

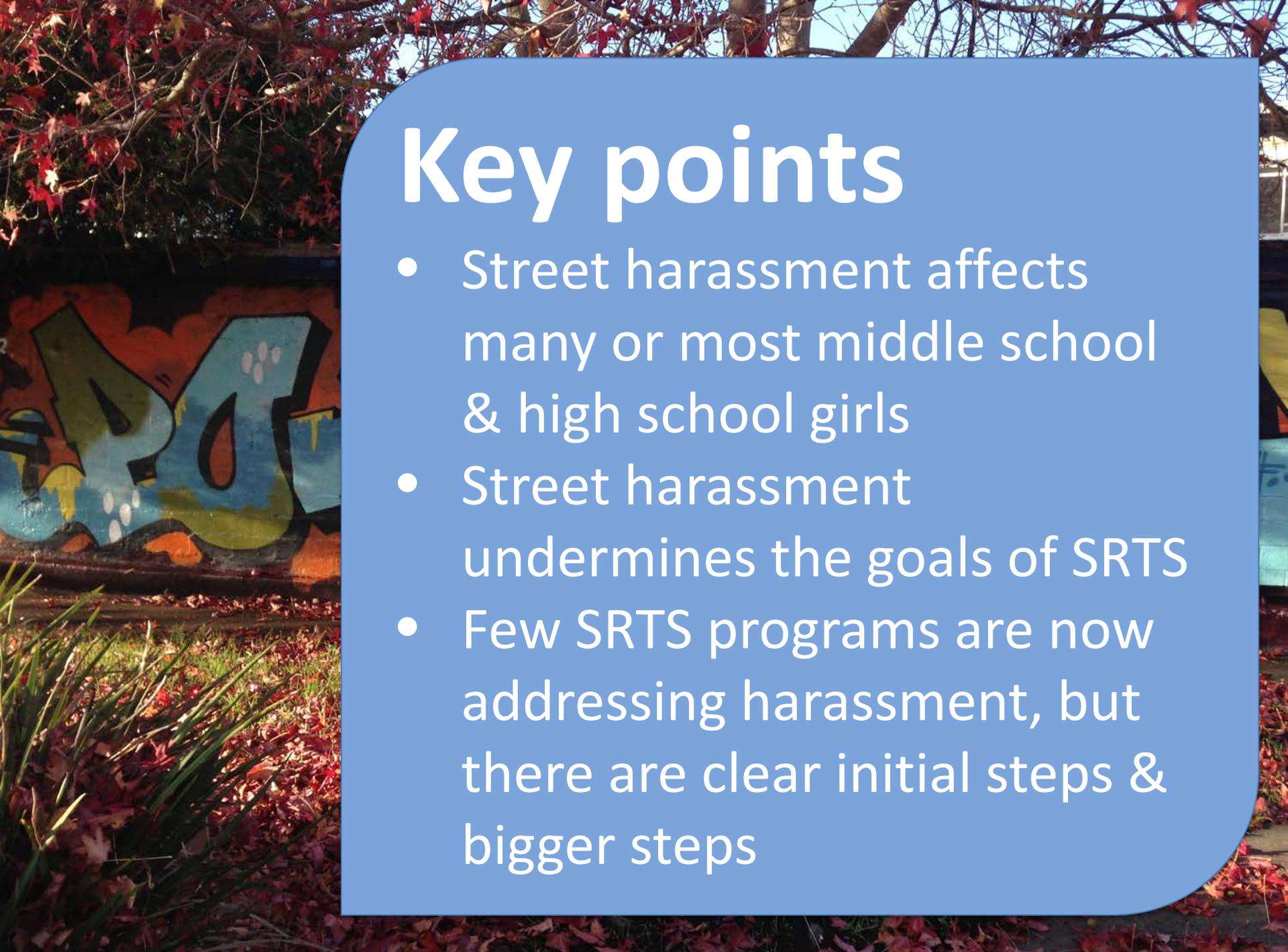


Safe Routes
to School
National
Partnership

Street Harassment & Safe Routes to School

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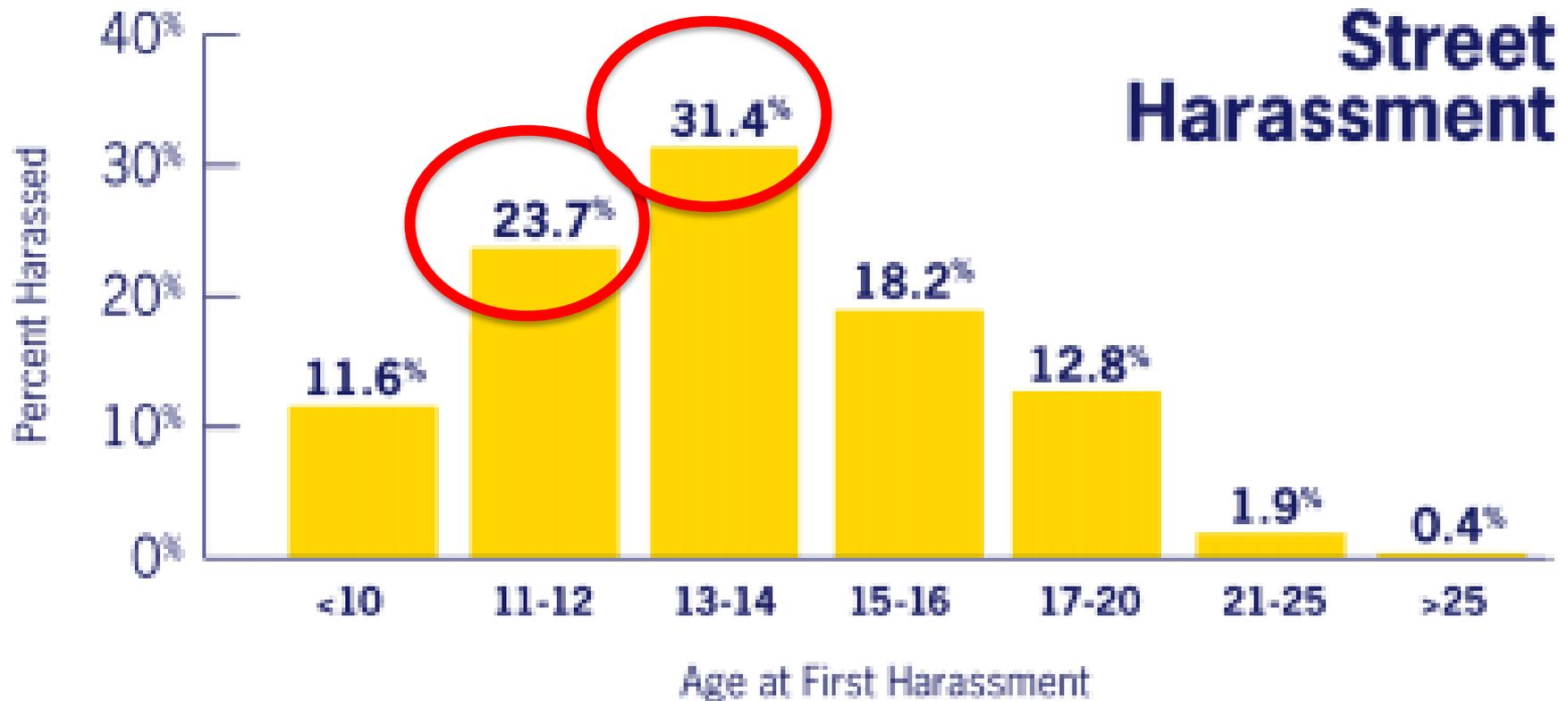


The background of the slide features a graffiti wall with vibrant red autumn leaves in the upper left and foreground. A large, semi-transparent blue rounded rectangle is overlaid on the right side, containing the text. The graffiti includes stylized letters in green, blue, and orange.

Key points

- Street harassment affects many or most middle school & high school girls
- Street harassment undermines the goals of SRTS
- Few SRTS programs are now addressing harassment, but there are clear initial steps & bigger steps

Why harassment matters for SRTS



Hollaback! International Street Harassment Survey Project

Street Harassment Threatens Safe Routes to School Goals

- Discourages walking & biking to school
- Leads to unsafe route selection
- Discourages healthy long-term habits

