating partners 2.5 years later (AOR for boys and girls, respectively; all  $p < .01$ ), including sexual harassment (AOR: 2.45; 2.9), physical dating violence (AOR: 2.02; 3.73), and physical peer violence (AOR: 2.75; 2.79). Gr 9 sexual harassment also contributed significantly to emotional distress (AOR: 2.09; 2.24), problem substance use (AOR: 1.79; 2.04), and violent delinquency perpetration (AOR: 2.1; 3.34) 2.5 years later (boys and girls, respectively; all  $p < .01$ ).

**Conclusions:** Sexual harassment at the beginning of high school is a strong predictor of future victimization by peers and dating partners for both girls and boys, and warrants greater prevention and intervention efforts. © 2009 Society for Adolescent Medicine. All rights reserved.

**Keywords:** Sexual harassment; Youth; Victimization

Sexual harassment is typically defined as a form of unwanted or unwelcome sexual attention, and is considered a form of gender-based violence [1]. Sexual harassment

among youth encompasses acts that are sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an education program or activity, or that create a hostile or abusive educational environment [2]. Such harassment can take physical forms such as a pulling at clothing, rubbing up against another person, or grabbing/pinching, as well as verbal forms such as sexual comments, jeers, rumor spreading, or sexual jokes.

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Sexual harassment has been recognized for many years as being a problem in the workplace, university campuses, and military settings, where studies show that about two in five women and one in six men report at least one incident in the past 2 years [3]. Although sexual harassment is gender based by nature, women experience it differently from men. Women are more likely to report being objectified, put down, or treated differently because of their gender [4], whereas men experience vulgar and homophobic comments, presumably to enforce traditional gender role stereotypes [1]. Most students also experience some forms of sexual harassment during high school, either occasionally (59%) or often (27%), with girls experiencing more frequent and severe forms than boys [5,6]. Even when the timeframe of questions about unwanted sexual behaviors and harassment is narrowed from “ever” (i.e., lifetime prevalence) to the past 2 weeks, 15% of high school students report being subjected to unwanted and personally upsetting sexual harassment [7].

Despite awareness of the frequency of sexual harassment, there is little available research on the forms of harassment experienced by adolescent boys and girls or how it may affect them differently over time. Although an atmosphere of sexual harassment is unhealthy and alienating, further study is needed to determine the effects of such acts on girls’ and boys’ interpersonal adjustment, especially over time. In the only longitudinal study of this issue, sexual harassment among grade 8 students predicted adjustment problems 3 years later [8]. Younger girls and boys who associated with deviant peers were more likely to be the victims of sexual harassment. Moreover, girls who reached pubertal development earlier were at increased risk for sexual harassment, most likely because of inappropriate attention by others. Of particular concern was the finding that girls who reported higher victimization in the eighth grade also had increased problems with substance use, lower self-esteem, and symptoms of depression 3 years later. These findings suggest that, similar to findings with adults, sexual harassment is a risk factor for psychological problems among youth.

Students’ experiences of abuse by peers in high school have a significant influence on their antisocial behavior and psychological adjustment [9,10]. Because victimization is highly stable, many of the same youth experience ongoing abuse from peers that contributes to their further mistreatment and adjustment problems, which may be especially relevant for boys who do not fit the rigid and conventional notion of masculinity [11,12]. Therefore, we conducted the present study of sexual harassment beginning in grade 9 (the first year of high school for this sample), because this is a time when many students are subjected to verbal and physical taunts and aggression from both their own classmates and older students. As they attempt to navigate entry into peer groups, many are faced with decisions and conflicts that pose a risk to their emotional well-being and are bombarded with negative gender-based messages [13]. We considered sexual harassment as a developmental risk factor, and anticipated that it could interfere with social adjustment and

emotional well-being and lead to further victimization in peer and dating relationships. Our primary objectives were to document the types and prevalence of sexual harassment experienced by boys and girls, and the negative outcomes associated with such experiences in the short and longer term. Given the gendered context of sexual harassment and that girls report more harassment and related distress than boys, we examined the short- and longer-term risks and outcomes separately for boys and girls.

