



UNSW  
SYDNEY


# Sexual Harassment

– It's Not OK!

Comics -  
Teacher Kit



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Legal Centre



# About this Kit

This resource was developed by Kingsford Legal Centre, a community legal centre at UNSW Sydney. It draws on our extensive experience in discrimination law and presenting legal information on sexual harassment to high school and university students. Kingsford Legal Centre runs a specialist Sexual Harassment Legal Service. More information is available at: [klc.unsw.edu.au/free-legal-help/sexual-harassment-legal-service](http://klc.unsw.edu.au/free-legal-help/sexual-harassment-legal-service).

This resource is designed to facilitate discussions around sexual harassment in the workplace and to help students understand what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. To engage students in this discussion we have developed a comic series that depicts common scenarios of sexual harassment. The comics are designed to generate discussion about what students can do if they are the target of inappropriate behaviour or know about it, and provide strategies if they experience or observe sexual harassment.

The Kit has been developed for high school and university students who are close to entering or have recently entered the world of work. Facilitators may wish to adjust the content for younger students and should use the trigger warnings contained in the material when advising students of the session and immediately before it is delivered. Teachers also need to ensure that information about where to go for help is also provided to students at the time of the session and afterward.

We acknowledge the support of the Women's Wellbeing Academy - Equity Diversity & Inclusion Unit - UNSW Sydney in funding the resource.

# Comics and Discussion Questions for Students

## Trigger warning – Note for Teachers

The following resources have been developed to teach students about the various ways sexual harassment can occur in the workplace. Sometimes, sexual harassment can constitute sexual assault. These comics may be upsetting for students and facilitators who have experienced sexual harassment or assault, or who know someone who has.

Please make sure that you give the students a content warning before discussing this material. You should do this when you advise them of the session (i.e. ahead of time) and immediately at the beginning of the session. Statistics indicate that it will be likely that someone in your class will have experienced some of these issues or be closely connected to someone who has.

If any students excuse themselves from the class, let them go out. Ideally if there are two facilitators you can discuss beforehand that if someone does leave the room, one of you can also discretely leave the room and check on them and the other person takes over their role at that time. If this is not possible, make sure that you check on them after class or build a break or a couple of breaks into the sessions. This will allow you to check on students and also to enable students who may leave the opportunity to rejoin after you have a chat with them about what you will be covering in the next sessions.

It is also important that you and your students are aware of where to go for assistance and support, so make sure you tell students this at the very start, as students might be feeling uncomfortable and might not ask for help. Having the resources link somewhere accessible (such as on a handout or a PowerPoint) is a good idea for students who do not want to disclose this information to you.

## Teacher Material Suggested Trigger Warning

*I am going to start by giving a trigger warning. A trigger warning is to tell you that what we discuss today may be upsetting or distressing to you.*

*This is because today we are going to be discussing sexual harassment, which will involve talking about content some of you may find distressing. We may also talk about upsetting issues such as what happens when you experience unwelcome sexual behaviour and sexual assault.*

*If at any point you need to take a moment during this training, please just leave the room [make the students aware of any relevant facilities]. It is important that you don't leave the building without me being aware.*

*When we discuss these issues today we need to remember to do so respectfully and to be aware that some people in this class room may have been directly affected by the issues we discuss. We also need to agree that what we discuss today stays in this classroom.*

*If this has brought up issues for you – help is available (we suggest this is provided to students in some form – see handout page)*

## Free Confidential Help:

If you need to talk to someone, the following organisations can help.

## For support:

- > **1800 RESPECT** – Call 1800 737 732 for confidential phone counselling about sexual assault.
- > **Kids Helpline** – Call 1800 55 1800 for free 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5-25.
- > **Lifeline** – Call 13 11 14 for crisis support and suicide prevention.

## For legal advice:

- > **Kingsford Legal Centre** – Call 02 9385 9566 to speak to someone about getting help with a sexual harassment complaint. Kingsford Legal Centre has a sexual harassment clinic that can help anyone in NSW. All legal advice from Kingsford Legal Centre is free and confidential.
- > **Community Legal Centres Australia.** Community Legal Centres Australia is a good starting point for people to find the most appropriate legal service to help them. You can find your local community legal centre by checking the online directory of legal services at [clcs.org.au/findlegalhelp](http://clcs.org.au/findlegalhelp)

*The next page has a handout for students that should be provided with the session.*

# Resources for Free Help for Students

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# Activity

- > Divide Class into small groups for a small group discussion.
- > Hand out comics - either one comic per group or all comics to all groups
- > Encourage small group discussion around one or more of the comics. Teachers should monitor this discussion;
- > Bring the groups back for large group discussion on the comics considered.

## Small group discussion

Divide the class into small groups to discuss the comics and ask them to consider the comics. Ask them to consider the questions for each comic. Depending on how much time you have, you can allocate a different comic to each group, or ask each group to go through several comics.

- > In your groups look at the comics and consider the scenarios and questions.
- > What is happening in the scenarios?
- > Are there points in which people cross a line? Is sexual harassment depicted?

You can encourage students to consider aspects such as :

- Relationship between the people involved and whether there is a power imbalance.
- Identify the perpetrator, person being harassed and bystander in each scenario.
- There are no absolute right ways to react.
- Remember to emphasise safety and wellbeing in the situation.
- Remember to keep the discussion respectful, even when there are different perspectives.

