

# Promoting SAFER SCHOOLS through the SCHOOL CODES OF CONDUCT

Comic strip panels 1-4 illustrating a bullying incident and the school's response.

**Panel 1:** Mary, Gabes keeps bothering me, and I don't know what to do to get him to leave me alone. What is he doing?

**Panel 2:** He asked me to go on a date with him, but I said no. Now every time I see him he says rude sexual things about how I look. Today he said that he won't stop until I agree to go on a date with him. It is making me really uncomfortable. What can I do? Please help me.

**Panel 3:** That sounds like sexual harassment. He is not allowed to treat you that way at school. It could get worse if you don't do something. Do you remember when that boy attacked Monica in the hostel last year after he sexually harassed her for months? We must make sure nothing like that happens to you. We MUST talk to a teacher about it!

**Panel 4:** Jessica's sister Jane comes into the room. Mary, those big girls have been sending me nasty sms messages for weeks, and today they stole my lunch money! They can't do that, Jane! It is bullying. The way those girls are acting is against the General Rules of Conduct for Learners. The way Gabes is treating you, Jessica, is also against the Rules. Let's tell Mr Smit.

Comic strip panels 5-7 illustrating the school's response and the Code of Conduct for Teaching Service.

**Panel 5:** The bullies are called to see the principal. Office of the School Principal. Gabes. What Mary told you is true, but ... Please listen. You cannot threaten to beat learners or ignore their mistreatment by other learners. The Code of Conduct for Teaching Service says that a teacher may not humiliate or abuse learners in any way. Teachers must respect the dignity and constitutional rights of every learner. You also have a duty to establish a safe and disciplined school environment. As for your actions towards Jessica, you know that teachers must not make sexual comments. You have a duty to promote gender equality in this school.

**Panel 6:** I will not tolerate this type of behaviour. Learners have a right to feel safe and respected in school, especially around their teachers. Do you remember what happened to Mr Van Wyk last year? He was dismissed because of sexual misconduct with a learner. We will discuss appropriate disciplinary measures for you later. For now, please read the Code of Conduct for Teaching Service again. I must now speak to the children. You are right. I am very sorry. I should not have behaved like that.

**Panel 7:** The Codes of Conduct apply to all learners and teachers at school. Know your rights and stand up for them at school. Then all learners can enjoy safer schools, free of mistreatment and violence. Remember, it is not only teachers who have a duty to behave appropriately towards learners. Learners must also respect the dignity, person and property of each other and of teachers.

Comic strip panels 8-10 illustrating the General Rules of Conduct for Learners.

**Panel 8:** Mr Smit, those big girls stole money from my sister Jane, and they keep teasing her. Yes, and Gabes keeps bothering Jessica - he is sexually harassing her.

**Panel 9:** Jane has to learn to stand up for herself. Jessica, stop crying like a baby or I will have to beat you myself! Gabes is just being friendly. You are a pretty girl after all.

**Panel 10:** Jessica, we were wrong. The teachers don't care. We will just have to deal with it ourselves. I know that Mr Smit is wrong. The principal, Ms Afrikaaner, told us that there are Codes of Conduct that apply to all learners and teachers at school. We talk to her about this.

Comic strip panels 11-13 illustrating the General Rules of Conduct for Learners.

**Panel 11:** Ms Afrikaaner spoke to us in her office this morning. She told us that she has spoken to the girls and to Mr Smit. She gave us a copy of the General Rules of Conduct for Learners too. Thank you Mary. Now Jane and I can feel safe at school. You're welcome. Ms A told me that it is very important that learners know their rights under the Codes of Conduct, and report misconduct. When learners don't report bullying or harassment by other learners or even teachers, it can escalate to more serious physical or sexual abuse. I am glad that you feel safe now.

**Panel 12:** The Codes of Conduct apply to all learners and teachers at school. Know your rights and stand up for them at school. Then all learners can enjoy safer schools, free of mistreatment and violence. Remember, it is not only teachers who have a duty to behave appropriately towards learners. Learners must also respect the dignity, person and property of each other and of teachers.

**Panel 13:** All Namibians have a right to education.

Comic strip panels 14-16 illustrating the General Rules of Conduct for Learners.

**Panel 14:** The Code of Conduct for Teaching Service has many rules about how teachers must behave. All learners have a duty to act respectfully towards their teachers, even when they disagree with them, but teachers also have a duty of respect towards learners. Mr Smit must not treat Jane or Jessica in the way you described.

**Panel 15:** Learners who are guilty of misconduct can be disciplined by the school after a disciplinary hearing. Possible punishment includes: reprimand, additional tasks relating to the contravention, a consultation with the learner's parents.

**Panel 16:** I am glad that you came to tell me this, Mary. You are right. The General Rules of Conduct for Learners say that all learners must respect the dignity, person and property of teachers and learners, and learners must not harm other learners or behave in a disgraceful, improper or indecent manner towards other learners.

Comic strip panels 17-19 illustrating the General Rules of Conduct for Learners.

**Panel 17:** The Code of Conduct for Teaching Service has many rules about how teachers must behave. All learners have a duty to act respectfully towards their teachers, even when they disagree with them, but teachers also have a duty of respect towards learners. Mr Smit must not treat Jane or Jessica in the way you described.

**Panel 18:** Learners who are guilty of misconduct can be disciplined by the school after a disciplinary hearing. Possible punishment includes: reprimand, additional tasks relating to the contravention, a consultation with the learner's parents.

**Panel 19:** I am glad that you came to tell me this, Mary. You are right. The General Rules of Conduct for Learners say that all learners must respect the dignity, person and property of teachers and learners, and learners must not harm other learners or behave in a disgraceful, improper or indecent manner towards other learners.

Comic strip panels 20-22 illustrating the General Rules of Conduct for Learners.

**Panel 20:** The Code of Conduct for Teaching Service has many rules about how teachers must behave. All learners have a duty to act respectfully towards their teachers, even when they disagree with them, but teachers also have a duty of respect towards learners. Mr Smit must not treat Jane or Jessica in the way you described.

**Panel 21:** Learners who are guilty of misconduct can be disciplined by the school after a disciplinary hearing. Possible punishment includes: reprimand, additional tasks relating to the contravention, a consultation with the learner's parents.

**Panel 22:** I am glad that you came to tell me this, Mary. You are right. The General Rules of Conduct for Learners say that all learners must respect the dignity, person and property of teachers and learners, and learners must not harm other learners or behave in a disgraceful, improper or indecent manner towards other learners.

DO YOU ... HAVE A QUESTION? ... HAVE A COMMENT? CONTACT US!

SMS: 081-6000048  
Email: comic@lac.org.na  
Fax: 088-613643  
Post: P.O. Box 604 Windhoek

We would like to hear your feedback about this comic.

Text: CHRISTINA BENINGER  
Illustrations, design and layout: DUDLEY VIAL and PERRI CAPLAN  
Project management: RACHEL COOMER and DIANNE HUBBARD  
Printing: JOHN MEINERT PRINTING (PTY) LTD  
Funding: DUTCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MDG3 FUND  
Publisher: GENDER RESEARCH & ADVOCACY PROJECT LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTRE 2011  
This comic may be freely copied for educational purposes, as long as the source is acknowledged.  
An electronic version of this publication is available on the LAC website: www.lac.org.na