

Be a Man

The Scenario:

You hear Mr. Beach, the teacher in the room next to you, consistently telling Johnny to be a man and calling him a fag, a pansy, and a queer. He degrades Johnny in front of the other students who laugh and often join in on the name calling. What do you do?

Discussion Begins

What do you do?

Do you report? If so, to whom? If so, when? If you don't, what might happen to Johnny? To other students? To you? To your school? To LAUSD?

If you report and the Local Law Enforcement Agency or the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) tells you...

...to **handle it administratively**, what do you do next?

...**they will investigate**, what do you do next?



Legal Response

Willful cruelty and a child's mental suffering constitute child abuse. You must consider whether Mr. Beach's actions alone create a reasonable suspicion that child abuse has taken or is taking place. You may not conduct a child abuse investigation. You may ask clarifying questions such as "I heard Mr. Beach. What happened?" If there is reasonable suspicion that child abuse occurred, a Suspected Child Abuse Report must be filed with either the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or the Local Law Enforcement Agency.

Other Considerations

Mr. Beach's actions may also be considered discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation regardless of whether Johnny is gay. In addition, given the public nature of Mr. Beach's activities, third parties (other students or adults) may claim discrimination.

Accordingly, you should notify an administrator and the Title IX Complaint Manager. Follow the steps in the Title IX Policy/Complaint Procedure Bulletin (BUL-2521.1) and Sexual Harassment Policy Bulletin (BUL-3349.0). Educational Equity can provide training in this area for both students and staff.

Listen

You may or may not have a strong emotional reaction (i.e., anger, sadness, guilt). However, listen to the interaction to be able to recall the exact language used. You may want to take notes to help with remembering details.

Protect

The situation must be addressed by following the legal response. Doing so is the best way to protect students and promote a safe learning environment.

Connect

Every school site has protocols, systems, and resources to support and address student safety and well-being. This is an opportunity to become familiar with and use the procedures, policies, and resources at your work site.

Model

Maintain a professional and calm level of emotions and reactions. Do not express shock or anger at the possible perpetrator or event.

Teach

This is an opportunity to bring real world issues into your classroom. As the opportunity arises, talk/teach about the inappropriateness of name-calling.

Emotional Support