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Sexuality Education Program  
for ages 12 to 17

A dark, textured silhouette of two people in a dynamic, possibly dancing or embracing pose. The figure on the left is leaning back with one arm raised, while the figure on the right is leaning forward towards them.

**BETRUE**  
**TO YOU**

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*Duquet, F. and al., 2023*  
*Projet Outiller les jeunes face à l'hypersexualisation*  
*Project: (Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization)*

UQÀM

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*Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization* project  
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The current version of the *Be True to You* program (2023) is an update of the 2010 version developed by Francine Duquet, Geneviève Gagnon and Mylène Faucher.

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Note that inclusive writing was used for this program in order to reflect the diversity of gender identities.

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- ▶ Thank you to Catherine Murray, a secondary teacher from the Lester B. Pearson School Board, without whom this project would not have been possible. After attending a two-day training session offered by the *Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization* project and the Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal during which the *Be True to You* program (2010 version) was presented, Ms. Murray pointed out that an English version of the program needed to be made available to school personnel. Following this request, the Lester B. Pearson School Board took official steps with the Ministère de l'Éducation to obtain funding to both translate and update the *Be True to You* program.
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## Awards and honors

We are proud to announce that we are winners of the Thérèse-Casgrain Equality Award in the “Allied” category (2023) from the Secretariat for the Female Condition.



## Reference of the “Be True to You” sexuality education program

Suggested reference for this program:

Duquet, F., Rouleau, L., Prince, A., Blais, J., Lemieux, S., Painchaud-Robert, L., Lindsay, M. and Radeschi, C. (2023). *Be true to You [Oser être soi-même]* (2nd ed.). Didactic tools in sex education to counter early hypersexualization among young people aged 12 to 17. Project Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualisation. Université du Québec à Montréal, 792 p. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-osser-etre-soi-meme/>

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# PREFACE



## Preface

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### History of the “Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization” project

The *Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization* project was first launched in 2005, in partnership with the Service aux collectivités de l'Université du Québec à Montréal (Protocole UQAM/Relais-femmes), following a request from the YWCA to develop an educational tool on the prevention of early sexualization. The project was initially divided into three phases: researching the subject, designing training for people working with youth and creating pedagogical tools.

With time, the *Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization* project became a key reference in sexuality education and training and was used to develop educational tools to address issues related to social hypersexualization and early sexualization.

### Achievements

The project began with the production of the documentary film *Sexy Inc.: Our Children Under Influence*, available in French and English (Bissonnette, 2007). This was followed by the creation of the *Be True to You* program (Duquet, Gagnon and Faucher, 2010), comprising 19 sex education sessions for youth ages 12 to 17. Lastly, a one-day training day was organized for teachers and other youth workers to address the phenomenon of social hypersexualization and early sexualization.

Since then, the *Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization* project has been updated with new and innovative trainings, programs and educational tools. Recent achievements include the sexuality education and early sexualization prevention program *On est encore des enfants! [We're still kids!]* for elementary students in Cycle 3 (Grade 5 and 6) (Duquet, 2017) and the educational tool *Séduction, Sentiment amoureux et Intimité: quand ça nous transporte ou quand ça dérape [Dating, romantic feelings and intimacy: the good and the bad]* (Duquet & al., 2020) for youth ages 12 to 17, which was developed in collaboration with the Regroupement des maisons des jeunes du Québec (RMJQ). These are only available in French.

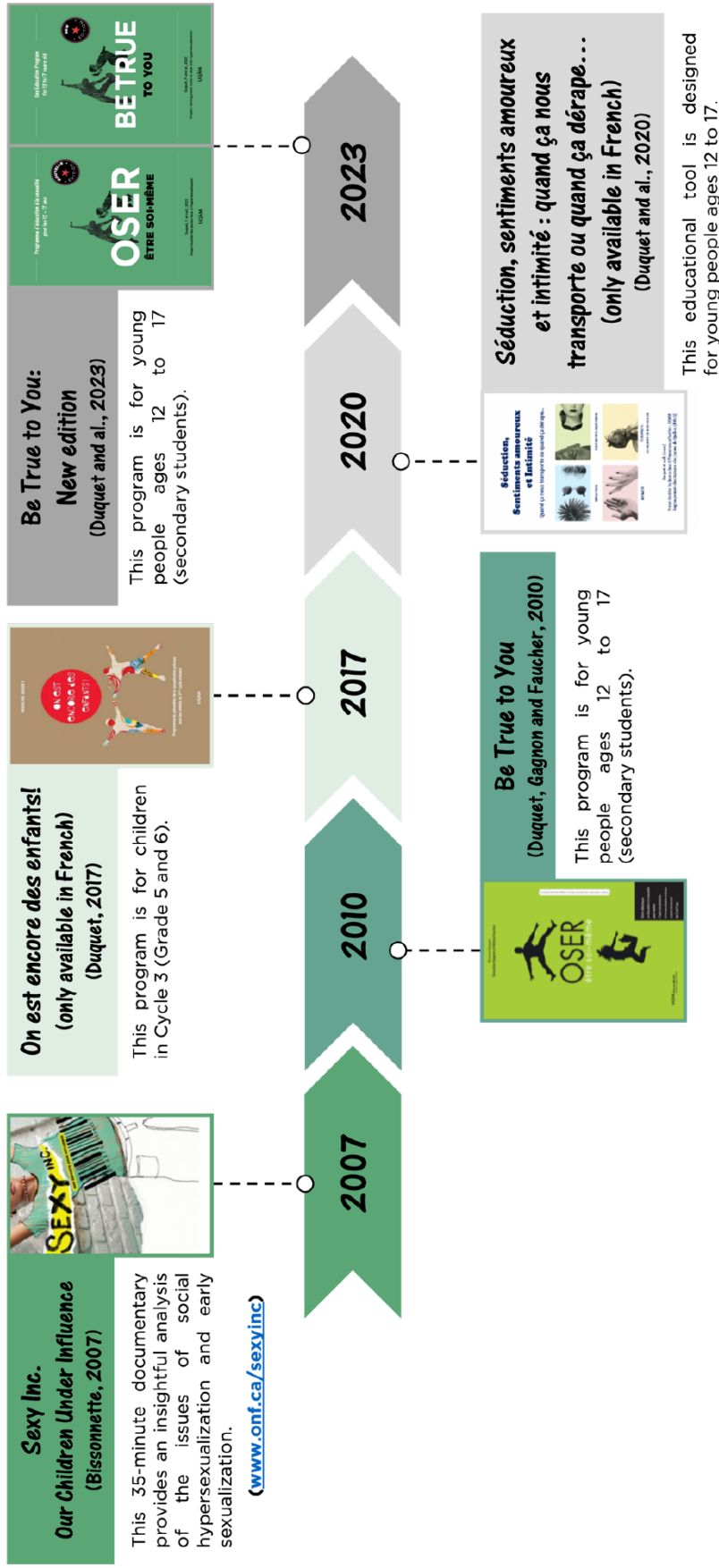
The current *Be True to You* program (Duquet & al., 2023) is in its second edition and has been extensively updated to reflect the new socio-sexual realities of youth. The program is also available in French, under the title *Oser être soi-même* (Duquet & al., 2023).

For more information on the *Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization* project and the related trainings, educational tools and research, please visit the project website:

[www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca)



# Sexuality education programs and educational tools for the Giving youth tools to deal with hypersexualization project





# Trainings and conferences offered to school personnel, youth workers and parents

## Trainings for SCHOOL PERSONNEL and YOUTH WORKERS

### PRIMARY

#### 1 Training 1 - Primary

Prevention and intervention related to early sexualization in primary school.



#### 2 Training 2 - Primary

Intervention options and application of the early sexualization prevention program for children in Cycle 3 of primary school. On est encore des enfants! (Duquet, 2017).



### SECONDARY

#### 1 Training 1-A Secondary

Lines of thought and intervention options related to social hypersexualization and early sexualization.



#### 2 Training 1-B Secondary

The “new” socio-sexual realities of youth: what seems new and what isn't.



#### 3 Training 2 - Secondary

Intervention options in sexuality education and application of the *Be True to You* (2010) program.



## Conferences for PARENTS (only available in French)

#### 1 « Prévenir la sexualisation précoce de mon enfant : j'y veille ! » (Primary)

#### 2 « Hypersexualisation sociale et sexualisation précoce : comprendre pour mieux intervenir comme parents » (Secondary)



## **Issues surrounding social hypersexualization and early sexualization**

In recent years, we have seen a ramping up of sexual content in entertainment media along with easier access to sexually explicit material. This bombardment of “sensationalistic and superficial sexual images and dialogue” [Translation] (Conrad and Milburn, 2002) has been described as “social hypersexualization” (Destal, 2010; Robert, 2005) and “the sexualization of the public space” [Translation] (Destal, 2010; Gouvernement du Québec, 2022a). This phenomenon, which is now well established in our society, has had the effect of trivializing sexuality and reinforcing sexual stereotypes (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022a).

Moreover, through information and communication technologies (ICT), we are now connected to the social and media universe any time, any place. This affects our relationships with others (Blaya, 2015) and creates an environment where young people are almost never “offline” (ATN, 2022; Lykens & al., 2017; Vogels & al., 2022) and are exposed to endless content.

The invasion of the media space by sexualized images (in advertising, reality shows, video games, music videos, on social media, from influencers and celebrities, pornography, etc.) is disconcerting to parents, teachers and youth workers. They find it regrettable that young people are discovering sexuality in this way (Baker, 2016; Chaumeron, 2003; Folscheid, 2002; Marzano, 2002) and being exposed to highly sexualized images along with products and services related to adult sexuality (Hamel and Naves, 2012).

According to Levin and Kilbourne (2009), it takes young people so much time to make sense of these sexual messages that they have less of it left for actual developmental tasks. This is why some authors characterize early sexualization as a “developmental lag” (Destal, 2010), while others believe it involves imposing adult sexuality on children, who are not yet ready to come to grips with sexuality on a psychological, emotional and physical level (Levin and Kilbourne, 2009; Papadopoulos, 2010).

Exposure to such media content appears to play a role in certain issues affecting youth, including the blurring of the public and private spheres (Duquet & al., 2018; Duquet and Quéniart, 2009; Gouvernement du Québec, 2022b); cyberbullying risks (Brisson-Boivin, 2019; RSPH, 2017); slut shaming (Goblet and Glowacz, 2021); the risk of sextortion and the non-consensual publication of intimate images (CCPE, 2022; Johnson & al., 2018; Karasavva & al., 2022; Ringrose, 2020); internet addiction (Doornwaard & al., 2016; Dufour & al., 2016); sexual solicitation (Wolak & al., 2009); and unrealistic expectations toward sexuality and romantic relationships (Peter and Valkenburg, 2016). Moreover, as Kotiuga and his colleagues point out (2022), “technology-dependent sexual practices [(e.g., voluntarily viewing pornographic material, sexting, photographing or filming a partner, etc.)] have become a part of young people’s sexual repertoire” [Translation].

Although parents are concerned about their teenagers’ exposure to pornography, they say that they feel uncomfortable discussing the subject and are poorly equipped to do so, partly because they are unfamiliar with the technologies being used (Zurcher, 2017). In addition, when facing these issues, those who work with young people are often surprised, shocked or even unsettled by the questions, attitudes and sexualized behaviours of some teenagers. In many cases, they do not know what to think, what to say or how to respond (Duquet and Quéniart, 2009; Mazzocchetti, 2017). Others may tend to trivialize situations that may in fact be concerning or inappropriate. Many are reluctant to offer guidance about sexuality out of fear of criticism, discomfort or a lack of confidence.

The Secrétariat à la jeunesse mentions that certain objectives such as “promoting healthy and safe behaviour” and “fostering equal treatment in relationships” are essential to the health and well-being of young people [Translation] (2021). The Secrétariat à la condition féminine (2022), for its part, mentions that, in order to promote egalitarian relationships, it is important to “raise awareness among the public, particularly young people, of

issues related to equality” and to “counter sexism in stereotypes, particularly in the media, advertising and communication” [Translation]. We believe that it is important for all sexuality education to move in this direction.

Though the *Be True to You* program cannot solve all the issues surrounding social hypersexualization and early sexualization, it can give young people tools for thinking about and reacting to these problems more critically. We also hope that the program, through its pedagogical approach and the topics it covers, will help young people gain a better understanding of sexuality in general but also their own (Desaulniers, 1997; MEES, 2023a), as they learn to analyze the environmental influences that affect their perceptions of sexuality (Desaulniers, 1997).

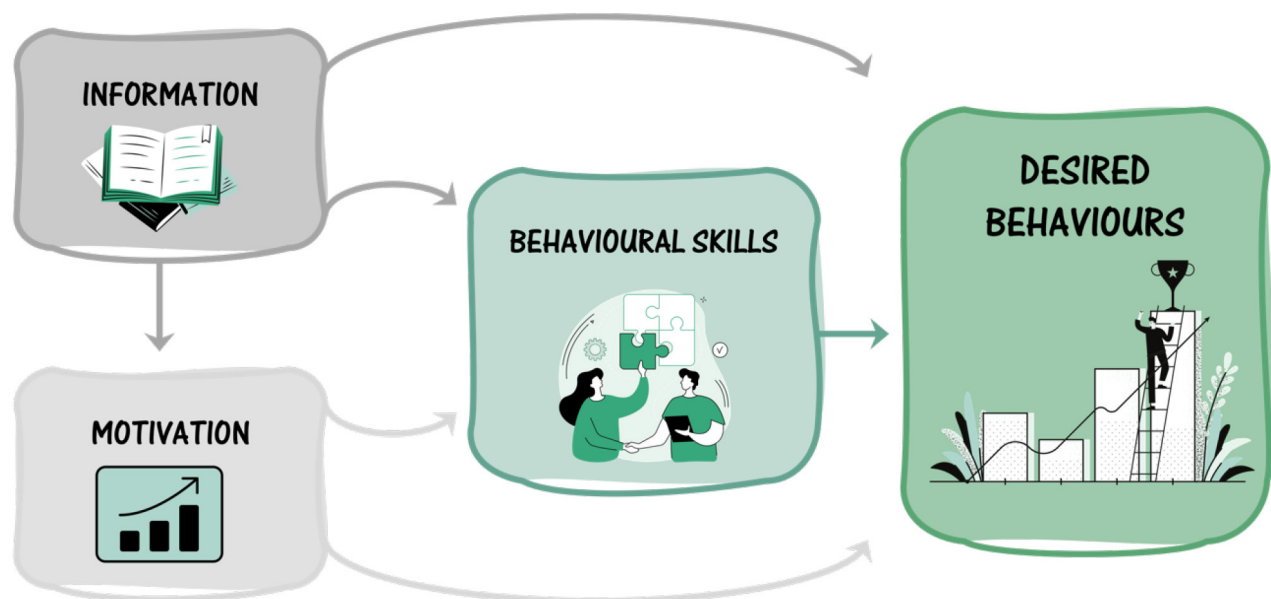
## Developing the “Be True to You” program

The second edition of the *Be True to You* program was developed based on a review of the scientific literature and various educational tools and videos as well as the survey results on the first edition of *Be True to You* (Duquet, Gagnon and Faucher, 2010), taught to 374 young people in Secondary 4 and 5 (Lefort, 2022), and the results of our anonymous *Be True to You* online survey, which was established in 2011 to collect the opinions of youth workers who use the program.

Moreover, the program session were developed based on the Information, Motivation, Behavioral skills Model (IMD) (Fisher, Fisher and Shuper, 2014; Fisher, 1992), recommended by the Sex Information and Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN, 2019), and frameworks that underpin our intervention philosophy. These elements are outlined in greater detail below.

## Theoretical model used

The diagram below illustrates the theoretical model on which the different components of the *Be True to You* program are based (Duquet & al., 2023)—namely, the Information, Motivation and Behavioural Skills (IMB) Model (SIECCAN, 2019, adapted from Fisher and Fisher, 1998).

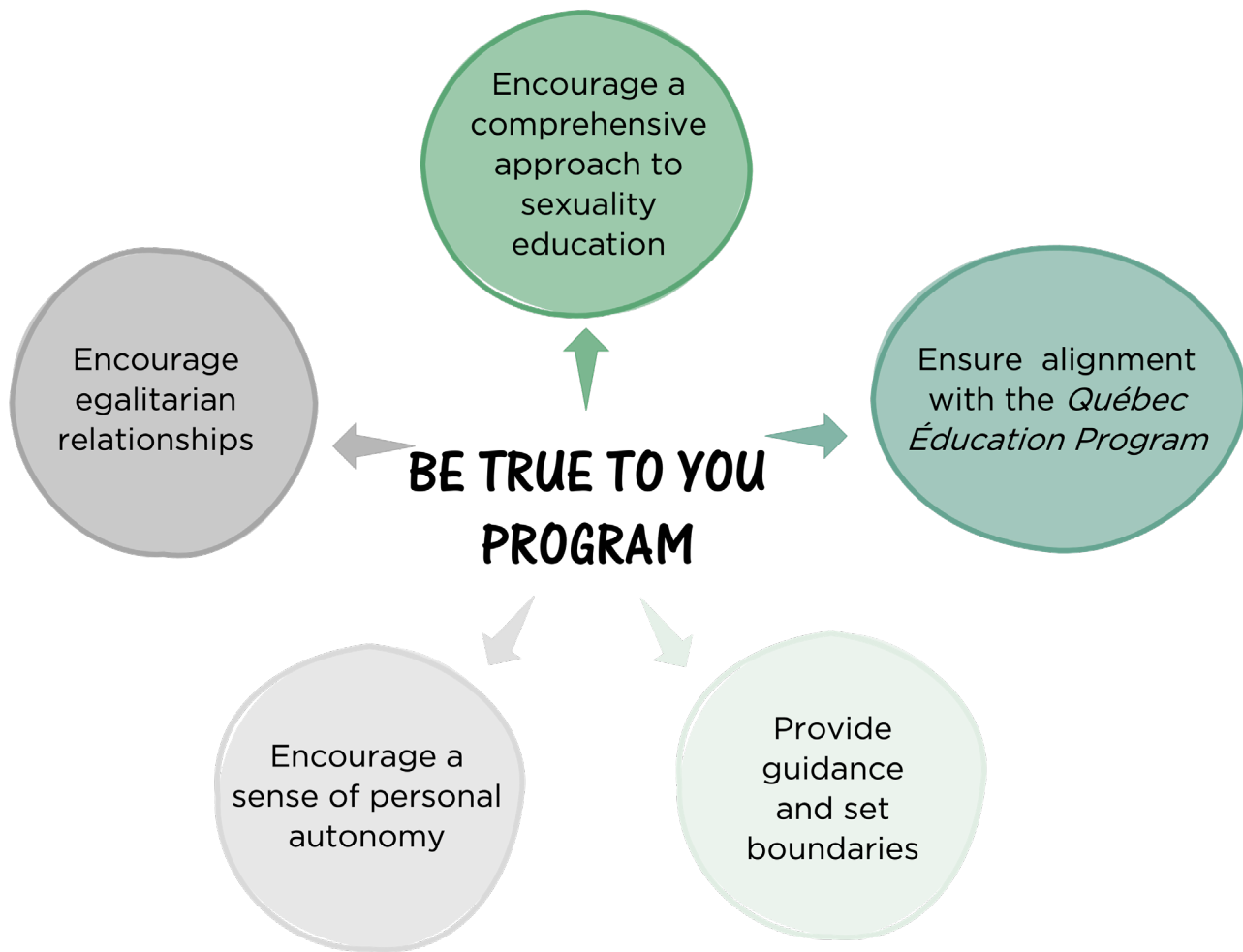


According to the theoretical model, these three key strategies enable participants to apply what they have learned in the *Be True to You* program to their daily lives (SIECCAN, 2019):

- › Provide relevant information about sexual health and wellness.
- › Develop motivational factors (e.g., individual attitudes, social norms) that encourage the adoption of healthy and positive behaviours in connection with human sexuality.
- › Teach specific behavioural skills that are essential to improving sexual health and well-being.

### **Intervention philosophy**

The diagram below shows the elements that make up the intervention philosophy of the *Be True to You* program.



## Comprehensive approach to sexuality education

Encourage a comprehensive approach to sexuality education

To counter social hypersexualization and early sexualization, the approach to sexuality education must:

- › Consider sexuality as a whole, which means covering the emotional, relational, social, moral, ethical and biological aspects.
- › Demystify certain concepts related to sexuality so that young people can place them in a more realistic context (e.g., advantages and disadvantages, challenges, their age and reality).
- › Deal with sexuality in an open and straightforward manner.
- › Encourage young people to develop their critical thinking, judgement, discernment and assertiveness.

## Québec Education Program (MEES, 2023b) Culture and Citizenship in Québec Program (MEQ, 2022) Content in sexuality education (MEES, 2018)

Ensure alignment with the *Québec Éducation Program*

For each of the sessions, the relevant broad areas of learning, cross-curricular competencies and subject-specific competencies in the Québec Education Program are indicated.

The proposed activities have been developed to directly align with the educational intentions in sexuality education or to provide a context for learning.

For educational interventions in schools that refer to the official programs of the Ministère and for each of the 20 sessions of the *Be True to You* program, have also been presented:

- › the links with the educational goals and topics in sexuality education, which are associated with the competencies (Studies a cultural reality; Reflects on an ethical question) of the *Culture and Citizenship in Québec Program* (MEQ, 2022).
- › links to the detailed content in sexuality education proposed in 2018 (MEES).

Although the *Be True to You* program does not cover all of the Ministère de l'Éducation's sexuality education topics (e.g. puberty), the 20 sessions offered here cover a wide range of prescribed themes, in addition to consider the issues with regard to the phenomena of social hypersexualization and early sexualization.

## Providing guidance and setting boundaries

Provide  
guidance  
and set  
boundaries

Young people need boundaries and guidance, especially when it comes to sexuality. Yet some adults can find it difficult to speak to young people about sexuality in an explicit and straightforward manner and discuss how emotions, relationships and ethics fit in with sexuality. This is why the *Be True to You* program teaches sexuality through a range of educational activities, discussion questions and informative content that provide a frame of reference for teachers and, in turn, students. Moreover, an analysis framework concerning kindness, dignity and safety is provided for some of the topics.

More and more, young people are finding that the adults around them are reluctant to take a stance when it comes to sexuality. Yet, it is possible to give an opinion without being moralistic. It comes down to our approach and to having an open, welcoming, thoughtful attitude. It is important to ask questions, give clarifications, propose various lines of thought, have discussions and sometimes say what is and is not acceptable. In this way, we can support young people as they think about these matters and develop their assertiveness. This is what we mean by “providing guidance and setting boundaries.”

## Encouraging a sense of personal autonomy

Encourage a  
sense of personal  
autonomy

Young people need a forum to discuss issues such as the commercialization of sexuality and social hypersexualization and to consider what “healthy” sexuality looks like—one that reflects their reality as teenagers and their needs.

“Encouraging a sense of personal autonomy” means helping young people develop critical thinking skills through pointers and guidelines that allow them to reflect, take a step back, make up their own minds and assert themselves in real-life situations.

During the sessions of the *Be True to You* program, students will be regularly encouraged to be proactive in their lives. So in addition to being a forum for them to learn, think and talk about sexuality, the program can also serve as a model of communication and self-affirmation.



## Focusing on the development of egalitarian relationships

Encourage  
egalitarian  
relationships

Our conception of gender equality is in line with that of the Conseil du statut de la femme (2008; p.7), which defines egalitarian sexuality based on three categories.

1. **Biological:** valuing knowledge about the body, respect for the body, safe sexual practices, access to and sharing of contraception.
2. **Psychological:** seeing people as owners of their sexuality rather than sexual objects, and being committed to zero violence, domination or coercion.
3. **Social:** promoting sexuality that is less constrained by sexual stereotypes.

It is essential that we develop egalitarian relationships within the younger generation since it is an issue that affects society at large. In the sessions of the *Be True to You* program, this requirement is reflected in questions and discussions on how we relate to gender. Each group gets the opportunity to present their viewpoints and is given tools for responding critically to stereotypes and narrow viewpoints about either gender.

## “Be True to You” program

### Target audience

#### Secondary students

The educational activities in the *Be True to You* program are geared to secondary students (ages 12 to 17). This program is tailored to the age and development level of the students at each grade level:

- **Secondary 1** (11-12 years old)
- **Secondary 2** (12-13 years old)
- **Secondary 3** (13-14 years old)
- **Secondary 4** (14-15 years old)
- **Secondary 5** (15-16 years old)



## Objectives

The objectives of the *Be True to You* program are:

- › **To encourage** students to think about, friendship, love and sexual awakening, dating, romantic relationships, emotional and sexual intimacy and egalitarian relationships and consider what these concepts mean and imply, in a manner appropriate for their age and development level.
- › **To foster** critical thinking about the commercialization of sexuality and its impact on their identity formation, perceptions of relationships and understanding of emotional and sexual intimacy.
- › **To encourage** the development of skills that allow students to be more self-assertive and to handle sexual activity in a way that respects their and their partner's sense of privacy and boundaries.

## Choice of topics

To achieve the objectives of *Be True to You* program, while taking into account priorities established for sexuality education, the sessions cover a range of topics based on the developmental level of the students, their age, their school level and a review of relevant literature.

- › Secondary 1 and 2 students are particularly susceptible to peer pressure and the desire to fit in, which is why, for this age group, the focus is on preventive and educational interventions aimed at developing critical thinking skills.
- › Secondary 3 students are at an age where they begin to experience pressure to become sexually active, so it is important to get them to think more deeply about this question.
- › Secondary 4 and 5 students are at an age where they have a clearer idea of what they want from their love and sex lives and better understand their role in countering the issues of social hypersexualization and early sexualization.

**Fourteen topics are covered in the 20 sessions:**

- › Some sessions deal with a specific topic and are intended for certain grade levels (e.g., Secondary 1: *Friendship and peer pressure*; Secondary 5: *Sexual diversity and gender pluralism*, etc.). Other sessions touch on topics that span multiple sessions. For example, the topic of *Body Image* will be covered in Secondary 1 and 3; the topic of *Romantic relationships* in Secondary 2, 3 and 5; the topic of *Consent* in Secondary 2, 3 and 4, but always in a different way according to the age of the students.
- › For each session, a slideshow accompanying the animation (Powerpoint) is available to facilitate the animation. You must download them from our website: [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca)
- › Among the 20 sessions of the *Be True to You* program, some include a part A and a part B which can represent two sessions of 75 minutes.



## Be True to You

Grade	Session #	Session topic	Session title	Duration
<b>Secondary 1</b>	1	Friendship and peer pressure	“Avoiding The Need To Please”	75 min.
	2	Body image	“More Than One Type Of Beauty”	75 min.
	3	Preventing bullying	“A Dangerous Game”	75 min.
	4	Dating	“Expressing Your Feelings To Someone”	75 min.
<b>Secondary 2</b>	1	Romantic relationships	“I’m In Love. What Should I Do?”	75 min.
	2	Preventing risks related to sexual solicitation on social media	“Internet Investigation – Part A”	75 min.
	3	Preventing risks related to sexual solicitation on social media	“Internet Investigation – Part B”	75 min.
	4	Consent	“Learn What Consent Really Means!”	75 min.
	5	First times	“How Do You Know If You’re Ready?”	75 min.
<b>Secondary 3</b>	1	Body image	“Body Representation In The Entertainment Industry”	75 min.
	2	Romantic relationships	“Loving And Being Loved: Not Always Easy”	75 min.
	3	Sexual consent	“Consent: Facts And Acts” Parts A And B	130 min.
	4	Sexualized social behaviour and activities	“Sex At Parties: Embarrassing, Shocking And... Risky?”	75 min.
	5	Sexual behaviour	“Let’s Talk About It”	110 min.
<b>Secondary 4</b>	1	Intimacy and Values	“Putting Values Into Action”	75 min.
	2	Sexual consent	“Making Sure You Get Consent”	75 min.
	3	Sexual behaviour and the influence of sexualized media	“Romance, Eroticism Or Pornography?”	90 min.
<b>Secondary 5</b>	1	Sexual diversity and gender pluralism	“Define Yourself On Your Own Terms!”	105 min.
	2	Romantic relationships	“Let’s Talk About Love”	110 min.
	3	Desire and pleasure	“The Key Components Of Desire And Pleasure” Parts A and B	150 min.

## Structure of the sessions

The program can be used in school or youth community settings.

### Duration :

- › Most of the sessions are **75 minutes** in length.
- › However, some of them are **90 minutes to 150 minutes**, which you can present in the stages (Part A, Part B), if you wish.

Although there is a sequence to the sessions and the topics they cover, there is also the option of handpicking sessions based on what is deemed most relevant for the group. Each session is turnkey and includes all the elements described below:

<b>Grade level, Topic, Title of the session</b>
For each session, the school level, the topic and the title of the session are indicated.
<b>Links to the programs of the Ministère</b>
For educational interventions in school settings that refer to the official programs of the Ministère, links have been made with the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2023) (Broad areas of learning; Subject areas; Cross-curricular competencies), the recent Culture and Citizenship in Québec Program (MEQ, 2022) and the content in sexuality education proposed in 2018 (MEES).
<b>Educational goals</b>
The educational goals specify what the young people will learn in the various educational activities in the session.
<b>Sequence</b>
The sequence and instructions are clearly detailed for each session. Sessions are generally made up of various educational activities (e.g., situational exercises, quizzes, discussions, videos, etc.) and a conclusion. Activities may also include discussion questions and information for the students. In short, teachers and youth workers have everything they need to lead the session. This is a turnkey program. The entire process can be found in the slideshow accompanying the animation (Powerpoint).
<b>Worksheets for the students Worksheets for the teachers</b>
Worksheets for some of the educational activities are available as well as the answers sheets for the teacher's versions.
<b>Links to educational videos</b>
Educational videos are used in some of the sessions, with links to access them. It is possible that some of the videos will no longer be accessible online or be accessible through a new URL.

### Slideshows (PowerPoint)

For each of the 20 sessions, the slideshows (PowerPoint) are available on our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca). These slideshows make it much easier to lead the session (interesting visuals, educational activities and detailed content).

<https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/> - Volet outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Be True to You.

Sexuality education sessions can also be led without using the PowerPoint.

