



**Youth Discussions: Sexual Harassment on Social Media and in Public
with Tori Keeth
Joshua Center Video Transcript**

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Today we're gonna talk about gender based harassment. Gender based harassment can appear as unwanted comments, gestures and actions forced on a stranger in a public place without their consent, and is directed at them because of their actual or perceived sex, gender, gender expression or sexual orientation. This harassment is witnessed everywhere on streets, in schools, and now we're seeing it all across social media. The social media accountability is even harder to come by with fake usernames, internet trolls, and apps like Snapchat, where photos and videos just disappear. So today, we're joined by Tori Keeth, an actress, singer and activist who has worked with the Joshua Center in the past. Today, Tori and I are going to talk about experiencing this harassment, reacting to it, and making an effort to understand it so that we can consider prevention methods.

I'm so excited to be here today. I think that this is such an amazing thing to bring awareness on because I feel like it's something that bothers a lot of women and men, but there's not really a platform for us to speak on it. I was trying to think earlier of my, my youngest memory with catcalling. And obviously being a presence on social media, I experienced a lot of sexual harassment and unwanted messages and those kinds of things. And I was trying to think of my youngest memory. And I honestly think one of the first times I was catcalled, was 13 years old, which is horrible. And in this day and age, it's so much easier now to reach different people with social media, and it's just getting worse. So I'm excited to talk about it and talk about how we can have some growth.

Absolutely. And you, you mentioned your first experience with sexual harassment. And it sounds like you've had many, many experiences since that first experience. So do you feel like all of these unwanted comments and gestures and criticisms, in any way have changed the way that you live your life, the way that you interact in society, the way that you interact online?

For sure. I mean, it's, it's something it's always on the forefront of my mind. Whether I'm looking out for myself or for my sister, my friends that I'm with I'm, if I'm wearing shorts during the summer, or a dress, I bring a jacket with me, and I'm always thinking, and it's so wrong, but I'm thinking that but I need to cover up like my legs, the back of me because if I leave my house, I get I get yelled at and followed. One time I was with my dad, one of the first ones was I was around 13. And men followed me with my dad, and they followed us into the store and I kind of had to hide behind him. And so I'm also very aware of not going out places alone by myself.

Is there anything that you would want perpetrators of this harassment to know, I know that you have this big platform and that you oftentimes do use it to hold people accountable, which is incredible. But if you could say something to the bystanders of this harassment, or to the harassers themselves, is there anything that comes to mind? Actually,

The other day, this man, not a man he was, he was probably in his 20s. He was started saying some very vulgar and sexual things to me in person. I, which I feel like could be a fault, but I don't know I'm outspoken. And so what I do is I respond in anger. And I'm like, you do not speak to women like that. That is disgusting. I feel very violated and scared. So I walked my car, I'm sitting in my car, it's just a couple feet away. His friend, who was another boy, he actually came up and asked me to roll down my window, and he apologized for him, which I thought was great. That's a great step in the right direction. He apologized to me, I really appreciated that. I ended up getting out of my car and walking somewhere after and he made the boy that came up or was saying the horrible things to me, come up to me and apologize. And that was great. But it went wrong when he started to justify his actions and saying, Don't you want to hear that? That I want to have sex with you? Don't you want to hear that? I think they get lost with thinking that it's a compliment, right? And that's what I've found, but with me challenging them, is that -- don't you want to hear that? Don't you want to hear that I'm attracted to you? Don't you want to hear, that's a compliment, you should be thankful. So I guess just, that's not a compliment. It's it's not a compliment when I'm at the gym, and I'm working out in smaller clothing for you to come up to me and say that I look good. That doesn't make me feel good. That makes me feel scared.