## Whole class discussion

After the students have discussed the comics in small groups, bring them back together for a whole class discussion. Ask each group to report back on what their group thought about the comic or comics they discussed. You can ask them to briefly explain the scenario in the comic, and then to share one or two of their answers to the discussion questions.

Overall, the best response is one that makes you feel safe and comfortable. There is no one right answer regarding the best way to respond. However, there are some overall guidelines to keep in mind.

Retaliating to try to hurt the harasser or make them feel uncomfortable might feel empowering in the moment. However, it could backfire and either make it a more uncomfortable place for you to work in the long run, or lead to you being told off or disciplined at work. You must also keep in mind that you have an obligation to act in a way that is appropriate for the workplace.

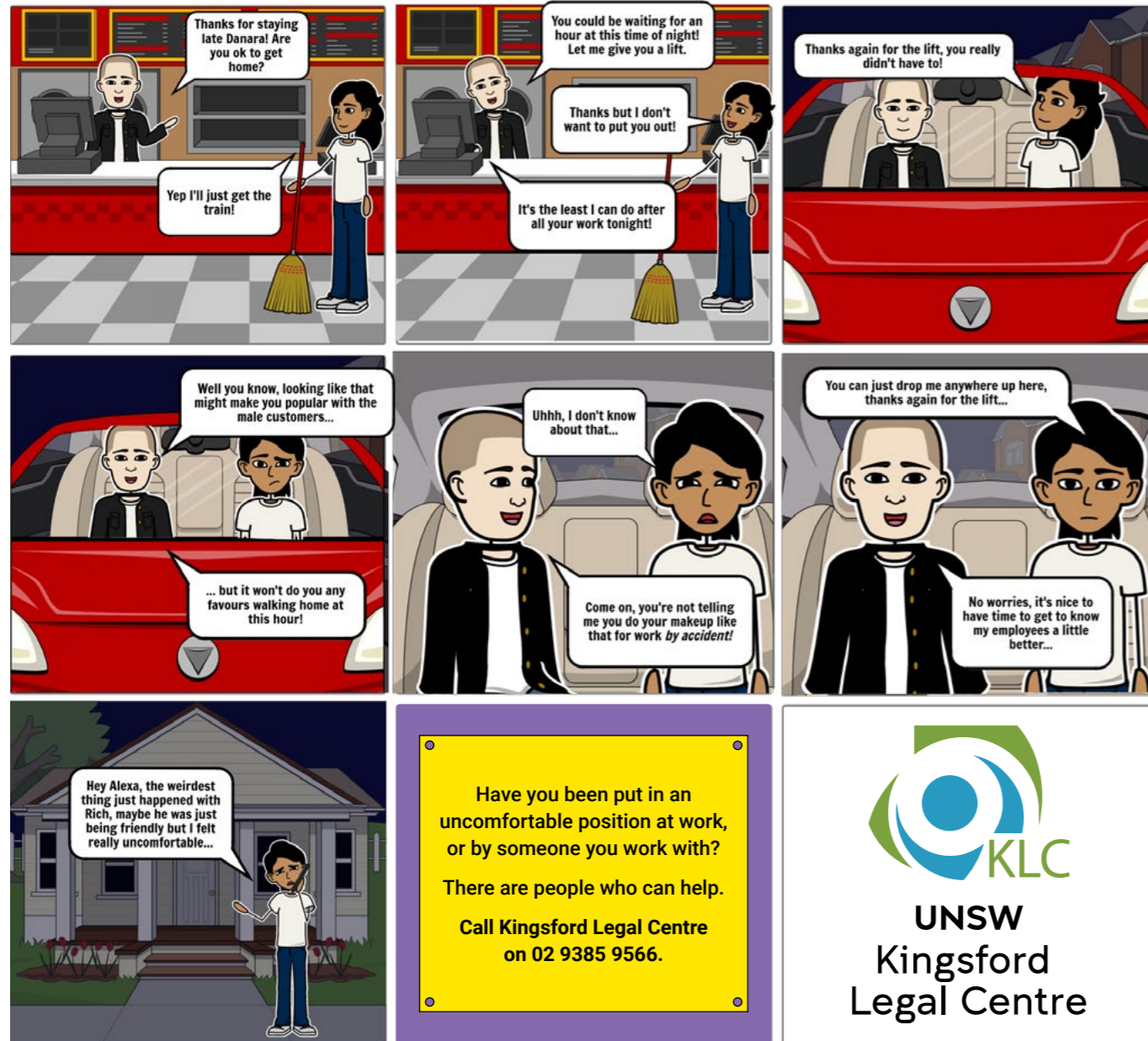
## Concluding the session

It is important at the end to re-emphasise that what you have talked about today are difficult issues. Touch on the elements of the trigger warning – some students may not have realised the issues will have been triggering, so make sure you raise again that help is available if students feel upset by the discussion. Indicate that you are available to chat at the conclusion of the class. Make sure the handout of where to go for help is easily available to all students. Try to bring together the discussion and themes raised by the discussion.