We hope that our *Be True to You* program will allow teachers and youth workers to support young people in this essential process of developing self-understanding and self-assertiveness and encouraging relationships with others based on values of respect, equality and dignity.

**Francine Duquet and the “Be True to You” project team.**

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## Preface

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# SECONDARY 1

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## Secondary 1 - Session 1

### Friendships and Peer Pressure “Avoiding the Need to Please”



This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Comprehensive View of Sexuality</b>	<b>Become aware that during adolescence, you will gradually adopt new roles and behaviours related to your sexuality and increasingly make your own decisions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Construction of a vision and personal choices: wishes, needs, limits and the ability to consider those of others, whether or not to follow various gender stereotypes and social norms, strategies for finding information and help.</li></ul>
<b>Identity, Gender Stereotypes and Roles, and Social Norms</b>	<b>Recognize the role of puberty in the consolidation of your gender identity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Events at the beginning of adolescence.</li><li>› Exploration of new sexual values and norms, some of which reflect stereotypes (peers, social environment, media).</li><li>› Influence on your gender identity.</li></ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<b>Intellectual competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul>	<b>Personal and social competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <b>Communication-related competency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Personal development subject area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Identities and Belonging

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<b>Studies a cultural reality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<b>Reflects on an ethical question</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<b>Understand the concept of sexuality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Entering adolescence and decision-making</li> </ul>	<b>Reflect on the general underlying influences that can be considered in making decisions about sexuality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Recognition of own wishes, needs and limits and those of others</li> <li>› Self-knowledge and respect for personal choices</li> </ul>
	<b>Understand the role of puberty in consolidating gender identity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Physical and psychological transformations</li> <li>› Evolution of relationships with peers</li> <li>› Gendered socialization, stereotypes and gender norms</li> </ul>	<b>Reflect on the tensions that may exist with regard to norms, stereotypes and own gender identity</b>
	<b>Understand the manifestations of friendship, love and attraction in adolescence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Manifestations within self and in own attitudes and behaviours</li> <li>› Variations as to whom it involves and when</li> </ul>	<b>Reflect on the tensions created by the role of feelings of love and attraction in adolescence</b>



## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**

75 minutes

**Become aware of issues that affect teen friendships (e.g. sharing things in confidence, peer pressure) and develop skills to assert yourself when being pressured by your friends.**

- 1. Explain** the differences between an “acquaintance,” “friend” and “boyfriend/girlfriend.”
- 2. Name** similar and different characteristics that people might look for in a “best friend” compared to a “group of friends.”
- 3. Identify** the people you may or may not want to confide in and the reasons you may or may not want to do so in different situations (public versus private life).
- 4. Analyze** a dilemma illustrating the peer pressure that young people can experience and discuss the pros and cons of the available options as well as the most appropriate course of action.
- 5. Identify** ways to assert yourself when pressured by your friends to engage in sexual activity or behaviour that you don't want to do.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **three activities**.

20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Brainstorming:</b> Difference between an acquaintance, friend and boyfriend/girlfriend</li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>Small Talk   Friendship</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> Similarities and differences between a best friend and a group of friends</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Individual survey:</b> “<i>Who would you want to confide in...?</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 1.1: Questionnaire: “Who Would You Want to Confide in...?”</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 1.2: “Sofia and Ashley”: Situational Exercise</i></p>
25 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Group Activity:</b> “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational exercise</li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> “Amelia and Renaud” Situational exercise</li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Real-life experiences with peer pressure</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 1.3: “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational Exercise</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 1.4: Answer Sheet: “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational Exercise</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 1.5: “Amelia and Renaud” Situational Exercise</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 1.6: Answer Sheet: “Amelia and Renaud” Situational Exercise</i></p>
10 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>Brain games - Social Conformity</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and key messages</b> from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations (e.g. conflicts, rejection, intimidation, etc.). It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the Resources section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.





## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MIN.



BRAINSTORMING



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



VIDEO

## Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › **Explain** that today's session is about friendships and peer pressure.

## Video and Discussion

- › **Start** the session by asking the group:
  - “What is friendship to you?”
  - “What are the differences between an ‘acquaintance,’ ‘friend’ and ‘boyfriend/girlfriend?’”

*Get their opinions.*
- › Continue by **showing** a video of young children explaining what friendship is and the differences between a friend and a best friend:

### Small Talk | Friendship (CBC Kids, 2017)

**Length:** 2 min., 53 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9HH3pTmHz8>



Video





› After showing the video, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and **get** their answers:

- **What are your takeaways from this video?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Presentation

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

› **Friendship**

- Friendship means feeling close to someone you really like. You share a connection. Friendship also means respect, mutual trust, sharing, understanding, and acceptance (Bukowski and al., 2019)

› **Difference between an “acquaintance,” “friend” and “boyfriend/girlfriend”**

- A friend is someone who cares about you, who is there for you and supports you; a friend is someone you can count on and spend time with; a friend is someone you like being with and someone you can talk freely to and confide in (Bukowski and al., 2019).
- An acquaintance is a person that you have met but don't know well (Acquaintance, n.d.). For example, someone you do activities with (e.g. sports, going to the same school). This is a person you get along well with, but you may not share everything with them (Narr and al., 2019).
- Acquaintances don't give us the same things we find in a friend, such as someone we share a connection with, to whom we can tell things in confidence, who understands us, who is there for us, etc. (Connaissance, n.d.).
- A boyfriend or girlfriend is someone you have romantic feelings for that are different from what you would feel for a friend. You think about this person all the time and want them to be interested in you. You may also feel physically attracted to this person (Tel-Jeunes, 2022c).

## Brainstorming

- › **Split** the blackboard into two sections with:
  - “Best friend” on one side
  - “Group of friends” on the other
- › **Ask** the group to name the characteristics they would want in a “best friend” and the characteristics they look for in a “group of friends.” **Explain** that a group of friends can be two or three people or more.
- › **Write** their answers on the board.

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Characteristics you look for in a “best friend”:**
  - Respectful, funny, good listener, friendly, in tune with you, honest, non-judgmental, shares some of your values, you can be yourself with them, you can confide in them, etc. (Tel-Jeunes, 2022b).
  - You feel like equals.
  - They can be counted on, and you can tell them the truth.
  - You can goof around, laugh yourself silly, or even cry with them.
- › **Things you look for in a “group of friends”:**
  - Having fun, sharing activities (e.g. leisure, sports).
  - Sharing interests (Bukowski and al., 2019).

## Discussion and Presentation

- › After the brainstorming, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and **get** their answers:
  - **What similarities do you look for in a “best friend” and a “group of friends”?**
    - Which qualities are the same?
    - Which ones are different?
  - **Do you think friendship changes as we age?**
    - If so, what changes specifically?

› **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### › **Differences between a “best friend” and a “group of friends”:**

- A group of friends lets you get to know each other, have new experiences, feel a sense of belonging to a group, and develop your independence and respect for others (Naitre et grandir, 2021; Narr and al., 2019). A friendship with a best friend lets you feel safe to open up, have more self-confidence, feel less anxious and feel useful and important to someone else (Bukowski and al., 2019; Burgun, 2012).
- Some of the characteristics you look for in a “best friend” may be the same as for a “group of friends” (e.g. sharing the same activities).
- However, you may look for some characteristics in a “best friend” that you may not look for in a “group of friends.” For example, being able to confide in the person and trust that they won’t tell anyone else, being able to talk to that person when you need someone to lean on, etc. (Tel-Jeunes, 2022b).
- A “best friend” often holds a special place in our lives. The ending of this relationship could feel like a hard loss (Tel-Jeunes, 2022a).
- You can generally be yourself with your “best friend” and usually don’t feel judged. With a “group of friends,” however, you may fear being judged if you don’t think or act like them. There may be some pressure to fit in with the leaders of the group.
- Overall, it’s good to have a “best friend” and a “group of friends,” but you need to know that each one doesn’t necessarily provide the same things.

### › **Friendships change as you get older:**

- Friendships can change as we get older for a variety of reasons:
  - Your friend moves to another city and you grow apart because you don’t see or talk to them anymore.
  - You no longer have the same interests, priorities or values.
  - Your friend has a new boyfriend or girlfriend and no longer has time to for you; they don’t seem like the same person.
  - You have a fight and never really make up.
  - Etc.
- However, sometimes people grow up and keep the same friends they had in elementary or high school.
- One thing that doesn’t seem to change over time is the trust that develops between two friends. It is very important to know that you can trust the other person.



# 2

## Activity 2



**SHEETS 1.1 AND 1.2**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**20 MIN.**



**INDIVIDUAL**  
**SURVEY**



**TEAM**  
**ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION**  
**AND PRESENTATION**

## Survey and Presentation

- › **Hand out** Sheet 1.1 to each person: “*Who would you want to confide in...?*”
- › **Tell** the group that, for confidentiality reasons, they don’t have to share their answers with everyone or fill out Sheet 1.1 in class. **They just need to answer the questions in their heads.** However, they can fill out the sheet at home if they want.
- › **Explain** to the group who the person(s) they can confide in are:
  - **Your best friend is one of your closest friends and even one of your confidants.**
  - **Your family, your siblings, or your boyfriend or girlfriend, if you have one, are also some people who can be closest to you.**
  - **Your “group of friends” can generally be less close; they know you well but less so than your family.**
  - **Your acquaintances are people you don’t know very well and who don’t know you very well either; they may be your classmates, neighbors, etc.**
  - **Adults at your school, such as the principal, teachers, nurse, psychologist, psychoeducator, monitor, etc.**
- › **Read** each question out loud and ask the group to think about each one.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Activities dealing with sensitive personal topics need to be kept confidential. This is because some young people may try to snoop and look at other people’s answers, which could be very embarrassing for some. This is why it is important to tell the group not to write their answers on the sheet directly. Another option is to only give them the Sheet 1.1 once the exercise is done.



## Discussion and Presentation

- › Once the questions have been read and answered (in their heads), **lead** a discussion using the following questions.

- **What are your takeaways from this activity?**
- **Does the person or do the people you feel like confiding in vary depending on the situation? If so, why?**
- **Do you share a lot of information about yourself with many people? Or are you more discreet or reticent?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The people you want to confide in will vary depending on your bond of trust with them, their kindness, their ability to listen, their ability to keep things to themselves, and what you want to confide in them. If the topic is a personal issue, some people may prefer talking to their best friend instead of a parent, as a friend may have good advice because they are going through similar things.
- › Other people prefer asking their parents because they know they will get more accurate and complete information. Others won't dare broach the topic with their friend or parents and will instead confide in a school counsellor.

- **What might prevent you from wanting to say certain things to certain people?** (Don't name the people, but rather give the reasons).

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › You may be reluctant to confide certain things because:
  - You fear being misunderstood. You don't feel heard.
  - You fear that the other person will tell other people or use this information against you and spread rumours; you don't really trust the person.
  - You fear being judged, being laughed at or even harassed.
  - Etc.

- › It's harder to confide in someone when you know that doing so can make you vulnerable. In this case, it may seem better not to reveal too much to "protect" yourself. It's normal not to want to share everything about yourself to everyone. It's a way to protect your "inner life."
- › Sometimes you hesitate to confide in others because you don't want to bother them or you think your problem isn't important. You may also fear that the problem is too big or too complex to tell anyone about. If you're having trouble with a situation or it's all you can think about, you should get help from a trusted adult (e.g. parent, counsellor, teacher).
- › You may also want to talk about the problem simply to get it off your chest without necessarily wanting other people's opinions. You can try and express yourself in some other way:
  - You can write in a personal diary.
  - You can let off steam by doing something that makes you feel good (e.g. play sports, do some art, listen to music, go for a walk).

- › **Continue** by asking the questions below. But first, **tell them** that they do not have to share their answers with the group; they just have to think about their response, as they did in the previous activity.
  - **Which people in your life (including your friends) can you trust, be yourself around, and share personal information with without the fear of being judged?**
- › **Add** to their reflection using the suggested content.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › In life, it's important to be able to count on someone you trust, including friends. In fact, you don't need to have a ton of close friends; just 1 or 2 may be enough.
- › This trusted person could also be a family member (e.g. sister, brother, parent).

- **In your opinion, based on the information presented in Sheet 1.1: "Who Would You Want to Confide in...?":**

**a. Which information is more "private"?**

- i.e. information that you want to keep to yourself OR that you would only share with someone very close to you OR with someone you trust who could help you and wouldn't make you feel judged.

**b. Which information is more "public"?**

- i.e. information that many people could know without there being any real consequences.

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

› **“Private” information vs. “public” information:**

- It’s important to distinguish between personal (private) information and information that we don’t mind people in our lives or strangers knowing about (public).
- Above all, you need to determine the people you can or would like to confide in. For example, you can tell people in your life that you have a boyfriend or girlfriend because you’re comfortable with people knowing that, so this is public information. However, you may decide not to share that you are no longer happy with your boyfriend or girlfriend and are thinking of breaking up with them. That is personal information. Or, you could decide just to confide in your best friend about your problem.
- On social media or in reality shows, we constantly see people sharing things about themselves and talking about extremely personal things. Some people may talk about conflicts in their relationship or about their past or current sexual experiences. Others will post intimate nude photos of themselves, etc.
- This can give the impression that anything that is usually “private” can easily become “public” and that everyone should share this kind of information with everyone else. This creates confusion between what is “private” and what is “public,” not only for adolescents but for adults too.
- However, remember that the goal of a reality show is to get people’s attention so that they have a big audience and high ratings and can sell advertising time at an expensive rate. Similarly, some people on social media “overshare” with the hope of getting more followers and “likes” to increase their popularity.

## Team Activity

- › **Continue** by giving the group a short situational exercise to test their knowledge of the criteria about whether or not to confide in someone and about which information is more private or public (Sheet 1.2: “Sofia and Ashley” Situational Exercise).

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

If you are leading the session without the slideshow or if you want everyone to read the situation individually, you can print out Sheet 1.2: “Sofia and Ashley” Situational Exercise and hand it out to the group.



## Discussion and Presentation

- Which information that Sofia shares with Ashley would be considered more “private” and which would be more “public”? Why?
- If others heard what Sofia said about them, how would they react?
- Why do you think Ashley is reluctant to confide in Sofia?

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Which types of information are considered “private” and which are considered “public”?**
  - Information that should not be disclosed to respect people’s freedom and privacy is considered private (Braudo, 2021; Trudel, 2014). The right to privacy is a fundamental right under the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (LégisQuébec, n.d.). The Charter is a law that has been in effect since 1975 to protect the rights of adults and minors (CDPDJ, 2022).
  - Sensitive information such as the end of her last relationship or the sexual orientation of her Math teacher is information that could be considered personal, intimate, and “private.” This is information that only the person themselves should disclose if they want and not through someone else. “Private” information becoming public can have negative consequences for the people involved (e.g. being made fun of or rejected; conflict).
  - Sofia herself can decide to reveal aspects of her own private life, such as her past relationships. But talking about others or spreading rumours shows she doesn’t care at all about the “inner lives” of others.
  - Other information she shares with Ashley, such as her dream of becoming an engineer or her favourite TV show, are personal interests that are not considered private, as there would not be any consequences if they became public. Talking about your interests with your friends or even strangers doesn’t necessarily expose you to the risk of ridicule.
- › **Possible reactions if people heard what Sofia said about them**
  - We don’t know what exactly she said about the girls on her team and the coach, but if she is spreading rumours about them, this could be considered a form of bullying (Éducaloi, 2022). The consequences of rumours and bullying can be serious: anxiety, loss of self-confidence, humiliation, isolation, fear, feelings of distress, etc. (Gouvernement du Québec, 2021).
  - Since they are on the same team, her teammates may feel betrayed by Sofia after learning what she has said about them. They may shun her and spend less and less time with her. In short, they may no longer trust her.
  - If this becomes bullying on Sofia’s part, they may go talk to staff at the school to stop the behaviour, which may have consequences for Sofia.



› **Ashley's hesitation**

- Ashley is reluctant to confide in Sofia, since they have only been friends for a very short time (2 weeks) and she is asking her about intimate experiences, which is personal information.
- It could be that Ashley would confide in Sofia if they were somewhere other than the cafeteria, as she doesn't feel that this is the best place to answer her questions.
- Sofia seems to have trouble keeping information about other people to herself. This may prevent Ashley from confiding in her. Sofia may not realize that she is revealing so much personal information about other people. She may not think that she's doing any harm.
- Also, since Sofia seems to be spreading rumours, Ashley may be worried that Sofia would talk about her to other people behind her back. Finally, Ashley may also hesitate because Sofia is pressuring her and insisting that she confide in her. These situations can make it hard to decide and do what you actually want to do. This is what we'll go over in the next activity.
- Finally, Ashley may also hesitate because Sofia is pressuring her and insisting that she confide in her. These situations can make it hard to decide and do what you actually want to do. This is what we'll go over in the next activity.

- › **Tell** the group that, in the next activity, you will **go over** different situations of young people experiencing pressure from their friends.
- › In fact, sometimes our friends, and even our best friends, can put pressure on us to think or act "like them." In some cases, this can make it difficult to make a decision and act based on what we actually want to do.
- › The first situational exercise will be done with the group and the second will be done in teams.



## Activity 3



SHEETS 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 AND 1.6

SLIDESHOW (PPT)



25 MIN.



GROUP  
ACTIVITY



TEAM  
ACTIVITY



PRESENTATION



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Group Activity

- ▶ **Hand out** Sheet 1.3 to the group: “*Thomas, Karim and Nicolas*” Situational Exercise (or refer to the PPT) and **lead** a discussion based on this exercise.
- ▶ Ask the group to come up with a solution to the dilemma, i.e. analyze a situation in which the main character is pressured to do something and has to choose from among several options and decide which choice is best. They must first indicate what the main character *COULD DO* (what are the different options?) and then what they think the character *SHOULD DO* (what would be the best solution for the main character, taking into account the other characters involved?).
- ▶ This first situational exercise done in a large group will facilitate the discussion and give them things to think about. **Refer** to Sheet 1.3: *Answer Sheet: “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational Exercise*, for a description of the possible options and solution to consider.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

“There are different ways to be popular. Some young people who are popular in a positive way (e.g. leaders, motivators) are imaginative, show a talent for sports or academics, have a sense of humour, and bring people together.

“The qualities required to be popular seem to be being a good listener, coming up with interesting things to do, having a way with words that can persuade people, expressing yourself well, participating in class, being skilled in general, having a good attitude, etc. Caring about others, understanding people’s feelings and mental states, and being good students will also contribute to their popularity. Leaders who speak up easily, who aren’t shy or socially anxious, who know how to consider what other people want and feel are often well liked.



“On the other hand, some kids may be popular because they goof off in class, are disruptive, or aren’t good students.

“The advantages of being ‘popular’ are feeling liked and accepted, having your self-esteem and self-confidence reinforced, and finding it easier to take on new things.

“However, whether they are popular or not, all young people need to feel respected.”

*Pascal Mallet, Professor of Developmental Psychology  
(2008, cited in Parents!, 2016).*

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of four and **hand out** the second situational exercise to each team (Sheet 1.5: “Amelia and Zachary” Situational Exercise).
- › **Tell** the students that they will have 10 min. to respond to the situation and do the same exercise, i.e. decide what the main character **COULD** do (what are the different options?) and what they **SHOULD** do (what would be the best solution for the main character, but also taking into account the other characters involved?). Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group. You can read over the instructions with them on Sheet 1.5: “Amelia and Zachary” Situational Exercise.
- › **Ask** the spokesperson from each team to share their answers for each question.
- › **Ask** the others in the group what they think about the decision made by each team.
  - **Is it the best decision? If so or if not, why?**
  - **Does this decision reduce the pressure that Amelia may feel to meet the expectations of her friends, her boyfriend, or her parents?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to their answers with the suggested content (Sheet 1.6: Answer Sheet: “Amelia and Zachary” Situational Exercise). Although each team is asked to consider only two options, others are obviously possible.

## Presentation

- › To illustrate peer pressure in adolescence, **share** these different stories with the group from young adult women, who explain what happened to them as children or teenagers when they felt peer pressure or pressure to be part of a popular group at school.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Young women around the age of 20 talk about what they did as children or teenagers to be accepted by their friends (adapted from QueenCamille, 2018):
  - Ruby: “When I was 13, I bought Nikes just because they were in fashion and because my best friend at the time had them, but I didn’t like them. I had them in blue, she had them in red. The worst part is that I insisted my mother buy them even though she couldn’t really afford them.”
  - Camila: “Throughout my adolescence, my strategy was to change my identity and dress like a specific group to fit in.”
  - Éloïse: “When I was 9 years old, I went on vacation with my family and ended up playing with a group of older kids. They must have been 11 or 12 years old. The girls wanted to kiss the boys, so they wanted to play spin the bottle all the time. But I just wanted to trade my Pokemon cards. Everyone thought the spin the bottle game was so funny and “forbidden.” I sat in the circle and played the game. I ended up kissing a 13-year-old boy. It was wet and gross. I didn’t want to do it again for years.”
  - Zoey: “To get into a very popular ‘clique’ in high school, I started smoking. I would go to the smoking area with them outside the school. But I hated the smell and taste of cigarettes.”
  - Nellie: “There was a girl in my Grade 6 class who had repeated a grade. Everyone thought she was so cool. I wanted to be in her circle of friends, and she invited me to a sleepover at her house. She liked to go on online chats to strip in front of her web cam. I saw my first “dick pics” around this time, when I was about 12 years old. After that night at her house, I didn’t want to talk to her anymore. I felt really uncomfortable around her.”
  - Tia: We were playing ‘Truth or Dare.’ One of the dares was kissing someone without really wanting to. Everyone was really uncomfortable, but no one said anything.”

## Discussion and Presentation

- › After the presentation, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and **get** their answers:
  - **What do you think of these situations?**
  - **Why do you think we sometimes decide not to tell our friends what we really think and to hide our feelings?**
    - **Are there any risks in doing what others want us to do, even if we don’t want to do it? If yes, what are they?**
  - **When pressured by our group of friends or best friend to do something sexual that we don’t want to do... (e.g. kissing someone during a Truth or Dare game; looking at naked pictures on the Internet), why is it important to respect our limits and tell others that we don’t really want to do something or like something?**
    - **What are your tips for getting out of this situation?**

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

› **Reasons you may decide not to say what you really think and hide your feelings from your friends.**

- Sometimes you can't tell your friends everything you think or you may decide to lie outright because:
  - You don't want to be laughed at or ridiculed.
  - You just want to be part of the group.
  - You feel pressure from your classmates or friends to think or act a certain way.
  - You don't want to disappoint your friends, etc.
- However, lying can put you in a tricky situation because you risk being found out and losing your friends' trust. At first, "playing the game" may seem harmless, but you can get trapped in a lie.
- Telling the truth and saying what you really think also means being honest with yourself and others. It means being able to speak up for yourself and accepting that you may have a different point of view. This isn't always easy, as the fear of rejection and confrontation is very strong in adolescence.
- You could simply decide not to tell people everything in order to protect yourself from other people's judgment. However, constantly lying to others is a sign of a real problem, because it means that you are never (or seldom) yourself and can't be vulnerable with others, especially with people who say they are your friends.
- You have to ask yourself if you are safe with your friends. Will they reject you over nothing? Or will they defend you in front of others who are pressuring you?

› **Tips to get out of something your group of friends or best friend is asking you to do but that you don't really enjoy or want to do**

- It's not always easy to be assertive and tell your friends that you don't like or don't want to do something they are asking you to do. But if they are good friends, they will understand and respect your decision.
  - For some people, being assertive means speaking up firmly and loudly; however, speaking your mind in a more quiet and discreet way is just as valid (Tel-Jeunes, 2022d).
- You can be assertive and tell your friends the truth: "I'm sorry, but I don't feel like it, I'd rather go home."
- You can leave the situation without explaining any further. This signals your discomfort and refusal to participate in something someone is trying to persuade you to do. You may have to explain later why you left.

› **Tips for getting out of an uncomfortable situation at a friend's house**

- You may also need an excuse to leave the situation. For example: a chore your parents asked you to do that you just remembered, a meal planned with your family, you don't feel well, etc.
- You can also get help from your friends and try to get their support.
  - Have a friend agreement: agree on a subtle non-verbal or verbal cue (e.g. a word, phrase, gesture) that signals you feel uncomfortable and want to leave.

- You can also set up a system with your parents to let them know if ever you are in a situation that you want to get out of and they can come get you.
  - Send a text message with an emoji or a word signalling that you want to get out of a situation.
  - Call and hang up after a few seconds to let your parents know they need to call back.
  - Calling your parents and saying a specific word or phrase that means they should come get you.
  - Etc.
- The important thing is to REACT when you see a situation that makes you uncomfortable or when you're feeling pressured in a situation and know that you don't want to do what everyone is asking you to do.



## Session Conclusion



10 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

- › Ask the group about their takeaways from this session.

### Video

- › **Show** a video that illustrates the difficulty of going against a group (social conformity). This revealing experiment shows how hard it can be to stand up for yourself when the group is doing something that doesn't work for you and that makes you feel indirectly (or directly) pressured by others. The question that the video asks is "How far will we go to be part of the group?"

#### Brain Games - Social Conformity (Mohamed Squalli, 2015)

**Length:** 3 min., 39 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UemyY4Hmeeg>



Video



### Discussion and Key Messages

- › After the video, **get** their opinions:
  - What are your takeaways from this video?

- › **Add** to what they say with these **KEY MESSAGES**:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › It's hard not to give in to group pressure, as this experiment has shown us.
- › In "real life," it's normal to want to do what others do or hope to be popular with our friends. However, you shouldn't pressure yourself or agree to do things that you aren't comfortable with, including intimate or sexual acts.
- › If you are experiencing peer pressure to do something you don't want to do, it's important to learn to speak up for yourself and find ways to get out of the situation. Everyone has their own way of asserting themselves.
- › You can also ask for advice or help from trusted adults (e.g., our parents, school counsellors).
- › It's important to tell the difference between true friends and people you simply want to please or "avoid displeasing."
  - Do we act differently with them because we think we have to be a different person for them to like us?
  - There are "friends" who can make you feel stressed, sad or even angry. If this happens, try to understand why you feel this way with these people and ask yourself if this is a "real" friendship.
- › In friendship, you have to feel that you can just be yourself. Sometimes our friends are the ones who won't let us, but sometimes we're the ones limiting ourselves.
- › **Rule no. 1**  
Disagreements or small conflicts can be easily resolved with your real friends.
- › **Rule no. 2**  
A real friend makes you feel good, and you don't need to "fake it" around them.





# SHEET

## 1.1

FOR THE GROUP

### Survey: “Who Would You Want to Confide in...?”

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Think about the person with whom you would like to share this information about YOURSELF. You can name more than one person OR no one at all.
- › For now, just think about it. You can fill out the questionnaire later at home.

Who would you want to confide in...?	Someone in your family	Your best friend	Your boyfriend or girlfriend	Your group of friends	Your followers on social media	An adult at school	Someone else: _____	No one in particular
Your favourite hobby								
That your parents are splitting up								
That you failed a test								
That you feel alone or are being bullied								
That you feel that you are in love with someone in your class								
That you have questions about puberty								
That you don't like parts of your body								
That you think you're smart								
That you did something you regret								
That you have done something you are particularly proud of								
<b>TOTAL</b>								



## “Sofia and Ashley” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Read the short situational exercise.**
- › **Make connections with the criteria for confiding in someone or not.**

### “Sofia and Ashley” Situational Exercise

**Sofia** is in the cafeteria talking with her new friend **Ashley**, whom she met for the first time two weeks ago on the school soccer team. As they both wait in line to get their food, Sofia tells Ashley all sorts of things in rapid succession:

- › How her last relationship ended.
- › Rumours about people in her class.
- › What she really thinks of the girls on their soccer team and the coach.
- › What she likes about her favourite TV show.
- › That the Math teacher is gay.
- › And finally, that she wants to become an engineer.

Then she turns to Ashley and asks: “Do you have a crush on a boy or girl in school? Who? Have you kissed them yet?” Ashley blushes and feels uncomfortable.

Sofia adds, “Come on, don’t be so embarrassed! I swear I’ll keep it between us.”

Ashley doesn’t know what to do and hesitates to answer.

- › **Which information that Sofia shares with Ashley would be considered “private” and which would be more “public”? Why?**
- › **If others heard what Sofia said about them, how would they react?**
- › **Why do you think Ashley is reluctant to confide in Sofia?**



## SHEET

### 1.3

FOR THE GROUP

## “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a group, read the situational exercise with Thomas, Karim and Nicolas and answer the questions.

### “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational Exercise

**Thomas, Karim** and **Nicolas** have been friends since primary school and have always been very close. Since starting high school, Thomas has made new friends in his class, who are very popular boys at school. He has slowly started spending less time with his old friends from primary school to spend time with his new group of friends. Nicolas and Karim tell Thomas that he has changed a lot; he dresses differently and even ignores them at school. **Thomas doesn't know how to react.**

- › What do you think of Thomas's attitude?
- › What do you think of Nicolas and Karim's reaction?

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- › Suggest **different ways that Thomas could respond** and describe the **pros** and **cons** of each choice.

**CHOICE 1** - Thomas **COULD**...:

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Pros of this choice	Cons of this choice
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

**CHOICE 2** - Thomas **COULD**...:

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Pros of this choice	Cons of this choice
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

- ▶ Thomas would like your opinion.  
In your opinion, what **SHOULD HE DO**?  
Why should he make this choice?

*Help Thomas find a solution*

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## Answer Sheet: “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Present the situational exercise and lead a group discussion.
- › For each question, get different opinions from the group.

### “Thomas, Karim and Nicolas” Situational Exercise

**Thomas, Karim** and **Nicolas** have been friends since primary school and have always been very close. Since starting high school, Thomas has made new friends in his class, who are very popular boys at school. He has slowly started spending less time with his old friends from primary school to spend time with his new group of friends. Nicolas and Karim tell Thomas that he has changed a lot; he dresses differently and even ignores them at school. Thomas doesn't know how to react.

- › What do you think about the attitude of Thomas's friends?
- › Suggest different ways that Thomas could respond and describe the pros and cons of each choice.

### Thomas COULD decide to:

1. Apologize for being more distant lately and decide to spend most of his time with his primary school friends.

#### Pros

- He has been friends with Nicolas and Karim for a long time. Their trust in each other is worth a lot.
- Etc.