There. I mean, there are -- there are some ways that people have approached me and they've said, I'm sorry, I don't mean to make you uncomfortable or anything, I just wanted to tell you that I think you're so beautiful. Have a nice day. And I I respect when they don't have an ulterior motive, right, of taking me home, getting my number, or something like that. I do. So I guess what I'm trying to relay is if men are listening to this and wanting to learn how to change, I think that going at it respectfully and knowing that women do have boundaries, and we do have to be, and men too. I mean, this happens to men, as well, I've, I've seen it happen so many times, so many unwanted comments. So for whatever gender is wanting to approach someone just go about it in a very, hey, I don't I don't mean to disturb you, or make you uncomfortable. Let me know if this does. But I just wanted to say you are beautiful. You look amazing. Whatever, I hope you have a nice day. And if I do it, they'll be like, Wow, thank you. That actually means a lot. We should talk then and that that's not but if they're like thank you, I appreciate that. Then you leave you leave. And that's that

Right, absolutely. I completely agree. And I think part of what we've been talking about is, is witnessing people being bystanders this and how to be good bystanders. So do you have any, do you have anything to say about how we can be better bystanders to prevent this type of harassment?

Yeah, I feel like, what I do is i'm whenever I'm in public, I'm very aware of the women around me, and who is around them. So if I see someone, a woman who is being harassed, someone's saying something, I will immediately join her and surround her, cover her whatever. Get them to back off. So I think being a better bystander is being very aware of your surroundings, very aware of of the communication that's going on between people. And there have been many circumstances where I've jumped in, where I thought that it was inappropriate, and, and they all say it's okay, like, I'm totally fine. So it's just don't be afraid to put yourself in those positions of helping someone, even if you think that it's necessary or unnecessary. Because when it's happening to me, when when men are following me, I do wish that a man or a woman, someone, it doesn't matter what -- would step in. And, you know, it's the typical pretending to be

your boyfriend, pretending to be your best friend. And that's always so helpful and makes you feel a lot more safe.

Right, and here at Joshua Center, we've talked in previous discussions about bystander intervention about how helpful it is to be aware of your privilege, because sometimes you can use that privilege to be a bystander. For example, there are lots of instances where standing up to someone who is harassing other people can put you in danger. And so that's an opportunity where someone else in the room who might have the privilege who might have the privilege of being a male, they can use that to then be an active bystander, absolutely.

Exactly. I think that that's amazing. And I wish more people were aware, and just paying attention to be a better bystander, right.

And we've kind of touched on this, and this is my last question, but how do you think we can create a culture that doesn't tolerate this? A culture of accountability?

I think just that holding people accountable. And I guess we haven't really touched on social media a lot but that's also a huge now network for unwanted sexual harassment and, I think we can touch on this more, I think a lot of people don't understand that unwanted and unconsented pictures are sexual harassment and even though that it's online and it's not in person, you're not you're not doing that face to face, it's still it's still an offense and it's not okay. I deal -- that's something that I deal with a lot and very vulgar and honestly scarier ways online than in person which speaks volumes because in person, they're a physical threat to you. But online, they don't have a face. They don't they don't. They don't have that accountability. Oh, how to hold people accountable online is comment back. If you see someone being very inappropriate on someone's picture, and you know that they don't want it, comment back. People DM me horrific things, detailed, vulgar, scary things. I'll screenshot it, I'll go to the page, find family members, and I'll send it to them. And I say this is predatory behavior. You need to be held accountable. Just because it's online and I have a lot of followers doesn't mean that I deserve it, or I'm asking for it, or I want it because I post a bikini picture doesn't mean that you have to send me a picture of you nude. That --that's my narrative that I'm choosing to, to post on my own. I'm not asking for any vulgar comments, you know? Right, absolutely.

Was there anyone when you entered this, this very public sphere, who talked to you or warned you about the level of harassment that you would experience?

No, wow, it's really not talked about. It's really it's, it's really not talked about. And I see, obviously, living in California, and being around a lot of influencers. Everyone is very numb to it. And I have spoken to other women and and their opinion on it is a little more altered now, where they're like, oh, that's a compliment. Why are you offended by that? That's, that's a compliment. But as an activist, and as a victim myself that these things are not normal to me in the way that they're being normalized. Which is really sad. For example, I was on set of a movie that I star in, and there was a camera man who was saying very inappropriate things to me. And I was only eighteen at the time, and age doesn't matter, you just shouldn't be creepy. So um, he was being very weird, very inappropriate to me, I ended up I ended up talking to the makeup artists, and they said, We have felt very scared and unsafe with him, because of the things that he's been

saying. But we aren't at the tier, that you are, to be able to say something and it matters. So they said, I, please say something for all of us. Because your voice will matter, which is it's so sad. So I ended up talking to people and he was fired that day. And those are just instances where going back to the other questions, what you can do to protect yourself and to protect others. So after that, I've insisted on having my mom be with me on set or a manager, you know, being there to protect, to protect me, and just again, being the voice for other people where I was in the position where I was able to change the situation for other women. And so I did, and that I think we all need to come together men, women, everyone, whatever you are, we just need to come together and just be very aware.