### You could emphasise:

- > this is a difficult and complex issue that is difficult to navigate.
- > it's good to reflect and think about these situations and what your options may be.
- > it is important that if you are sexually harassed you can recognise it and understand that It's Not OK! and there are things you can do or places that you can go for help.
- > that even talking to someone after the event can help.
- > sometimes a harasser may not realise what they are doing or saying is harassment or the effect it can have.
- > if you see harassment happening, you have a role to play too. While it may not always be easy, there are choices that you can make to help stop sexual harassment.
- > Workplaces should be safe places and we all play a role in that. We can help change workplaces. You are the future managers and bosses who can make that change.
- > this program should not make you nervous about joining the workforce, it is arming you with knowledge to navigate issues if they come up. We hope you never have to deal with these issues but that if you do, you come to it with some information.
- > There are places to go for FREE help (see the Resources for Free Help for Students on page 6) or I am available after class to speak.

# It's Not OK! A Lift Home Danara



01 . How do you think Danara felt?

*Suggested answers:*

- Worried
- Confused
- Uncomfortable
- Concerned about future encounters, whether and how to say no to future offers for a lift home

02 . Did Rich do anything that crossed the line? If yes, what was it?

*Suggested answers:*

Yes. Offering a colleague a lift home may not in itself be an issue. But the comments he made in the car were inappropriate. They were talking about her looks and how she might be treated by customers and others because of them. What he says about getting to know his employees was at the very least a bit creepy and concerning.

03 . If you were in the same situation as Danara, what could you do?

*Suggested answers:*

- Not accept lifts from Rich again.
- Have alternative arrangements ready for getting home.
- If Rich is the shift manager or line manager of a larger organisation, she could go to someone more senior.
- The next time she is at work, ask Rich what he meant by those comments and say that they made her feel uncomfortable.
- If he is the business owner, she may want to make a formal complaint outside of work

04 . Does it make a difference whether Rich is her boss or a colleague?

*Suggested answers:*

- The comments were inappropriate whether from a boss or colleague, however, clearly there is the additional issue that there is a power imbalance here, which makes it more difficult for Danara to complain
- She would be worried about the effect on her job in making a complaint, whether she would be given more shifts etc.

05 . (Bystander question optional) Alexa is Danara's friend, and also her colleague. What advice could Alexa give her?

*Suggested answers:*

- Simply as a friend, Alexa could let her know her options in making a formal or informal complaint.
- Alexa could make sure Danara felt supported, if for example she choose to take action.
- She could tell her not to take any lifts with him again.
- She could tell Danara to make sure she tells her if any other weird comments or incidents happen.



# It's Not OK!

## The Warning

### Celeste



01 . How do you think Celeste felt?

*Suggested answers:*

- Scared
- Confused
- Annoyed
- Angry
- Upset

02 . Did any character do something that crossed the line? If yes, what was it?

*Suggested answers:*

It is unclear. Steve has given Celeste a warning at work. If she genuinely did something wrong that is one thing, but Celeste says she didn't do it and thinks the warning is in retaliation for her not going out with him. This is very serious as he is threatening her job.

03 . If you were in the same situation as Celeste, what could you do? What do you think might be some of the consequences of these options?

*Suggested answers:*

- It doesn't look like Steve is the owner. Celeste could make a complaint to management.
- This is very serious if Celeste's job is in jeopardy. Celeste should consider getting legal advice about the situation.

04 . (Bystander question: optional) If you were Jess, what could you do? What would you be worried about in taking those actions?

*Suggested answers:*

- Jess didn't actually see or hear anything but she said that something similar has happened before.
- She could be supportive to Celeste, whether or not Celeste makes a complaint she could let her know that if a complaint is made, she would be willing to tell management about what happened to Sophie.
- She could tell Celeste that she could have formal complaint options and she should get legal advice.

# It's Not OK! Twenty Questions

## Jia

Time drags when there are no customers!

Only... 117 minutes to freedom!

I know, let's play 20 questions!

Mmmm ok...

Let's start simple...

What's your bra size?

Come on Jia, it's not like I asked you something *really* personal...

Hi! Could I please try these on in a size 9?

Oh, of course! Let me get those for you.

You should know I overheard your conversation - I don't think that was ok.

What?! She knows it's a joke, this happens all the time!

I have half a mind to report you!

I wonder if your manager will see it as 'just a joke.'

Have you been put in an uncomfortable position at work, or by someone you work with?

There are people who can help.

Call Kingsford Legal Centre on 02 9385 9566.

  
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Legal Centre

01 . How do you think Jia felt?

*Suggested answers:*

- Embarrassed
- Humiliated
- Offended
- Worried
- Confused about why she was being asked this at work.

02 . Did Jeff do anything that crossed the line? If yes, what was it?

*Suggested answers:*

Yes, he asked a very personal question about his colleague's physical appearance. This is not appropriate and could be sexual harassment.

03 . What could Jia do? What if this was a one off? What if this kept happening?

*Suggested answers:*

- She could tell Jeff that the question was not appropriate and not to do it again.
- She could tell Jeff that actually he can't ask his colleagues questions like that at work.
- She could report it to management.
- If it was a one off, Jia may feel it is enough to let Jeff know that the comment was inappropriate. That may be enough for the comments to stop.
- If it was not a one off, she could still ask Jeff to stop, if she hasn't before, but if the comments keep happening she could report it to management
- She could get legal advice about the formal options.

04 . Would your response change if Jeff was Jia's boss and not a co-worker?

*Suggested answers:*

If Jeff was Jia's boss, she may feel less comfortable in asking Jeff directly. It would depend on their working relationship and how comfortable she felt doing this.