#### Cons

- By remaining friends just with Nicolas and Karim, Thomas would miss out on new friendships.
- Etc.

2. He could spend less time with his primary school friends as they don't have the same interests and he prefers hanging out with his new friends. Without being rude to his older friends, he could tell them that he enjoys his new group of friends because they share his interests and style.

**Pros**

- Thomas becomes part of the popular group at school and makes new friends.
- Thomas then becomes popular himself and feels more interesting.
- Thomas feels good because he is accepted by this popular group at school, not like his friends from primary school.
- Etc.

**Cons**

- When we grow up, our personality can change and our interests can change as well. We have to adapt to these changes, which is normal. If Thomas changes his personality just to be with his new "friends," this may not reflect who he really is.
- If Thomas is constantly letting down his long-time friends, he may hurt them and miss them.
- Thomas's parents might worry that he is seeing his old friends less (or not at all), especially since he's known them for so long.
- Maybe popularity has become more important to Thomas than loyalty to his old friends.
- Etc.

3. Continue to see his primary school friends after school and on weekends and see his new group of friends at school.

**Pros**

- Thomas creates a balance between his new friends and his long-time friends, who would then become his "school friends" and his "weekend friends."
- Etc.

**Cons**

- By doing this, Thomas is ranking his friends by "style" and "popularity." Is he ashamed of his long-time friends?
- He can't practically ignore them at school and then still want to do activities with them on the weekend.
- Etc.

4. Introduce his primary school friends to new high school friends so that they can all do activities together sometime.

**Pros**

- Thomas makes sure his two groups of friends do activities together. This way, he wouldn't be separating his friendships and wouldn't need to ignore the friends he's known since primary school.
- Thomas can be happy, and even proud, to introduce his "popular" friends to his new group of friends.
- Etc.

**Cons**

- Thomas's new friends may not accept his old friends and vice versa.
- Thomas may experience a lot of pressure to "make it work."
- Etc.

› **Thomas would like your advice: what should he do and why?**

## INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Get the solutions from the group. Then suggest the ones below that are intended to be respectful for everyone involved.**

### Thomas SHOULD decide to...

#### Several options are possible depending on the person's needs and their situation:

- Options 3 or 4 could be good decisions depending on the interests of his two groups of friends.
- However, option 4 seems to be the best decision.
- At the same time, Thomas needs to ask himself questions about his new attitude. Does he want to be with his “new friends” only to be popular like them at school? Does he really feel accepted in this new group or does he have to fake it?
- He can't forget that things are easy and comfortable with his long-time friends (whom he has had since the beginning of primary school) because they've known each other for a long time, they've shared activities, and they confide in each other, and this type of bond can't be recreated overnight.
- It is understandable that he feels torn between his old and new friends and hopes that both groups will like each other so that he won't have to choose between them.
- It is also understandable that Karim and Nicolas do not want to lose their friend and may feel a little jealous that Thomas is developing new friendships. They may fear that these new friends become more important to him than they are.
- However, it could be that the bond and interests that Thomas shared with his friends just aren't what he's looking for anymore when it comes to friendship. It is not easy to explain this to childhood friends. Even if hearing this may help them better understand their friend's attitude, they may still feel saddened or shocked. When a friendship ends, people can feel pain at the loss.
- In life, we sometimes grow apart from our friends without always understanding why, and this can happen naturally without anyone saying anything.



**SHEET**

**1.5**

**FOR THE GROUP**

## “Amelia and Zachary” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situational exercise and answer the questions.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.
- › You will have 10 minutes to respond to the situation.

### “Amelia and Zachary” Situational Exercise

Since **Amelia** has been dating **Zachary**, she spends less and less time with her friends. Every day, Zachary takes Amelia home after school, and he loves their time together. Amelia also enjoys being with Zachary, but she used to go home all the time with her friends. They accuse her of choosing a boy over them, but they are also curious and want to know everything about her relationship. One day, her friend Maria asks her (somewhat discreetly) during class if she and Zachary have made out. Amelia feels uncomfortable and worries that other people are listening. Amelia’s parents are also concerned about this new relationship, as they don’t want it to become too serious and interfere with her studies. **Amelia doesn’t know what to do to share her time equally between everyone and make everyone happy.**

- › What do you think of the attitude of Amelia’s friends, boyfriend and parents?

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- › Suggest **different ways** for Amelia **to respond** and explain the **pros** and **cons** of each choice.



**CHOICE 1 - Amelia COULD...:**

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Pros of this choice	Cons of this choice
<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

**CHOICE 2 - Amelia SHOULD...:**

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Pros of this choice	Cons of this choice
<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

- ▶ Amelia would like your opinion. In your opinion, what **SHOULD SHE DO?** Why should she make this choice?

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*Help Amelia find a solution*



## Answer Sheet: “Amelia and Zachary” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Hand out the Amelia and Zachary situational exercise to all of the teams.**
- › **The teams will then read the situation and answer the questions.**
- › **Choose a spokesperson.**
- › **Let the spokesperson from each team share their answers with the whole group.**

### “Amelia and Zachary” Situational Exercise

Since **Amelia** has been dating **Zachary**, she spends less and less time with her friends. Every day, Zachary takes Amelia home after school, and he loves their time together. Amelia also enjoys being with Zachary, but she used to go home all the time with her friends. They accuse her of choosing a boy over them, but they are also curious and want to know everything about her relationship. One day, her friend Maria asks her (somewhat discreetly) during class if she and Zachary have made out. Amelia feels uncomfortable and worries that other people are listening. Amelia’s parents are also concerned about this new relationship, as they don’t want it to become too serious and interfere with her studies. **Amelia doesn’t know what to do to share her time equally between everyone and make everyone happy.**

- › **What do you think of the attitude of Amelia’s friends, boyfriend and parents?**
- › **What could Amelia do or say to her friend in this situation?**
- › **Write down the pros and cons of each choice.**

### Amelia COULD decide to ...

1. Tell her friends that she really likes them, but that she needs to see her boyfriend more often.

#### Pros

- Spending more time with her boyfriend would help her get closer to him.
- This could give others the impression that she is more mature and serious.

#### Cons

- She may sense her friends’ disappointment that she’s not spending all her time with them. Spending less time with her friends means sharing fewer activities with them, confiding in them less, and not laughing together as often.

- Spending more time with her boyfriend can also mean less time for her studies.
- Etc.

2. Tell her boyfriend that he is very important to her and that she loves him, but that her friends are also very important. Explain that she feels the need to see her friends as much as him.

**Pros**

- This would create a balance between her boyfriend and her friends. It could be that both Zachary and Amelia’s friends understand the situation.
- Amelia’s friends will no longer accuse her of “dumping” them for a boy.
- She can enjoy time with her friends, which is normal for people her age. And she can spend time with her boyfriend as well.
- This may reassure her parents.
- Etc.

**Cons**

- Amelia may feel her boyfriend’s disappointment. Amelia’s boyfriend might feel that she isn’t prioritizing him and might risk breaking up with her, which would make Amelia’s choice even more complicated.
- Amelia may want to spend all her time with her boyfriend because it’s a brand-new relationship. Although she thinks about him a lot and he takes up a lot of space in her life right now, she would have to stop seeing him so often so that her friends can spend time with her too.
- Spending a lot of time with your friends can also have an impact on your school work.
- Etc.

3. Tell her boyfriend that she wants to break up with him.

**Pros**

- Amelia’s friends will no longer accuse her of “dumping” them for a boy.
- Amelia will have more free time for her friends and her school work.
- Etc.

**Cons**

- This solution seems a bit drastic. Amelia isn’t listening to her feelings, and Zachary may not understand why she’s breaking up with him since she said she loved him and likes being with him.
- Going through a breakup is difficult. Especially if that isn’t what you really want.
- This may have an impact on her studies.
- Amelia’s friends may feel bad for indirectly “demanding” her to break up with him.
- Etc.

4. See only her boyfriend and quietly distancing herself from her friends or even telling them she’d rather not see them anymore because she doesn’t want to choose between them and her boyfriend.

**Pros**

- Amelia no longer has to worry about what her friends think of her relationship.
- Amelia will have more time for her boyfriend and her studies.
- Etc.

**Cons**

- This solution seems a bit drastic. Amelia isn’t listening to her feelings, and her friends may not understand her decision.
- “Breaking up” with friends can be just as hard as breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend. In this case, it is clear that this is not what Amelia wants.
- This may impact her studies.
- Zachary might feel bad because he never asked for her to stop seeing her friends for him.
- Etc.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Amelia would like your opinion. What do you think she should do and why?**
- › **Collect the solutions from the different teams. Then suggest the ones below that are intended to be respectful to everyone involved.**

### Amelia SHOULD decide to...

#### Several options are possible depending on the person's needs and their situation:

- Choices 1 and 2 seem like good decisions, as long as Amelia is comfortable explaining the reasons for the choice to Zachary and her friends. And there's no need to break up with your boyfriend (Option 3) or stop seeing your friends (Option 4). You can definitely find a balance.
- For example, Amelia might tell her friends how important it is for her to spend time with her new boyfriend but that they are no less important to her and that she wants to keep them as friends.
- Conversely, Amelia might tell her boyfriend that she misses her friends and would like to see them more often. If he really loves her, he will understand her need to see her friends too. In any case, he too most likely needs to see his friends.
- At the beginning of a relationship, it is normal to feel in love and want to be with the other person as much as possible, but it can also be very awkward when you are alone together. In this case, it is easier to see each other with friends.
- Even though you can be in love and have a boyfriend or girlfriend in Secondary 1, you don't yet have a real "couple's life" like young adults who live together.
- In the long run, it's better not to invest all of your energy in one area of your life. The important thing is for this initial phase to eventually lead to a balance between your friends, school work, family and your boyfriend/girlfriend (if you have one).
- Friendships, family, and school work are all very important at your age as well.

#### Beware of Too Much Pressure!

- Although this is not the case with Zachary and Amelia, putting pressure on someone or even blackmailing them so that they don't see their friends as much or at all is not a way to prove your love.

#### Hey, That's Private!

- Amelia can decide whether to share more personal information with Maria. She doesn't have to tell her friend everything that happens between her and Zachary: she may want to keep some things private. If she feels the need to confide in her, she will when they are alone so that other people don't overhear them. Protect your privacy and the other person's is important.

#### My Parents Are Worried!

- Many young people your age don't have a boyfriend or girlfriend. If you do start a relationship, your parents may become concerned because they don't want you to experience an emotional roller coaster (e.g., intense joy followed by intense heartache) that could interfere with your studies or other aspects of your life. They also want this new person in your life to treat you right!
- Getting to know this person in your life may reassure them.

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## Secondary 1 - Session 2

### Body Image “More Than Just One Model of Beauty”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual Growth and Body Image</b>	<p><b>Reflect on the advantages of having a positive body image:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feelings about your own body.</li> <li>Attitudes and behaviours related to appreciating your own body.</li> <li>Influence of body perception on the expression of sexuality.</li> <li>Advantages of having a positive body image.</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand how certain norms can influence body image:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards and messages about the body from the people in your life (peers, family), society and the media.</li> <li>Influence of these standards and messages on people’s body image.</li> </ul>
<b>Comprehensive View of Sexuality</b>	<p><b>Become aware that during adolescence, you will gradually adopt new roles and behaviours related to your sexuality and increasingly make your own decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of a vision and personal choices.</li> <li>Whether or not to follow various gender stereotypes and social norms.</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2021)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Media Literacy:</b> Enable students to exercise critical, ethical and aesthetic judgment with respect to the media and produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights.</p> <p><b>Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities:</b> Encourage students to develop an active relationship with their environment while maintaining a critical attitude toward consumption and the exploitation of the environment.</p>	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal and social competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication-related competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul> <p><b>Methodological competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information and communications technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Identities and Belonging

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand the concept of sexuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Entering adolescence and decision-making</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the role of puberty in consolidating gender identity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Gendered socialization, stereotypes and gender norms</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand how body image is formed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Thoughts, feelings and attitudes about own body</li> <li>› Influence of norms and messages about the body</li> <li>› Advantages of having a positive body image</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on the general underlying influences that can be considered in making decisions about sexuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Self-knowledge and respect for personal choices</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflect on the tensions that may exist with regard to norms, stereotypes and own gender identity</b></p> <p><b>Reflect on the tensions between norms, the bodily changes of puberty and the perception of own body and own physical appearance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Feelings about own body</li> <li>› Attitudes and behaviours related to appreciating own body</li> </ul>





## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Help young people respond to the pressure of beauty standards on how they perceive their body image.**

- 1. Define** beauty and a positive body image.
- 2. Discuss** the importance and benefits of having a positive body image.
- 3. Clarify** how beauty standards for girls and boys are both similar and different and the importance that people attach to these standards.
- 4. Identify** different sources of positive and negative influence on beauty standards.
- 5. Show** students how to critically analyze the three sources of influence (media, friends, family) on the perception of their looks and body image.
- 6. Discuss** how young people can protect themselves against things that negatively influence their body image.
- 7. Identify** ways they can change their own behaviour to positively impact the body image of others.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **four activities**.

10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Quiz:</b> Beauty and body image</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 2.1: TRUE / FALSE Cards</i> <i>Sheet 2.2: Beauty Facts and Falsehoods</i></li> </ul>
10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Beauty standards</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 2.3: Beauty Standards</i></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Impact technique:</b> Water glass and body image</li> <li>› <b>Three videos:</b> Talking to kids about...Body image Seeing the beauty in our friends and ourselves Dove: choose beautiful</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Personal reflection:</b> Things that influence body image</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Content Overview:</b> Strategies to help students protect themselves against negative stereotypes and impossible beauty standards <i>Sheet 2.4: Am I Influenced by Beauty Standards?</i></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> <i>You're beautiful – social experiment</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations or situations involving violence. It is important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the police *or* Youth Protection Directorate must be contacted.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.





## Activity 1



**SHEETS 2.1 AND 2.2**

(PHOTOCOPY AND CUT OUT THE CARDS IN ADVANCE)

**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**10 MIN.**



**QUIZ**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

## Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by telling the group that you are going to discuss body image and the perception of beauty.
- › **Continue** by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).

## Quiz

- › **Explain** that the first activity will be a True or False quiz about beauty and body image. Here are the instructions:

Everyone will get a TRUE card and a FALSE card (Sheet 2.1: *TRUE / FALSE Cards*). Read each of the different statements about beauty (Sheet 2.2: *Beauty Facts and Falsehoods*). After each statement, everyone will raise either their TRUE card or FALSE card to show whether they think the statement is true or not. Then give the correct answer (Sheet 2.2) and ask one or two students to explain why. If necessary, add to the information using Sheet 2.2.

- › **Hand out** the TRUE and FALSE cards to the group and start the quiz.

- › **Use** the content below to summarize the statements in the quiz:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Beauty standards evolve over time, and we are living in an era when it can be particularly hard to have a positive body image.**
  - Social media is everywhere, and social media use can increase the desire to change one's body (Rodgers and al., 2020).
- › **Teens of all genders worry about their body image, which means that during this time in their lives they may:**
  - Judge their appearance harshly.
  - Find it harder to think they are good-looking (Yager and al., 2013).
  - Confuse beauty and attractiveness, which are two different things (Tylka and Wood-Barcolow, 2015).
  - Believe they have to be sexy to be good-looking.
  - Accept their body image more easily if they feel that others accept their bodies (Rodgers and al., 2020).

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group:
  - **How would you define “positive body image” to a friend?**
  - **Why do you think it’s important to have a positive body image?**

*Ask some volunteers to share their opinions.*
- › **Explain** what it means to have a positive body image along with the benefits of a positive body image.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### › **Definition of positive body image:**

“Positive body image is a recent concept that includes several facets, such as the acceptance of one’s body and the ability to take care of it with safe, nurturing methods” (Carrard and al., 2019). It’s about feeling good about the way you look (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).

### › **Benefits of a positive body image:**

- When you love your body, you want to take care of it. A person who loves their body therefore:
  - Develops good habits, such as eating well and exercising, not to have a perfect body but to take care of their bodies (Tylka and Wood-Barcalow, 2015).
  - Can find good strategies to feel better when they aren’t doing so well (e.g. go for a walk) (Tylka and Wood-Barcalow, 2015).
- When you accept your appearance and think you are good-looking, it’s easier to have good self-esteem and self-confidence, to feel good about yourself, and to be more caring or kind to yourself, which makes it easier to connect to others (Tylka and Wood-Barcalow, 2015).

### › **Conclude** with the following question:

- **After the TRUE or FALSE quiz and our discussion about the benefits of a positive body image, what are your main takeaways about beauty and body image?**

*Get their opinions.*



## Activity 2



**SHEET 2.3**  
(PHOTOCOPY AND CUT OUT  
THE QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE)

**POSTER TACK  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**10 MIN.**



**TEAM ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three or four.
- › **Go over** the definition of “beauty standards.” This definition will help the group do the next activity.

**Beauty Standards:** *Beauty standards are physical criteria that people think they have to meet to be considered beautiful and that are determined by our society or culture (Dufour-Bouchard, 2016).*

*Specific standards will influence our perception of beauty (Dufour-Bouchard, 2016). For example, Western society is highly influenced by standards of beauty portrayed in the media (e.g. movies, reality shows, ads, social media, music videos).*

- › **Randomly assign** one of the three questions from Sheet 2.3: *Beauty Standards* to each team.
- › **Explain** that their team will have five minutes to answer the question before sharing their answers with the group.

Below are the questions on Sheet 2.3: *Beauty Standards*:

- **Give examples of “beauty standards” portrayed in the media that are directed at boys or men. In other words, what qualities do boys or men need to have for people to think they’re “good-looking”?**
- **Give examples of “beauty standards” portrayed in the media that are directed at girls or women. In other words, what qualities do girls or women need for people to think they’re “good-looking”?**
- **How far are some people willing to go to meet the “beauty standards” portrayed in the media (e.g. movies, reality shows, ads, social media)?**

- › **Divide** the blackboard into three columns (one column for each question).
- › **Ask** each team to put up their answers (using poster tack) into the corresponding column.
- › **Choose** three volunteers from the group to come to the board. Each one will be assigned a question and will have to read their team’s answers.

## Presentation and Discussion

- › **Add to** their answers with the information below:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Examples of “beauty standards” portrayed in the media and directed at boys or men.**
  - Men should have muscles and not a lot of fat; they must be tall and tanned; they shouldn’t have a lot of hair, etc.
  - They have to represent strength (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
- › **Give examples of “beauty standards” portrayed in the media that are directed at girls or women.**
  - Women should be thin, have smooth hair, full lips, big breasts (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022), long legs, straight teeth (Mimeault, 2005), rounded buttocks and little (or no) body hair, etc.
- › **How far are some people willing to go to meet these beauty standards?**
  - It is okay to want to take care of yourself and improve your appearance without becoming obsessed about it.
  - But some people are willing to risk their health to get their dream body (e.g. strict dieting, intense workouts, not protecting themselves from the sun (Nowicki, n.d.)).
  - Others take more definitive action with plastic surgery: “Cosmetic surgery sells the dream that you can look like your favourite celebrity and be admired like them too” (Mimeault, 2005). The number of teenagers who want surgery to change something they don’t like about their bodies has increased (Nowicki, n.d.). However, this doesn’t mean that surgeons automatically perform these operations. They need to make sure that the request isn’t hiding a more significant problem.



- › **Ask** the following questions and **get** their opinions:
  - **Who do you think decides on these beauty standards?**
  - **Are there beauty standards that make it difficult for you to be satisfied with your body image? If so, why?**
- › **Add** to their answers with the information below:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Who decides on these beauty standards?**
  - The entertainment, fashion, cosmetics and other industries all impose their own “beauty standards.” By bombarding us with the same type of images, they “make us believe that there is just one way to be beautiful” (Mimeault, 2005).
- › **Are there beauty standards that make it difficult to be satisfied with our body image? If so, why?**
  - Yes, some of these stereotypical and unattainable standards can impact self-esteem. The problem is when you constantly compare yourself to these images, which can be “technologically manipulated,” and constantly feel dissatisfied with your body. You can’t compete with Photoshop or a team of professionals (e.g. hairdresser, make-up artist, fashion designer) who are there to improve the image of these models, actors, and singers.
  - Remember that the body is changing and transitioning during adolescence. You can’t compare your body to an adult body.
  - Some days we feel like we look our best and other days we don’t. Learning to appreciate your body image is a challenge at any age, and this is the key to “beauty.”



## Activity 3



**LARGE GLASS**

**WATER**

**MATERIALS OR “POLLUTANTS”  
THAT WILL BE ADDED TO THE WATER**  
(e.g. moss, soil, stones, shredded tissues)

**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**20 MIN.**



**IMPACT TECHNIQUE**



**VIDEOS**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Impact techniques are simple activities that use movement or objects (in this case, a glass of water) as metaphors. When material engages multiple senses, and not just verbal language, the students will be more likely to remember the key message, as they will make different associations between the glass of water and body image. The goal is to help them retain the information more easily (Beaulieu, 2014). After the activity, and for the rest of the session, refer back to the glass of water as often as applicable.

We based this glass of water activity on the one developed by Beaulieu (2014) and adapted it to the theme of body image. However, you can also use the glass of water metaphor to address other aspects of self-esteem.



### Impact Technique

- › **Take** a see-through glass, fill it part-way with water, and show it to the group. Explain how the water is of very good quality because it is clean and transparent.
- › Now **take** the stones, earth, etc. that you collected and show them to the group.
- › **Show** the glass to the group as well and explain that the glass and water together represent a teenager.
- › **Ask** the group to give examples of things they may say about their own bodies and things that others may say about them from the time they get up until the end of the day. Whenever someone says something negative, add some “pollutants” to the water. Whenever someone says something positive, add some water.



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

It is very likely that the examples students give will be fairly negative (e.g., ugly, fat, skinny) if not outright disrespectful and insulting (e.g., fat cow, troll). Ask the students to provide positive examples as well. The goal is to illustrate the effect that receiving either compliments or disparaging remarks can have on how someone's day goes and, by extension, on that person's self-esteem. The point is not to allow a free for all; it's important to "protect" those who are often the target of mockery or insults, so do not allow students to use their examples as personal attacks. The goal is for them to realize how big an impact negative comments can have on body image perception and self-esteem. It is not to make it a game or a joke "just for laughs," etc.

- › After some pollutants and water have been added to the glass several times, **ask** the group what they think the water and pollutants represent. (Water = positive thoughts or comments; pollutants = negative thoughts or comments).
- › After several pollutants have been put in the glass, **show** the glass to the group so that everyone can see what it looks like.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the following questions and for each question, add to the answers with the information below:
  - **What do you think the message of this activity is?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Every day, we take different negative thoughts about our body or our appearance into our "glass of water." These things may be our own dissatisfaction with our bodies or even comments from others.
  - › Taking these "pollutants" (negative thoughts) into our "water" will have an impact on us. Waste "pollutes" our water. In other words, negative thoughts and messages about our bodies influence how we think and feel.
  - › A day when we don't appreciate our body and judge it severely means that we may have a lot of "pollution" in our water and therefore a lot of negativity about our appearance.
- › **Continue** the discussion by asking the following questions:
    - **Do you think that the media (e.g. ads, social media) and our friends, and family have an impact on whether we appreciate our bodies, i.e. can they add "water" or "pollutants" to our glass?**

- **Can the media and friends and family influence whether teens are satisfied or not with their appearance?**
- **If so, why?**  
**If not, why not?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Body image, or how we perceive our body, is influenced by the different messages we get about appearance and beauty.
- › These messages can come from our own personal experiences and from the people around us, such as our friends and family, the media, or society in general (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).

## Videos

- › **Tell** the group that they will watch three videos that represent different sources that can influence teens' body image: 1. the media; 2. their friends and peer group; and 3. their families. A discussion will follow each video.
- › **Show** the following video that illustrates the “influence of media” on body image:

**Talking to kids about... body image (The House of Wellness, 2018)**

**Length:** 4 min., 34 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7N6-mTvW9Zw>**



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › After the group watches the video, **ask** the following questions and **get** their opinions.
  - **One message from this video is that the media, including social media, negatively influence young people’s body image and self-esteem. What do you think?**
  - **What role can the media, such as advertising, movies, TV shows and social media, play in how you perceive your body image?**
  - **If you had the same discussion with your parents about self-esteem and the influence of the media on body image, what would you say?**
  - **How can the media influence whether you want to change things about your body? Do they add more “water” (positive thoughts) or “pollutants” (negative thoughts) to your glass?**
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Every day, teens are exposed to idealized body images in the media, and these standards are often very difficult to reach (SIECCAN, 2013).
- › Girls’ constant exposure to media images of women’s bodies portrayed as “sexy” can cause them to be dissatisfied with their bodies, have low self-esteem, and do excessive and even dangerous things (e.g. working out too much, not eating enough) to become perfect like the images shown in the media (Vandenbosch and Eggermont, 2013).
- › Boys also experience pressure from the media and are less encouraged by society to talk about any anxiety they may feel due to their body dissatisfaction (Vandenbosch and Eggermont, 2013; Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
- › Teen boys and girls who don’t meet beauty ideals may have negative feelings about their bodies. If the media presented more diverse images of bodies, it would probably be easier to accept our bodies both as teens and adults.
- › In recent years, the media have been trying to present women and men of different shapes and sizes that do not necessarily conform to stereotypes. This not only allows more people to identify with these models but also makes everyone realize that there isn’t a single model of beauty.

## Video

- › **Show** the following video that illustrates the “influence of friends” on body image:

### **Seeing the beauty in our friends and ourselves (Dove US, 2014)**

**Length:** 1 min., 43 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APgEJoAYh0Y>



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › After watching the video, **ask** the group the following questions and **get** their opinions:
  - **The message of this video is “If we can see beauty in others, why can’t we see it in ourselves?”**  
**What do you think?**
  - **What role do friends and family play in how teens accept their body image?**
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Friends play an important role in the lives of teens, and what their peers think is very important: feeling accepted by others and that their appearance is perceived positively by others is part of a positive body image.
- › The experiences of teens with other young people their age and their friends will influence how they see themselves (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022). For example, being made fun of for your weight or appearance by people your own age can have a negative impact on your body image.
- › Since friends are very influential, young people may feel pressured to look or dress a certain way to be like everyone else (Kids Help Phone, 2020).
- › They can also be influenced by their friends' and family's vision of beauty. Whether they have very stereotypical views or are open to many forms of beauty will have an impact on teens' own view of beauty.
- › Having friends who accept different forms of beauty and who value each other in ways other than for their physical appearance will help teens more easily accept their own bodies.

## Video

- › **Show** the following video that illustrates peer pressure on body image:

**Dove “Choose Beautiful” (Barnes, 2015)**

**Length:** 3 min., 40 sec.

**<https://vimeo.com/124362501>**



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › Then **ask** the following questions and **get** their opinions:
  - **At one point in the video, a young girl says, “I wanted to go through the average door, but my mum just pulled me over to the ‘Beautiful’ door.” What do you think about her reaction?**
  - **Why do you think her mother did this, and what impact did this have on her daughter?**
  - **How can your family (parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, etc.) influence your body image?**
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The family plays an important role in the body image of children, whether by setting a negative or positive example of their own body image. For example, if parents constantly talk about their weight or foods that make them fat, it will make children more weight-conscious (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022). E.g., If parents feel comfortable with their body image no matter what they look like and feel “comfortable in their own skin,” this sends a message of self-acceptance.
- › Negative comments from a parent and even jokes by siblings about the looks of a brother or sister can have an impact on self-perception.
- › Conversely, if children are valued for who they are and what they do, and not just what they look like, this sends a message that it is important not to judge others solely based on their appearance.

- › **Conclude** the activity by explaining that, for each of the three sources of influence on body image that they just saw, they can decide to behave in different ways. These sources of influence—the media, friends and family—can have a negative or positive impact on our body image.
  - **When the media only portray images of perfect (and sometimes photoshopped) bodies, we have to be critical.**
  - **When people say mean things about our appearance, we have to protect ourselves from these negative messages (e.g. put our hand over our glass to prevent this negativity from “polluting” our water).**
  - **This is what we’ll do in the next activity.**





## Activity 4



**SHEET 2.4**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MIN.**



**PERSONAL  
REFLECTION**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Personal Reflection

- › **Explain** that this activity will get the group to reflect on whether beauty standards influence their choices about their appearance and body image.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 2.4: *Am I Influenced by Beauty Standards?* to the group.
- › **Give** the following instructions:
  - **This is an individual and personal activity.**
  - **You don't need to write your name on the sheet and you won't have to hand it in.**
  - **You won't have to share your answers with the group either.**
  - **Answer as best you can by checking off the answer that most accurately reflects your experience. You can also decide to simply think about your answers, without filling out the sheet.**
  - **You have five minutes to do this activity.**
- › After five minutes, **tell** the group that their time is up and that they can finish answering the questions later at home if they want.
- › **Review** the exercise by mentioning that it is perfectly normal to be influenced by the beauty standards all around us, but some people will be more influenced than others.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the following question:
    - **How can we protect ourselves from stereotypical or unachievable beauty standards or the of negative influences from the people around us on our body image?**
- In other words (if we think back to the glass of water exercise), “How can I prevent my ‘water’ (body image) from being polluted by stereotyped, unrealistic or negative messages from the media or people around me?”**

*(This refers back to the glass of water activity in which the “water” represented body image and the “pollutants” represented stereotypical or unachievable beauty standards).*

**Get their ideas.**

- › **Share** the four strategies suggested by Julia Lévy-Ndejuru (2020) from Équilibre, an organization whose mission is to prevent and reduce weight and body image problems. These strategies help us move away from behaviours that are influenced by beauty standards, which may be stereotypical or unachievable. Here are the strategies:
  - **Choose one action at a time that you would like to move away from (e.g. severe dieting, working out intensely, feeling obligated to wear makeup).**
  - **Decide for how long you will stop this behaviour (e.g. “This week I’m not going to work out” or “I’m only going to work out if I really want to”).**
  - **Take time to think about how you feel before, during and after the experience.**
  - **Be kind to yourself. This exercise may be difficult, and you won’t succeed the first time. It doesn’t matter, the important thing is to try.**

## Personal Reflection

- › **Ask** anyone in the group who wants to share a behaviour they feel pressured to do in order to meet a beauty standard (they can choose a behaviour from their personal reflection exercise). This behaviour must be one they would like to stop doing altogether or less often. After choosing the behaviour, they have to apply these four strategies for one week while thinking about why it is important to apply these strategies in their daily lives.
- › It is important to distinguish between:
  - **Eating a healthy diet AND constantly dieting to control your weight and look like your favourite celebrity.**
  - **Exercising to feel fit AND working out intensely to get a perfect body like you see in magazines.**
  - **Doing a sport that you like or even practising intensively to get ready for a competition AND only doing that sport to sculpt your body and get noticed.**
  - **It’s great to eat well, get exercise and play sports for FUN. These activities become problematic when they get overly intense, when you don’t enjoy them, and when they feel like something you have to do.**
- › **Conclude** by mentioning that the next activity will be about a student initiative to change beauty perceptions at her school.



