

**MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS**  
**when you see online harassment**

**SETTING:**     **An office cubicle**

[Two workers are together at a desk. A WORKER (ALEX) is sitting behind a keyboard. A COLLEAGUE (JORDAN) is alongside, leaning in. The computer monitor is positioned so they can both see it. They are reviewing what's on the monitor screen together.

On the screen is a Facebook event page: FAMILY CELEBRATION IN THE PARK. Prominent in the graphic are the words: "All families welcome!" We can see the header and photos of who has RSVPed that they are "going" to the event, including the two workers, the BYSTANDER (REESE), PAT, and SAM.]

JORDAN:       [still looking at the screen, which is showing the header...] **The event page looks great. You just made it live this morning – and already there are people responding, saying that they're going...**

ALEX:           **... who aren't us! A few people are posting replies already, too.**

[They laugh. ALEX zooms in to look at posts on the event wall.]

ALEX:           [sounding concerned and looking at JORDAN. On the screen, a post from BYSTANDER REESE reads, "I'll be there!" A post from SAM says, "Going with the kids!" The next post is from PAT.] **Ahh... uh oh. Are you reading this post from PAT? It says, "Sam has no right to be at a FAMILY event. Sam is a worthless coward who abandoned their family."**

JORDAN:       [looking uncomfortable] **Oh, yuck. That's so horrible. I just read that, too. I think I know Sam – aren't they Pat's ex? That's so mean, using our event to say terrible things.**

**Do you think it will become a big thing and ruin all the hard work we put into our event? We need to deal with this now, before it becomes a long comment thread ...**

NARRATOR:   **Family violence doesn't always end when a relationship ends. In fact, a recent separation or breakup is a risk factor for violence and abuse. The months after leaving a violent relationship can be the most dangerous time for a victim of abuse.**

**Signs of abuse and violence may show up in real life—or online. It is very common to see comments on social media that are mean or involve trolling, bullying, or harassment. It’s also common to see comments that display sexism, racism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination.**

**If inappropriate comments come up between people who are family or have been dating partners or in a family-type relationship, online comments may be signs of family violence.**

**If you were a social media user who saw mean personal comments on a page you managed, what could you do to address the abuse and keep yourself and the people around you safe? Here’s one option.**

[Back to scene]

**JORDAN:** [talking to ALEX] **Do you know Pat or Sam? This comment seems really personal and would really hurt my feelings if someone posted something like this about me. This is *definitely* not in the spirit of our event.**

**ALEX:** **I know, right? But we’re not allowed to hide or delete comments without permission, are we?**

**JORDAN:** **No, but I don’t want this to stay up on the screen too long. Let’s do a screen capture and do up an incident report.**

**ALEX:** **Yeah, that’s a great idea. I’ll do a screen grab and send an email for permission to hide or delete the comment.** [Leaving for the next cubicle.]

**JORDAN:** [Nodding agreement and reaching for a file folder] **I’ll grab a form, do up an incident report, and see a supervisor.**

**NARRATOR:** **If an online comment feels “off” to you, documenting it is a good first step. Some employers will have a policy about what to do with inappropriate social media posts and comments. Here’s an example of what you could do if you have a policy to back you up.**

**JORDAN:** [talking to ALEX] **Do you think Pat’s comments would be considered a personal attack?**

**ALEX:** [replying] **If it was directed at me, I’d take it pretty personally, that’s for sure.**

JORDAN: **Well, our social media policy doesn't allow personal attacks. Yeah, we can go ahead and delete it.**

ALEX: **Great. I'll send a private message to Pat after we delete the comment, with a link to our policy.**

JORDAN: **Perfect.**

NARRATOR: **[Popping up on the screen again.] Recognizing signs of family violence is just as important in online spaces as in real-life spaces, but it can be difficult. If you are not sure what to do, there are services in your community that can help. And remember, if you think someone is in danger—or if you are in danger—call 911.**

NARRATOR: **Other people who joined the event for the Family Celebration in the Park might have seen Pat's post before it was deleted. If you were on social media and saw this kind of message from a person to their ex, what could you do to address the abuse and keep yourself and the people around you safe? Let's ask another event-goer.**

**[The BYSTANDER REESE is onscreen. The NARRATOR asks them:]**

**Reese, I know you saw Pat's comment accusing Sam of abandoning their family. What did you do?**

REESE: **I don't really know Pat or Sam very well, but I'm "friends" with Sam on social media. I sent a private message to Sam. I've been in that situation before myself with an ex, and it wasn't great. I felt like Sam needed to know someone's paying attention, you know? That someone cares and knows what's going on with them.**

NARRATOR: **A small action might be all it takes to help in a situation of family violence. Recognize signs of violence and abuse. Consider what you can safely do. Reach out for help from community services like Family Violence Prevention Services. *Make it your business* to prevent family violence.**