

# #UsToo: Talking Openly About Sexual Assault, Harassment and Keeping Your Employees Safe

**Alrinthea Carter**

The #MeToo movement is credited to being started by Tarana Burke in 2007 to bring attention to the shared experiences of women subjected to sexual harassment. The movement was popularized by the Hollywood community after stars began coming forward with allegations against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, which created a ripple effect, bringing similar abuses perpetrated by other powerful men in the film industry, government, and business environments. This public movement empowered women and men across the country to confront their own harassers.

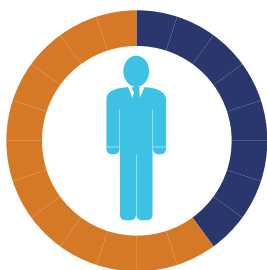
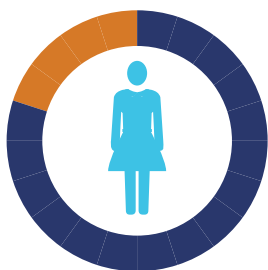
## TWO IMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS

### Sexual Assault:

This term involves a sexual act that someone was forced to do against their will and without their consent.

### Sexual Harassment:

Verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature, in the form of touch, repeated comments about the body, repetitive romantic overtures, and the use of the internet (social media, email, etc.) for purposes of sexual or romantic pressure. Separate from forced sex acts, which would be classified as sexual assault.



**81% of Women and 43% of men report experiences of sexual harassment.**

The top three locations of these reports are in public (street harassment, etc.), in the workplace or school, and in the home

### There are two main forms of workplace sexual harassment:

- **Quid pro quo sexual harassment:** an employee is required to tolerate sexual harassment in exchange for employment, a raise or job benefit, or promotion.
- **Hostile work environment:** sexual harassment in the workplace results in an offensive work environment or unreasonably interferes an employee's work performance.

### What can you do for your staff and partners?

- **Implement:** Create a strong anti-harassment policy with clear language that notes what harassment is, how and to whom employees that have experienced harassment can report any issues, and how allegations are addressed along with necessary consequences. Post this information in public places, like a breakroom or any common space.
- **Empower:** Empower your employees to come forward and report any issues, and to encourage their colleagues to do the same. Create a culture that does not tolerate harassment of any sort.