## Methods

### *Study participants and design*

Students (N = 1897) from 23 high schools participated in this study, which was approved by the Institutional Review Boards at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and the University of Western Ontario. Data were collected as part of a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of a school-based intervention program to reduce adolescent dating violence and related risk behaviors. Sexual harassment victimization was assessed at the beginning of grade 9 and again 2.5 years later at the end of grade 11, along with other self-reported behaviors described below.

Demographic information was collected from the parents of participating students with a take home questionnaire in grade 9 (return rate = 65%, n = 1225). The majority of participants’ parents were Caucasian (89%), married (82%), employed (86%), and had some post-secondary education (73%). However, a low return of this survey does not make these data representative of our sample in general. Indeed, the students in this study were much more diverse in ethnicity and family status.

### *Measures*

*Sexual harassment victimization.* Sexual harassment was assessed using a modified version of the AAUW Sexual Harassment Survey of unwanted verbal and physical forms of sexual attention or harassment [5]. The original survey was modified to ask specifically if another teen or classmate had done any of the unwanted acts to him or her in the past 3 months at school, using a dichotomous (yes/no) response scale. Six behaviors of the original 14 were removed based on low relevance or low frequency within high school samples [1,5]. Items included verbal, nonverbal, and physical forms of harassment, shown in Table 1. Because the total item distribution was positively skewed, sexual harassment victimization was dichotomized into absent (no or one experience) or present (two or more experiences).

*Physical dating violence and peer violence.* Physical dating violence victimization was assessed with four items from the Conflict in Adolescent Relationships Inventory (CADRI), a self-report measure with established convergent/divergent validity [14]. Students indicated (yes or no) to behaviors they had experienced in the past year from a boyfriend/

Table 1  
Sexual harassment victimization experiences in grade 9 for boys and girls

| Type of harassment <sup>a</sup>   | Girls        | Boys         | $\chi^2$ (1) | <i>p</i> |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Someone made sexual comments, jokes, gestures, or looks at me                         | 452/954 (47) | 318/897 (35) | 27.08        | <.01     |
| Someone touched, grabbed or pinched me in a sexual way                                | 302/954 (32) | 225/894 (25) | 9.53         | <.01     |
| Someone brushed up against me in a sexual way   | 262/952 (28) | 275/895 (31) | 2.30         | .13      |
| Someone spread sexual rumors about me   | 126/955 (13) | 106/896 (12) | 0.78         | .38      |
| Someone called me a “gay”, “fag”, “dyke”, “lezzie”, “queer” or similar terms          | 219/954 (23) | 298/893 (33) | 24.82        | <.01     |
| Someone pulled at my clothing in a sexual way   | 161/951 (17) | 141/894 (16) | 0.45         | .50      |
| Someone showed, gave, or left me sexual pictures, photographs, messages, or notes     | 90/955 (9)   | 143/891 (16) | 18.35        | <.01     |
| Someone made comments about or rated the parts of my body that makes me a boy or girl | 238/948 (25) | 144/891 (16) | 22.33        | <.01     |

Data are n/N (%).

<sup>a</sup> Items from the American Association of University Women Survey.

girlfriend “while you were having an argument, angry at one another, or having a fight.” Presence of physical abuse was based on endorsement of one or more times (e.g., “he pushed, shoved, or shook me”). Physical peer violence victimization was assessed with one item (yes/no) that asked students whether they had been hit, slapped, or punched by a peer with the intention of harm in the past 3 months. Youth also completed a delinquent behavior inventory developed by the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth [15]. Eight items were chosen to reflect engagement in violent delinquency (e.g., “fought with someone to the point where they needed care for their injuries”). Presence of violent delinquency perpetration (i.e., two or more forms of violent delinquency) was based on prior established cut-offs [16]. Peer relational victimization was assessed with five items from the Self-Report of Aggression and Social Behaviors survey [17]. Students indicated (1 = not at all true; 5 = very true) the extent to which they experienced some form of rumour/gossip spreading or social exclusion in the past 3 months, and those who reported 4 or 5 on one or more items were scored as positive.