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



5 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

- › **Tell** the group that, after talking about beauty standards, body image, and different things that influence how we perceive our appearance and discussing what we can do to change things, they will now watch a video made by a teenage girl who wanted to do a social experiment at her high school. She asked students and school staff if she could take their photo for a school project. Some of the people she knew and some she didn't. Just before taking the picture, she explained to them that her goal was to take pictures of "things she finds beautiful."

**Instructions:** As they watch the video, **get** the group to pay close attention to the verbal and non-verbal reactions of the people receiving the compliment.

## Video and Discussion

- › **Show** the following video:

**You're beautiful – social experiment (Beacham, 2018)**

**Length:** 9 min., 59 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDO-6suZPYE>**



Video



- › **Stop** the video at 5 min., 20 sec.

- › **Ask** the following questions:
  - **Based just on the reactions of people who are told that they are beautiful, what do you notice about their self-perception?**
  - **What explains their reactions?**
  - **Think about how you would have spontaneously reacted if someone said the same thing to you.**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Continue** the video by explaining that this girl then asks people what characteristic makes them a beautiful or unique person, a question that people often don't take the time to think about.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Share** with the group what this young filmmaker learned from this experience:
  - *"People don't get told that they're beautiful enough."*
  - *"When I asked, most people said that they did not know or could not identify what makes them beautiful."*
  - *"Everyone is beautiful in their own way!"*
  - *"When you see something beautiful about someone, tell them! It only takes a few seconds of your time, but for them, the impact will last for a long time!"*
- › **Ask** the following questions:
  - **This young director said that when you see something beautiful in someone, it's important to tell them. Why do you think that is?**
  - **If you would like to do something to help a family member or friend improve their body image, what could you do or say to them?**
  - **Be kind to yourself. This exercise may be difficult, and you won't succeed the first time. It doesn't matter, the important thing is to try.**  
*Get their ideas.*

## Session Conclusion

- › **Conclude** with the following information:
  - Wanting to be beautiful is not a bad thing in itself.
  - Beauty IS NOT JUST ABOUT being good-looking or having a perfect body.
  - Kindness, intelligence, humour, personality, and style are also ways we find someone beautiful.
  - There may be times when you feel less comfortable in your body and are more critical of some aspects of it. As explained by psychologist Annabelle Ryburn, it is unrealistic to expect all young people to appreciate everything about their bodies (KidsMatterAustralia, 2015). The same is true for adults.
  - But if we judge ourselves too harshly or let other people judge us, this can have an impact on our self-esteem.
  - What's important for good self-esteem is that you feel good about your body most of the time (KidsMatterAustralia, 2015).
  - Self-esteem is the ability to like who you are with all of your qualities, flaws and limitations (Mimeault, 2005).
- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**  
*Get their opinions.*



**SHEET**

**2.1**

**FOR SESSION  
LEADERS**

## TRUE / FALSE Cards

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Before the activity, photocopy and cut out enough cards for all students in the group. Give each person one TRUE card and one FALSE card.

TRUE

FALSE

TRUE

FALSE

TRUE

FALSE



## SHEET

### 2.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Beauty: What's True, What's False?

Statement	Answer	Explanation
Someone who thinks they are good-looking is vain, i.e. they think a lot of themselves.	<b>False</b>	It isn't vain to accept your body and think that you're good-looking. Appreciating your body is a very positive thing. However, if your goal is to look better than everyone else (comparison or competition) or if you are willing to do anything to be good-looking or to maintain your appearance at all costs, then this could be considered vanity (Tylka and Wood-Barcolow, 2015).
When you think someone is attractive, that means you want to date that person.	<b>False</b>	You can think someone is attractive without being attracted to them or wanting to date them (Tylka and Wood-Barcolow, 2015). Beauty and attractiveness are two different things.
Girls tend to get more compliments about their appearance than boys do. (i.e. "Your hair is so pretty"; "I love your outfit").	<b>True</b>	The positive comments that girls get usually relate to their appearance ("You're beautiful," "You have beautiful eyes") while boys are complimented more for their physical abilities or what their bodies can do ("You're good at basketball," "You run fast," "You're strong," (Gattario and Frisen, 2019 cited in Todd, 2019).
It can be harder to think that you are good-looking or to appreciate your body during adolescence.	<b>True</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Our body image can vary at any age.</li><li>› However during adolescence, the body is going through a lot of changes, and it can be hard for teens to adapt while dealing with the pressure from the media and their messages about perfect bodies. It has been shown that 70% of teen girls and 45% of teen boys are dissatisfied with their bodies and want to change their weight or shape (Yager and al., 2013).</li></ul>
You have to be sexy to be considered good-looking.	<b>False</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› When you look at celebrities or images on social media, you may get the impression that sexy equals beautiful. But these are two different things. For example, dressing in a sexualized way may get people's attention, but beauty is something else. Beauty is personal and it's not just about appearance, weight or your "look."</li><li>› Beauty is above all how we express our unique personality.</li></ul>

Statement	Answer	Explanation
Social media helps make us satisfied with our bodies and how we look.	<b>False</b>	It has been shown that people compare themselves with the images on social media and then become dissatisfied with their bodies and want to change them. Girls are more likely to want to lose weight, and boys are more likely to want to build muscle (Rodgers and al., 2020).  On social networks, people usually want to show themselves in the best light (e.g. smiling, fit, energetic). When you feel like you don't measure up, you risk becoming very critical of your body, your look, your appearance, etc.
If I feel that people around me accept my appearance, I'll be more likely to have a positive body image.	<b>True</b>	When other people accept our bodies and appearance, we are less likely to want to change our appearance and may be more concerned with how we feel rather than just what we look like (Tylka and Wood-Barcolow, 2015).
What a person needs to look like to be considered good-looking is always the same, no matter what time period we live in.	<b>False</b>	Beauty standards change over time. For example, people considered "fat" by today's standards would have been seen as canons of beauty in other eras. For women, having curves was a sign of fertility, while for men, this was a sign that they were in a high-status position, as they could eat as much as they wanted. In other times, thinness and muscles have been in vogue.
Boys also feel pressure to meet beauty standards and may have a negative body image.	<b>True</b>	A study of boys aged 16 to 19 showed that they are under pressure to meet the beauty standards conveyed by the media and that these standards are very difficult for most boys to achieve (e.g. being muscular and "ripped" like the people they see on TV). They feel inadequate if they do not fit this model (Spur, Berry and Walker, 2013).
It is more difficult to have a positive body image in this day and age.	<b>True</b>	Although each era has had its different pressures to fit a certain body type, it seems more difficult to have a positive body image today, as we are bombarded with images of perfect, remade, and photoshopped bodies in the media or on social media. People didn't used to have this technology and were exposed to fewer images with which to compare themselves. This is why it's important to be critical of stereotyped or unrealistic images.







# SHEET

## 2.3

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Beauty Standards

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Give each team one of the following three questions.
- › Photocopy the sheet as needed and cut out each question.



1. Give examples of beauty standards portrayed in the media that are directed at men or boys, i.e. what qualities do men or boys need for people to think they're good-looking?

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2. Give examples of beauty standards portrayed in the media that are directed at women or girls, i.e. what qualities do women or girls need for people to think they're good-looking?

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3. How far are some people willing to go to meet these beauty standards portrayed in the media (e.g. movies, reality TV, ads, social media)?

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# Am I Influenced by Beauty Standards?



## SHEET

## 2.4

### FOR THE GROUP

Take time to think about how beauty standards impact you personally. This sheet is just for **you**.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

#### Step 1

- › To learn if you need to “protect yourself” against beauty standards, first ask yourself whether you are really influenced by these stereotyped or unrealistic beauty standards.
- › Answer the questions by checking off the answer that you find most closely reflects YOUR experience. You can also decide to simply think about your answers, without filling out the sheet.
- › You only need to answer the questions that apply to you; for example, if you don’t wear makeup, you don’t have to answer Question A.

#### A) Why do you wear makeup?

- Because I like wearing it and it makes me feel good.
- To improve my appearance.
- Because I feel like I’m supposed to.
- Other reasons. Explain:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### B) Why do you absolutely want to change your weight?

- Because I would look better.
- Because I want to be healthier.
- To improve my appearance.
- Because I feel like I’m supposed to.
- Other reasons. Explain:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### C) Why do you work out?

- Because I like doing it and it makes me feel good.
- To be healthier.
- To improve my appearance.
- Because I feel like I’m supposed to.
- Other reasons. Explain:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### D) Why did you choose to wear the clothes you are wearing today? (if you wear a school uniform, think about the clothes you wear on the weekend.)

- Because I like them and I’m comfortable in them; I would wear them even when hanging out by myself in my living room!
- These clothes are not my first choice, but I feel like I should wear them to look good.
- Other reasons. Explain:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### E) Why do you retouch photos of yourself (e.g. use a filter) before posting them on social media?

- Because I like doing it and it makes me feel good.
- Because I feel like I’m supposed to.
- Other reasons. Explain:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Step 2: What do you notice about your answers?

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## Secondary 1 - Session 3

### Bullying Prevention “A Dangerous Game!”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Comprehensive View of Sexuality</b>	<p><b>Become aware that during adolescence, you will gradually adopt new roles and behaviours related to your sexuality and increasingly make your own decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Construction of a vision and personal choices: wishes, needs, limits and the ability to consider those of others, whether or not to follow various gender stereotypes and social norms, strategies for finding information and help.</li> </ul>
<b>Identity, Gender Stereotypes and Roles, and Social Norms</b>	<p><b>Recognize the role of puberty in the consolidation of your gender identity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Events at the beginning of adolescence: physical and psychological transformations of puberty, evolution of relations with peers.</li> <li>› Exploration of new sexual norms.</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2021)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Media Literacy:</b> Enable students to exercise critical, ethical and aesthetic judgment with respect to the media and produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights.</p> <p><b>Citizenship and Community Life:</b> Enable students to take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity.</p>	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul> <p><b>Methodological competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information and communications technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec citizenship and culture</i></li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Identities and Belonging

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand the concept of sexuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Entering adolescence and decision-making</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the role of puberty in consolidating gender identity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Evolution of relationships with peers</li> <li>› Gendered socialization, stereotypes and gender norms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on the general underlying influences that can be considered in making decisions about sexuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Recognition of own wishes, needs and limits and those of others</li> <li>› Self-knowledge and respect for personal choices</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflect on the tensions that may exist with regard to norms, stereotypes and own gender identity</b></p>





## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Get young people to think about how sexual rumours impact a person’s reputation and what to do to stop a rumour from spreading, with the ultimate goal of preventing cyberbullying.**

- 1. Define** what a rumour is and why people start rumours.
- 2. Identify** the impacts of a hurtful rumour and ways to stop a rumour (based on a real-life case study).
- 3. Recognize** the differences between how rumours spread through word of mouth and how they spread online.
- 4. Discover** possible consequences for victims of a rumour and for the people who start rumours.
- 5. Discuss** the impact of sexual rumours on a person’s reputation and the differences or similarities when it comes to boys’ and girls’ reputations.
- 6. Differentiate** between bullying and cyberbullying.
- 7. Analyze** how the “group effect” can be either negative or positive in a bullying situation.
- 8. Discuss** ways to react when you are either the victim or observer of a hurtful rumour.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **four activities**.

10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> What is a rumour?</li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “What is a Rumour?”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Case study:</b> Alexandra Discussion <i>Sheet 3.1: Alexandra’s Story</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Illustration of how a rumour spreads <i>Sheet 3.2: Illustration of How a Rumour Spreads Through Word of Mouth</i> <i>Sheet 3.3: Illustration of How a Rumour Spreads Online</i> <i>Sheet 3.4: Discussion Questions About How a Rumour Spreads Through Word of Mouth or Online</i></li> </ul>
25 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> What does it mean to have a “good” or “bad” reputation?</li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Expressions about reputation</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Harassment, bullying and cyberbullying</li> <li>› <b>Two videos</b> <i>“Mean girls”</i> <i>“A Happier Morning in Paris”</i> <i>Sheet 3.5: Expressions About Reputation</i> <i>Sheet 3.6: Answer Sheet: Reputations - Negative or Positive?</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
10 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> “What can you do if you find out a rumour is being spread about you? What if you hear a rumour about someone else?”</li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Key messages</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations or situations involving violence. It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the police or *Youth Protection Directorate* must be contacted.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Session Introduction

- › **Remind** the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Start** the session by asking the group:
  - **What is a rumour?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to their answers if necessary with the information below:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Rumour: “an unofficial interesting story or piece of news that might be true or invented and quickly spreads from person to person” (Rumour, 2021).
- › Rumours can be about someone’s physical appearance, behaviour or attitude. Although rumours are usually negative, they can also be positive. Sometimes rumours are an exaggeration or caricature of someone’s characteristics; however, they can also be completely untrue and made up.
- › “Rumour” is a synonym for “gossip” (Gossip, 2021).
- › Gossip: “conversation or reports about other people’s private lives that might be unkind, disapproving, or not true” (Gossip, 2021).

- › **Continue** the discussion by asking this question:
  - **Why do you think people start rumours?**  
*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › To make themselves feel important or get other people's attention.
- › To be funny.
- › Out of jealousy or envy.
- › Out of boredom.
- › To do what their friends are doing.
- › To vent their frustration or get revenge.
- › To bully someone.
- › From a lack of confidence or self-esteem (Kolwalski et al., 2014).
- › Because by drawing attention to other people's faults and weaknesses, we pull focus away from ourselves (Bordeleau, 2009).
- › Because someone who constantly says mean things about others may be experiencing personal problems themselves and may also be feeling sad, lonely or vulnerable.

## Video

› **Show** the following video:

**Rumours spread about me at school (Storybooth, 2017)**

**Length:** 3 min., 12 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SrEJ5W8KUdk>**



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

› **Lead** a discussion using the suggested questions below:

- **What are your takeaways from this video?**
- **Does the video clearly illustrate what a rumour is?**
- **If so, can you give examples from the video?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Add** to their answers with the information below:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › This story clearly represents a rumour.
- › A girl's best friend started to tell everyone stories about how she supposedly...
- › Put her in a choke hold.
- › Almost broke her arm.
- › Gave her an Indian burn.
- › And almost broke her leg.
- › The rumours spread to the entire Grade 6 class.
- › After she confronted her former best friend, the rumours stopped; however, they started up again a few months later, which can happen with rumours.
- › Regardless of their reasons for starting a rumour, people who spread them may not always realize the consequences of their actions.



# 2

## Activity 2



**SHEET 3.1**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MIN.**



**CASE STUDY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Case Study

- ▶ **Begin** the second activity by telling the group that they will hear a story in different parts with breaks for questions to have a broader group discussion. Although this is a true story, the person's name is fictitious.

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

OPTION: This activity can also be done in mixed- or single-gender teams. If you do the activity in teams, read the story out loud and each team can discuss and answer the different questions. Bring everyone back into a group after each part of the story. As the activity goes along, give them new information to discuss.



- ▶ **Tell** Alexandra's story using Sheet 3.1: *Alexandra's Story* and, with the whole group, **ask** the discussion questions for each part of the story about what this girl did in response to a rumour going around about her.
- ▶ If necessary, **add** to the young people's answers using the information in Sheet 3.1.



## Activity 3



**SHEETS 3.2, 3.3, 3.4**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MIN.**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Discussion and Presentation

- › To illustrate how a rumour spreads through *word of mouth*, **read** the story of Nicolas and Kim (Sheet 3.2: *Illustration of How a Rumour Spreads Through Word of Mouth*) while showing the images in the PowerPoint presentation step by step. If you can't use the slideshow (PowerPoint) during the activity, draw the diagram from Sheet 3.2 on the blackboard.
- › **Ask** the group the following question:
  - **How far do you think this rumour spread through word of mouth?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › We can see that more than 25 people can quickly hear a rumour through word of mouth.
- › To illustrate how a rumour spreads *online*, **read** the same story about Nicolas and Kim (Sheet 3.3: *Illustration of How a Rumour Spreads Online*) while showing the images from the PowerPoint presentation step by step. If you can't use the slideshow (PowerPoint), draw the diagram on the board based on Sheet 3.3.
- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **What did you notice about how fast the rumour spread online compared to word of mouth?**  
*Get their opinions.*



- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › A rumour spreads much faster online than through word of mouth.
- › In this case, 1110 people heard about the rumour.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the following questions and **share** the information on Sheet 3.4: *Discussion Questions About How a Rumour Spreads Through Word of Mouth or Online*.

- **What makes a rumour so easy to spread?**
- **Is it easy to stop a rumour?**
- **What’s different about a rumour spread online compared to one spread through word of mouth?**
- **What are the consequences for the victims of rumours spread online?**
- **What could be the consequences and punishments for people who start rumours online or who cyberbully?**

*Get their opinions.*

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

It’s important for the group to know that “ignorance of the law is no excuse,” which means that even if they aren’t aware that their behaviour is illegal, they can still be punished for it. Not knowing the law is not a reason for bad behaviour (Éducaloi, 2021-a). However, depending on the seriousness of their actions, sentences are often less severe for teens.

Students who want more information about what is and isn’t against the law can visit the Éducaloi website (<https://educaloi.qc.ca/en/>) or ask a parent or other adult they trust.

The site of the Service de police de la ville de Montréal (SPVM, 2021) has a section for teens on cyberbullying:

<https://spvm.qc.ca/en/Jeunesse/Cyberbullying>.



- › **End** the activity by reading this story that illustrates how hard it is to stop a rumour:
  - In the movie *Doubt* (2008), directed by John Patrick Shanley, one of the main characters, a priest, includes an anecdote in his sermon about the impact of rumours and gossip. He tells the story of a woman confessing to her priest that she has said mean things about her neighbour. In the story, the priest tells the woman to go home and up to the roof of her house with a feather pillow, cut the pillow open with a knife, and then return to see him. She does so, and the priest asks what happened. She says, “Feathers everywhere, Father.” The parish priest then says, “Now, I want you to go back and gather up every last feather that flew out on the wind.” “Well,” she says, “It can’t be done. I don’t know where they went. The wind took them all over.” The priest says to her, “And that is gossip!”
  - This is a very good illustration of how a hurtful rumour can take on a life of its own!



## Activity 4



**SHEETS 3.5, 3.6**  
**2 LARGE ENVELOPES**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**25 MIN.**



**TEAM ACTIVITY**



**VIDEOS**



**DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION**

### Discussion and Presentation

› **Tell** the group how spreading hurtful rumours can impact a person’s reputation. **Ask** the group to answer the following questions:

- **What does it mean to have a “good reputation”?**
- **What does it mean to have a “bad reputation”?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Add** to their answers if necessary with the information below:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › A reputation is how people perceive a person or their lifestyle (Government of Canada, 2016). Generally, someone who behaves well will have a good reputation and vice versa.
- › Having a good reputation means that people have POSITIVE perceptions and opinions of you.
- › Conversely, a bad reputation means that people have NEGATIVE perceptions or opinions of you.

### Team Activity

- › **Tell** the group that rumours related to sexual stereotypes can impact someone’s reputation. Rumours can also involve stories that are completely made up or consist of sexual insults. This is what we’ll talk about in the next activity.
- › **Ask** the group to split up into teams of two.

- › **Give** each team the series of questions from Sheet 3.5: *Expressions About Reputation*. **Tell** them that you will all look at a specific example to better understand the impact of rumours and gossip on someone's reputation.
- › **State** that this exercise is ANONYMOUS. They don't have to write their names on the answer sheet. They must also not provide any names with the examples.

Below are the questions from the sheet:

- **Have you ever heard expressions for someone (boy or girl) who has dated more than one person (e.g. had serial boyfriends or girlfriends)? If so, which ones?**
  - **Would these expressions have an impact on that person's "reputation"? If so, explain.**
- › When you finish the exercise, **ask** them to put their answers in the envelope you prepared.
  - › **Divide** the blackboard into three sections labelled:
    - Expressions about girls
    - Expressions about boys
    - Expressions about either a boy or a girl
  - › **Explain** that you are going to read the expressions written on the answer sheets and that the group will have to decide whether the expression applies more to girls, to boys or to both. Write the expression in the column for the gender with which most of the group associates the expression.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

During this exercise, you will have to review the answers on the spot. You don't have to read all the answers verbatim; instead, ensure that all points of view have been presented.

Note that you should avoid asking an open-ended question as much as possible and only ask for fixed expressions (the more open-ended the question, i.e. "What are the words that come to mind when you think of someone who has slept around?" the more likely they will name someone specifically). To avoid this, you may want to review the answers and quickly rank them before saying them out loud to avoid sharing anything derogatory about someone in particular.

Expect some of the expressions to be vulgar (e.g. slut, whore, fuckboy). The point, however, is not to give the group ideas for new sexual insults but rather to see how often the expressions for boys and girls can be different, even for the same behaviour. It will also be interesting to see whether the comments are more vulgar, derogatory and harsher for girls compared to boys.



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the questions below:
  - **What do you notice about the expressions primarily aimed at girls and those primarily aimed at boys? Are there similarities or differences?**
  - **What about expressions that apply to both girls and boys?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to their answers using Sheet 3.6: *Answer Sheet: Reputations – Negative or Positive?*
- › **Continue** by reading the answers to the last question from the answer sheets:
  - **Would these expressions have an impact on that person’s “reputation”? If so, explain.**
- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **Let’s take some expressions as examples: why is it positive or negative to have this reputation?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to the answers using Sheet 3.6.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

When a rumour spreads about a young person’s sexuality, it is harder for them to seek help and report the situation (Chelab and al., 2016). Their lack of knowledge about sexuality and inexperience may make them even more vulnerable.



## Presentation

- › Let the group **know** that some young people don’t care about rumours or sexual insults about other people. However, this is nothing to trivialize. Saying mean things like this isn’t simply a case of teasing between friends or an interpersonal conflict. When this behaviour happens frequently by one or more people, it becomes harassment or (if it happens online) cyberbullying.
- › **Clarify** what is meant by “harassment,” “bullying” and “cyberbullying.”

*“Harassment means treating someone in a way that harms their dignity or their psychological or physical health. [...] Usually, repetition is what makes insulting comments and behaviour into harassment”* (Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, 2021).

*“Bullying includes words, actions, images and actions that hurt, humiliate or socially exclude someone or that lower someone’s self-esteem”* (Éducaloi, 2021-b).

“Cyberbullying is posting threatening, hateful, offensive or degrading messages about someone, using words or images. It also includes harassment. Cyberbullying can use many different means: email, chat rooms, discussion groups, Websites, Instant messaging (SPVM, 2021).

## Video

- › **Show** the video of young singer Rachel Crow to illustrate the effect that bullying can have on teens.

**Mean girls by Rachel Crow (2012)**

**Album: Rachel Crow**

**Length:** 3 min., 36 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTIBDuTxzUw&list=PLRhgpZP8sZte6isYIQOQte586FitMZnc0&index=2>**



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the suggested questions below:
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**
  - **What do you think about the consequences of bullying shown in this video? How far do you think bullying can go?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Add** to their answers with the information below:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › This video shows the bullying experienced by different people as well as the “group effect” that this creates for the victim. People make fun of and exclude these girls, who feel like they don’t fit in and have no one to turn to.
- › These teens who experience bullying talk about how lonely they feel, how they don’t understand what is going on, and their feelings of powerlessness. They feel worthless.
- › Some teens change schools because they no longer feel safe.
- › It’s important to understand that any form of bullying can make the victims—both boys and girls—feel humiliated and scared and feel like it will never stop. They may experience great distress, which for some can lead to suicidal thoughts.
- › This is why it’s important for victims to speak up, get help, and not keep this problem to themselves.

- **At what point in the video do we see a positive change for the victims of bullying? Why does that happen?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Add** to their answers with the information below:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › You notice a change when someone (Rachel, in this video) approaches a girl and shows her support.
- › It’s important to them to make a friend and have an ally.
- › That’s why it’s also important for people who witness bullying to take action as best they can when they see one of their peers being bullied (e.g. on social media, in class, in the schoolyard, on the school bus). This may involve disagreeing with what’s going on, stepping in, comforting and listening to the victim, or getting help from an adult.
- › When you become an ally for a victim, others will join in and this can create a “positive” group effect, which can reduce the “negative” group effect of bullying.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



In bullying situations, adults may want to empower victims by getting them involved in filing charges against the person or people bullying them. Although the final decision is not up to the victims, they may nevertheless be consulted about what the punishment could be, especially if a possible punishment could involve the bully and victim being around each other.

- › **Conclude** the activity by explaining that the group effect can also be used in a positive way to stop bullying.

## Video

- › **Show** the following video that illustrates a positive group effect, as a man gets a group of passengers in the Paris subway to dance without fearing that people will laugh at them.

« A Happier Morning in Paris » (Tracktl, 2015)

**Length:** 3 min., 9 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLQ937a-Odl>



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion:
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**
  - **What connections can you make between this video and what you can do when you WITNESS bullying?**

*Get their opinions.*



- › **Add** to their answers with the information below:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Although dancing in public seems strange to everyone at first, the dancing becomes less so as more people decide to join in.
- › You can do the same thing as a witness. By daring to speak out against the bullying situation, you can influence other people to do the same.
- › It may seem easier to ignore the situation and pretend that you don't see or hear anything. However, how would you want other people to react if you were the one being bullied?
- › When you do something positive that helps someone else, you get a sense of pride and accomplishment that is motivating and makes you want to do it again.
- › If you can't intervene or express your disagreement with the situation, you can still seek out help for the victim. It's not easy to witness bullying and to feel powerless or afraid, so witnesses may also need support.



## Session Conclusion

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5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

### Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the group the following question:

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Ask** the group to take a few minutes to think about the following questions on their own:

- **Why is it important to do something as soon as a rumour starts spreading about you?**
- **What would you do if you found out that a hurtful rumour was going around about you?**
- **Whom could you ask for help?**
- **What would you do if you heard a rumour about a classmate from someone you knew or on the Internet?**
- **Why is it important to respond?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Summarize** the session with the following key points:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE for not spreading rumours about other people, as rumours can damage people's reputations.
- › WE ALL HAVE THE POWER to stop a rumour: first, by not spreading it and second, by standing up to the people who do spread them.
- › Our true friends should "protect us," but they may fear that they too will be the target of rumours if they do something to stop it. You have to be very assertive to avoid getting caught up in this dangerous game, which can easily get out of hand.
- › When you are the victim of a rumour, don't wait for the situation to get worse before asking for help and talking about it with your friends, trusted adults or professionals at your school, etc.
- › Asking for help is a sign of self-esteem (i.e. you value yourself) and courage. No one has to bear the weight of this situation alone.
- › There are punishments for people who spread embarrassing rumours or who cyberbully.
- › Instead of saying bad things about people, what if we talked about what we like about them?

- › **Conclude** by telling the group about useful websites that address online dangers, particularly cyberbullying. **Remind** the group that professionals from the school are available to listen to them and support them.

- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Internet safety resources): <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/is-si/>
- Tel-Jeunes (*Cyberbullying: When the bullying is virtual*): <https://www.teljeunes.com/Tel-jeunes-en/All-topics/Something-s-wrong/Bullying/Cyberbullying>
- Kids Help Phone (*Cyberbullying: How to support the young person in your life*) [https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-involved/programs-resources/open-conversation-young-person/cyberbullying-support-young-person-life/?\\_ga=2.32330750.1550271739.1600790731-1103714071.1586962666](https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-involved/programs-resources/open-conversation-young-person/cyberbullying-support-young-person-life/?_ga=2.32330750.1550271739.1600790731-1103714071.1586962666)
- Suicide Action Montreal: 1 866 277-3553



## SHEET

### 3.1

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Alexandra's Story

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Introduce the case study and ask questions after each part of the story.
- › Ask the group to answer the questions and give their opinions by raising their hands.
- › Use the sheet to add to the answers given.

### Alexandra's Story - Part 1

Girls at school have started a rumour about Alexandra. They started telling their classmates that she's "as hairy as a monkey."

#### › Could this rumour harm Alexandra? How?

- Yes, it could, because she risks being ridiculed, laughed at, and rejected. She may feel ashamed even though she knows that what these girls are saying about her isn't true.

#### › Why do you think these girls started this rumour about Alexandra?

- Out of jealousy and envy, to make fun of Alexandra, to make themselves seem more interesting, popular or even "tough" in other people's eyes, out of malice, to feel empowered, etc.
- In a group of friends, some may think they will be left out if they don't join in on the gossip.

### Alexandra's Story - Part 2

Alexandra started getting harassed more and more. At first, just the people in her class knew about this ridiculous rumour. Now the whole school knows. She's feeling more and more alone and doesn't know what to do.

#### › What impact could this rumour have on Alexandra?

- She may start feeling very bad about herself; she may question the image she projects to others; she may feel watched, different, and isolated from other kids her age; she may feel rejected, ashamed, hurt, etc.
- Since the rumour is about her body hair, which is something private, she may also feel embarrassed or humiliated.
- She may feel depressed and want to drop out of school.

### › What can Alexandra do to stop this rumour about her?

- It can be very hard to stop a rumour and ensure that everyone who has heard it stops believing and/or spreading it.
- ALEXANDRA'S POWER IS IN HOW SHE REACTS TO THE SITUATION.
- Alexandra might wonder what made the girls spread that rumour about her. Were they just making a joke or were they out to hurt her? Or did they want her to lose friends? Knowing the intentions behind this rumour can help her decide how to manage the situation to resolve it or decrease its intensity. .
- Alexandra could choose one of these strategies:
  - Ignore others and what they say about her.
  - Confront the girls who helped spread the rumour.
  - Ask her friends to defend her.
  - Tell the kids who spread the rumour how she feels (however, this isn't recommended if the girls' goal is to hurt her, as this will only encourage them to keep going).
- In addition to these strategies, Alexandra can talk to her friends and trusted adults about the situation.
- Alexandra can also turn to helplines, whose counsellors can help her think about the best strategies for her situation and abilities.