Right? Kind of sensitive. Yeah. I think that that's exactly what this conversation will hopefully provide to people -- that level of awareness as well for, for everyone regardless of how they identify. And I think that being aware is the best way you can be a bystander, if you're not experiencing the harassment yourself, is listening to other people who are experiencing it, hearing what they --

Listening, and also being open to understanding and accepting that just because you haven't experienced it doesn't mean that it's not real, and it's not valid, and it's not hurtful, right. Because a lot of people can't grasp, sometimes that that is harmful. You know, so you just have to be open to learning and educating yourself.

Well, thank you so much for joining us. And this is such an amazing resource. And I think just hearing your perspective as someone who is in a field where this is so common, and who is so outspoken about your experience as a woman in the world and navigating the issues that come with that. We're really appreciative of you joining us.

You guys are absolutely incredible. And I'm so excited to continue to learn more from everything that you're doing. Absolutely.

Well, I just wanted to say thank you, everyone for being here. I really love having these discussions. And I think we can all agree that we're so grateful that Tori was able to just share her insight and her history and just her own knowledge and experience with us. And I guess I want to start off by just asking if anyone has any initial thoughts or feelings or concerns about anything that Tori had to say, or just about gender based harassment in general.

My initial thoughts throughout and that that was a common topic was the commonness of it. And now, you know, and never really stops at one person. That was my initial thought.

Just going off of what Owen said, just like the one thing that really shocked me was just how common and prevalent it is. And how, personally for me, like, I didn't start knowing about how common it was until I started talking to my friends about it, and just realizing how like, it's really an everyday thing, which shouldn't be happening. And yeah, that was just my initial thought that it was very shocking.

It's also a kind of terrifying to think about as a young woman in society is that most of these like perpetrators who catcall and sexually harass women online or in person, it's never really a one

time occurrence. It's usually a behavior that has built up and is a common malady within them. And so it's kind of scary to think that like, this happens to multiple women and how much pain and hurt that they can cause many women over like a period of time.

Adding on to that, um, something that struck me when Tori was talking about her story was the person who catcalled her really didn't understand what it was, uh, he did wrong, Because he thought that he was paying a compliment. And I feel like that right there is the biggest problem that we have when talking about gender based harassment is the fact that people don't really recognize what they're doing wrong.

I think that's a great point. And I think adding on to that and just to what's been said already, I was really inspired by the action that Tori took, because I think like, being in like, not the exact same shoes as her in some things, but like, just being like a teenage girl has been like catcalled before. Like, I've never been able to like feel that power and like to maybe it's kind of like a fake it till you make it situation. But I was just like, really inspired by her like taking screenshots and like sending it to family members. And like, being able to, like, take that action. I didn't like realize that, like people really did that. So I think like, I'm just definitely like, more inspired by that. Cuz I didn't really realize that was like an option. I guess I kind of just like realized we can like have these discussions and do these types of things. But like, in the moment, I never really thought about doing that. So that was very cool.

I also thought it was it was interesting that when you asked if there were any other people in the industry that helped educate her or not warn her but sort of introduce her to the world of social media and what that can be like her answer was no. And I thought that was fascinating how little it's talked about even in even in situations like like Tori's in where she's in such a spotlight and she's way more susceptible to, to nasty comments. And I think that that is a huge testament to how little it's it's brought up.

I feel like the main thing that stood out to me when Tori was talking was kind of how normalized harassment is, which is so sad and crazy to think about. But I think that it was really good how she talked about a first step would be to defeat this normalization. Because defeating that would be like the first thing to do in order to actually like, educate more people and making sure that everyone knows like, these kind of actions are just not okay.