05 . What could happen in this situation so Jeff could better understand the impact of his 'jokes'?

*Suggested answers:*

- Jeff may not realise that his question was offensive. This doesn't excuse the comments but it is an opportunity to make him aware that they are offensive. It might stop him making these comments to Jia or anyone else in the future.
- Jia may not want him to get in trouble and have his employer investigate things, she may be content to just have him realise the comments were offensive and inappropriate and that they stop.
- He might apologise to Jia.

06 . (Bystander question optional) Someone said something to Jeff. Did that person do the right thing? What other ways could she have intervened? Is this different depending on whether the intervention was by a customer, co-worker or manager?

*Suggested answers:*

- If you feel that it is safe to do so, this is a good option to take as a bystander.
- She could have intervened in the way she did, but use softer language with Jeff, with the same message and hopefully also be a way to stop the behaviour.
- You might react differently depending on your role. If you are a customer, you may not have the same bystander fears as an employee (for example, thinking about the effect on your job). If you are the manager, you have an obligation to stop sexual harassment from occurring. You should also talk to Jia about what happened.



# It's Not OK!

## The Loading Dock

### Natalia



01 . How do you think Natalia felt?

*Suggested answers:*

- Offended
- Humiliated
- Vulnerable
- Violated

02 . Did Jon do anything that crossed the line? If yes, what was it?

*Suggested answers:*

Yes, they are discussing her body and it seems to be in a sexual way.

03 . Do you think it matters if the male characters were accessing the pictures on her social media account as friends (i.e. they had permission to see them)?

*Suggested answers:*

It does not matter how they got the photographs.

04 . (Bystander question optional) What could Scott have done differently when he was shown the photos? How is your answer affected by the fact that Scott is friends with Jon?

*Suggested answers:*

- He could have not engaged in looking at the photos at all or by not engaging with Jon when he made his comments.
- He could have told Jon "That's not OK" and explained why.
- Scott had an opportunity to be an active bystander. Instead he was not supportive when Natalia responded to what was being said about her by Jon. His response supports Jon, so he could be seen as also harassing Natalia.
- He could have shown Natalia support by saying something like "yeah, that wasn't funny".
- He could have apologised to Natalia for letting Jon show him the photographs.
- By joining in he was sending a message to say that it was OK to look at the photos and make those comments.
- As Jon's friend, Scott is in a good position to be an active bystander and stop sexual harassment from happening. He could have told Jon to stop what he was doing before Natalia came over.

# It's Not OK!

## The Christmas Party

### Josie



01 . How do you think Josie felt?

*Suggested answers:*

- Intimidated
- Confused
- Worried
- Nervous

02 . Did David do anything that crossed the line? If yes, what was it?

*Suggested answers*

Yes. David appears to be Josie's boss. It seems that Josie and David don't have the type of relationship where they would go for dinner as she initially thought it would be a group dinner with colleagues. It is after work and he is inviting a colleague by herself to dinner with him, singling her out from a group of colleagues.

03 . If Sara had not intervened, what could Josie have done in this situation?

*Suggested answers:*

- Told David that she remembered she had somewhere she had to go to.
- Mention the name of a colleague or two that she thinks should come too.
- If she felt comfortable, politely declined the offer.

04 . Did Sara do the right thing? Is there anything she should have done differently? Should Sara do anything else after the party is over?