### › What do you think about the option of telling a parent or trusted adult?

- It's not always that simple, for several reasons:
  - You may be embarrassed for your parents know the mean things that people at school say about you.
  - You may be afraid of losing control of what happens next:
    - You may be afraid your parents will get mad.
    - You may be afraid that they'll want to meet with the school principal to quickly resolve the situation.
    - Or they may contact the parents of the person who is harassing or bullying you.
  - By giving control to someone else, you may fear that the situation will get worse.

### › Why is it important to tell a trusted adult?

- To make the bullying stop.
- If Alexandra doesn't talk about it, the situation could get even worse and make her even sadder and more vulnerable.
- Alexandra could think about what she needs from her parents or from an adult: Someone to listen to her? Advice? Protection?
- Having an idea of her needs will make it easier for her to explain them to the adult she trusts and clearly state what she wants the adult to do for her.
- Teens who are the victims of rumours and experience harassment may feel completely distraught and unable to react. In this case, they may need adults to support them and take action to make it stop.

- Every school is required to have a plan to respond to and stop bullying, which means that staff at the school know the resource person who can deal with the situation. It is the school’s responsibility to ensure that its students feel safe at their institution (MEES, 2022b).

## Alexandra’s Story – Part 3

Here is what Alexandra did to stop the rumour that she’s “*as hairy as a monkey*”: Using her webcam, she took pictures of herself in her underwear and sent them to her whole class to prove that she wasn’t hairy like people were saying.

### › What do you think of her response?

### › Do you think that this was the best way to stop the rumour? Why?

- No, this is not the best way to stop the rumour:
  - She may start getting harassed for other reasons (e.g. people saw her almost completely naked and may laugh at her or insult her).
  - She no longer has control over the images/video posted online. Many people may see them, and this may have further consequences:
    - Taking her clothes off and posting the pictures online could make it more likely for her to be harassed and ridiculed.
    - This could damage her reputation, or people could say mean or untrue things about her.
    - These images can circulate for a long time and even resurface many years later.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

In Alexandra’s story, it isn’t specified what people do with Alexandra’s pictures. However, it’s important for them to know that the law prohibits the sharing of intimate images of a person under the age of 18. An intimate image is a photo or video that shows certain parts of the body, like breasts or genitals. An intimate image could also show a sexual activity (Éducaloi, 2021c). It might also be useful to invite a community police officer to discuss this aspect and the issues surrounding the law in more detail.



› **Why do you think Alexandra did this?**

- To prove to everyone that the rumour was untrue and to stop the harassment.
- Alexandra most likely wanted to “take care of the situation on her own.” She was so caught up in her problem that she saw this as the best solution. Unfortunately, her actions put her in an even more vulnerable position.
- Even though sending these pictures was not the most effective thing to do, remember that Alexandra did this to defend herself from other kids who were bullying her and that she does not deserve more harassment because of her actions.
- When we feel trapped in a situation, we often do things we wouldn’t normally do. It can be difficult to think of the best solution on our own. That’s why it can be helpful to get advice from someone else who isn’t affected by the problem.

› **What are the impacts for the people who started the rumour?**

- If adults discover the hurtful rumour about Alexandra and find out who started and spread the rumour (including any pictures of Alexandra in her underwear that may have been shared), the people who did so could be punished as per the school’s anti-bullying and anti-violence plan (e.g. suspension from school).

› **Why is it important to react when you see someone being bullied?**

- If you hear a rumour (e.g., insinuations, hurtful comments or sexual insults) or learn about a rumour by email or on social media, you have the power to stop it.
- You can decide to stop a rumour by not spreading it or by standing up to the person or group spreading the information.
- We can all be part of the SOLUTION!
- Conversely, when you hear hateful comments or condone insults on social networks by doing nothing or clicking “Like,” you are contributing to the PROBLEM and become an accomplice in this personal attack (Public Safety Canada, 2018).

› **If you had witnessed what happened to Alexandra or were a friend or someone in her social group, what could you have done to help her?**

- Put yourself in her shoes and think about what you would want others to do for you if you were in her situation.
- Imagine that your sister or brother (or someone else close to you) were the one being victimized by the rumour and think about what you would do.
- When you hear a rumour, refute the information instead of spreading it.
- Don’t feed the rumour or pass it (or Alexandra’s pictures) on to others.
- Tell the person (Alexandra in this case) that a rumour is going around about her and that you don’t believe it. This will reassure her that she is getting support from others.
- Notify adults with the authority to do something to stop the rumour and harassment.



## SHEET

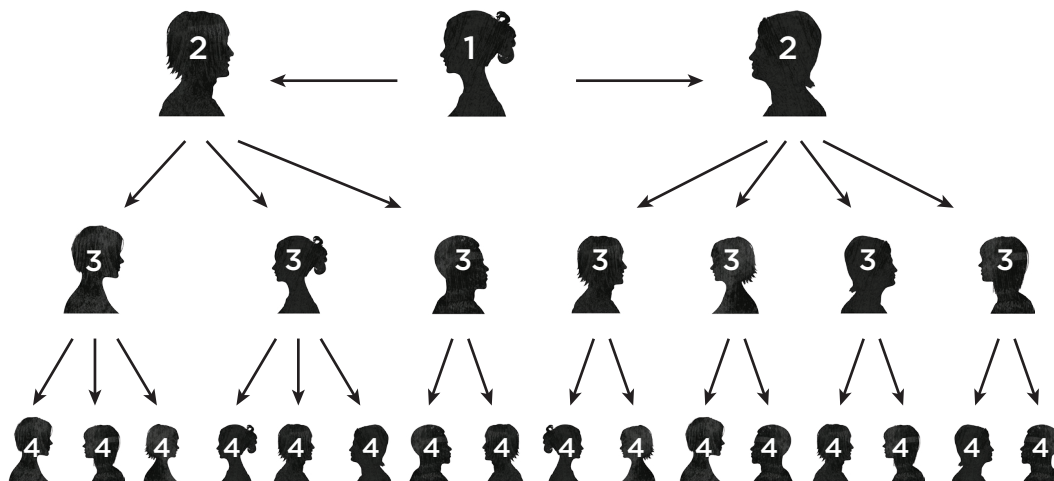
### 3.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Illustration of How a Rumour Spreads Through Word of Mouth

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Show how a rumour spreads through *word of mouth* by using the slideshow for the session (or draw the diagram below on the blackboard for each part of the story).



- Nicolas has just broken up with Kim.
- To get back at him, Kim tells Nicolas's two best friends that she doesn't mind that they are no longer together because Nicolas "*is afraid to go past first base.*"
  - Nicolas's two friends tell three or four friends
  - Who also tell two or three friends
- Overall, over 25 people hear that Nicolas is "*afraid to go past first base.*"





## SHEET

### 3.3

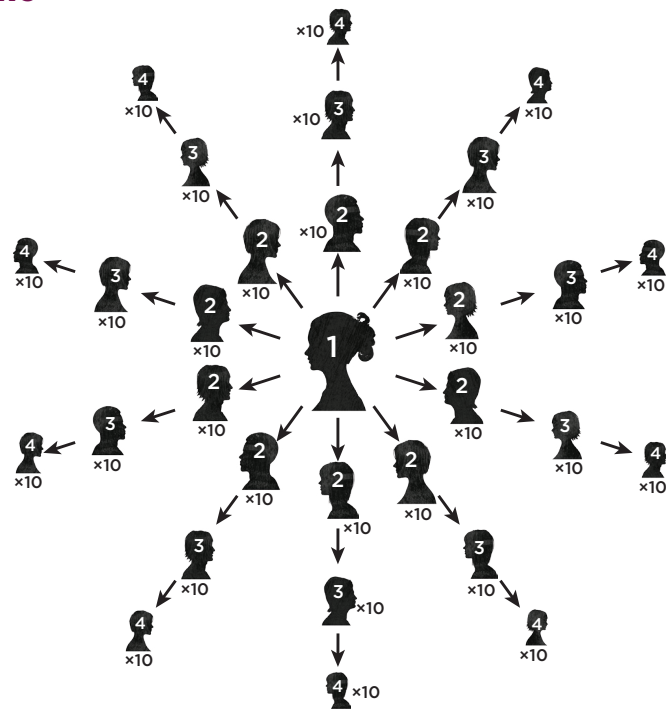
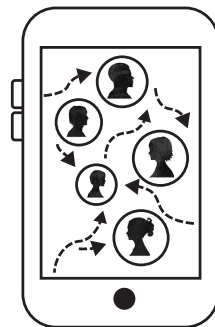
FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Illustration of How a Rumour Spreads

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Show how a rumour spreads *online* by drawing the diagram below on the blackboard (or use the slideshow for the session) for each part of the story.

### How a Rumour Spreads Online



- Nicolas has just broken up with Kim.
- To get back at him, she writes a private message on social media to ten friends saying that she doesn't mind that they are no longer together because Nicolas "*is afraid to go past first base.*"
  - They share this news with 10 of their friends
  - Who also share it with 10 other friends
- Overall, 1110 people hear that Nicolas "*is afraid to go past first base.*"



## Discussion Questions: How a Rumour Spreads Through Word of Mouth or Online

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Lead a discussion using the suggested questions.

#### › What makes a rumour so easy to spread?

- Some people enjoy spreading, changing and exaggerating rumours. They may feel like they have “special” information without realizing the possible impact of spreading the information.
- Other people don’t question the source of the information: they think that everything they hear or read is true and are eager to share with others.
- When so many people see these messages and don’t object to them or share or “Like” them, this is seen by both the victim and the cyberbullies as approval for the humiliation of this person and encouragement to continue.
- That’s why it’s important to say something to object to these negative messages.

#### › Is it easy to stop a rumour?

- No, it isn’t easy to stop a rumour, because you can lose control over who tells whom, and the rumour itself can change. We don’t know how much importance people will place on the rumour or the impact that it could have now or in the future.
- It may seem harmless at first and even funny; however, in reality, rumours can become a weapon to humiliate and hurt people (FPJQ, 2021).

#### › What’s the difference between a rumour spread online compared to a rumour spread through word of mouth?

- It’s easy to reach many people very quickly online and to lose control of the information. For example, “Harassing messages, posts and photos can be distributed quickly to a very wide audience, including strangers, and can be extremely difficult to delete once they’ve been sent or posted” (Public Safety Canada, 2018).
- It can also be difficult to find out who started the rumour in the first place (e.g. email address with a pseudonym).

- The frequency of attacks can be relentless: victims can get hundreds of hurtful text messages at any time of day or night (Public Safety Canada, 2018).
- Spreading embarrassing or hurtful rumours about someone online is a type of cyberbullying (Public Safety Canada, 2018).
- The comments can be even more disrespectful, if not cruel, since people are hidden behind their screens.

› **What are the consequences for victims of rumours that spread online?**

- Rumours spread online can lead to more consequences that have a greater impact (Chehab, Levasseur and Bowen, 2016).
- It's easy for people who spread rumours and who cyberbully to simply say "It's not true, it's just a joke." However, the victim's suffering is very real, and these actions have repercussions in the person's real life (FPJQ, 2021).
- The rumour (or photo, etc.), especially when spread online, can circulate for months or even years without the person being able to stop it. A situation that seems "funny" or "harmless" at first may eventually have short-term consequences (anxiety, insomnia, anger) as well as medium-term consequences, such as isolation (no longer wanting to go out), school problems (late homework, lower grades, school absences), distress (crying, feelings of great loneliness) (PREVNet, 2019).

› **What could be the consequences and punishments for people who start rumours online or who cyberbully?**

Because these attacks take place online and are mostly anonymous, some cyberbullies are less aware of the harm they cause, their responsibility in the situation, and the seriousness of their actions. However, the consequences and punishments for people who start rumours online or who cyberbully can be:

• **Possible consequences for people who start rumours or who cyberbully:**

- Having problems making real friends because they aren't respected by their peers or because others fear them (Kowalski and al., 2014).
- Some people who cyberbully have trouble distinguishing between right and wrong, and this can lead to long-term difficulties in their friendships, romantic relationships, or professional relationships (PREVNet, 2019).

• **Possible punishments for people who start rumours or who cyberbully:**

- The person may be punished by the school as per its anti-bullying plan and intervention protocol (e.g. making amends, being suspended from school).
- They could also get into trouble with the law. Even if people think that what they are doing is anonymous, police can trace them and subject them to criminal sanctions or civil lawsuits (SPVM, 2020).
- Under the Criminal Code of Canada, it is prohibited to communicate repeatedly with a person with the intent of causing them to fear for their safety or to post something that insults them or could harm their reputation (Éducaloi, 2020d).
- In Canada, young people can be held responsible for a crime starting from the age of 12 and will be tried under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (Éducaloi, 2020e).



## Expressions About Reputation

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Print** and cut out the questions for the number of participating teams.
- › **State** that this exercise is **ANONYMOUS**. They don't have to write their names on the answer sheet. They must also not provide any names with the examples they give.
- › When you finish the exercise, ask them to put their answers in the envelope you prepared.



Have you ever heard of expressions for **SOMEONE** (boy or girl) who has dated more than one person (e.g. had serial boyfriends or girlfriends)? If so, what are these expressions?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Would these expressions have an impact on that person's "reputation"? If so, explain.

_____
_____
_____





## Answer Sheet: Negative or Positive Reputations?

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › If necessary, add to the teams' answers using the information from this sheet.

- › What do you notice between the expressions primarily aimed at girls and those primarily aimed at boys?
- › What do these expressions mean?
- › Are there any expressions that apply to anyone, whether they identify as a boy or a girl? If yes, which ones?

Possible answers:

**For girls:** These descriptions generally refer to girls who are thought to be “easy” (e.g. let people touch them sexually, agree to sexual activity, “sleep around”). Some expressions that might be mentioned include “easy,” “slut,” “whore/ho,” “skank,” etc.

**For boys:** These descriptions generally refer to boys who come on to girls, who play with girls' feelings, who do not take relationships seriously, who date several girls at once, and who are only out to “get some.” Expressions that might be mentioned include “stud,” “player/playa,” “fuckboy,” “womanizer,” etc.

**For all genders:** There are few expressions that are similar for boys and girls. However, some behaviours are considered just as inappropriate whether they are done by a boy or girl (e.g. cheating on someone, lying).

- › **Do these expressions have an impact on a person's reputation?**
  - Out of sheer repetition, things said about a person will inevitably give them a “reputation.”
  - Many of these expressions may be sexual insults. For example, if someone has dated more than one person (i.e. had serial boyfriends or girlfriends), this can give them a reputation, e.g. “easy” (for a girl) “player” (for a boy), etc., suggesting that the person has already been sexually active when very often this is not the case. Even if someone has become sexually active, this is no reason to insult or humiliate them.

› **Let's take an example. What do you think is POSITIVE about having this reputation?**

- “Easy,” “Hot,” “Player,” “Womanizer”:
  - Getting noticed by others.
  - Be considered more “mature” than others (not a child!).
  - More popular.
- In fact, some girls and boys may:
  - Want to get noticed more, to please people, to enjoy coming on to or teasing others sexually.
  - Enjoy the effect they have on others.
  - Like being the centre of attention without necessarily wanting to go further.
- At your age , you may want to have fun getting to the “initial bases” or having a boyfriend or girlfriend without going any further, i.e., engaging in sexual activity with this person.

› **What do you think is NEGATIVE about having this reputation?**

- It may create pressure to adopt behaviours just to meet other people’s expectations.
  - Some girls or boys may feel pressured to fit with the image of being “hot.”
  - Some may feel pressured to fit with the image of not being very respectful (e.g. saying vulgar things).
- Others may find themselves in situations that are inappropriate for their age and that they don’t really want to engage in because they were dared to or they were pressured into fitting with a certain image (examples: being intimate with someone you barely know or engaging in sexual touching without wanting to, etc.).
- This can change how people are perceived; they may become the target of derogatory remarks or disrespectful acts.
  - The person who gets this “reputation” in the form of “sexual insults” (e.g. “slut,” “whore,” “fuckboy”) may then get unwanted sexual solicitations from other people.
  - Based on these rumours, some people may decide to come on to them sexually, thinking that they are “easy” or “players” etc.
  - Rumours, sexual insults, etc., are disrespectful.

› **Overall...**

- Expressions for “girls’ reputations” can often be perceived more negatively than those associated with “boys’ reputations.”
- This is what we call a double standard. Very often, we judge a behaviour by a girl differently from how we would if the action were done by a boy. When it comes to sex, girls are often judged more severely (and unfairly) compared to boys who behave in the same way.
- However, anyone can experience stress and pressure when they get a “bad reputation.” And this situation becomes even more stressful when the rumours or gossip circulate on social media (e.g. insults, cyberbullying). When a rumour is related to someone’s sexuality, it can be more difficult for them to ask for help (Chelab et al., 2016). But it’s important to get help anyway.

- When sexuality is used to hurt and humiliate someone:
  - This automatically touches on something private and sensitive for that person.
  - The person may not know how to defend themselves against these types of accusations (e.g. sexual insults, reputation related to sexuality).
  - The person can become uncomfortable and have no idea what to say.
- If someone were being bullied because of the colour of their glasses, most people would find that ridiculous. People don't usually care about that. However, sexual insults are more sensitive, and people may take more interest in them.
- All negative rumours and insults can cause worry and embarrassment, and it is understandable for the victim to feel frustrated, sad and humiliated. This is why it's important not to be afraid to seek help (e.g., parents, nurse, youth police officer, psychologist, sexologist, an aid organization such as Tel-jeunes, Kids Help Phone, etc.).

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## Secondary 1 – Session 4

### Attraction and Dating

#### “Expressing Your Feelings to Someone”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Identity, Gender Stereotypes and Roles, and Social Norms</b>	<b>Recognize the role of puberty in the consolidation of your gender identity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Events at the beginning of adolescence: romantic and sexual awakening.</li></ul>
<b>Emotional and Romantic Life</b>	<b>Become aware of the role of feelings of love and attraction in adolescence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Manifestations of feelings of love and attraction: inside yourself and in your attitudes and behaviours.</li><li>› Variations as to for whom and when these feelings arise.</li><li>› Similarities and differences between feelings of friendship, love and attraction.</li></ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal and social competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication-related competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul> <p><b>Methodological competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information and communications technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Personal development subject area:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)  
Theme: Identities and Belonging

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand the concept of sexuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Entering adolescence and decision-making</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the role of puberty in consolidating gender identity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Romantic and sexual awakening</li> <li>› Gendered socialization, stereotypes and gender norms</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the manifestations of friendship, love and attraction in adolescence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Manifestations within self and in own attitudes and behaviours</li> <li>› Variations as to whom it involves and when</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on the general underlying influences that can be considered in making decisions about sexuality.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Recognition of own wishes, needs and limits and those of others</li> <li>› Self-knowledge and respect for personal choices</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflect on the tensions that may exist with regard to norms, stereotypes and own gender identity</b></p> <p><b>Reflect on the tensions created by the role of feelings of love and attraction in adolescence</b></p>



## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Get young people to develop their ability to understand their feelings surrounding dating and attraction.**

- 1. Define** what dating means for young people today and how it has changed since the time their parents and grandparents were teens (similarities/differences).
- 2. Identify** the main stages of attraction and the behaviours, emotions, concerns, and potential outcomes that go along with each stage.
- 3. Discuss** the different ways young people try to attract the attention of or ask out the people they like, and **evaluate** how effective these approaches are.
- 4. Identify** the similarities and differences between feelings of friendship, love, and attraction so that students can better articulate what they're feeling and what they want out of a given relationship.
- 5. Discuss** the importance of being yourself and expressing your true feelings when it comes to attraction and dating, without giving into pressure from others.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **four activities**.

15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Brainstorming:</b> Different Words Related to Dating</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>Dating: Do’s And Dont’s (1949)</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>Butterflies</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Stages of Attraction</li> </ul>
25 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Ways to get someone to notice you</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Sheets 1.1a and 1.1b: Ways to Get Someone to Notice You</i>  <i>Sheet 1.2: Answer Sheet: Ways to Get Someone to Notice You</i></p>
10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Raised Hand Survey:</b> Friendship, Attraction and Love</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
10 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Key Messages</li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>Tumbleweed Tango</i>”</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations (e.g., romantic breakup, romantic rejection, questions about sexual orientation). It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the Resources section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



## Activity 1



**BLACKBOARD  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MINUTES**



**BRAINSTORMING**



**VIDEO**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Next, **tell** the group that you'll be discussing the topic of dating and attraction.

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Tell the group that they don't need to currently have or have had a boyfriend or girlfriend to talk about the topic of "attraction."



### Brainstorming

- › On the blackboard, **write** "Dating."
- › **Ask** the group to tell you all the expressions that come to mind to describe interacting with someone they want to date.
- › **Write** their answers on the blackboard.
- › Then **ask** the following question:
  - **Do all of these expressions mean exactly the same thing? Explain your answer.**  
*Get their opinions.*





## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Some expressions that the group comes up with may be “colourful” or even direct and vulgar. Some ideas may relate more to explicit sexual relationships (e.g. “getting some,” “scoring”). You may need to redirect the discussion by pointing out that these expressions don’t fully encapsulate this aspect of relationships or how we should perceive the other person. Some young people at this age (Secondary 1) may not even know what these expressions really mean.

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **There are many expressions that describe interacting with someone you want to date.**
  - These can include behaving as though you are attracted to the person, i.e., “flirt,” “tease,” “chat up,” “make eyes at.”
  - Other words are more explicitly sexual: “hit on,” “come on to,” “pick up,” “make a pass at,” “make a move on,” “make sexual advances toward.”
- › People also had a different dating language in different time period. Do you know these expressions from past eras: “Court,” “woo,” “going steady,” “beau,” “getting pinned,” “necking,” or “keeping company.”
- › **What does the word “Attraction” mean?:**
  - “A feeling that makes someone romantically or sexually interested in another person” (Attraction, n.d.).
  - These feelings can include things like having a “crush” on someone, having “chemistry” with them, or feeling “close” to them.

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the group the following questions:

- **“What was dating like when your parents or grandparents were teenagers compared to what it is like now?”**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › People seemed to take more time before “going steady.”
- › When your grandparents or even your parents were teens, they didn’t have cell phones to text each other. To see each other, they had to call the person on their home phone or go knock on their door to ask them out (Duquet, 2019).

Other examples:

- › In a study, young people aged 14 to 17 were asked about how dating was different for their parents (Duquet, 2019). Here are some of their answers:
  - “I think that back then they didn’t really have technology. I think they talked face to face. Now we talk on Facebook, Snapchat and stuff like that.” (Emma)
  - “People don’t really go on ‘dates’ at a restaurant anymore, because they don’t really know how to talk to each other in person. Young people talk on their phones instead.” (Phil)
  - “Some young people still ask each other out in person but they do this more often on social media because it’s easier to admit your feelings online than face to face.” (Félix)
  - “Things have changed. I’m pretty sure my dad wrote letters to my mom when they first met. Now it’s more like you just text the person. I don’t think that this has anything to do with your age but rather the century you are in and what part of history you belong to.” (Raphaëlle)
  - “I think our generation places too much importance on the physical aspect and what the person looks like instead of their personality and everything else.” (Anaïca)
  - I think the way we talk to each other is different. The compliments are different. People used to say things like, ‘You’re beautiful.’ Now they’ll say, ‘OMG, you’re a hottie!’ It’s more vulgar.” (Rose)
  - “In my parents’ time, there was a stage called ‘getting to know the other person before getting naked.’ It’s as simple as that.” (Maggie)
- › To sum up, what is considered appropriate when it comes to dating practices and when to start dating may be influenced by:
  - Our culture (where we come from; the values of our community).
  - Our immediate surroundings (our family’s values, what our friends do, the messages we get at school).
  - Our environment (media messages, e.g. from movies, TV shows, social media, music videos) and values conveyed by celebrities (e.g., YouTubers, singers, actors).

## Video and Discussion

- › **Tell** the group that they will be watching a video from 1949 that discusses the do's and don'ts of dating for young people.
- › **Show** the following video:

**Dating: Do's And Don'ts (1949), (Old TV Time, 2010)**

**Length:** 12 min., 25 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxBOSdl-b54&t=5s>**



Video



### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

You can present the video in two ways:

**Option 1:** Show the video in full.

**Option 2:** Show the video up to 7 min. and 10 sec.; stop and then fast forward to 10 min. 38 sec. until the end. The content between these 2 segments is less relevant to this session, as it simply includes a discussion that the boy has with his parents a few minutes before his date along with some images from the event that he and his date are attending.

- › Then **ask** them the following questions:
  - **What do you think about this video?**
  - **What do you think are the differences between young people's experiences back then and their experiences today when it comes to asking someone out or going on a first date?**

- **The young man’s mother agreed to let him go on the date but with certain conditions, i.e. weekends only and not too late. What do you think of these conditions for a 14-year-old?**

*Get their opinions*

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### What did the people in the video say?

##### Dating at the dawn of the 1950s:

- › In those days, a date was a “major event,” and boys were the ones who generally invited girls to an activity, such as going to the movies, attending a carnival, going skating, etc.
- › As you can see in the video, parental approval was important: teens needed permission to go on their first date. They had conditions (e.g. only on weekends and not too late!).
- › Even then, physical appearance or “looks” were important. We can see the two teens spend a lot of time on their appearance to get ready (e.g. the boy wears a shirt and tie, while the girl wears a dress).
- › The boy also thinks about other things to make the date go well, such as making sure they each feel appreciated, have fun together, laugh, and have a good time.
- › In those days, people also took their time to get to know the other person before getting close (e.g. kissing).

##### A good way to ask someone out:

- › Some ways of asking someone out on a date are more effective, clear or “respectful” than others.
  - The fact that the boy mentioned the activity first and then asked the girl out was a good way to get her interested in his proposal.
  - For example, if he had only asked whether she was available at a specific time (e.g. “Are you available this Saturday?”), she may have been caught off guard and, not knowing whether she would like the activity, might have said no.
- › It’s best to ask the person if they are interested in the activity you’re suggesting (e.g. going to the skatepark, going for ice cream, having a game night).

**Now:**

- › Teenagers' approach to dating may be influenced by various factors, including their family, friend group, the media (e.g., movies, TV shows, social media).
- › Since the advent of the Internet, attraction has generally focused on physical appearance and "sexiness" (Boëtsch and Guilhem, 2005). People seem to focus on getting physically close (e.g. kissing, caressing) very early on in their relationship, if not immediately.
- › People may get the feeling that they absolutely have to be like what they see in the media to get noticed or be attractive to someone. This is not realistic; plus, is that even a good thing ?
- › The video showed rather stereotyped views of how boys and girls should be and how they should act. However, the media today also present stereotypes about what boys or girls should do on a date.

**Some things that don't change over time:**

- › It doesn't matter where you come from, your culture, or how you were raised: you are attractive because of your sense of humour, talents, intelligence, good mood, empathy and kind words.  
**These things never go out of fashion.**
- › When you want to get closer to someone you like, it's important that both of you take the time to get to know each other.



# 2

## Activity 2



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION



VIDEO



EXPOSÉ

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Start** the second activity by **asking** the group:
  - How does it feel to want to get close to someone you like to get to know them better?
    - How does it feel physically?
    - What things do you wonder about?

*Get their opinions.*

## Video, Discussion and Presentation

- › **Show** the *Butterflies* video, which shows how we get butterflies in the stomach when we see someone we like.

**CGI Animation Short Film: Butterflies (Abby Boyce CGMeetup, 2018)**

**Length:** 2 min., 14 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEGlhgoShbY>



Video



- › Then **ask** them the following questions:
  - **What do you think about this video?**
  - **How do the characters feel?**
  - **Why do you think they act the way they do?**

*Get their opinions.*

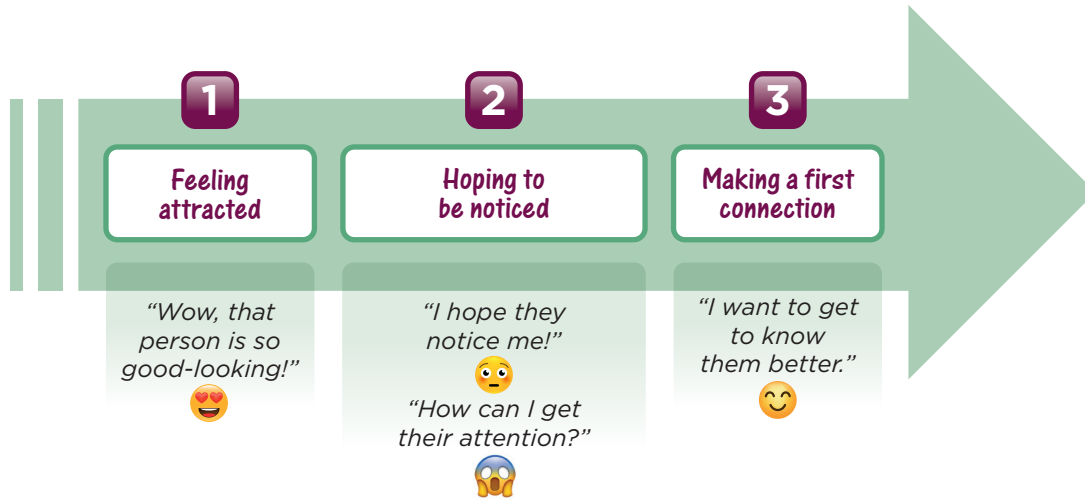
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › When you are around the person you like, you can have all kinds of emotions or sensations.
- › Your body reacts:
  - You may feel nervous and blush, have trouble talking, and feel butterflies in your stomach, etc.
- › You can experience all kinds of emotions:
  - Embarrassment and awkwardness. Or, on the contrary, you can also feel very comfortable and cheerful.
  - You may be afraid that the person won't be attracted to you or like you back.
- › You may wonder a lot of things:
  - What will I say to them?
  - How will they react if I talk to them (or text them)?
  - Why do I feel like this when I'm around them?
  - What if I blush?
- › Sometimes it feels like you aren't in control and that you'll say or do something stupid.
- › The good news is that these reactions are quite normal and are part of the experience!
- › The important thing is to take your time and stay as calm and natural as possible!