Yeah, like when a man steps in, sorry, like one of if a man were to step in, like that would be so powerful, like, just as a woman, like if I was catcalled, and then, like, a man was like, Hey, don't do that. Like I feel like, unfortunately, it shouldn't take a man to like, stop it, but it just, it would be far more powerful. I think because like the man will probably listen to another man. And I think like that, I just, I think that's a good place to start. Yeah,

I think just to add on That, like the fact that she said when she talked to other women they were, they themselves were like, Oh, that's a compliment. Like, why are you getting upset over that, like the fact that it's so normalized within our society, like women are taught that it's okay. And that it's they're taught to take it as a compliment, I think was really interesting. The point -- the fact that, like, she brought that point up, I

think similar to that, um, just the nature of women or even men, being like, oh, they're just like that, like, people are just like that. That's how people have always been. And it's just like, that's the nature that's human nature. Like, that's not human nature, human nature is being able to love someone not for what they look like, but for who they are.

Adding on to this idea of like, what defines a compliment in school, we're not really taught on how to compliment people and respect boundaries as much. And I think that that is a really important part of holding people accountable and understanding like what defines a compliment and what defines crossing someone's boundaries and making them feel uncomfortable. And I think that's something that is like definitely worth kind of talking more about and maybe discussing on like, what the parameters define a compliment and define sexual harassment because there's definitely like a line that needs to be drawn between crossing someone's boundaries, and making someone feel appreciated.

And I think I completely agree with that. And I think adding on not to say that sexual harassment does not happen to like men and boys, because it absolutely does. But there's like all those things that have been said they're definitely less add a little bit less now but still said, like, boys will be boys or like, oh, like he teases you because he likes you and things like that. And I think that has caused people and I think especially like girls to have, like such a skewed idea of what like, attraction is and what like, crushes are, or like what things are because in our mind, it's like, oh, like, if I'm being like, hurt by this, that means it's like a good thing. So I think like, it's really good that like, women now are being able to like, okay, that's not right. And I think like, men are like, a lot of men are too. But I think that we all have to deconstruct all of that that's been like said for, like, so so many years. So, yeah.

I agree. And I think something that was kind of implicit to what someone previously mentioned, was the idea that these comments are not just comments, because the normalization of them allow for like, further gender based violence. And I don't know if people are familiar, but there's like a gender based violence pyramid, that kind of highlights how the normalization of less violent behavior at the bottom creates a foundation for more violent behavior to take place, because it's so normalized. And also, I think, the more normalized it is, the more likely we are to believe, as Tori mentioned, we are to believe that it's not a big deal, and that it doesn't influence us the way that it does. And so something that this pyramid talks about is the fact that if we're able to dismantle the violence at the bottom of the pyramid, like comments, and crossing boundaries, both verbally and physically, then we'll be able to then tackle the violence at the top of the pyramid that affects people at lower rates, but still rates that shouldn't exist in the first place.

And I think so much of that, like goes back to the concept of education and having like people from a young age be taught, like just the simple fact that people don't know that it's not considered a compliment and that it's not okay. Instead, like you're seeing women look up to media and TV shows where it's run essentially by men, who are, and it's affirming like the men's beliefs that what is occurring is okay when in reality like, like, it was said earlier, like, there needs to be like a deconstruction of what is considered a compliment and what is considered like sexual harassment and just society in general's, like, attitude towards that.

Yeah, combining Saanvi and Aliyah's thoughts earlier. On the flip side, what Aliyah was saying like young boys are also taught that like if you like a girl you have to tease her or make fun of her. So that that ingrained sort of perception of what is a compliment like you were saying is so instilled in both genders.

I think going along with what Holland was saying, I think another idea that is like ingrained in like boys' minds is that like if a girl is like saying no to their advances like they should keep going because she's playing like hard to get, when in reality, like this ties into consent. Like no means no, and like, there is like a line you can't cross it depending on sorry, depending on what how the other person responds.