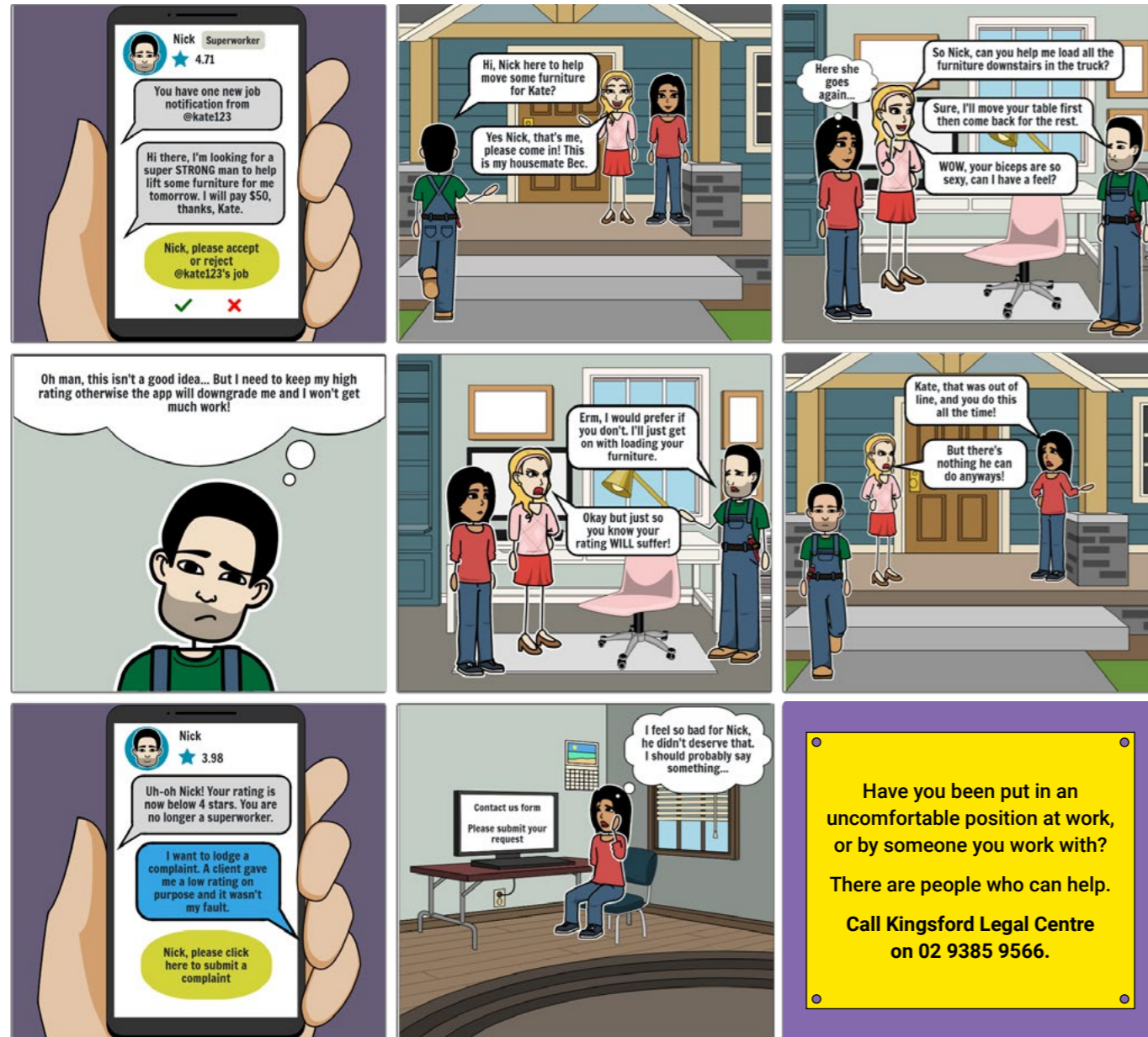
*Suggested answers:*

- We don't know if the intervention was accidental or on purpose. Based on Sara looking over before she intervened, she may have heard what was going on. She gave Josie an easy way to get out of the situation if Josie wanted to. Sara may have read the situation and intervened and it gave Josie a solution, so that was a great bystander action.
- It seemed to be an appropriate intervention in the circumstances.
- Depending on Sara's position in the workplace, she may feel comfortable talking to David and telling him that his offer may have been inappropriate and should not have been made.
- She could check in with Josie and ask her if she is OK and tell her that she heard the conversation and would support her if she decided to make a complaint. This could be that night and/ or the next time they are at work.



# It's Not OK! Your Rating Will Suffer!

Nick



01 . How do you think Nick felt?

*Suggested answers:*

Nick could have felt uncomfortable, worried or confused by the situation.

02 . Did Kate do something that crossed the line? If yes, what was it?

*Suggested answers:*

Yes. Although it is normal to request someone to do something while providing goods and services, Kate's request was inappropriate as she made sexual comments about Nick's body. She also made an unwelcome sexual advance towards Nick that was accompanied by the threat of lowering Nick's rating on the app if he did not agree to do it.

03 . Why did Nick have hesitations in speaking up for himself?

*Suggested answers:*

Nick could have hesitated for the following reasons:

- He was in shock and may have misunderstood the situation or not known how to react to it
- Kate made it apparent that she could blackmail him if he did not comply
- Nick wanted to maintain his high rating so that he could receive more work in the future as the app was based on a ratings system
- It was a single encounter with Kate, meaning that even though he felt uncomfortable in the moment, it would be unlikely to happen again
- Not wanting to cause a fuss and be professional in the circumstances

04 . If you were in the same situation as Bec, what could you do? (Bystander Q)