*Emotional distress and suicidal thought/self-harm.* Twelve items from the depression and anxiety subscales of the Brief Symptom Inventory [18] were combined to form a measure of emotional distress. Youth indicated (0 = not at all; 4 = extremely) the extent to which they experienced each symptom over the past 7 days. Responses were dichotomized as present or absent, and summed to form a total distress score ( $\alpha = .89$ ). Students were categorized as experiencing emotional distress if they endorsed five or more of the 12 items based on instrument norms and the current distribution of scores. Suicidal thought was assessed with one item (yes/no) asking students if they had considered suicide at any time over the past 3 months. Self-harm was assessed with one item (yes/no) asking students if they had hurt themselves on purpose (cut yourself, burned yourself, etc.) without intending to kill themselves in the past 3 months.

*Maladaptive dieting behaviors.* Four items from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey [19] asked students if they had engaged in any maladaptive dieting behaviors to

lose weight in the past 30 days, including the following: purging; taking pills, powders, or liquids; fasting; and restriction of food. Maladaptive dieting was dichotomized based on the presence of one or more dieting behaviors.

*Problem substance use.* Experience with alcohol and illicit drugs was assessed with the NLSCY [19] and converted to a dichotomous problem substance use score based on the presence of any one of four criteria: drinking 1–2 days a week or more; having five or more drinks at one time in past 30 days; using marijuana 1–2 days a week or more; or having tried any other illicit drug in the past three months.

*Sexually active and early dating.* Students indicated whether they ever had consensual sexual intercourse (yes/no). Early dating was assessed with one item, asking students how old they were when they first started seeing (dating) someone, and dichotomized based on starting dating at 12 years of age or younger (i.e., presence of early dating).

*Feeling unsafe at school.* This variable was coded positive for respondents who indicated they felt unsafe at school on one or more days over the past 30 days.

#### Procedure

Data were collected in October 2004 (T1: grade 9) and 2.5 years later in May, 2007 (T2: grade 11). All grade 9 students were eligible and there were no exclusion criteria. A research assistant explained the study to each class and distributed research information, consent/assent forms, and a demographic survey to send home to parents. During school hours, students completed an on-line survey in the computer room or library under supervision by research staff and teachers. This procedure was identical at T1 and T2. Students were assured that their responses were confidential, were assigned a unique identifier for follow-up, and received help-seeking information.

#### Data analyses

Chi-square analyses were used to identify other risks associated with sexual harassment victimization in grade 9, by

gender. A logistic regression model predicting sexual harassment victimization at T2 was then examined, controlling for demographic variables, baseline scores, and grade 9 intervention status based on the associated RCT. Grade 9 intervention status was included in the model to control for any effects the associated prevention program may have had on any of the outcomes in this study. This model was repeated for related T2 outcomes of relationship victimization and psychological adjustment. Given the gendered-nature of sexual harassment victimization, separate logistic regression analyses were conducted for boys and girls. Adjusted odds ratios (AOR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) are reported for all analyses, with type I error rate set at  $p < .01$ .

## Results

The parent consent–youth assent rate was 75%, with a combined return rate (yes or no) of 82%. Longitudinal analyses included only students who provided data at both waves (1734/1897; retention rate 92%; 51% female). Of the 334 students who had changed schools at T2, 186 were located and completed the on-line survey at their new school. The remaining students lost to follow-up refused to participate ( $n = 29$ ) or could not be located ( $n = 119$ ). The subsample of students lost to follow-up did not differ from the full sample on baseline measures.

### Risk factors associated with sexual harassment in grade 9

A sizable number of students ( $n = 790/1822$ ; 43%) was classified as experiencing sexual harassment in grade 9. Although rates were the same for girls (44.1%) and boys (42.4%), types of harassment experiences differed (Table 1). Girls were more likely than boys to experience being the recipient of sexual jokes, comments, and unwanted touch, while boys were more likely to be subjected to homosexual slurs or given sexual pictures and notes. Boys and girls reported similar rates of being brushed against in a sexual way, being the victim of rumors, and having their clothing pulled in a sexual way.