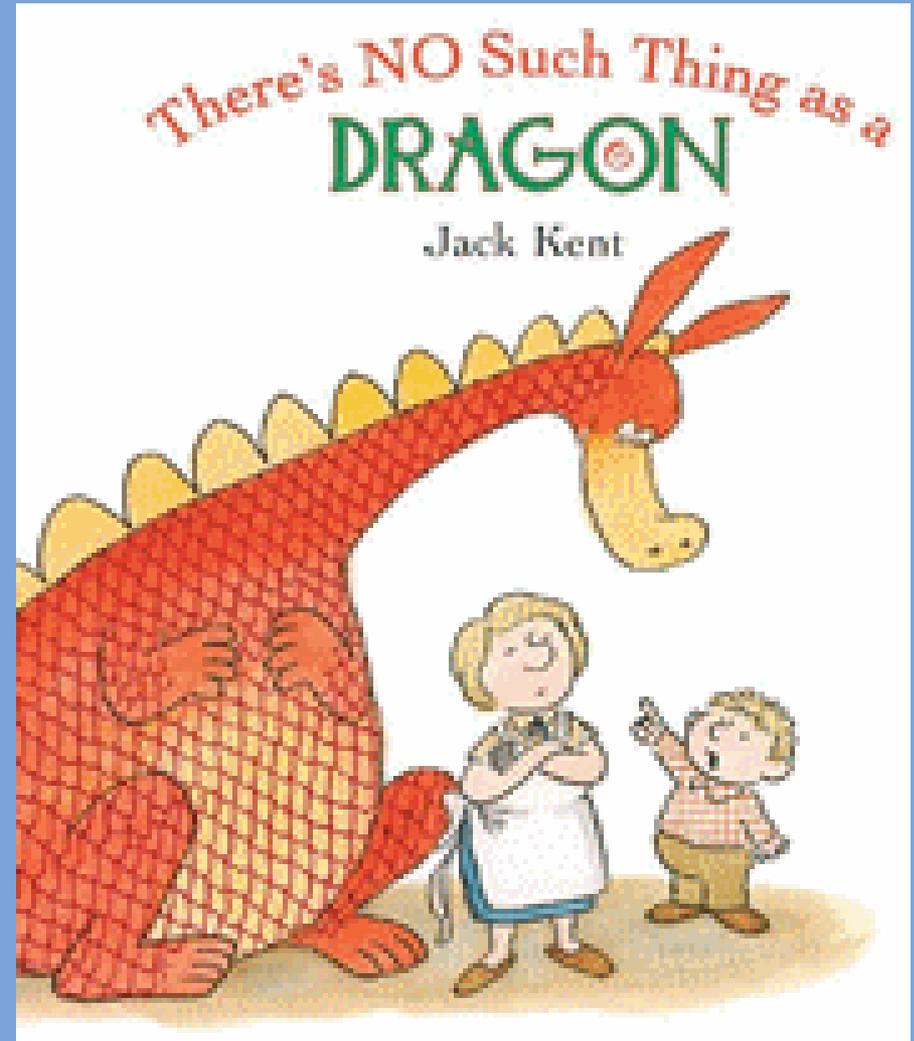


1

First Steps for Safe Routes to School Programs: Prepare Adults

Don't ignore the problem

- Help adults in your program be prepared to talk about street harassment
 - Provide basic info to volunteers (e.g. our talking points)
 - In volunteer trainings, include topic/role plays on street harassment



Key Messages for Safe Routes to School programs



Harassment:

- Is not the fault of the person being harassed
- Targets girls, kids with disabilities, kids of color, & kids perceived as LGBTQ
- Starts young
- Can have serious effects on mental health & success in school

2

Next Steps for Safe Routes to School Programs

- Provide workshops/training for students on street harassment basics: how it feels to be harassed, why people harass, what to do if you experience or see harassment, roleplays.
- Assess & monitor the problem: survey students, conduct safety/harassment audits of routes, develop a reporting system that aligns with schools' Title IX processes.



3

Deeper Engagement for Safe Routes to School Programs

- Support student-led actions: work with students to make art or posters about street harassment; host art show; march; post posters
- Make spaces safer: e.g. businesses can identify as safe spaces; adults can monitor problem areas
- Partner with transit agencies on public relations campaigns





What do we want to accomplish?

1. Give students who are harassed tools to respond & process
2. Help students respond when they are bystanders
3. Save mini-proto-harassers from becoming harassers
4. Decrease harassment overall



WOLF WHISTLES AND CREEPY COMPLIMENTS



**How Safe Routes to School Programs Can
Take Action to Protect Kids from
Street Harassment**




Fact Sheet
**Street Harassment and
Safe Routes to School**

Street harassment matters for Safe Routes to School programs. Because street harassment can undermine the goal of getting kids to make walking and biking a permanent, safe, and healthy habit, Safe Routes to School programs have a strong vested interest in taking on street harassment. Safe Routes to School programs can take action to reduce street harassment, give kids tools to respond when they experience or witness harassment, and work to help kids not become harassers in the first place.

Street Harassment Discourages Students from Walking and Biking

A 2014 nationally representative telephone survey in the United States found that 65 percent of women and 25 percent of men reported experiencing street harassment.¹ Studies of Canadian women found that between 85 and 91 percent had experienced some form of street harassment after age 16.² The most common form of street harassment identified by the American survey was verbal harassment, but 41 percent of women reported physically aggressive harassment, including having their path blocked, unwanted sexual touching, being followed, and sexual assault.

In a survey of young women conducted in Chicago in 2003, 86 percent reported having been catcalled on the street, 36 percent said men harassed them daily, and 60 percent said they felt unsafe walking in their neighborhoods.³ Harassment commonly begins when youth are in their teens, with one survey showing that 50 percent of those harassed reported that such harassment had begun by age 17.⁴



Street harassment can have a strong negative effect on students who are trying to get to school or home on foot, by bicycle, or on public transit. How do these unsolicited and often threatening comments and actions affect students? Harassment can have major effects on students and the trip to school, especially for tween and teen girls, LGBTQ youth, and youth of color. Experiences of street harassment can cause students to miss school, and can affect readiness to learn and academic success. Harassment can cause students to not want to walk, bicycle, or use public transportation. It can also lead students to change their routes to ones that are more inconvenient or more dangerous in terms of traffic. Street harassment can affect students mentally, resulting in negative self-esteem and depression. Larger scale effects can include students avoiding taking on new independence and responsibilities, instead feeling ashamed, alone, and threatened as they go through puberty.

What Is Street Harassment?
Street harassment occurs when someone experiences inappropriate and unwanted comments or actions that are sexual, homophobic, or racial, ethnic, religious, or gender-related in public spaces, such as streets, parks, or mass transit.



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