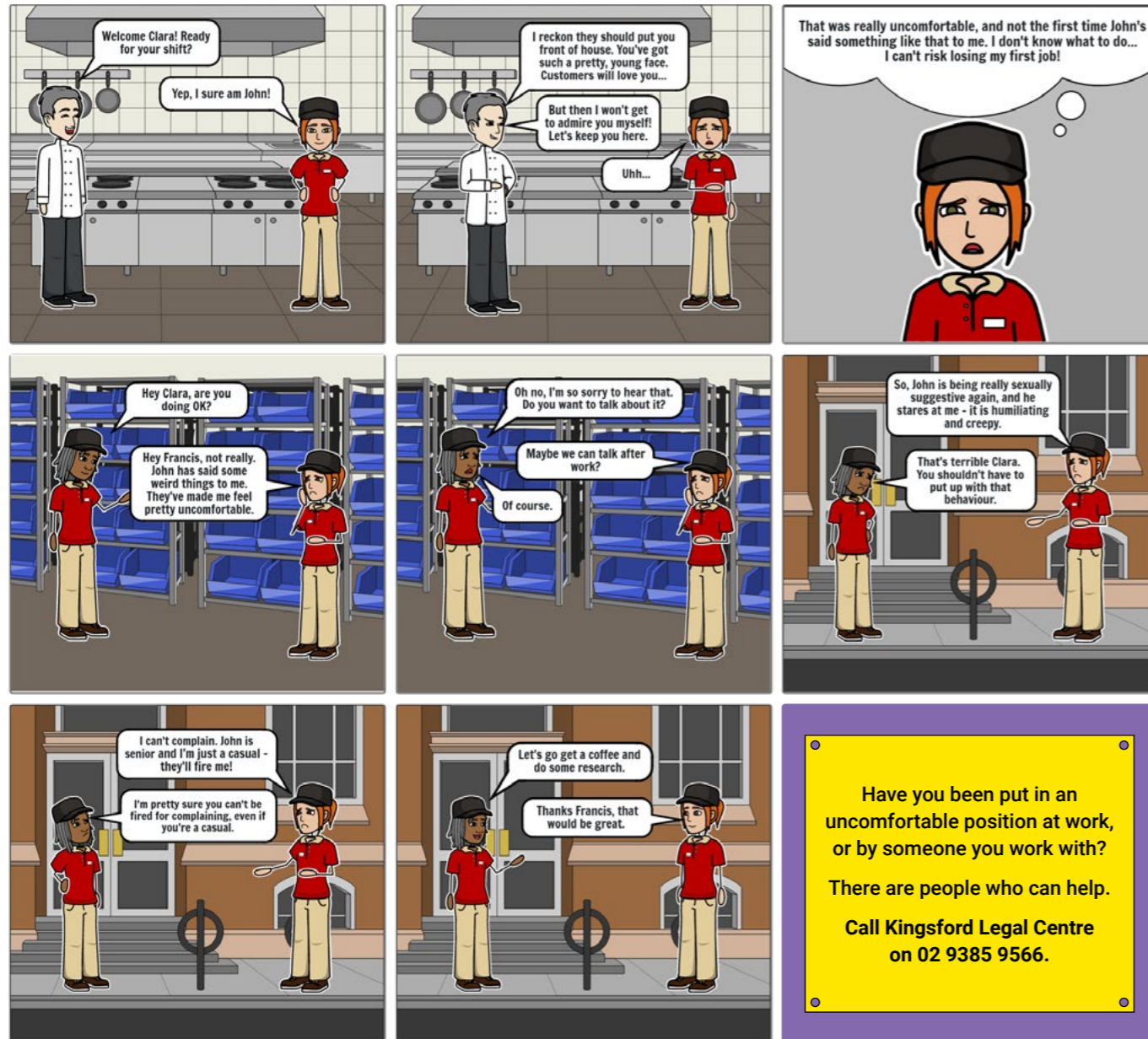
*Suggested answers:*

As Kate's housemate, Bec could have intervened when Kate made her original comment if it was safe to do so, which would reassure Nick that he was not in the wrong. This includes supporting Nick's decision to decline Kate's request and offering him direct support immediately following the encounter. Although Bec confronted Kate afterwards, her failure to act at the time made her a passive bystander in the situation. If it was not safe for Bec to speak up in the circumstances, she should still lodge a complaint to the app about Kate's behaviour, to ensure that the app can address it and that Nick is not adversely impacted by Kate's low rating of him.



# It's Not OK! I Can't Lose My Job

## Clara



01 . How do you think Clara initially felt?

*Suggested answers:*

Clara may have felt powerless, helpless and humiliated.

02 . What do you think made her open up to Francis?

*Suggested answers:*

Francis provided Clara with a safe space to voice her concerns after work and asked her whether she was comfortable discussing it, enabling Clara to make an informed decision.

03 . What did Francis do well?

*Suggested answers:*

Francis made sure that she continually checked in with and followed up with Clara as a junior employee in the restaurant. She also made sure that Clara felt heard when she was voicing her concerns about John, and offered to look into some options to help Clara moving forward. She ensures that they discuss Clara's concerns in a safe environment away from the harasser.

04 . Do you think Clara can get fired for complaining as a casual?