Sexual harassment victimization was associated with several significant risk factors at T1. Notably, for girls, sexual harassment victimization was associated with elevated risk of all study outcomes, as shown in Table 2 (i.e., suicidal

thoughts, self harm, maladaptive dieting, early dating, substance use, and school safety). Significant odds ratios (ORs) ranged from 2.03 (CI: 1.57–2.65) for maladaptive dieting, to 5.88 (CI: 2.52–13.72) and 5.03 (CI: 3.5–7.21) for self-harm and suicidal thoughts, respectively, indicating a two- to almost sixfold increase of such risk factors among girls experiencing sexual harassment. With the exception of dieting and self-harm behaviors a similar pattern of risk was found for boys, with substance use and suicidal thoughts being the highest risk factors (OR 2.94, CI: 2.23–3.89 and 2.75, CI: 1.64–4.6, respectively). In all cases, the magnitude of the impact was smaller for boys than girls.

### Impact of sexual harassment victimization on grade 11 victimization and adjustment

Boys and girls who reported sexual harassment victimization in grade 9 were 2.5 to 3 three times as likely to report it again 2.5 years later, supporting the view that such experiences tend to continue (boys: AOR: 2.45, CI: 1.8–3.32; girls: AOR: 2.9, CI: 2.25–3.42) (Table 3). Table 3 also indicates that sexual harassment in grade 9 was associated with higher risk for other forms of relationship violence in grade 11. For boys, sexual harassment victimization at T1 was associated with higher risk of physical dating violence victimization (AOR: 2.02 CI: 1.19–3.48), physical peer violence victimization (AOR: 2.75, CI: 1.59–4.76), and peer relational victimization (AOR: 1.49, CI: 1.09–2.02) at T2. A comparable pattern for girls was found, with the exception of peer relational victimization: (AOR: 3.73, CI: 2.27–6.61; 2.79, CI: 1.61–4.82; for physical dating violence and physical peer violence, respectively).

Finally, sexual harassment at T1 contributed to risk for several other problem outcomes 2.5 years later, over and above the continuity associated with these problems (i.e., controlling for T1 functioning). For girls and boys, emotional distress, problem substance use and violent delinquency perpetration were all significantly predicted by T1 sexual harassment victimization (Table 3). For boys, sexual harassment victimization at T1 was associated with an elevated risk at T2 for emotional distress (AOR: 2.09 CI: 1.46–3.0), problem substance use (AOR: 1.79 CI: 1.29–2.48), and violent delinquency perpetration (AOR: 2.1 CI: 1.39–3.16). A similar pattern was found for girls: emotional distress

Table 2  
Risk factors associated with sexual harassment victimization in grade 9, by gender

|                     | Boys (n = 878)   |          | Girls (n = 939)   |          |
|---------------------|------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
|                     | OR (95% CI)      | <i>p</i> | OR (95% CI)       | <i>P</i> |
| Suicidal thoughts   | 2.75 (1.64–4.6)  | <.01     | 5.03 (3.5–7.21)   | <.01     |
| Self-harm           | 2.40 (0.99–5.9)  | <.05     | 5.88 (2.52–13.72) | <.01     |
| Maladaptive dieting | 1.00 (0.73–1.41) | .95      | 2.03 (1.57–2.65)  | <.01     |
| Early dating        | 2.60 (1.94–3.48) | <.01     | 3.19 (2.42–4.21)  | <.01     |
| Substance use       | 2.94 (2.23–3.89) | <.01     | 4.68 (3.51–6.24)  | <.01     |
| Unsafe at school    | 1.99 (1.5–2.65)  | <.01     | 2.13 (1.6–2.84)   | <.01     |

\**p* Values refer to  $\chi^2$  analysis examining sexual harassment versus no sexual harassment group by dichotomous outcomes.

(AOR: 2.24 CI: 1.59–3.16), problem substance use (AOR: 2.04 CI: 1.5–2.77), and violent delinquency perpetration (AOR: 3.34 CI: 1.27–8.78).