I think another point that she made, which really caught my attention was, you know, her awareness for what she's aware and how, you know, maybe the other people are kind of saying that, oh, basically, they were wearing this outfit, they were kind of asking for it, you know, they, it was kind of their fault because they are not wearing something appropriate. They're, they're wanting it basically. And, and that's the recognition of like this. I don't know if anyone in this entire world wants sexual, disgusting comments coming their way, no matter what. Um, so just that whole idea of someone asking for harassment is crazy. And I don't I can't even process that idea of someone asking for harassment.

Kind of going after that, that kind of got me thinking about like school dress codes, but I could like go on about for hours, how that contributes to rape culture. Like boys at my school, I don't know if you know, this, if there's like the tank tops that are like cut out like this -- like they can wear that, and that's completely fine. But the girls at my school are just like, you cannot wear spaghetti straps. And it's like, oh, you're distracting the boys. Or even if it's not like that reason, it's kind of is that reason.

I think in part that's done and like, whenever people say like, hey, maybe she shouldn't have been wearing that -- tht's like, they use it an excuse excuse their actions rather than holding themselves accountable, which is the -- which is what has caused so much of this and led to this culture that we now have, where so many people don't even know what sexual harassment really is. And refuse to even hold themselves accountable because they don't even know that it's an issue.

But what I was going back to is sort of the the miseducation of men from a young age. And I do think that a lot of times, the men who are who are making these comments or or perpetrators in a lot of these situations aren't necessarily with malicious intent, or like the psychopath killers that you imagine in the bushes. They're not always those people. Actually, they are most of the time not these people. They've just been so miseducated by society about what a compliment is, about, about what flattery means, about how to approach them. And then also adding on to that not understanding like the privilege they have, and the power dynamics that they can create, especially if like a big white man approaches you, not understanding what that means or how that makes the other person feel. And the dynamics present there.

I think like something interesting is that like, when people are called out for like sexually harassing usually they don't like own up to it, they tend to like deflect, or kind of like push it

under the carpet, which I find super interesting. And I also think like over the pandemic, at least from what I've seen, people have like, started to understand how destructive these issues are. And I think that's like, it's super awesome that people are wanting change.

I think another thing to add on too is that people should be open to understanding and really willing to learn. I think Tori mentioned that when she was talking as well. But really making sure you're not like invalidating any person's feelings and stuff. And if someone says, Hey, like you're crossing the boundaries, you're crossing the line, and being willing to like understand that, recognize that, and then kind of address it from there and not just ignoring it or kind of invalidating other people.

Did you all ever receive messages either like very overt messages or subliminal messages from adults in your life or through education about this as an issue or how you can prevent it, how you can address it, how you can be a bystander to it?

I feel that as I was growing up, a lot of the messages that I received are really, they really like put the blame on victims. So a lot of victim blaming, it's like they're trying to prevent it by saying like, you shouldn't wear this and you shouldn't wear that, but that just like puts all the pressure on the victims to change their behavior when the actual like behaviors that should be changed are the perpetrator's.

In my experience growing up in that parochial school system, which is like the Catholic school system, there was definitely a lot of emphasis on victim blaming. I would say especially, as was mentioned earlier, I feel like dress codes are a very strong enforcer of rape culture and definitely put a lot of blame on victims and what they wear. And it wasn't until I joined an organization called Teen Council where we were teaching a lesson at Bellevue High School on pornography and online safety. And I, in preparing that lesson and teaching it to these like ninth and 10th graders I learned so much more about, like my impact on social media, and just how to be safe online because I think a lot of people sometimes think that teaching children about like online safety, and pornography is like enabling them giving these ideas when these ideas already exist, and it's just more about protecting them and giving kids the tools to be safe and conscientious of their actions online.

I feel like another message I've received like growing up is to like not escalate the situation whenever sexual like harass -- or anything like happens just for like the safety of like, myself, or like, just so that like, nothing worse happens like violence or like it escalates. Which is very challenging, just because it like puts the victim in a situation where they feel like they can't speak up. It was very interesting hearing like Tori speak, because she was very, like, passionate about, like, going against people who are like harassing her, and like speaking up and standing up for herself. But I feel like that message isn't really like spread because girls are scared in general of like, something worse happening.