# Presentation

› **Explain** the main stages of attraction to the group.



• **Attraction happens in 3 stages:**

1. Noticing a particular person: “Oh wow, that person is so good-looking!”
2. Hoping to be noticed back and to make a good impression: “I hope they notice me too! How can I get their attention?”
3. Making a first connection: “I want to get to know them better.”





## Activity 3



SHEETS 1.1A, 1.1B AND 1.2  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



25 MIN.



TEAM ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

## Discussion and Presentation

- › To discuss the topic of attraction, **ask** the group the following question:
  - **What are ways that young people today can get noticed by someone they are attracted to?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Show** the group this table, which lists the ways young people can try to get someone they like to notice them. **Tell** them that they will use this for the next team activity.

How to get someone to notice you	
1. Use your personality (e.g. sense of humour, talents, kindness).	5. Focus on your appearance.
2. Get to know the person.	6. Attract their attention.
3. Be yourself.	7. Want to impress them.
4. Use a go-between to avoid face-to-face interaction (e.g. friend, social media).	8. Agree to do things you don't like to please them or avoid displeasing them.

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of two.
- › **Present** the situations illustrating the different ways that they can show they are attracted to someone. Half of the teams will get Sheet 1.1a: *How to Get Someone to Notice You*, while the other half of the teams will fill in Sheet 1.1b: *How to Get Someone to Notice You*. The group will have about 10 min. to fill out the sheet.
- › For each approach, the teams will have to **indicate**:
  - **Whether the approach is EFFECTIVE or NOT.**
  - **Briefly explain why these approaches are considered effective or not.**
  - **Name the category of the approach (e.g. personality, appearance, motivation to get to know the other person, desire to impress) (See box above).**

- › Then, **go** back over each statement and lead a discussion while **comparing** the teams' answers.
  - **For each statement, ask the group to raise their hands if they think the approach is EFFECTIVE.**
  - **Then ask a few volunteers to explain their point of view.**
- › **Add** to their answers using Sheet 1.2: *Answer Sheet: How to Get Someone to Notice You.*

## Discussion and Presentation

- › Then **ask** the group:
  - **Do you think that some approaches are better for letting someone know you are attracted to them? If yes, which ones? Why?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

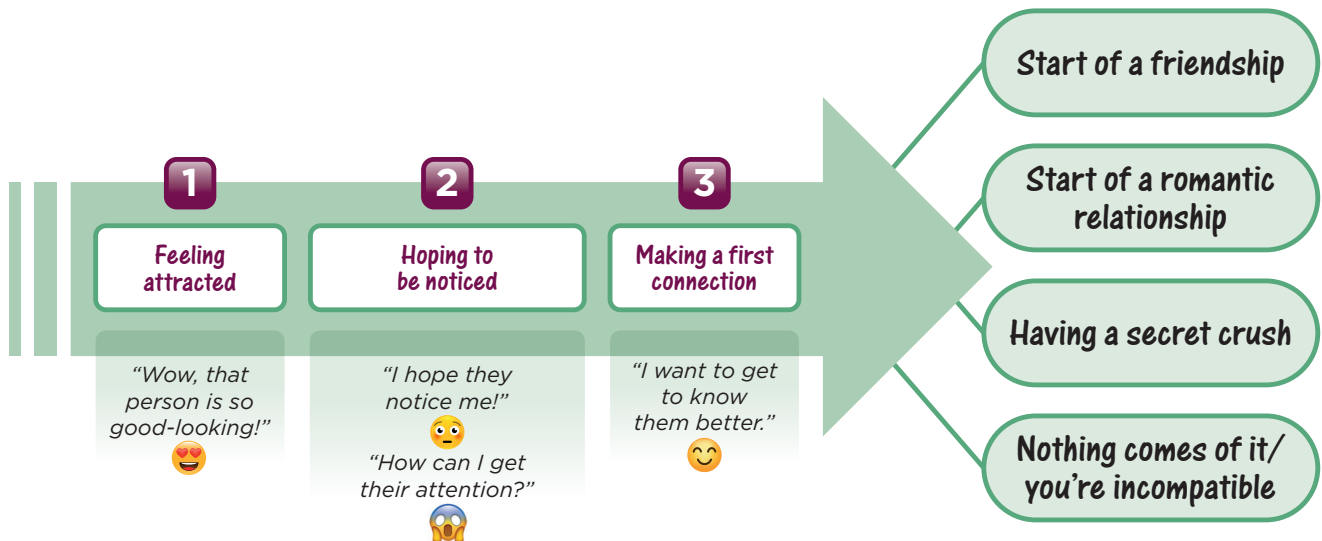
### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › There isn't just one way to let someone know you like them. There are no magic spells!
- › People also don't like us just for our appearance, look, attitude, or a sexy photo.
- › People like us for our:
  - Skills or talents: sports, music, improvisation, science, dance, sewing, writing, mechanical ability.
  - Passions: the environment, video games, cooking, gardening, reading, history, comics, animals, travel.
  - Our personality: sense of humour, ability to keep a secret, intelligence, originality, kindness, charm, self-confidence (or conversely, shyness), simplicity, ability to listen.
- › The important thing is to draw on these qualities and your personality and to be yourself.



- › **Go back** to the table illustrating the stages of attraction but this time with the possible outcomes.
  - **“We've gone over the main stages of attraction and getting someone to notice you. Now let's look at the possible outcomes. In other words, what could happen next?”**

› **Share** the following information:



• **Very important to remember:**

- **Just because you are interested in someone and think about them a lot doesn't mean they will feel the same way about you. Expressing your feelings for someone can have a number of outcomes:**

- 1. Start of a friendship:** In the end, you become friends.
- 2. Start of a romantic relationship:** The two people are interested in each other. They fall in love.
- 3. Having a secret crush:** The other person doesn't know because you weren't clear (e.g. you were too embarrassed to admit your feelings). You may keep this feeling a secret and continue to daydream about the other person.
- 4. Nothing comes of it / you're incompatible:** If the person doesn't return the feelings or one person realizes they just aren't into the other person, i.e. they're incompatible, then the story ends there.

› **Continue** the presentation:

- **To sum up, there are different stages of attraction and different possible outcomes. However, BEFORE making an initial connection, it's important to think about why you want to be noticed or liked by someone (Stage 3).**
- **In your opinion, why is it important to think before you act when you want to approach someone you like?**

*Get their opinions.*

# Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › It's normal for teenagers to want to test out how attractive they are to others (Séduire, 2007).
- › In other words, it's okay to want someone else to be interested in you and enjoy the feeling of knowing that they like you. And it's perfectly fine not to want to have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- › But beware of playing games and leading someone on when you aren't really interested in them, as this can lead to hurt feelings.
- › To avoid hurting someone's feeling, ask yourself questions to better understand why you want someone to like you or go out with you.
- › Am I interested in this person because:
  - I find them good-looking? I am attracted to them physically?
  - I think they are funny and intelligent and I want to get to know them better?
  - I want to see if I am attractive? I only want this person to be interested in me, but I'm not interested in a being with them?
  - I really don't want to be single?
  - I don't want to get laughed at because I'm the only one in my friend group who has never dated anyone?
  - I feel ready to have a boyfriend or girlfriend—and be in love!?
  - I feel ready to get physically close to someone (e.g. hugging, kissing)?
  - Etc.
- › Overall, it's important to think about what you really want.
- › You also need to think about what the other person might want:
  - Is this person interested in me? Do they really like me and want to go out with me?
  - Is this person only responding to my advances because they don't know how to say no?
  - Is this person only interested in me physically?
  - Are they flirting with me just for the fun of it? Or, worse, to make fun of me?
  - Or do they actually want to get physically close (e.g. kissing, cuddling, sexual activity)?
  - Etc.
- › Wanting to be liked at all costs (e.g. just to be like your friends) without caring about how you actually feel or how the other person feels can lead to uncomfortable situations for both you and the other person.
- › Sometimes it's hard to tell if you're feeling love, friendship, or simply attraction. Also, it's possible to be interested in someone without necessarily wanting to go out with them. In the next activity, we'll explore the differences between love, friendship, and attraction.



## Activity 4



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



RAISED HAND  
SURVEY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Raised Hand Survey

- ▶ **Tell** the students that this activity involves a survey to help differentiate between friendship, attraction, and love. The students vote by raising their hands.
- ▶ Using the list below, **ask** the students to raise their hands if they think that the statements are related to (A) friendship, (B) attraction, (C) or love. **Tell** them that they can raise their hands more than once for a given statement if they think that there is more than one possible answer.

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

If you're leading the session without the slideshow, **read** the statements below during the session.



#### Statements: Friendship – Attraction – Love

1. I often laugh with this person. We have fun together.
2. This person and I often do things together, and we sometimes share our lunches.
3. I think of this person a lot and want to go out with them.
4. I know I can trust them. Sometimes we tell each other personal things.
5. When I see this person, I feel funny and want to get closer to them, even though I'm really shy.
6. This person makes me feel special and unique.
7. I find this person beautiful.
8. When life gets hard, this person is there for me.
9. When I'm with this person, I feel good.
10. This person's opinion is important to me.

## Presentation and Discussion

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Sometimes it can be hard to tell if you're feeling friendship or attraction or are in love. This is perfectly normal.
  - You can feel attraction, friendship, and love toward another person all at the same time.
  - It's possible to trust your friends as well as a person you're in love with.
  - You can laugh, have fun, and feel good with someone you love, a friend, or someone you're attracted to. These feelings aren't unique to romantic relationships.
  - Just because you find a person beautiful doesn't mean you're in love.
  
- › Here are some tips for differentiating between **friendship**, **attraction**, and **love**:
  - **Friendship:**
    - A friend is someone you trust, enjoy spending time with, can be yourself around, and rely on during hard times. However, you don't want to become more intimate with a friend, or kiss them, like you would in a romantic relationship. You don't constantly think about your friend or daydream about dating them. But sometimes feelings of friendship can turn into feelings of love.
  - **Love:**
    - When you're in love with someone, you want to spend all your time with them. You see them as having only good qualities: charming, beautiful, handsome, funny, etc. You feel special when you're around them. With time, the person you're in love with can become your best friend.
  - **Attraction:**
    - You feel drawn to this person; you have a crush. You may get butterflies in your stomach when you see them. There's something about this person that makes you want to get to know them better. You don't know if they're attracted to you too, but you're sure that you're interested and attracted to them and want to be physically close to them. The person you're attracted to may also be someone unattainable, like a celebrity.

- › Then, **ask** the students the following question:
  - **Why is it important to ask yourself if you're feeling attraction, friendship or love toward another person?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Thinking about what you're feeling helps you make good decisions and avoid false hopes. It also helps you express what you want more clearly and consider whether your expectations are realistic. Here are some examples of why it's useful to think about your feelings:
  - So you can gently tell someone that you don't want to go out with them and would rather be friends.
  - So you can tell someone you like that you want to get to know them better.
  - So you understand that your crush on a celebrity won't lead to anything further—though you may still enjoy daydreaming about them.
    - Why can't it lead to anything? Because it would be a relationship between an adult and a teenager, because the person lives in Hollywood while you live in Quebec (your chances of meeting them are nil), etc.
  - Or say you have a crush on the guy who works at the depanneur. This person is 16 and has a girlfriend he's in love with. You understand that this can't go further, but you may still enjoy daydreaming about this person.
    - Why can't it go further? There is too large of an age gap between a 12-year-old and 16-year-old (Secondary 1 and Secondary 5).

- › **Ask** them the following question:
  - **Whether you are in love with someone or are just friends, why is it important to express your true feelings?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### The importance of expressing your true feelings

- › When you feel ready to express your feelings to another person or respond to someone who has expressed their feelings to you, it's important to be honest, even if it may be difficult or awkward.
  - That way, you avoid misunderstandings, and the situation becomes less stressful for both of you.
  - It's disappointing and painful when you find out that the other person doesn't feel the same way. But it will be easier to move on once you know how the other person really feels.
  - Being assertive is also important.
    - Take the following example: Alex asked Sophie, "Do you want to be my girlfriend?" Sophie doesn't want to be his girlfriend, but she feels really awkward. She doesn't know how to say "no" and doesn't want to hurt Alex. She answers, "Okay."
    - What do you think about this?

### The importance of thinking about how to reveal your feelings

- › It's also important to think about the best way to reveal your feelings to the other person:
    - So that your words convey what you really think.
    - So that you say it in a polite and respectful way.
- Examples:
- **If someone is in love with you, but you only feel friendship for them:**
    - "I really like spending time with you as a friend, but I'm not in love, like you are. I'm sorry."
  - **If you're in love with someone, but don't know how to tell them:**
    - "I want to tell you something, but I don't know how to say it. It's a bit awkward. I like you and enjoy spending time with you. Do you feel the same way?"
- › Whether this new relationship turns into friendship or love, the important thing is:
    - Feeling comfortable around the other person.
    - Not pretending to be someone you're not just to please the other person or avoid disappointing them.





## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › “Attracting someone we like involves many little things we can’t learn “by heart,” because then how we communicate can start to look fake. Spontaneity is one of the main qualities that make people attractive” (Turchet, 2004).
- › Everyone has unique traits that make them attractive:
  - Personal qualities
  - A distinct way of thinking, a particular style
  - A unique talent, passion or interest
- › Everyone has their own way of being attractive.
- › There are no magic spells to get someone to like you, which is actually a great thing!

## Video

- › **End** the session with the video *Tumbleweed Tango*. This wonderful cartoon is a great illustration of the dance that people do when they have feelings for each other, which can lift them both up.

## Tumbleweed Tango (Mickey Mouse, 2013)

**Length:** 3 min., 15 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rlwfd1ZaDJ4&t=11s>



Video



› **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.

- **What do you think about this video?**
- **What are your takeaways?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Presentation

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Being attracted to someone is like a dance. It can be the first in a series of what we call “dating rituals.”
- › At first, you aren’t always sure of yourself, and sometimes you feel like you’re walking on eggshells (or dancing in a field of cacti!). However, when both people gradually trust each other, these moments can be very enjoyable and uplifting!
- › Then, who knows...
  - It could turn into a romantic relationship.
  - Or become a great friendship.
  - Or even remain a fantasy!



## SHEET

### 1.1a

FOR THE GROUP

## Ways to Get Someone to Notice You

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Each of the following statements is a suggestion from a teen on how “to get someone they like to notice them.”
- › State whether you think their approach is EFFECTIVE or NOT.
- › Categorize their approach using the table below (more than one approach may apply):

How to get someone to notice you	
1. Use your personality (e.g. sense of humour, talents, kindness).	5. Focus on your appearance.
2. Get to know the person.	6. Attract their attention.
3. Be yourself.	7. Want to impress them.
4. Use a go-between to avoid face-to-face interaction (e.g. friend, social media).	8. Agree to do things you don't like to please them or avoid displeasing them.

**Statement A:** *“I changed my look. Since then, I feel like people notice me more. I hope the person I’m interested in will notice me too.”*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement B:** *“In the morning, I like to get up two hours before I leave for school. That gives me enough time to have breakfast, do my hair, and choose my clothes. This makes me feel confident because I feel that I look really good! I make an extra effort on Tuesdays because I know Charlotte is in my class.”*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Different ways to get someone to notice you:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Use your personality (e.g. sense of humour, talents, kindness).                 | 5. Focus on your appearance.   |
| 2. Get to know the person.   | 6. Attract their attention.  |
| 3. Be yourself.  | 7. Want to impress them.   |
| 4. Use a go-between to avoid face-to-face interaction (e.g. friend, social media). | 8. Agree to do things you don't like to please them or avoid displeasing them. |

**Statement C:** *“When I like someone, I try to get to know them. I talk to them a lot and take an interest in what they like to do.”*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement D:** *“Last year, I had a huge crush on someone. At every break between classes, I would walk near his row of lockers with my friends and laugh so he would notice me.”*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement E:** *“I got a follower request on Instagram® from Maxime. To find out if he was interested in me, my friend did my makeup for a photo shoot. I posted the best photos and Maxime ‘liked’ one of them. I guess he likes me.”*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_



# SHEET

## 1.1b

FOR THE GROUP

### Ways to Get Someone to Notice You

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Each of the following statements is a suggestion from a teen on how “to get someone they like to notice them.”
- › State whether you think their approach is EFFECTIVE or NOT.
- › Identify what they did using table below:

#### Different ways to get someone to notice you:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Use your personality (e.g. sense of humour, talents, kindness).                 | 5. Focus on your appearance.   |
| 2. Get to know the person.   | 6. Attract their attention.  |
| 3. Be yourself.  | 7. Want to impress them.   |
| 4. Use a go-between to avoid face-to-face interaction (e.g. friend, social media). | 8. Agree to do things you don't like to please them or avoid displeasing them. |

**Statement F:** “My friend has a big crush on a guy in Secondary 3. Since he smokes, she started smoking too and visits him in the smoking area during breaks. I don't know why she started; she used to think it smelled gross.”

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement G:** “I text her and started doing activities with her. We often hang out together at school. Right now we're friends, but I'm hoping that at some point we'll start going out.”

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Different ways to get someone to notice you:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Use your personality (e.g. sense of humour, talents, kindness).                 | 5. Focus on your appearance.   |
| 2. Get to know the person.   | 6. Attract their attention.  |
| 3. Be yourself.  | 7. Want to impress them.   |
| 4. Use a go-between to avoid face-to-face interaction (e.g. friend, social media). | 8. Agree to do things you don't like to please them or avoid displeasing them. |

**Statement H:** *"I didn't know how to take the first step to tell Alex I was interested in him, so I got my friend to ask him what he thinks about me."*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement I:** *"I often go on Instagram® to see if the person I like is 'online.' If they are, I'll make myself 'online' right away so that maybe they'll message me."*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement J:** *"When I'm interested in someone, I don't try to change. Because if they only show interest in me when I change, that means they're only interested in me for something I'm not."*

- › Can this approach be EFFECTIVE?  YES  NO
- › Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- › Which approach(es) did the person use to get noticed? (Use the numbers): \_\_\_\_\_



## SHEET

### 1.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Ways to Get Someone to Notice You

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read each statement to the group.
- › For each statement, ask the group to raise their hands if they think the approach is EFFECTIVE.
- › Then ask a few volunteers to explain their point of view. This includes students who didn't think the approach was effective.
- › Add to the reflection activity using the answers below for each statement.

**Statement A:** *"I recently changed my look. Since then, I feel like people notice me more. I hope the person I'm interested in will notice me too."*

Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? **YES and NO**

- › **Yes**, if that's what the person wants to do. The benefit of dressing well is that you look your best. However, this is a temporary effect, so you can't rely on looks alone to make someone attracted to you.
- › **No**, if the change in clothing style is ONLY to please others and isn't really who you are. Also, just because you change how you look doesn't mean the other person will notice or appreciate it.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 5:** Focus on your appearance.

**No. 6:** Attract their attention.

**Statement B:** *“In the morning, I like to get up two hours before I leave for school. That gives me enough time to have breakfast, do my hair, and choose my clothes. This makes me feel confident, because I feel that I look really good! I make an extra effort on Thursdays because I know Charlotte is in my class.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? YES and NO**

- › **Yes**, it is true that a routine can make you feel good, which in turn can make you feel confident. Confidence lets some people feel more comfortable and be themselves around others. This can be a good way to get someone to notice you.
- › **However**, you should not rely solely on your appearance. Also, if you care more about your appearance than about people, this may be a sign that you have trouble being yourself when you aren't made up or in nice clothes. This can create a lot of pressure to always look your best.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 3:** Be yourself.

**No. 5:** Focus on your appearance.

**No. 6:** Attract their attention.

**Statement C:** *“When I like someone, I try to get to know them. I talk to them a lot and take an interest in what they like to do.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? YES**

- › **Yes**. This approach lets you get to know the person better to find out if you have common interests and if you still would like to “go out” with them.
- › You can also discover if the other person is interested in you; if so, you can both gradually reveal your feelings.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 2:** Get to know them.

**Statement D:** *“Last year I had a huge crush on someone. At every break between classes, I would walk near his row of lockers with my friends and laugh so he would notice me.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? NO**

- › **No**. When you don't send clear signals, you may have to wait a long time for the other person to respond. They can't read your mind. “Laughing” in front of someone may even create the opposite effect to what you want. The other person may misinterpret the laughter and wonder if you and your friends are laughing at them. They may even find you a little too intense.
- › **However**, this could work if you also do other things to get noticed and get to know the person (e.g. approaching them, smiling, saying hello).

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 6:** Attract their attention.



**Statement E:** *“I got a follower request on Instagram® from Maxime. To find out if he was interested in me, my friend did my makeup for a photo shoot. I posted the best photos and Maxime ‘liked’ one of them. I guess he likes me.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? YES and NO**

- › **Yes**, a person may “Like” another person’s photo to let them know that they like them.
- › However, liking a photo doesn’t mean you have a crush on someone or romantic feelings for them.
- › Some people may think that you absolutely need “sexy” photos to get people to notice you. However, people actually notice us for the things that make us different.
- › Plus, you don’t always have control over the photos you post on social media. People can make unwanted and inappropriate comments, even if the photos weren’t meant for them.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 4:** Use a go-between (here, social media) to avoid face-to-face interaction.

**No. 5:** Focus on your appearance.

**No. 6:** Attract their attention.

**Statement F:** *“My friend has a big crush on a guy in Secondary 3. Since he smokes, she started smoking too and visits him in the smoking area during breaks. I don’t know why she started; she used to think it smelled gross.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? NO**

- › **No.** Sometimes you may agree to do something you aren’t really interested in (e.g, biking, video games) just to please the other person. But lying about the things you like to look cool and get someone’s attention can be a slippery slope: you may start agreeing to do other things you don’t want to do to please or impress the other person and then end up doing even more things you really don’t like.
- › Doing things you don’t like or find “gross” does not guarantee that the other person will notice you or like you back. You should never agree to do things that you don’t like or that are risky just to please someone else.
- › Even if you say yes to everything, it doesn’t mean the other person will like you back. You might be getting used and you could get hurt if the other person takes advantages of how nice you’re being.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 8:** Agree to do things you don’t like to please them or avoid displeasing them.

**Statement G:** *“I text her and started doing activities with her. We often hang out together at school. Right now we’re friends, but I’m hoping that at some point we’ll start going out.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? YES and NO**

- › Getting to know someone as a friend first can work—for example, by texting with them and spending time together at school, like in this case. This allows a relationship to develop naturally (and not just virtually but also in person).
- › **However**, just because you become friends with someone doesn’t mean they will end up having romantic feelings for you. Being nice and pleasant to someone does not mean that they owe you anything in return and will want to be your boyfriend or girlfriend.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 1:** Show off your personality (e.g. humour, talents, kindness).

**No. 2:** Get to know them.

**Statement H:** *“I didn’t know how to take the first step to tell Alex I was interested in him, so I got my friend to ask him what he thinks about me.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? YES and NO**

- › **Yes**, because you can find out what the other person thinks of you and if they are interested in you. Your friend can also let the person know that you like them. This can “break the ice” so that you can approach them directly afterwards.
- › **No**, because this may give a false first impression if the other person doesn’t really know you. It can also make the person uncomfortable and put pressure on them that wasn’t there to begin with. Also, there is no guarantee that the person will tell the truth to your go-between.
- › With this approach, the other person may get a “weird” first impression of you.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 4:** Use a go-between (in this case, a friend) to avoid face-to-face interaction.

**Statement I:** *“I often go on Instagram® to see if the person I like is ‘online.’ If they are, I’ll make myself ‘online’ right away so that maybe they’ll message me.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? YES and NO**

- › **Yes**, this can be a good way if the person uses Instagram® in the same way.
- › **However**, the other person may not use the chat feature and may not answer. And when they do answer, it can be difficult to figure out what they mean.
- › Getting to know each other first on social media can seem exciting and may be less awkward than interacting face to face. But you can’t stay online; for example, the other person can invent things about their life and say anything to get you to like them. Ideally, you should talk to each other and meet in real life and eventually meet their friends (in real life), and their family (in real life), etc.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 4:** Use a go-between (here, social media) to avoid face-to-face interaction.

**No. 6:** Attract their attention.

**Statement J:** *“When I like someone, I don’t try to change. Because if they only show interest in me when I change, that means they’re only interested in me for something I’m not.”*

**Can this approach be EFFECTIVE? Why? YES**

- › **Yes**, you are more likely to be noticed for your authenticity. This keeps you from having to pretend to be someone you’re not or constantly fearing that you will disappoint the other person and not be who they want you to be.
- › **However**, just because you are interested in someone doesn’t mean they will feel the same way, even if you are nice and authentic.

**Ways the person tried to get noticed:**

**No. 1 :** Show off your personality (e.g. humour, talents, kindness).

**No. 3:** Be yourself.

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## Videos

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# SECONDARY 2

Secondary 2

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## Secondary 2 - Session 1

### Romantic relationships “I’m in love. What should I do?”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

#### Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)

##### Emotional and Romantic Life

##### Engage in a critical reflection on adolescent romantic relationships:

- › Characteristics of the couples around you and those presented in the media
- › Influence of these models of couples on your representations of romantic relationships
- › Characteristics of romantic relationships in adolescence
- › Importance attributed to being in a romantic relationship

##### Become aware of the challenges involved in a first dating relationship:

- › Issues involved in sharing your feelings: requited/unrequited, fear of rejection
- › Social pressures: positive or negative pressures from the people around you and influence of the media
- › The relationship itself: divergent expectations, needs, motivations of the partners

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Media literacy:</b> Enable students to exercise critical, ethical and aesthetic judgment with respect to the media and produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights.</p>		
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Intellectual competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Personal and social competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal and social competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
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<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>		

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Autonomy and Interdependence

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand romantic relationships in adolescence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Feelings of friendship, love and attraction</li> <li>› Representations and characteristics of couples and romantic relationships in adolescence</li> <li>› Diversity of possible relationship paths</li> <li>› Positive and negative norms and social pressures</li> <li>› Importance attributed to being in a romantic relationship</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the benefits of a romantic relationship based on mutuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Consideration of each partner's needs</li> <li>› Emotional intimacy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on tensions between own feelings and the feelings of others in first dating relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Ambivalence about expressing own feelings</li> <li>› Approach to dating</li> <li>› Divergent expectations, needs, motivations and limits</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflect on possible tensions in romantic relationships based on mutuality</b></p>





## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**

75 minutes

**Help young people become aware of the progress in a first dating relationship and the challenges involved, while practising ways of communicating.**

- 1. Distinguish** between “having a boyfriend or girlfriend,” “being in love,” “going out with someone” and “being a couple.”
- 2. Identify** the various steps that can lead to a romantic relationship and the emotions (heart) and physical reactions (body) associated with each one.
- 3. Discuss**, depending on each person’s desires and boundaries, how they can reveal their feelings for someone and the importance of preparing for it, and how they can react with kindness if they don’t feel the same way.
- 4.** Using a fictitious love advice column, **play** the role of a youth blog reporter and **offer** advice and answers to questions from teens (mind) about dating relationships.
- 5. Specify** what a romantic relationship represents at their age.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **four activities**.

10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> on romantic relationships in adolescence</li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation</b> on the stages of attraction in a romantic relationship</li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “GAELLE (short film)”</li> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> The emotions of attraction <i>Sheet 1.1: The emotions of attraction</i> <i>Sheet 1.2: Answer Sheet: The emotions of attraction</i></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> Situational exercise: Revealing your feelings</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 1.3a: Revealing your feelings: Juliette and Adam</i> <i>Sheet 1.3b: Revealing your feelings: Zara and Mathieu</i> <i>Sheet 1.4: Answer Sheet: Revealing your feelings</i></li> </ul>
25 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> Dr. Love advice column</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 1.5: Dr. Love advice column</i> <i>Sheet 1.6: Answer Sheet: Dr. Love advice column</i></li> </ul>
5 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Key Messages</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website **[www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca)** (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)



## Activity 1



**BLACKBOARD  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**10 MIN.**



**DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION**

## Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or in the companion slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › **Explain** that today's session is about romantic relationships in adolescence.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations (e.g., romantic breakup, romantic rejection, questions about sexual orientation). It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the Resources section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group the following questions:
  - **What's the difference between "having a boyfriend or girlfriend" and "being in love"?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Difference between “having a boyfriend or girlfriend” and “being in love”:

- › Young people in Secondary 1, 2 and 5 were asked about this subject (Duquet and Quéniart, 2009). Here are their answers:
  - For some, having a boyfriend or girlfriend and being in love are the same thing because, in order to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, you have to love the person.
  - For others, being in love is much more serious than having a boyfriend or girlfriend because it means that you think highly of the other person.
  - It’s different in terms of the length of the relationship because, according to some young people, having a boyfriend or girlfriend is not as long lasting as being in love.
  - Still others believe that being in love doesn’t necessarily mean wanting to be in a couple or going out with someone because it’s a feeling that you can have secretly, without telling the person in question.
  - Lastly, some say that the feeling may not be reciprocated, so you can be in love with someone and never go out with them.

- › Then, **ask** the group:

- **Do people your age feel that they have to have a boyfriend or girlfriend? Why or why not?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Obligation to have a boyfriend or girlfriend

- › Nobody has to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, at any age. So, it’s perfectly OK to not feel ready to have one at your age.
- › It’s also perfectly OK to have a boyfriend or girlfriend at your age and to want to go out with that person, not to be like everyone else or to be seen as popular by your friends, etc., but because you want to and you feel ready.
- › Being in love can help you learn to feel good about being with someone else and to assert yourself. That happens gradually.
- › You have to learn how to manage those feelings because they’re new and cause you to experience all kinds of emotions.
- › When you’re newly in love, you feel a combination of nervousness, excitement and happiness, whether you’re an adolescent or an adult. But the experience won’t be the same if you’re 13, 17, 25 or older because you don’t have the same maturity or the same needs.