## Discussion

Sexual harassment victimization is prevalent among youth entering high school, occurring at equivalent rates for girls (44%) and boys (43%) in the present study. However, the nature of sexual harassment victimization differed for boys and girls, with girls experiencing more unwanted comments, gestures, and touch, and boys experienced more homosexual slurs and being shown or given unwanted sexual pictures, photos, messages, or notes. At the same time, the overlap across items should not be discounted, as significant numbers of both boys and girls reported each type of harassment.

This research extends previous work on sexual harassment in a number of ways. First, it documents the negative impact for both boys and girls. Historically, sexual harassment victimization has been viewed as a form of violence experienced primarily by girls, with significantly more negative outcomes for girls than boys [8]. Although our results indicate that the immediate impact and longer-term outcomes associated with sexual harassment victimization are often stronger and more negative for girls, the experience of sexual harassment victimization for boys should not be overlooked. Sexual harassment experienced by boys was also associated with risk for virtually all outcomes assessed in this study, with the exception of unhealthy dieting and self-harm. In addition, our findings point to the importance of studying sexual harassment victimization over time. Sexual harassment victimization at the start of high school was associated with elevated risk, in terms of other forms of victimization and psychological adjustment difficulties 2.5 years later. These results add substantially to our knowledge about the longer-term impact and effects of sexual harassment victimization in an adolescent sample.

With previous studies reporting rates of sexual harassment victimization as high as 80% (depending on the timeframe), some authors have suggested that such interactions between teens in schools are an accepted (if not welcomed) component of adolescent lives [20]. Nonetheless, results from this study

and others strongly suggest that boys and girls are distressed by gender-based harassment. The presence of sexual harassment victimization in this study was associated with a range of risks for both boys and girls. For girls, an elevated risk of all outcomes under study (i.e., suicidal thoughts, self-harm, maladaptive dieting, early dating, substance use, and school safety) was associated with sexual harassment victimization. Consistent with previous research demonstrating that adolescent girls who experience repeated sexual harassment are more likely to attempt suicide [21], our findings show that the impact of sexual harassment victimization in girls is severe, and was reflected in odds ratios as high as 5.88 for self-harm (e.g., cutting behaviors) and 5.03 for suicidal thoughts. When sexual harassment frequently occurs in adolescent girls' lives, they may be at risk for dysfunctional and abusive relationships in adulthood, in part because they come to expect demeaning behaviors as normal in heterosexual relationships [22,23].

Although most research on sexual harassment victimization among youth attempts to describe the impact cross-sectionally, this study contributes to a more precise knowledge of the long-term impact of sexual harassment victimization by studying the issue longitudinally. We found that sexual harassment victimization in grade 9 was associated with higher risk for other forms of relationship violence, such as physical peer violence and sexual harassment victimization at grade 11 for both boys and girls, and dating violence and peer relational aggression for boys. These findings indicate additive risk for these outcomes as the analyses controlled for prior victimization experiences. Moreover, sexual harassment victimization in grade 9 contributed to risk for emotional distress, substance use, and violent delinquency 2.5 years later, over and above the continuity associated with these problems. It may not be enough to ensure that sexual harassment stops; additional supports may be required to reduce the impact over time.

The longitudinal pattern was similar for boys and girls in that emotional distress, problem substance use and violent delinquency perpetration were all significantly predicted by grade 9 sexual harassment victimization, with adjusted odds ratios ranging from 1.79 (problem substance use for boys) to 3.34 (violent delinquency perpetration for girls). The