Yeah, it can be I think, at least for me, like men don't really understand. Like, it's genuinely terrifying to like, be catcalled sometimes or like, harassed in any way. Like, it's scary. Like, we're scared of you. We don't like you. And like, we're going to do anything well, Tori was like very in power and she likes fights back but like, at least to me, like I'm gonna do anything in my power

to get out of like your -- this situation. And also, this, that other question if like someone was definitely but like, if he's mean to you he likes you, like that was just like, throughout my childhood that was definitely pushed through whether it was like friends, parents, but definitely the media too, just like that. Oh, if he's mean, it's good thing.

I think that as I was growing up, I was never really given an actual message on what to do, and how to, like, prevent anything bad like, from happening to me. I just kind of learned it over time from hearing the, like, the experiences of other women and like adding on to the last point, I feel like not a lot of people really understand how alert most women are when they're in a public setting about like, the people around them and how to stay safe. And yeah, I just feel like growing up, we never really were given like a, I guess a guide on how to keep ourselves safe.

I think another thing that's crazy is like I've seen videos where women are like talking about going out in public with like, pepper spray, like window breakers, like all these key chains and stuff and I'm like that should never like, like men don't have to go out and make sure they have all these materials to stay safe when they go out in public. You can go --

Okay, that is that is a really good point. And just like, for me personally, I'm never scared if I'm like in a parking lot alone. I'm never scared to like walk at night. Well, that's just like a privilege that I have, and like, especially in the past few months as I'm talking to more my friends about like. Because like a lot of us are starting to start driving. And they were talking about like pepper spray and I'm like why do you need pepper spray? They're like, Yeah, because men do these things all the time. And I'm just wow, it just really opened my eyes to just like everything that's out there and like the things that I don't see personally, which is why like I think it's really important that we all keep an open mind and make sure that we just aren't, I don't know how to say it but like have like blinders on at times and just be open to hearing other people's stories and empathizing with them.

I really appreciate you saying that I think part of like why like I love the work we do at the Joshua Center and like just these discussions is simply just to like educate people and like even if someone sees like the teaser we post on Instagram like I think like that can really just make people more aware. And I think adding onto to the point that was right before the last one. Like that just made me think there's like this whole TikTok account which is kind of going back to a point previously about like social media and like the benefits and negatives. But there's this woman who like her whole TikTok account is like dedicated to like woman's safety and like different tools you can use like different like self defense mechanisms and things like that. Like all my friends know about like before I get my car I like check like all the like windows and like to make sure because I'm so paranoid like someone's in the trunk or like literally someone's gonna like hide under the car and like slash from ankles or just things like that. That I'm just like so paranoid because maybe it's an a horror movie, but it's also like, you hear like one of those stories about a woman being like abducted and like, your mind is just like never the same. So I think like I just so like appreciate like your guys's insights and like, all these discussions we're having just because -- my mom's calling -- just because I think that they are so like invaluable and like educating everyone. And just like discussing it and making us feel like less isolated. So thank you, all.

Yeah, and I really appreciate what Ryan said as well. Sort of acknowledging, not necessarily understanding or having the experience of having pepper spray in your car or having one of those I have one of those things key -- bedazzled pepper spray and then one of those key chains that like you pull the side out, and it makes like that awful, awful noise, which is also really protective. And I have a taser in my car. And there's another person on this call, but I routinely check her trunk before she leaves anywhere. Just like things that we kind of joke about or like being girls. But you do realize how screwed up society is that we're that we're taught to normalize this and how, yeah, how prevalent that is, and how visible it is. That all my friends, all my girlfriends share these same experiences of just fear of like we're running with headphones on and constantly checking behind your shoulder, things like that, that you that you don't take the time to reflect on often enough.

I feel like even the word sexual harassment is like so desensitized to the point where I think a when you bring it up in conversation, you say, oh, I've experienced sexual harassment. People don't - a lot of the times men in particular, they don't recognize it for being that severe. They just say oh men will be -- or boys will be boys. And it's just, it's very desensitized. So even like when I was from my own experiences, and were in a classroom, if I was being severely sexually harassed by other classmates, and the entire class would be aware and even the teacher, no action would be taken. And I think that the process of going back to it like deconstructing what we've been taught as a society is so important.