› **Ask** the group the following question:

- **What do you think the difference is between “going out with someone” and “being a couple”?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › At 13 or 14, you can have a boyfriend or girlfriend, but you usually talk about “being a couple” when you reach adult age.
  - When you’re an adult, being a couple allows you to:
    - Do all kinds of activities together or with friends
    - Live together under the same roof or see one another as often as you want
    - Share expenses (e.g., rent, groceries)
    - Share household chores (e.g., grocery shopping, meal preparation, housework)
    - Have a family
  - When you’re an adolescent, going out with someone allows you to:
    - Do all kinds of activities together or with friends
    - See each other at school, on weekends and sometimes on weekday evenings
    - Split your time between your friends, your boyfriend or girlfriend and your family
- › In short, the level of commitment isn’t the same for teens.
- › In adolescence, “going out with someone” can take up a lot of your time, but it shouldn’t take up all your time.
- › It’s important to spend time with other people, such as family and friends, and to devote time to a variety of activities (e.g., hobbies, homework, sports, arts, volunteering).
- › However, whether you’re a teen or an adult, the emotions that you feel when you’re newly in love are the same. This is what we’ll go over in the next activity!

# 2

## Activity 2



SHEETS 1.1A TO 1.1D AND 1.2  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



15 MIN.



PRESENTATION



VIDEO



TEAM  
ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

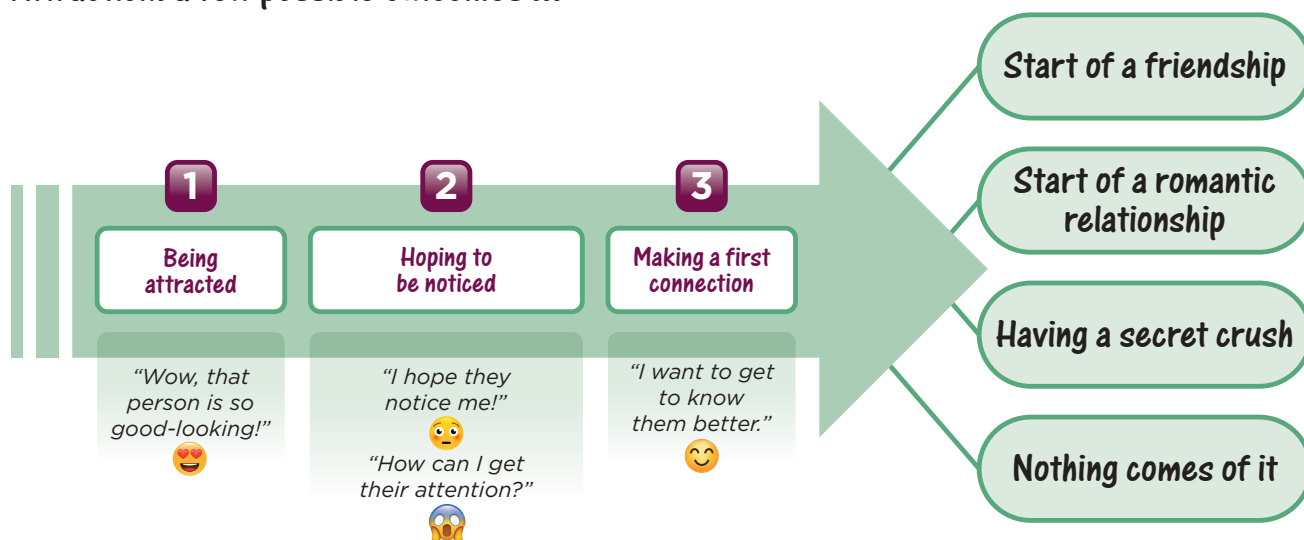
## Presentation

- › **Explain** to the group the different stages of attraction that can lead to different outcomes. They were seen during the session on *Attraction* in Secondary I. Here's a recap.

*Expressing your feelings for someone can have different outcomes:*

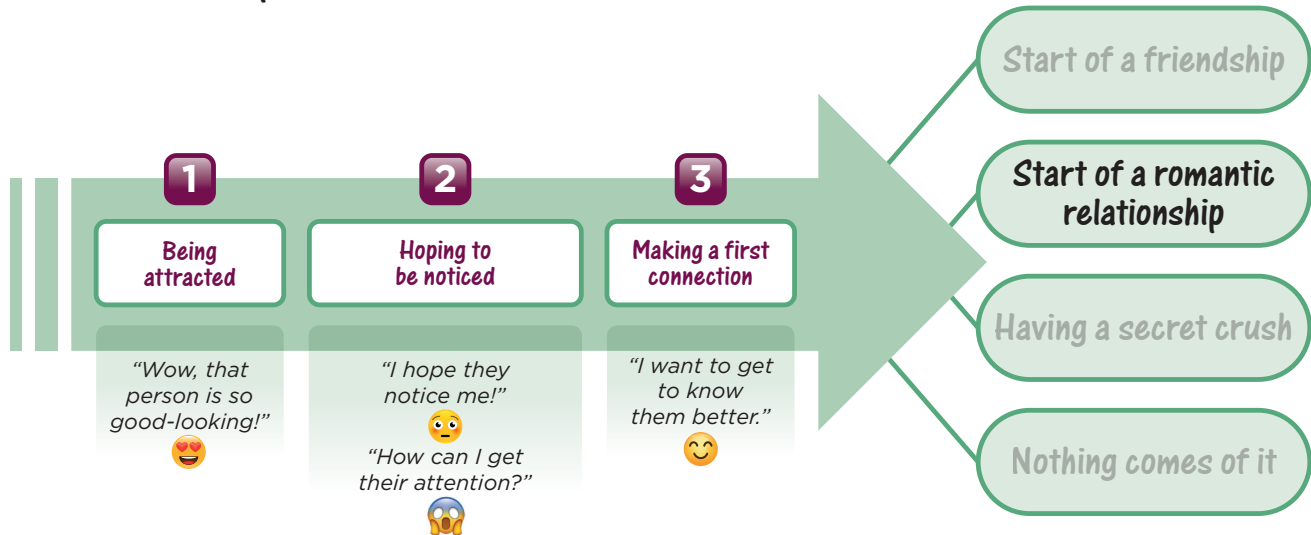
- 1. Start of a friendship:** In the end, you become friends.
- 2. Start of a romantic relationship:** You are interested in each other and you fall in love.
- 3. Having a secret crush:** The other person doesn't know because you weren't clear (e.g., "You were too embarrassed"). You may keep this feeling a secret and continue to daydream.
- 4. Nothing comes of it:** If the other person doesn't return the feelings, then the story ends there. Or one person realizes they just aren't into the other person, i.e., they're incompatible, then the story ends there.

## Attraction: a few possible outcomes ...



- Various stages can lead to a romantic relationship. At each stage, you can feel different emotions that are reflected in your body and your behaviour.

### Attraction: a few possible outcomes ...



## Video

- › Continue by **showing** a short film by Thomas Delorme about a young Quebecer, aged 15, who falls in love.
- › **Tell** the group to pay attention to the teen's reactions. What does he do? Then, **ask them** to imagine the emotions that he might be feeling.

### GAELE (short film) (Delorme, 2017)

**Length:** 7 min., 25 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJsYTGQ0sww>



Video





## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three.
- › **Explain** to the group that a romantic relationship allows you to learn more about yourself and, as the relationship develops, you feel closer to the other person.
  - **At each stage, you can experience a range of emotions; you can feel nervousness, restlessness or excitement, which are reflected in your body and your behaviour.**
  - **In addition, this new relationship can lead you to ask yourself a lot of questions. Lastly, a romantic relationship affects your **Heart** (emotions), **Body** (physical reactions) and **Mind** (thoughts and questions).**
- › **Hand out** one of the four sheets representing the different stages leading up to a romantic relationship to the teams (Sheet 1.1a: *Start of a romantic relationship – Stage 1: Being attracted*; Sheet 1.1b: *Start of a romantic relationship – Stage 2: Hoping to be noticed*; Sheet 1.1c: *Start of a romantic relationship – Stage 3: Making a first connection*; Sheet 1.1d: *Start of a romantic relationship – Stage 4: Starting a romantic relationship*).

Drawing on excerpts from the video seen earlier and the adolescent's possible physical reactions specified on Sheets 1.1a, 1.1b, 1.1c and 1.1d, **ask** the group to identify the emotions that the boy might experience at the stage that was assigned to them and that leads to a romantic relationship, and to write them in the designated box on the sheet that they were given. You can also choose to do this activity as a group discussion.

**Be sure** that they have clearly understood the instructions.

- The sheet that you were given contains part of what the young boy in the video experienced.
  - This makes reference to one of the stages of a romantic relationship.
  - This sheet also specifies how the body might respond when faced with the emotions that this young boy might experience at that stage.
  - Your team has to identify how the boy feels. What emotions do you think he might experience at this stage of a romantic relationship?
- › **Give** them approximately five minutes to fill out the sheet.
  - › **Have** everyone come back into the group. **Review** each stage, asking the group to name the emotions identified in teams (Sheets 1.1a to 1.1d).
    - **Go over** the different stages that can lead to a romantic relationship so that everyone has a big picture before sharing their answers.
  - › **Complete** the information for each of the stages on Sheet 1.2: Answer Sheet: Start of a romantic relationship (Stages 1 to 4).
    - **Specify** that these emotions and reactions can differ according to each person's personality, the context, the other person's reaction, etc.
  - › The next activity will help you put into practice how to reveal your romantic feelings and how to respond to "declarations of love" with kindness if you don't feel the same way.



## Activity 3



SHEETS 1.3A, 1.3B AND 1.4  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MIN.



TEAM ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to stay with their team.
- › **Explain** the activity by telling the group that you will present situations in which only one of the two characters likes the other and wants to reveal their feelings. Each team will have to come up with a scenario describing how the character can reveal their feelings to the “object of their affection” and how the other person can react kindly.
- › **Hand out** a sheet to each team (see Sheets 1.3a and 1.3b: *Revealing feelings: Juliette and Adam; Zara and Mathieu*). **Give** them 10 min to fill out the sheet.
- › Then **go through** each situation again. The teams have to share with the group their answers to the different questions (way to express your feelings to someone and ways to react kindly).
- › After presenting the two situations, **add to** their answers using the suggested content (see Sheet 1.4: *Answer Sheet: Revealing your feelings*) and **lead** a discussion using the questions below.

### Discussion

- › **Lead** a discussion with the whole group based on these questions:
  - **Were the scenarios presented realistic?**
  - **Why is it important to think about the best way to share your feelings BEFORE YOU DO IT?**
  - **Why is it so hard to tell the person you are in love with how you feel about them?**
  - **When you aren't interested in going out with the person, why is it important to say so with kindness?**

*Get their opinions.*

# Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### › **Were the scenarios realistic?**

- There are many ways to tell someone that you like them. Some may be more original than others, but you need to consider the following:
  - Was the approach too direct or too fast? (Being too pushy can have the opposite effect.)
  - Was it the right time?
  - Was the location private enough?

### › **Importance of thinking about the best way to reveal your feelings**

- Thinking about the best way to tell the other person how you feel will help you make sure that your words reflect what you actually think and feel.
- Writing your thoughts and feelings in a diary can help you organize your ideas and decide what you want to share.

### › **Sharing feelings is hard**

- There are many reasons why it can be difficult to tell someone you are attracted to them and have feelings for them:
  - Fear that the other person is not interested in you, that they don't share your feelings
  - Fear of looking silly and being laughed at
  - Fear of feeling vulnerable
  - Fear of being disappointed
  - Fear that the person will tell their friends about your feelings

### › **Importance of responding with kindness when feelings are not reciprocal**

- It definitely takes a lot of courage and boldness to tell someone that you like them without really knowing whether the person feels the same way.
- That's why it's important for the person who receives these "declarations of love" and does not share these feelings to respond honestly, while being respectful and kind. Ask yourself the following question: "If I were in their shoes, how would I want the other person to react if they didn't feel the same way?"



## Activity 4



**SHEETS 1.5 AND 1.6**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**  
**BLANK SHEET OF PAPER**



**25 MIN.**



**TEAM ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Team Activity

- › Before starting the activity, **cut out** the seven different statements on Sheet 1.5 and hand them out to different teams.
- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three.
- › **Tell** them to imagine that they're working for a youth blog and that they received questions posted to a love advice column from adolescents in Secondary 2.
- › Once the group submits their sheets with their answers, you can **select** a few questions, **read** the answers and elaborate on them using information from Sheet 1.6: *Answer Sheet: Dr. Love advice column*.
- › Then, **lead** a discussion with the entire group using the following question:
  - **What are your takeaways from this activity?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › When you're in love, it's normal to ask yourself questions, hesitate or wonder if you're doing the right thing.
- › It's also normal to be embarrassed or to sometimes feel awkward, since you're getting to know each other.
- › When you take the time to listen to each other and do things at your own pace, a romantic relationship will just keep getting better.



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the group the following questions:

- **What are your takeaways from the session?**
- **What does having a romantic relationship mean for young people your age?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Nobody has to have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
  - You can be interested in someone and get to know the person without being in a hurry to “go out.”
  - It’s important to take it one step at a time to keep your emotions from becoming too much to handle and avoid unnecessary pressure.
  - Also, “going out” with someone doesn’t mean that you’re ready for or that you have to engage in sexual acts.
- › A romantic relationship can be fun, light and simple.
  - For things to go well, be respectful and kind, and aware of what you want and what makes you feel good.
  - There’s no magic formula: expressing what you feel allows you to get to know each other better and create a special bond with the person you’re in love with.
  - There’s no point in comparing your romantic relationship with other people’s. Each romantic relationship is unique and reflects who you are.
- › If you have questions or concerns (e.g., embarrassment, heartbreak), don’t hesitate to talk to trusted adults who can provide support and answers.



## SHEET

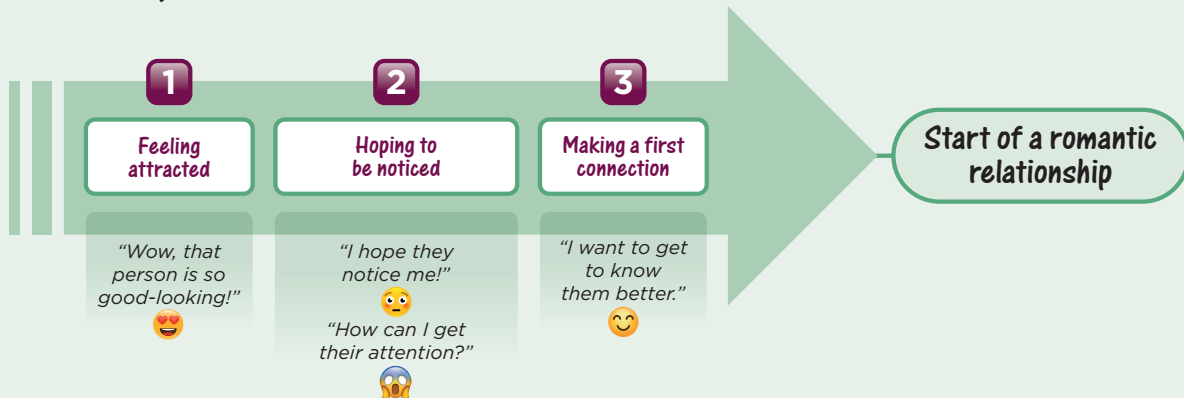
### 1.1a

FOR THE GROUP

## Start of a romantic relationship – Stage 1: Feeling attracted

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Here are the different stages leading up to the start of a romantic relationship (see arrow below).



- › **Your team received stage 1: Feeling attracted.**
- › **Answer the following question: "How do you think the boy feels?"** by imagining the emotions that he might experience at this stage.
  - › To help you, below is an excerpt from the video seen earlier that describes what's happening and the possible physical reactions that the boy experiences.
- › You have five minutes to answer the question.

**Excerpt from the video:** The boy notices the girl on the bus for the first time, and then again in school, at the library.

STAGE	HEART – EMOTIONS FELT "How does the boy feel?"	BODY – PHYSICAL REACTIONS "What's happening inside his body?"
<b>1</b> Feeling attracted	<b>Your answer</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<b>Possible reactions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Smiling</li> <li>› Increased heart rate</li> <li>› Goose bumps</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>



# SHEET

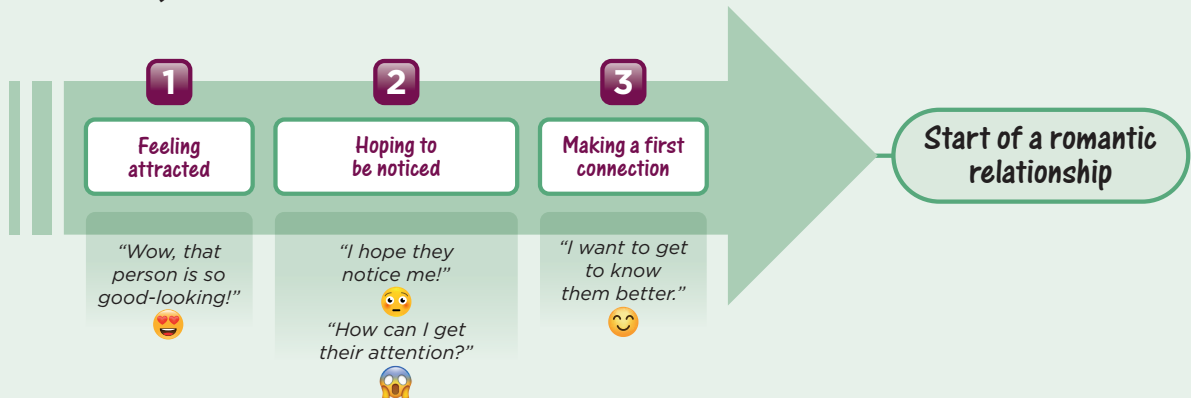
## 1.1b

FOR THE GROUP

### Start of a romantic relationship – Stage 2: Hoping to be noticed

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Here are the different stages leading up to the start of a romantic relationship (see arrow below).



- Your team received stage 2: Hoping to be noticed.
- Answer the following question: **"How do you think the boy feels?"** by imagining the emotions that he might experience at this stage.
  - To help you, below is an excerpt from the video seen earlier that describes what's happening and the possible physical reactions that the boy experiences.
- You have five minutes to answer the question.

**Excerpt from the video:** The boy tries to make eye contact, turns to face her so that she notices him, imagines walking toward her at the library, etc. Then, he tries to find her, but realizes that she's not in the usual places where he saw her before.

STAGE	HEART – EMOTIONS FELT "How does the boy feel?"	BODY – PHYSICAL REACTIONS "What's happening inside his body?"
<b>2</b> <b>Hoping to be noticed</b>	<b>Your answer</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<b>Possible reactions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blushing</li> <li>Avoiding or trying to make eye contact</li> <li>Moving forward to be noticed or trying to hide</li> <li>Stomach ache</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul>



# SHEET

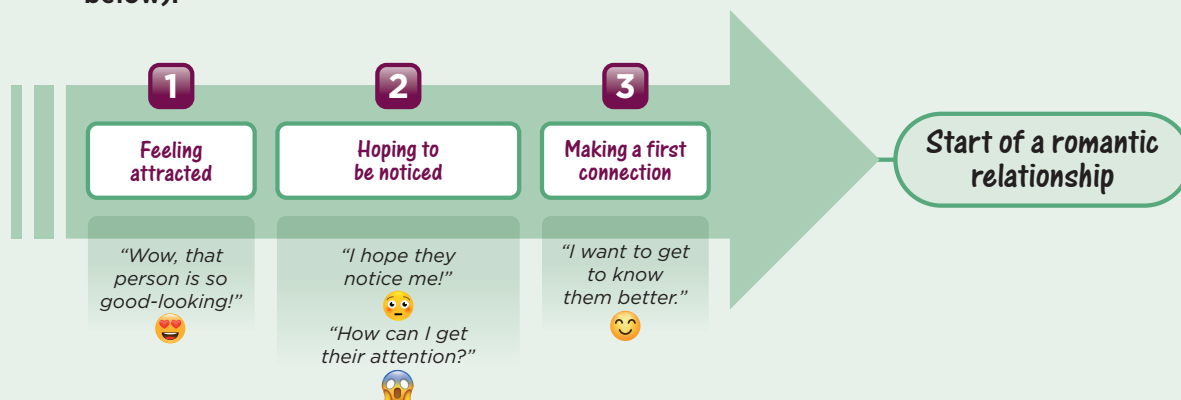
## 1.1c

FOR THE GROUP

### Start of a romantic relationship - Stage 3: Making a first connection

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Here are the different stages leading up to the start of a romantic relationship (see arrow below).



- › Your team received stage 3: Making a first connection.
- › Answer the following question: **"How do you think the boy feels?"** by imagining the emotions that he might experience at this stage.
  - › To help you, below is an excerpt from the video seen earlier that describes what's happening and the possible physical reactions that the boy experiences.
- › You have five minutes to answer the question.

**Excerpt from the video:** At the end of the video, we don't know whether the boy really approached the girl on the bench or whether he was daydreaming. Assuming that the boy took the first steps and spoke to the girl, what emotions might he experience when approaching her for the first time?

STAGE	HEART - EMOTIONS FELT "How does the boy feel?"	BODY - PHYSICAL REACTIONS "What's happening inside his body?"
<b>3</b> Making a first connection	Your answer _____ _____ _____	<b>Possible reactions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Attempt to get physically closer (in either a self-assured or nervous way)</li> <li>› Moist or clammy hands</li> <li>› Nervous laughter</li> <li>› Stammer</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>





# SHEET

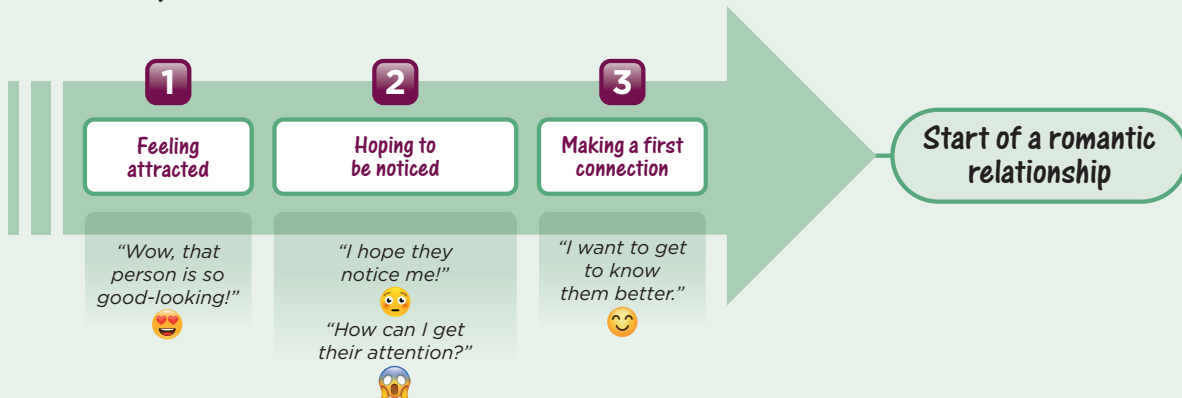
## 1.1d

FOR THE GROUP

### Start of a romantic relationship – Stage 4: Starting a romantic relationship

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Here are the different stages leading up to the start of a romantic relationship (see arrow below).



- Your team received stage 4: Starting a romantic relationship.
- Answer the following question: “How do you think the boy feels?” by imagining the emotions that he might experience at this stage.
  - To help you, below is an excerpt from the video seen earlier that describes what’s happening and the possible physical reactions that the boy experiences.
- You have five minutes to answer the question.

**Excerpt from the video:** Imagine that the first meeting went well and that the two adolescents see each other several times and end up “going out.”

STAGE	HEART – EMOTIONS FELT “How does the boy feel?”	BODY – PHYSICAL REACTIONS “What’s happening inside his body?”
<b>4</b> Starting a romantic relationship	Your answer _____ _____ _____	<b>Possible reactions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundless energy</li> <li>Smiling, laughter</li> <li>Trouble falling asleep</li> <li>Head in the clouds</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul>



## SHEET

### 1.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Start of a romantic relationship (Stages 1 to 4)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › When showing the video “GAELLE (short film)” ask the group to observe the boy’s reactions and to imagine the emotions that he might feel.
- › Then, discuss the different stages leading up to the start of a romantic relationship.
- › For the stage that was assigned to their team, ask them to answer the following question: **“How do you think the boy feels?”** by imagining the emotions that he might experience (heart). To help them, they can refer to the excerpt of the video seen earlier and to the possible physical reactions (body) specified on the sheet.
- › Be sure that they have clearly understood the instructions. You can also choose to do this activity as a group discussion.
- › Give them five minutes to answer the question before bringing everyone back into a group to go over each of the stages.

**First video excerpt:** The boy notices the girl on the bus for the first time, and then again in school, at the library.

STAGE	HEART - EMOTIONS FELT “How does the boy feel?”	BODY - PHYSICAL REACTIONS “What’s happening inside his body?”
<b>1</b> Feeling attracted	<b>Possible answers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Curiosity</li><li>› Happiness</li><li>› Embarrassment</li><li>› Nervousness, stress</li><li>› Etc.</li></ul>	<b>Possible Reactions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Smiling</li><li>› Increased heart rate</li><li>› Goose bumps</li><li>› Etc.</li></ul>

**Second video excerpt:** The boy tries to make eye contact, turns to face her so that she notices him, imagines walking toward her at the library, etc. Then, he tries to find her, but notices that she’s not in the same places where he saw her before.

STAGE	HEART – EMOTIONS FELT “How does the boy feel?”	BODY – PHYSICAL REACTIONS “What’s happening inside his body?”
<p><b>2</b></p> <p><i>Hoping to be noticed</i></p>	<p><b>Possible answers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Nervousness, stress</li> <li>› Excitement</li> <li>› Fear</li> <li>› Embarrassment</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible reactions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Blushing</li> <li>› Avoiding or trying to make eye contact</li> <li>› Moving forward to be noticed or trying to hide to avoid being seen</li> <li>› Stomach ache</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>

**Third video excerpt:** At the end of the video, we don’t know whether the boy really approached the girl on the bench or whether he was daydreaming. Imagining that the boy took the first steps and spoke to the girl, what emotions might he experience when approaching her for the first time?

STAGE	HEART – EMOTIONS FELT “How does the boy feel?”	BODY – PHYSICAL REACTIONS “What’s happening inside his body?”
<p><b>3</b></p> <p><i>Making a first connection</i></p>	<p><b>Possible answers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Embarrassment</li> <li>› Excitement</li> <li>› Impatience, enthusiasm</li> <li>› Confusion</li> <li>› Fear</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible reactions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Attempt to get physically closer (in either a self-assured or nervous way)</li> <li>› Moist or clammy hands</li> <li>› Nervous laughter</li> <li>› Stammer</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>

**Fourth video excerpt:** Imagine that the first meeting went well and that the two adolescents see each other several times and end up “going out.”

STAGE	HEART – EMOTIONS FELT “How does the boy feel?”	BODY – PHYSICAL REACTIONS “What’s happening inside his body?”
<p><b>4</b></p> <p><i>Starting a romantic relationship</i></p>	<p><b>Possible answers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Enthusiasm, excitement</li> <li>› Daydreaming</li> <li>› Embarrassment</li> <li>› Fear of not being good enough</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible reactions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Boundless energy</li> <li>› Smiling, laughter</li> <li>› Trouble falling asleep</li> <li>› Head in the clouds</li> <li>› Etc.</li> </ul>



## SHEET

### 1.3a

FOR THE GROUP

## Revealing your feelings: Juliette and Adam

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the description of the two characters and answer the questions.

#### Situation A



Adam has a big crush on Juliette.

He tries different ways to “capture” Juliette’s heart.



Juliette is flattered by Adam’s attention.

She doesn’t know if she’s interested in Adam, but she thinks he’s good-looking and nice. Juliette would like to have a boyfriend because most of her friends have one.

- › How can Adam know whether Juliette is interested in him?

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- › How do you think Adam could tell Juliette that he likes her?

- How could he approach Juliette?
- What should he say to her (what, how)?

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- › What would be a good way for Juliette to gently explain her hesitation to Adam?

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## SHEET

### 1.3b

FOR THE GROUP

## Revealing your feelings: Zara and Mathieu

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the description of the two characters and answer the questions.

#### Situation B



Zara has a huge crush on Mathieu, who is in her class. She likes Mathieu's personality and would love to go out with him.



Mathieu prefers hanging out with his friends. He's not ready to date yet and doesn't want a girlfriend. He's just not interested.

- › How can Zara know whether Mathieu is interested in her?

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- › How do you think Zara could tell Mathieu that she likes him?

- How should she approach Mathieu (where, when)?
- What should she say to him (what, how)?

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- › What would be a good way for Mathieu to kindly tell Zara that he doesn't want to go out with her?

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## Answer Sheet: Revealing your feelings

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Ask someone from each team to read the description of the characters and collect the teams' answers to the different questions for Situations A and B.
- › Add to each team's answers using the information below.

#### Description of Situations A and B



Adam has a big crush on Juliette. He tries different ways to "capture" Juliette's heart.

Juliette is flattered by Adam's attention. She doesn't know if she's interested in Adam, but she thinks he's good-looking and nice. Juliette would like to have a boyfriend because most of her friends have one.



Zara has a huge crush on Mathieu, who is in her class. She likes Mathieu's personality and would love to go out with him.

Mathieu prefers hanging out with his friends. He's not ready to date yet and doesn't want a girlfriend. He's just not interested at all.

### › Ways of knowing whether the interest is shared

- You can sometimes rely on non-verbal language (e.g., smile, look, nervousness).
- But since everyone reacts differently, it's hard to be sure that the interest is really reciprocal just by observing the person's non-verbal language.
- The best way to know whether the interest is shared is to ask the person directly and tell the person how you feel.
- But sometimes it's preferable to wait a bit before asking so that the other person can get to know you better.
- You might hesitate for all kinds of reasons (e.g., fear of rejection or fear of losing the person's friendship).
- But you'll have to talk about it at some point. And it's better to learn a disappointing truth than to always be wondering about it.

