

In your group, discuss each of these scenarios and appoint a member to share your group's recommendations.

SCENARIO #1

A sophomore girl shares the following concern with a senior administrator: She and her boyfriend have broken up after having dated for a year. In the course of their relationship, they became physically intimate. Though no animosity accompanied the split, she has learned that her ex-boyfriend is sharing with his male friends personal details of the relationship. Some of those boys have made off-hand remarks to her about matters she assumed would remain between the two of them. Her request of the administrator is straightforward: she wants the gossip to stop; and she does not want to see her ex-boyfriend punished. She is reluctant to give the administrator permission to talk to the boy or any of his friends. She does not want any of this information shared with her parents, who have told her that she is not to be intimate with any boy until she is married. She adds that if the school moves forward with its investigation without agreeing to her conditions, she will tell her friends that the school has fabricated the entire scenario to advance its own sexual harassment/sexual assault agenda.

Can the school protect this young woman, hold accountable those who are gossiping about her, and honor the conditions she has set?

SCENARIO #2

A junior girl and boy, who have been close friends for many years, are paired to complete an English assignment. They must answer a series of in-class questions and, at the end of the period, turn in a single answer sheet.

Completing the assignment quickly-- and a little bored by the whole thing-- they turn the paper over and begin to make a list of things that they wish they could be doing, other than sitting in class. As they build this list, the boy writes a crude, sexually-charged epithet on the paper. The girl responds with a picture of a heart with an arrow through it.

The teacher calls for the papers to be turned in, and the couple does so. Some hours later, both are summoned to the dean's office and are confronted with their handiwork. They admit the work is theirs; he admits he wrote the crude epithet and acknowledges he should not have done so. The girl volunteers that they talk to one another this way all the time; and she adds that she was not offended.

Has the boy violated the school's sexual abuse policy? Have they both done so? Is their defense (this is the way they talk to one another) appropriate and compelling? In deciding how it will move forward, should the school consider the girl's assertion that she took no offense at the epithet directed toward her?

SCENARIO #3

3 eighth grade girls are chatting during athletics- whispering, and carrying on and not paying attention. When the coach redirects them they tell her that they are discussing something very serious and that they wish to tell her after practice. When everyone else has been dismissed, the girls tell her that they are feeling uncomfortable about a pattern of behavior from a fellow male 8th grader- of snapchatting and texting requests of each girl wearing a certain outfit (leggings and a crop top) and posing in a certain way (standing and hands on hips) so that he can add those pictures to his contacts list. Each girl says that he has asked each of them several times (one girl actually took a screenshot of the request) and that those requests are making them uncomfortable.

When the student in question is interviewed, he denied at once asking for the picture. Once he is shown the screenshot, he says that he likes that kind of picture so that all of his contacts can look the same on his phone. He does have snapchat and instagram and admits that he did ask for the photo multiple times. He was asked to relinquish his phone and to open his “for your eyes only” folders on snapchat. Several folders were labeled with specific names of female students and in those folders are multiple pictures of the girls procured from social media and manipulated/enhanced to focus on certain body parts. He admits collecting the photos but says that he didn’t take any of them- either they were sent directly to him by the girls or he copied them from their online presence. He said that he has not asked any girl for a photo in over 2 weeks.

When his mom came in about this, she said that she does check his phone and texts, but knows that she can’t supervise his snapchats. She didn’t know about the folders and was upset to see them and their content. She did however mention that she has read some of the direct texting threads between her son and some of the girls and felt that they were bordering on “harassment” of her son. She promptly took away his phone and his other devices.

Is this a violation? Is this normal peri-adolescent behavior or is this concerning? Does age matter when it comes to this?