*Suggested answers:*

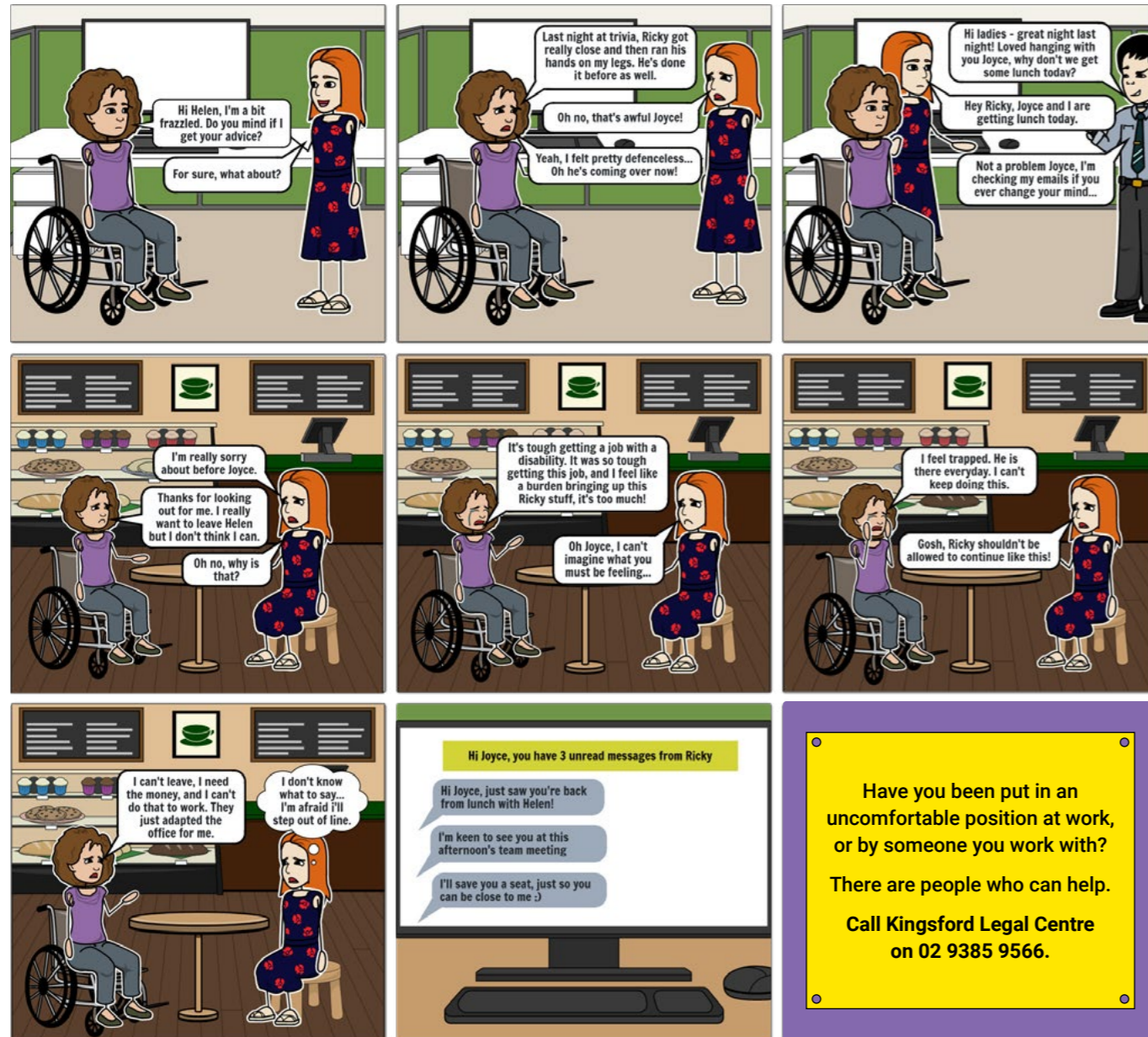
Clara has the right to complain about sexual harassment and to be safe at work. It doesn't matter that she is a casual. She can't be fired or stop receiving shifts just because she exercises these rights. She could tell her manager about the incidents, and she could make clear that if it continues, she won't work with John in the kitchen anymore. If that doesn't work or something happens after that, she could follow up externally, for example by calling 1800 RESPECT or a community legal centre.



# It's Not OK!

## I Feel Like Such a Burden

### Joyce



01. How do you think Joyce felt?

*Suggested answers:*

Joyce likely felt humiliated, angry, helpless and distressed by the situation.

02. Did Ricky do something that crossed the line? If yes, what was it?

*Suggested answers:*

Yes, Ricky sexually harassed Joyce by inappropriately touching her legs without her affirmative consent. Additionally, Ricky sends Joyce sexually suggestive messages at work and continues to make unwelcome advances on Joyce.

03. How might Ricky's actions impact Joyce in the workplace?

*Suggested answers:*

Joyce may be impacted by Ricky's actions in the following ways:

- Having feelings of low self-esteem, self-blame and guilt
- Feelings of confusion and being powerless
- Loss of productivity at work, decreased job satisfaction
- Psychological effects including anxiety or depression

04. Why does Joyce feel like she is trapped by the situation?

*Suggested answers:*

Although Joyce understands that what Ricky is doing is wrong, she feels uncomfortable speaking out because her workplace has supported her to work with her disability. She feels like she will be perceived as a burden if she does so, and she does not want to risk losing her job, especially because there may be limited opportunities available for people with disabilities and she needs financial stability. As Joyce feels shame and stigma, she is reluctant to tell her boss about the

situation. In this way she feels trapped, allowing Ricky to continue on with his unacceptable behaviour.

05. What do you think Helen did well and what could she have done better in the situation?

*Suggested answers:*

Helen did well by:

- Listening to Joyce honestly and frankly and offering a comfortable environment to voice her concerns
- Speaking up when Ricky approached them to make sure Joyce felt safe

Although Helen did a great job listening to Joyce and making her feel understood, she could have also done the following:

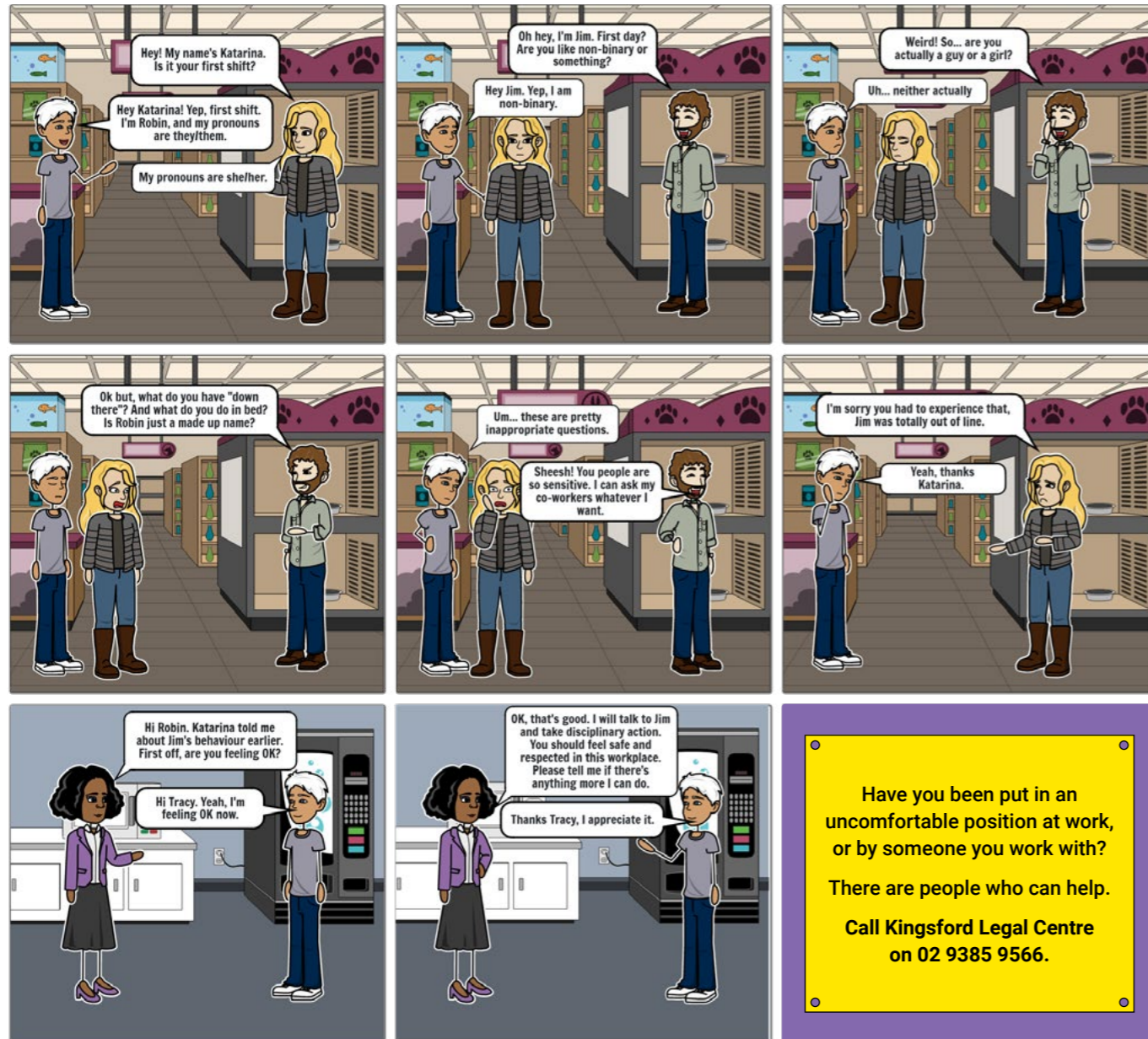
- Take Joyce to a more secluded part of the office initially so that she could express her worries without the fear of being overheard by someone she was not comfortable discussing her concerns with.
- Confront Ricky about his behaviour and ask him to stop, or at least ask Joyce if this is something that Joyce wanted her to do.
- Helping Joyce go through their organisation's policies about sexual harassment and assist her in finding out information about how to make a complaint.
- Offering to accompany Joyce to speak with HR about what was happening to her.
- Raising to her and Joyce's manager that greater training about sexual harassment in the workplace is needed to prevent this type of behaviour occurring in the future.



# It's Not OK!

## Allies at work

### Robin



#### 01 . How do you think Robin felt?

Robin likely felt humiliated, upset and that they were not accepted in their workplace.

#### 02 . What did Jim do that was inappropriate?

Jim was inappropriate by asking Robin sexual questions about their sexual orientation and offensive comments about their gender identity.

#### 03 . What could Katarina have done differently during the situation? Why do you think she didn't act like this?

Although it was good that Katarina apologised to Robin afterwards about the situation, she could have done the following things differently:

- Spoke up against Jim to tell him that his actions were incorrect and out of line
- Ask Robin how they were feeling after the incident and offering a space for them to echo their thoughts and feelings
- Check if Robin was comfortable with her telling Tracy about the incident without their consent

Katarina may not have done this because she was surprised by the situation and wasn't sure how to react in the moment. She also may have been intimidated by Jim. If she had thought about how to respond to a situation like that in advance, she may have acted differently.

#### 04 . Should Katarina have reported the situation to the manager as she did?

Although Katarina may have thought she was doing the right thing, it depends on the situation. It may have been better if she had offered to go with Robin and accompany them to talk to Tracy, rather than tell her without getting Robin's consent first. In the future, Katarina should maybe have helped Robin go through their organisation's policies about sexual harassment and offer to introduce them to Tracy if they were worried it was their first day on the job.

However, note that if Katarina's position requires her to report sexual harassment (e.g. because she is a supervisor), then she was justified in telling Tracy. It would still be respectful to first tell Robin that this is what Katarina was required to do.

#### 05 . How do you think the manager, Tracy, responded? How do you think it made Robin feel?

Tracy responded in a professional manner and put Robin's concerns as a high priority. She asks Robin if they felt okay after the situation and provides a clear picture of the next steps in taking disciplinary action against Jim. She enabled Robin to feel accepted and welcome, and wanted them to know that she would keep her employees accountable so that this would not happen again. In doing so, Tracy created a safe environment in which her employees could feel like they would be heard and supported during tough times.





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