One more thing to add kind of on what you just said, I feel like authority figures that might have more power should definitely take more action to intervene if they see something going on. Because sometimes if you're in a moment where you don't have that much like kind of say, or something like that, it can be harder to kind of stand up for yourself. But if there's an authority figure there, and they have a lot more power, I think that it's really important for them to kind of intervene and to make sure that people know that what they're doing is wrong. And to kind of address that situation.

I think that teachers are like definitely a group of people, especially male teachers, at least in my school, there's been a lot of sexual harassment, because there have been the female teachers that are really outspoken about it, like, they're like, hey, this needs to stop. This is making me uncomfortable. And I know it's making the students uncomfortable, it doesn't matter how they identify, like, this isn't really okay. But I haven't really heard anything like any of the male teachers. And I kind of take that as, like, oh, if I were in a classroom, with some of these teachers, like some of them might use the name but some of them definitely wouldn't

I think, adding on to that part, just the blindness that people have, and not being able to recognize it is kind of sad in a way that you know, it a lot of the times, I mean, sometimes it can be you can't see it, and you don't know what's happening. It is happening after class or after school or something like that, um, but a lot of, but some of the times you see it happen, I think the inability for, you know, bystanders to be able to step in, is something that we also need to fix. You know, of course, we're trying to, um, but I think I'm not, I want to just make the point that for the whole situation for everyone, when, you know, if it's teacher to teacher, teacher to student, student to teacher, whatever it is, or even in public, just two people. I think it's not just scary for that one man, or that one woman or that one person, it's, it's scary for everyone

around them. Because, you know, you're not, it's all it's, a lot of the times it can, and little like catcalls and stuff like that can be out of the blue. I mean, there's no real, you know, intent to you know, it can just be, oh, I saw that person walking down the street, and then something happened, right. So, I think it's scary for everyone. And I think people need to be able to overcome and come together with the person who's being harassed. And I think that I think that's the hard part because people are scared as well, even though they might not be the person who is, you know, the most scared because they're not the ones being targeted. But I think I just wanted to point out that the whole situation is scary for everyone, I would think.

Right. And I think it's interesting that we've been talking about prevention, in terms of pepper spray and tools that I think a lot of us are familiar with. And we understand how they can be useful in situations. But then looking, especially with the work that we do at Joshua Center, looking back at prevention that can happen even before then, and preventative education that can happen, not to protect yourself in the moment, but that can protect yourself long term. And so I'm wondering what kind of ideas people have about creating a culture that doesn't tolerate this kind of violence, from a young age, and from like a developmental standpoint. I

think probably the biggest thing that we can do to just snip this in the bud really is just to tell kids especially like this is what we were talking about earlier when like people say boys will be boys, or he's only doing that because he likes you, just stopping that immediately and stopping those, just like those sayings. And make sure to teach boys, especially boys and girls, that no does really mean no. And your actions do have consequences.

I loved what Torey did, and that when people would send her harassing messages online, that she would screenshot them, and send them to their family members or friends. I think that's a great way to hold people accountable. Because sometimes I think behind the screen, it can be hard to remember that there are other people who have feelings and families and goals and they're just like us. And I think that holding people accountable is a really important step in getting to a society where everyone feels safe.

Also, just like normalizing these conversations, and normalizing this dialogue would be so important and crucial to like, changing this culture, because if we just talk more about this topic, it fundamentally will like spread more information and like, hopefully will change somebody's mind about their behaviors and their actions. And yeah, just hopefully, we'll make this a more safer place.

I think that's also like a big flaw in our current, the current way it's taught, which is that it's taught from, like a perspective of these are like rules that you have to follow, or this is like a checklist, rather than understanding and having to communicate, like the communication aspect of it. And recognizing that this isn't just a checklist that you have to like, check off to make sure that you're being safe, like it's something that actually affects people and there needs to be a mutual understanding of, don't just do it because it's bad, but do it because it's actually hurting the other person. Rather than looking at it from that. I guess, not from a moral standpoint, but rather from a material one.