Table 3

Logistic regression of the contribution of sexual harassment victimization in grade 9 to relationship victimization and psychological adjustment outcomes in grade 11, by gender

| Grade 11 outcomes                 | Boys                 |          | Girls                |          |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|
|                                   | Adjusted OR (95% CI) | <i>P</i> | Adjusted OR (95% CI) | <i>p</i> |
| <b>Relationship victimization</b> |                      |          |                      |          |
| Sexual harassment victimization   | 2.45 (1.8–3.32)      | <.01     | 2.9 (2.25–3.42)      | <.01     |
| Physical dating violence          | 2.02 (1.19–3.48)     | <.01     | 3.73 (2.27–6.61)     | <.01     |
| Physical peer violence            | 2.75 (1.59–4.76)     | <.01     | 2.79 (1.61–4.82)     | <.01     |
| Peer relational victimization     | 1.49 (1.09–2.02)     | <.01     | 1.32 (.96–1.82)      | .08      |
| <b>Psychological adjustment</b>   |                      |          |                      |          |
| Emotional distress                | 2.09 (1.46–3.0)      | <.01     | 2.24 (1.59–3.16)     | <.01     |
| Problem substance use             | 1.79 (1.29–2.48)     | <.01     | 2.04 (1.5–2.77)      | <.01     |
| Violent delinquency perpetration  | 2.1 (1.39–3.16)      | <.01     | 3.34 (1.27–8.78)     | <.01     |

Odds ratios (ORs) adjusted for demographic variables, baseline scores, and intervention or control status.

violent delinquency finding is noteworthy, given that most studies tend to focus on internalizing and substance-related outcomes. This finding suggests that girls who experience sexual harassment are not simply distressed but over time may also act out in a highly aggressive manner. Sexual harassment victimization, however, did not predict peer relational victimization for girls 2.5 years later. Although girls in the present sample did report more peer relational victimization at both time points than did boys (not presented here), peer relational victimization was not significantly predicted by T1 sexual harassment victimization. The literature on sexual harassment victimization shows that girls are often victimized by boys, whereas boys who experience sexual harassment are also victimized by boys (e.g., homosexual/homophobic slurs). Peer relational victimization is often same-sex peers spreading rumors, exclusion, and other similar behaviors, so it may not be predicted for girls by earlier accounts of sexual harassment likely committed by boys.

#### Study limitations

Despite the methodological strengths of the present study, a few important limitations should be noted. The dichotomization of sexual harassment victimization does not capture the severity, chronicity, or subjective impact of such experiences. Although there was overlap in types of behaviors experienced by boys and girls, it is difficult to know whether a particular behavior is experienced in the same way (e.g., whether being grabbed in a sexual manner is experienced the same by boys and girls). Other researchers have found that girls perceive these types of harassing experiences as more harmful and upsetting than do boys [24] and receive “qualitatively more severe, physically intrusive, and intimidating forms of harassment” [26]. Given the context of gender role socialization that occurs in high school and the developmental stage of high school students, gender differences in how sexual harassment is experienced and how it affects adjustment are not surprising. Similarly, sexual minority youth, those from minority ethnic groups, or those with child maltreatment backgrounds might experience higher rates or different forms of sexual harassment as well as more adverse effects because of heightened vulnerability [2]. It may be possible that youth who have had earlier experiences of child abuse or sexual harassment may have had more negative outcomes than youth who first experience sexual harassment victimization in grade 9, factors not controlled for in this study. Future research in this area would benefit from a greater understanding of the mediators or mechanisms through which sexual harassment influences relationship victimization and psychological adjustment for both boys and girls more than 2 years later.

#### Conclusions

During the past several years, schools and organizations have conducted significant work on the issue of sexual

harassment, establishing schoolwide policies making it clear that sexual harassment is illegal and unacceptable behavior. The development of effective policies and prevention strategies should be a high priority for all school districts. The delivery of school-based programs that build healthy, positive relationships among children and youth and that create a school climate that supports gender equality and other forms of diversity can be effective prevention strategies [25]. Moreover, the importance of professional development training opportunities for educators to challenge the view that sexual harassment is simply “boys being boys” needs to be addressed. Although many of these behaviors are not as visible or extreme as other forms of violence, this study shows that these acts of “everyday violence” are likely to have significant impact on the lives of youth and have the potential to cause physical and psychological harm throughout their high school years. Strategies to educate youth about the nature and harm of sexual harassment and related behaviors (e.g., dating violence, unsafe sex, etc.) are warranted.

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