This goes back to a previous point, but also just like, supporting and affirming the stories of survivors because that is so crucial. And like we need to really believe other survivors because there's like, we shouldn't be victimized, like, sorry, like blaming them for their actions. And, um, we shouldn't be really putting all the blame on the victims and should be shifting all of that. Like, I'm sorry, follow that pressure to the actual people who need to change their behaviors.

I think that like teaching young kids just from a really young age, like explicitly like, hey, this not in a super explicit way because yes, like they're children, but children experience it. So I feel like children are young enough to learn about it. But like, Hey, this is not okay. This is like this concept of like, this is actually harassment. And it's -- this behavior isn't okay. And here's how it's hurting people kind of thing.

Going, yeah, I think -- adding into the young kids, I almost feel like, whenever you're around a younger kid, you, if like an adult says a bad word. Or if they do something like that, they're always on top of you. Like, hey, you can't say that or like that's not that's not appropriate stuff like that. And I almost feel like that could be good. A good thing, right? Because if we're talking to them at a young age, and they're they're realizing with their friends, that's inappropriate. Like I feel like they would really cut down on that because you know, just they're, they, I feel like younger toddlers, people in like second grade even act like that. And I think also just with younger kids, we need to recognize that it's not just like 13 to 18 year olds dealing with this problem. It's it's really young kids. And I think that's the sad part.

I was also gonna say, I think we have all been in situations where we've had a peer or even a friend say something that has offended us or worse said something that's offended us in front of other people. And I think we always feel a sense of shock when that happens. And I think one big prevention message is just -- is not only being educated, but being educated enough to not be shocked anymore. So that when it happens in front of you, and especially when it's a peer or a friend who is the harasser, that instead of reacting with shock, you really have a method of being a bystander, and of holding your friends accountable. Because as Tori spoke about when the man catcalled her in the parking lot. It was his friend, who actually approached Tori, apologized on behalf of his friend, and spoke to his friend. Had he instead, had he instead stood there in shock. Maybe none of that would have taken place. And so I think it's, like many of you have said, it's about understanding the the extent of the issue that we can then become better bystanders to it.

So I guess in terms of prevention, I think that there needs to be a system of accountability set into place that holds people accountable. And there's some sort of repercussion to sexual harassment and these actions. But also, I think, going back to education, I wonder how things would be different if young children were encouraged to have conversations with the opposite gender, and I think something like that, like it prevents things like gross, like, locker room talk and from occurring in the future, if there's that understanding, and if you, like the aspect of humanizing that occurs from a very early age.

Yeah, adding on to that. Unfortunately, we live in a society where men, most prominently listen to other men. And so I think a way in which, like you were saying prevention can be can be kind of tackled at the foundation is sort of educating other men how to teach men about sexual

assault, about sexual harassment, about sexual violence. And so I think it does come from kids being educated a young age to treat each other differently, and with more respect, but also comes from, from teaching adult men with immense privilege about how to teach other men and how to step in and how to be bystanders and how to be allies. Because like I said, unfortunately, we live, we live in a world where men listen to other men, so yeah.

Just adding on to that, I think, um, the whole topic about sexual harassment, sexual assault is largely spearheaded by people who identify as woman. And I think that's a really big issue because, like, what, like what the previous speaker just said, a lot of people really just listen, like men just listen to men. And I feel like by doing that, it also kind of puts men who speak up about sexual assault on a really high pedestal. So like, a woman would just say some, like, put a whole thing about sexual assault and how that is like, terrible. And then now we'll just repost it, and he gets so much praise about it, because he speaks up about it. But he's not really doing that much. So just like the littlest action to prevent sexual assault, by a man could really like change a lot.

Just a recognition that Ryan and I are the only boys on this call. I mean, I've seen -- you know, the people on these calls fluctuate, I guess, of people knowing and making sure it's not just women wanting to learn how to protect themselves, watching these and making sure that our parents watch these or our friend watch these, and making sure that people are really get out and, and aren't afraid to talk about these things.

I completely agree. That's a great point. I want to be respectful of everyone's time. And so I want to say thank you all for being a part of this. And I really look forward to seeing what the final product is. And like I told Tori, I think this is such a great resource. And you all are incredibly right in saying that this is something that needs to be more talked about. And that's exactly what we're doing.