### › Ways of revealing your feelings

- For Adam and Zara, it's best to go slowly. You have to take your time getting to know the other person, which might help avoid negative outcomes.
  - You can show your interest by asking questions to start a conversation (e.g., "I saw you play the saxophone. Have you been playing long?"; "I noticed you're on the improv team. How do you like it? I was thinking of joining."; "You're amazing at basketball; you manage to sink a basket with almost every shot. That takes a lot of concentration, doesn't it?"; "What are you reading right now?").
  - You can compliment the other person. That's another way of showing your interest (e.g., "You've really got your own style. I like that."; "You're so funny. You make me laugh every time."; "You're pretty quiet, but when you say something, it's always interesting."; "You have a really great smile."; "You're really patient and you always listen to other people."; "You have beautiful eyes.").
- If Adam puts too much pressure on Juliette or if Zara is too insistent with Mathieu, it can have the opposite effect: Juliette and Mathieu might get annoyed.
  - It's important to listen to the signals that the other person is sending: "Do I feel that this person is interested in me?" or "Does it seem like this person is avoiding me?"
- It's understandable for Adam to really want to know whether Juliette is interested in him. Same thing for Zara with Mathieu.
- **In private**, Adam and Zara can tell the person they like:
  - **How they feel about them** E.g., "It's fun to be with you; it's easy."; "I feel like we have a lot of the same interests; we're a lot alike."; "I always find your point of view interesting."
  - **They can suggest an activity.** The advantage of doing an activity together is that you aren't face to face, like at the cafeteria, which can be more awkward.

#### Note that "private" here means:

- "Not in the cafeteria"
- "Not on the bus"
- "Not in a place with too many distractions or too many people"
- It is important to choose a quiet place and a time when the other person is able to listen (Ça Sexprime, 2011).

- You can:
  - Do an extracurricular or outdoor activity (e.g., bike ride, snowshoe outing, game of mini-golf) or go to a movie, so you can talk on your way to the theatre and after the movie.
  - Share playlists of your favourite songs, including one that talks about love. And, if you're feeling brave enough, you can decide to tell the person that you chose that song because it really describes how you feel about them.
  - Give the person a card in which you explain how you feel. In this case, you would need to stay to see the person's spontaneous reaction to the card, the poem, etc. You can also do a slam, send a text or create a friendly animation and show it to the person on the computer.
  - Go shopping and make it a friendly and fun outing. While laughing with the person, you could say: "You know, I really like you."
- Overall, you could use your imagination and creative side to share your feelings. Everyone's unique: there isn't just one way to do things.
- Very important: don't be afraid of being made fun of. You may blush, get hot, stammer, etc. This isn't a big deal. It's part of "being yourself". What do you think?
- Adam could then ask Juliette if she shares his feelings. Zara could ask Mathieu the same thing. If the feelings are reciprocated, the person can then ask if they want to "go out."

› **Ways for Juliette to kindly explain her hesitation to Adam and for Mathieu to kindly tell Zara that he doesn't want to go out with her.**

- In both of these cases, one person had feelings and the other didn't. This often happens in real life. However, two people can also fall in love at almost the same time and experience a 'WOW!' moment.
- Here are the possible outcomes:
  - In one case, a friendship emerges, which could lead to a romantic relationship.
  - And in the other case, it is very clear that the two people won't be friends or boyfriend/girlfriend.

## Juliette

- › Juliette can tell Adam that she is flattered by his attention and that she thinks he's nice. But right now, she doesn't want things to go too fast.
- › Although she likes their relationship, she doesn't seem to have the same feelings that he does for the moment. She doesn't want to go out with him for the wrong reasons (e.g., out of pressure or just to be like her friends).
- › What if they took more time to get to know each other and see how their relationship develops? If this is indeed how she feels, she can tell him that she is interested in him but doesn't want too much pressure.
- › And if Juliette's friends pressure her to go out with him (e.g., "He's so cute," "He's so nice," "You're so lucky," "If you say no, he'll just ask someone else out"), it will be important for Juliette to decide what SHE really wants and not do things simply to please her friends.



## Mathieu

- ▶ Mathieu can tell Zara how flattered he is that she is interested in him. But at the moment, he doesn't want a girlfriend. It's best to be clear but to say it nicely.
- ▶ He's sorry, but this has nothing to do with her. He doesn't want to pretend to have romantic feelings that he doesn't have or be pressured to date someone: not her or anyone else.
- ▶ When you aren't interested, it's important to just say so. Also, there's no need to be mean and say things like, "Oh my god! I wouldn't date you if you were the last person on Earth" or mock the person on social media for admitting their feelings. You can be polite and respectful. Put yourself in the shoes of the person who opened up.
- ▶ It could be that Mathieu's friends pressure him to tell Zara on social media that he's not interested in "going out" with her (e.g., "Message her on Instagram® that you don't want to have anything to do with her" or "On Facebook®, just change your status to 'single'. She'll figure it out and everyone will find out at the same time."). It will be important for Mathieu to decide what HE really wants and not do things simply to please his friends. In fact, that way of doing things wouldn't be respectful or discreet.
- ▶ Mathieu has already made a decision about what HE really wants, and that's good. Now, it's best to explain to Zara (face to face) why he doesn't feel the same way. This approach is much more respectful to the other person. He decided to meet Zara to tell her.

## Zara

- ▶ Zara has the right to be disappointed or sad that Mathieu doesn't feel the way she hoped he would.
- ▶ But just because she likes Mathieu doesn't mean he will like her back. That's part of life.
- ▶ And even though being rejected isn't easy, you have to accept the other person's answer. Rejection is not a personal attack.
- ▶ Her disappointment and sadness shouldn't turn into harassment or feelings of revenge.
- ▶ Zara can also be kind by not starting rumours about Mathieu (e.g., "He doesn't want to go out with me because he's such a baby or he's probably gay"). That would be immature and unkind.



## SHEET

### 1.5

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Dr. Love advice column - questions

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Tell the group to imagine that they're working for a youth blog and received questions posted to a love advice column from adolescents in Secondary 2.
- › Divide the group into teams of three and ask them to answer to the questions as blog reporters.
- › Cut out the different situations below and hand one out to each of the teams.
- › Go over each team's answers as a group.

**#1** Dear Dr. Love,

I've been going out with my boyfriend for almost two months, but when something happens to me, I'm more comfortable confiding in my best friend. Is that normal?

**#2** Dear Dr. Love,

My girlfriend really wants to meet my whole family and all my friends. She says it's what everybody does and that if I don't want to, it's because I'm embarrassed to be with her. I'm afraid she'll take it the wrong way if I say "no." What should I do?

**#3** Dear Dr. Love,

The school year's almost over and I'm interested in someone in my class. Should I tell her? I thought about telling her on the last day of school, before she gets on the bus. That way, if she doesn't like me, I won't feel so bad. Is that a good idea?

**#4** Dear Dr. Love,

I just started going out with a girl that I find really nice and pretty. Do I have to hold her hand at school? It embarrasses me and my hands get all clammy. It makes me uncomfortable. Thanks.

**#5** Dear Dr. Love,

On weekends, I like being with my friends and doing activities with them like shopping, going to the pool and going over to their houses to listen to music. When my boyfriend suggests we see each other on the weekend, he always wants to play basketball or go to the skate park. I find those activities really boring, and I don't always feel like it. Do I really like him if we're not interested in the same things?

**#6** Dear Dr. Love,

I had a huge crush on a guy in my math class. I messaged him on Instagram to say that I found him really cute. We text and FaceTime for hours every day, and he sends me photos, GIFs and really funny memes. My friends asked if we were going out because we don't really talk at school. I'm not sure, but he sends me hearts and kisses in his messages when we say good night. Should I ask him if we're going out?

**#7** Dear Dr. Love,

I'd like to see my girlfriend all the time, but I think she finds me a bit clingy. When I ask her about it, she says I'm not, but sometimes she pulls away and stops holding my hand. "Normal couples" around me and in movies are always snuggling and seem to be happy. Should I talk to her about it?



## Answer Sheet: Dr. Love advice column

### #1 Dear Dr. Love,

I've been going out with my boyfriend for almost two months, but when something happens to me, I'm more comfortable confiding in my best friend. Is that normal?

Aspects of the question to remember	Advice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recent romantic relationship (two months)</li><li>Confides more in her best friend</li><li>Wonders whether it's "normal"</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Since they've been going out for only two months, it's normal that she confides more in her best friend. Just because you have a boyfriend or girlfriend doesn't mean you suddenly stop confiding in your best friend.</li><li>However, it all depends on what she's saying. If it's about her romantic relationship, she can ask her best friend for advice, but shouldn't she also talk to her boyfriend if it concerns him?</li></ul>

### #2 Dear Dr. Love,

My girlfriend really wants to meet my whole family and all my friends. She says it's what everybody does and that if I don't want to, it's because I'm embarrassed to be with her. I'm afraid she'll take it the wrong way if I say "no." What should I do?

Aspects of the question to remember	Advice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Current romantic relationship</li><li>Wants to be "like everybody else"</li><li>Pressure from his girlfriend to meet his family and friends</li><li>Afraid to disappoint her</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It's not always easy to announce to family and friends that you're in love because you can get mixed reactions. Do you hesitate out of concern that your family or friends will tease or make fun of you, or out of fear that your parents will disapprove and worry? Family and friends can also be happy for you.</li><li>If it's a new romantic relationship, it's normal to want to take your time before making it "official" and including the person in all aspects of your life (e.g., family, friends). You shouldn't rush things just to please or avoid displeasing the other person.</li><li>If it's a "hidden" relationship, you have to ask yourself why you can't talk about it, even after a while.</li><li>They could discuss why she finds it important to meet his family and friends, and why he is hesitant. Couldn't he start by introducing her to some of his friends?</li></ul>

### #3 Dear Dr. Love,

The school year's almost over and I'm interested in someone in my class. Should I tell her? I thought about telling her on the last day of school, before she gets on the bus. That way, if she doesn't like me, I won't feel so bad. Is that a good idea?

Aspects of the question to remember	Advice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Desire to reveal his feelings</li><li>▶ Fear of rejection</li><li>▶ Trying to find the right time to do it</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ It depends on whether there was an initial approach (making a first connection). If not, revealing your feelings that quickly, before the person gets on the bus, may seem a bit "intense."</li><li>▶ Instead, ask the person to stay in touch, and make plans to see each other and do an activity over the summer.</li></ul>

### #4 Dear Dr. Love,

I just started going out with a girl that I find really nice and pretty. Do I have to hold her hand at school? It embarrasses me and my hands get all clammy. It makes me uncomfortable. Thanks.

Aspects of the question to remember	Advice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Emotions of a new romantic relationship (enthusiasm, nervousness that results in clammy hands)</li><li>▶ Wonders whether he has to hold hands</li><li>▶ Fear of disappointing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ What is it that he finds embarrassing? Is it holding hands in public or that he sometimes has clammy hands?</li><li>▶ If it's about boundaries: it's important to know that boundaries differ from one person to another. Some people prefer not to hold hands or kiss in public, and that's OK. You never have to do things that you're uncomfortable with, even in a romantic relationship.</li><li>▶ Not wanting to hold his girlfriend's hand doesn't mean that his feelings are any less "present" or "strong."</li><li>▶ In addition, since they're at the very beginning of their relationship, it's normal to be a bit embarrassed, and he can talk to her about it.</li><li>▶ If it's about clammy hands: having clammy hands shows that he's nervous. He can talk to her about it to reduce his stress. He can also put his hand around her waist, when possible, or link arms, if he wants to.</li></ul>

### #5 Dear Dr. Love,

On weekends, I like being with my friends and doing activities with them like shopping, going to the pool and going over to their houses to listen to music. When my boyfriend suggests we see each other on the weekend, he always wants to play basketball or go to the skate park. I find those activities really boring and I don't always feel like it. Do I really like him if we're not interested in the same things?

Aspects of the question to remember	Advice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Not sharing the same interests</li><li>▶ Questioning her romantic feelings because of different interests</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Even if they like each other, it's normal not to like all the same things. Also, just because you have a boyfriend or girlfriend doesn't mean you have to do everything together or see each other every weekend.</li><li>▶ That said, when you "go out" with someone, it's usually because you have things in common. That can be sharing the same values, or having the same sense of humour, hobbies or interests (e.g., music, school subjects).</li><li>▶ When you have nothing in common with the other person, you might want to ask yourself why you want to "go out" with them. Is it just for their looks? To be like everyone else? Or is it because you enjoy being with someone who is completely different from you?</li></ul>

### #6 Dear Dr. Love,

I had a huge crush on a guy in my math class. I messaged him on Instagram to say that I found him really cute. We text and FaceTime for hours every day, and he sends me photos, GIFs and really funny memes. My friends asked if we were going out because we don't really talk at school. I'm not sure, but he sends me hearts and kisses in his messages when we say good night. Should I ask him if we're going out?

\*Meme: A digital image accompanied by humorous or ironic text that is copied (Douani, 2021) [free translation].

Aspects of the question to remember	Advice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Romantic feelings right from the start</li><li>▶ Wonders whether they are going out</li><li>▶ Discreet or secret romantic relationship?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Having initial contact in writing (Instagram) is a good way to tell someone that you noticed them, but it's a good idea to see each other in person to get to know one another.</li><li>▶ Also, just because you get along well and your friends are asking questions doesn't mean you have to start "going out" right away. The important thing is knowing how YOU feel about the person.</li><li>▶ The start of a relationship can be uplifting, when you talk to the person for long periods at a time, and you laugh and have a good time together.</li><li>▶ If one of the two falls in love, it's OK at some point to ask about the other person's feelings.</li><li>▶ What explains the difference in attitude when they're alone or with friends? Is it embarrassment, or is it that one of the two doesn't want to let on that they're "going out" or is simply not in love?</li></ul>

**#7 Dear Dr. Love,**

I'd like to see my girlfriend all the time, but I think she finds me a bit clingy. When I ask her about it, she says I'm not, but sometimes she pulls away and stops holding my hand. "Normal couples" around me and in movies are always snuggling and seem to be happy. Should I talk to her about it?

<b>Aspects of the question to remember</b>	<b>Advice</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Enthusiasm at the start of a romantic relationship</li><li>▶ Demonstrations of affection differ from one person to another</li><li>▶ Wanting to be like everyone else</li><li>▶ Fear of being different</li><li>▶ Fear of rejection</li><li>▶ Discovering what you like</li><li>▶ Respecting the other person's boundaries and privacy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ It's normal to be enthusiastic when you're in love, and to want to see the other person every day and want to get closer. But it's important to respect the person's boundaries in public. Some people can find these types of gestures embarrassing. It's best to discuss how she perceives these types of public gestures.</li><li>▶ Couples that you see in the media or among your family and friends can sometimes affect how you think you should act in a romantic relationship. There are great examples all around you.</li><li>▶ However, since everyone's unique, every couple is also unique. It's important to take into account what each person wants in a relationship.</li><li>▶ Let's celebrate our differences!</li></ul>

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## Secondary 2 – Session 2 (Part A)

### Preventing the Risks of Sexual Solicitations on Social Media “Online Safety Checkup”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

	Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence</b>	<p><b>Understand your own position on the notion of consent and its application in order to recognize a situation of sexual assault:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Age difference, real or perceived sexual pressure, in the virtual world.</li> </ul>	
	Possible links to the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2021)	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Methodological competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information and communications technologies</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2021)

<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>
<b>Subject-specific competencies</b>	<p><b>Reflects on ethical questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Analyzes a situation from an ethical point of view</li> <li>› Examines a variety of cultural, moral, religious, scientific or social references</li> <li>› Evaluates options or possible actions</li> </ul> <p><b>Engages in dialogue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Organizes his/her thinking</li> <li>› Interacts with others</li> <li>› Develops a substantiated point of view</li> </ul>

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)  
Theme: Autonomy and Interdependence

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand the notion of consent in order to recognize a situation of sexual violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Consent in virtual contexts</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the importance of empowerment to prevent and report a situation of sexual assault and to support the victim</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Self-protection skills in different situations</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Sexual violence may be studied, but it should not be the subject of normative ethical reflection, especially since the values and responses to be fostered have been determined and cannot be the subject of a critical examination.</i></b></p> <p><b>Reflect on the ambivalence created by some contradictory norms, such as differentiated norms for sexual behaviour in adolescence</b></p>



## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Get young people to think about the personal information that they post on social media and how this information can lead to risks of sexual solicitations.**

- 1. Identify** the advantages and disadvantages of being on social media.
- 2. Distinguish** between “sexual solicitation” and “sexual exploitation.”
- 3. Learn about** the kinds of personal information shared on different social media networks that may expose the account owners to risks of sexual solicitations.
- 4. Discuss** why personal information shared with others on social media and instant messaging may put them at risk of sexual harassment, solicitations or exploitation.
- 5.** After watching a video on digital footprints, **identify** what the students could change (if necessary) on their own accounts to protect themselves from the risks of sexual solicitations.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **three activities**.

15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Survey:</b> Use of social media</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
35 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Social media checkup</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.1: Checkup Report</i></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.2a: Instagram - lamJuliette</i></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.2b: Instagram - Thom.Rob</i></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.2c: Facebook - Étienne C.</i></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.2d: Twitter - Sabrina L.</i></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.2e: Snapchat - Léa D.</i></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.3: Answer Sheet: Checkup Report</i></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> "Teen voices: oversharing and your digital footprint"</li> <li>› <b>Individual activity</b></li> <li><i>Sheet 2.4: Your Digital Footprint</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion</b></li> </ul>
5 min.	<b>SESSION CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this PowerPoint can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations or situations involving violence. It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the police or Youth Protection Directorate must be contacted.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



15 MIN.



SURVEY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

## Session Introduction

- › **Begin** by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Then, **tell** the group that you are going to talk about the use of social media.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Tell the group that the goal of this session is not to debate if they should be on social media but rather to discuss the importance of developing protective instincts. The concept of safety is paramount, whether they use social media or not.



## Survey

- › **Ask** them the following questions:
    - How many of you have an active account on ONE social network (*Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok*)?
    - How many of you have an active account on MORE THAN ONE social network?
    - If you have an active account on one or more social networks, what do your parents think of your use of these platforms?
      - Are they okay with it?
      - Are they worried about you being on these social networks? If yes, which ones?
      - Do they supervise your use of these platforms?
- Get their responses.*

# Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Social networks play an important role in the lives of young people and adults alike.
- › In 2019, 3.8 billion people on the planet were on social networks (Espaze, 2020). To give you an idea of this scale of use, in 2019, there were 7.7 billion people on the planet (United Nations, n.d.). Does 3.8 out of 7.7 billion perhaps not sound like much to you?
- › Remember that those 7.7 billion people include babies, children who are too young to use social media, and all the people in the world who don't have access to technology devices or the Internet.
- › The most popular applications for people of all ages are *Instagram*, *Facebook*, *Snapchat*, *Twitter* and *TikTok* (The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 2017; Von Abrams, 2019).
- › The worldwide number of users of different social networks is huge! In 2021, 2.79 billion people used *Facebook* and 1.28 billion used *Instagram* (Statista, 2021). *TikTok* reached 732 million users, while *Snapchat* had 528 million users and *Twitter*, 396 million for the same year. (Statista, 2021).
- › Most parents are well aware that technology is everywhere. However, some parents complain that these tools (and especially social media) are accessible to children at a young age and that the information posted or shared on these networks can put their children or teens at risk of different types of abuse, such as:
  - buying things without their parents' permission.
  - playing violent video games.
  - finding readily available pornography.
  - becoming at risk of sexual solicitations, etc.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

These statistics on the number of social media users may regularly change on the various sites that periodically update these counts.



## Discussion and Presentation

› **Start** a discussion using the questions below:

- **What are the benefits of using social media?**
- **What could the downsides be?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

› **The benefits might include:**

- Easily keeping in touch with friends.
- Easily organizing and planning get-togethers and activities with friends (Steeves, McAleese and Brisson-Boivin, 2020).
- Getting a better idea of what you need to do to be popular (Steeves and al., 2020; Subrahmanyam and Šmahel 2011, as cited in De Lenne and al., 2020), i.e. by looking at what your friends or celebrities post on social media and what kind of comments they get.
- Testing what you can reveal about yourself (photos, opinions, secrets) by analyzing others' reactions (Subrahmanyam and Šmahel, 2011, cited in De Lenne and al., 2020).
- Feeling accepted by your peers if you get a lot of "Likes."
- Flirting with someone online if you are too embarrassed or uncomfortable doing it face to face (MediaSmarts, n.d.a).
- Finding out about the person you are interested in by looking at their page, posts and photos.

› **The disadvantages could be:**

- Feeling rejected if you don't have a lot of "Likes" (Time, Riva and Paladina, 2020).
- Thinking that you aren't good-looking if you compare yourself with the photos of other people on social media. The risk is thinking that your body should look like the bodies you see on social media and doing things that may be harmful to your health (starting a strict diet and/or intensive exercise to build muscle) (Rodgers and al., 2020).
- Spending too much time on social media. Some specialists call this addiction, while others use the term "excessive use." Excessive use of the Internet (including social media) means use that interferes with your daily activities (school, sleep) and relationships (family, friends or romantic partners) (MediaSmarts, n.d.b).
- Exposure to inappropriate content and language and sexual images and content (Perron, 2019).
- Contact with people with bad intentions, i.e. people who want to take advantage of young people (steal their money, blackmail them after exchanging photos, ask them for sexual favours).



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Studies do not seem to agree on the disadvantages associated with the use of social media and the impacts on teens' mental health. Some studies (Blachnio and al., 2016) conclude that social media use has a negative effect on mental health (depression, low self-esteem, disrupted sleep), while others conclude that the effects are positive (feeling less alone, positive mood, increased self-esteem) (Valenzuela and al., 2009 cited in De Lenne, Vandenbosch, Eggermont, Karsay and Trekels, 2020). Simply linking social media use with mental health does not seem sufficient to properly assess the impacts (De Lenne and al., 2020). Like many other aspects of young people's lives, the amount of time they spend on social media and the quality of the pages they visit most likely set the stage for the impacts they experience.



# 2

## Activity 2



SHEETS 2.1, 2.2A TO 2.2E AND 2.3  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



35 MIN.



TEAM ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

- › **Tell** the group that the next activity will address the risks associated with sexual solicitations on social networks.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group the following questions:
  - **What does “sexual solicitation on social media” refer to? What does this mean?**  
*Get their answers.*
  - **What do you think the difference is between “online sexual solicitation” and “online sexual exploitation”?**  
*Get their answers.*
- › **Share** the following content to distinguish between online sexual solicitation and exploitation:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Online sexual solicitation:**
  - Means receiving sexual messages (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig and Ólafsson, 2011) or nude images or videos (Lenhart, 2009) online.
  - Refers to when someone goes online to incite a young person to talk about sex, give private information of a sexual nature, or engage in sexual behaviour online, such as taking off their clothes in front of a camera or sending, exchanging or receiving pictures of a sexual nature, etc. (Jones, Mitchell and Finkelhor, 2012; Mitchell and al. 2007).
  - “Aggressive sexual solicitations” are when individuals solicit kids or teens for more direct encounters, such as convincing them to talk on the phone or meet in person to have sexual contact (Jones and al., 2012).

› **Online sexual exploitation:**

- Online sexual exploitation can occur through sexting: youth-generated explicit images or videos on the Internet, which are often further distributed without consent (Public Safety Canada, 2022).
- This type of exploitation can also include “sextortion,” in which youth or adult offenders use manipulation, pressure, or threats to extort naked images or videos of minors (Public Safety Canada, 2022).
- In Canada, it is illegal to contact a young person online to try to sexually exploit them (Éducaloi, 2022; MediaSmarts, n.d.c.; Public Safety Canada, 2022).
- To determine whether a relationship is sexually exploitative, the Department of Justice of Canada recommends taking the following factors into account (Department of Justice, 2017):
  - The age of the person communicating with the young person.
  - The age difference between the young person and their partner.
  - How the relationship developed (quickly, secretly or online).
  - Whether the partner may have controlled or influenced the young person.
- To protect minors (children under 18 years of age), different police forces have teams of investigators dedicated to preventing sexual exploitation online (on the Internet).

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of four. **Tell** them that they will have to put on their police investigator’s hat.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 2.1: *Checkup Report* to each team.
- › **Give** the following instructions:

*“You work for your local police department. Your team has been assigned to check the Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram or Twitter accounts of a number of teens.*

*You will be given 15 minutes to complete your “Checkup Report” and note down any **INFORMATION** that may expose the account owner to risks of sexual solicitations and explain the **REASONS** you believe the teen may be at risk.*

- › To help them, **tell** them that the “Checkup Report” includes a definition of sexual solicitation and information on what is meant by “a person with bad intentions.”
- › Then **give** each team one sheet from Sheets 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2c, 2.2d or 2.2e representing an *Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or Snapchat* account. They will use this sheet to analyze the social media account or the accompanying conversation.
- › **Review** the activity with the entire group by asking each team to present the **INFORMATION** found on the *Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or Snapchat* accounts using their “Checkup Report” (Sheet 2.1: *Checkup Report*).

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the following question:

- **Why do you think these different types of INFORMATION (photos of themselves and their friends, personal interests, moods, places they go, etc.) can put the people who post them at risk of sexual solicitations?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Add** to the group's answers with the content presented in Sheet 2.3: *Answer Sheet: Checkup Report* and the session slideshow.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADERS

No type of posted images gives someone permission to sexually solicit, insult, or humiliate someone else. However, the message to convey here is that some images can be interpreted as an invitation for sexual solicitations; this means that people need to be careful when publicly posting these types of images/photos.

It is also important for youths (and adults) to understand that if a sexual assault unfortunately occurs, the perpetrator is the one entirely at fault, even if the boy or girl posted nude photos of themselves or responded to the person's propositions.





## Activity 3



**SHEET 2.4**

**VIDEO**

**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**20 MIN.**



**VIDEO**



**PERSONAL  
REFLECTION**



**DISCUSSION**

### Video

- ▶ **Introduce** the following video to the group. This video explains the concept of digital footprints and encourages young people to really think about the information and comments that they post on social media.

**Teen voices: oversharing and your digital footprint (Common Sense Education, 2019)**

**Length:** 3 min., 34 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ottnH427Fr8>**



Video



## Discussion

› **Ask** the group the following question:

- **What do you think about this video?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Personal Reflection

- › **Tell** the group that the next activity will be a personal reflection about their digital footprints that they will do on their own. A digital footprint is “all of the information online about a person, either posted by that person or others, intentionally or unintentionally” (Common Sense Education, 2020) or the “version of yourself that you put on the Web” (Leblanc 2018). If anyone in the group does not have a social media account, they can think about what information that they would feel comfortable (or uncomfortable) posting on social networks.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 2.4: *Your Digital Footprint* to the group and give them ten minutes to fill it out.

## Discussion

› After the ten minutes is up, **have** a discussion based on the following questions:

- **After analyzing YOUR OWN social media accounts, is there any information that may put you at risk of sexual solicitations?**
- **What did you learn from the three “golden rules”?**
- **Are there aspects about how YOU use the three golden rules that you would like to improve? If yes, which ones?**

*Get their opinions.*



## Session Conclusion



5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

### Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **End** the session with the proposed **KEY MESSAGES**:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › When we create an account on *Facebook, Instagram, TikTok* or other platform, we must automatically choose the personal information we want to reveal (name, age, education, names of family members, relationship status).
- › It may seem harmless at first to share this information, but the activities we just did show how this information can be interpreted and used by others, including those with bad intentions.
- › As we saw earlier, someone with “bad intentions” (an unknown person, someone from your school or on your social networks) may try to:
  - Identify information that they can use to engage their target victim in a conversation.
  - Find different strategies to have a private conversation or to locate the person.
  - Do everything possible to gain the person’s trust.
  - Get intimate photos or videos using arguments to “trap” the other person into doing so before they realize what’s happening.
- › Social networks provide many benefits in the lives of young people and adults, but we must also be aware of the risks of online sexual solicitations.
- › To have positive experiences on social media, it’s important that you carefully choose the information that you reveal about yourself.
- › If you are having problems or if you have particular concerns about social networks, don’t hesitate to talk to a trusted adult.



## SHEET

### 2.1

FOR THE GROUP

## Checkup Report

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › You work for your local police department. Your team has been assigned to perform checks of the *Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram or Twitter* accounts of certain teens.
- › You will have to:
  1. Note down the **INFORMATIONS** you find on the *Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram or Twitter* accounts of these teens that may put them at risk of sexual solicitations.
  2. Explain the **REASONS** why you believe this information may put them at risk.
- › Indicate your answers in the “Checkup Report” on the next page.
- › To help you in your thinking, remember that:

Someone with bad intentions will try to:	Sexual solicitation means, for example, encouraging a minor to:
› Identify information that they could use to engage in a conversation with their target victim.	› Receive sexual messages online (Livingstone and al., 2011).
› Find different strategies to have a private conversation or locate the person.	› Receive nude images or videos (Lenhart, 2009).
› Do everything possible to gain the person’s trust.	› Talk about sex; give out personal sexual information or engage in sexual behaviour online (Jones and al., 2012; Mitchell and al., 2007).
› Get intimate photos or videos using arguments to “trap” the other person into the behaviour before they realize what’s happening.	› Meet in person to have sexual contact (Jones and al., 2012).





# CHECKUP REPORT

Date : A\_\_\_\_/M\_/J\_\_

Time :

Report #

Investigators assigned to the case : \_\_\_\_\_

Social network used : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of account owner : \_\_\_\_\_

<b>INFORMATION that may put the account owner at risk of sexual solicitations</b>	<b>REASONS why this information may expose them to risks of sexual solicitations</b>
<p><i>Personally identifiable information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Personal information that could identify their location</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Moods that would help someone engage them in conversation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Choice of photos</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Other important information to consider</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	



# SHEET

## 2.2a

FOR THE GROUP

Instagram - iamjuliette 

**Instructions**  
Identify any **INFORMATION**  
that may expose Juliette to risks  
of sexual solicitations.


iamjuliette


23 Posts    548 Followers    309 Following

13 🏈 / Laval 🇨🇦  
 Mine : @samthelover 🗝️❤️  
 BF : @cathpichette 😘




Following ▾    Message    ▾



🏠    🔍    ⊕    ❤️    👤



 **iamjuliette** ...







July 6






Liked by **cathpichette** and **others**  
**iamjuliette**  

 **jake.shark** How old are you? Ur so beautiful.  
Reply 

 **will\_the\_chief** Ur the most beautiful girl I've ever seen 😊👩🏻🌈  
Reply 

 **cathpichette** OMG 🔥 Ur so hot 😍  
1 Like Reply 

Add a comment...



## SHEET

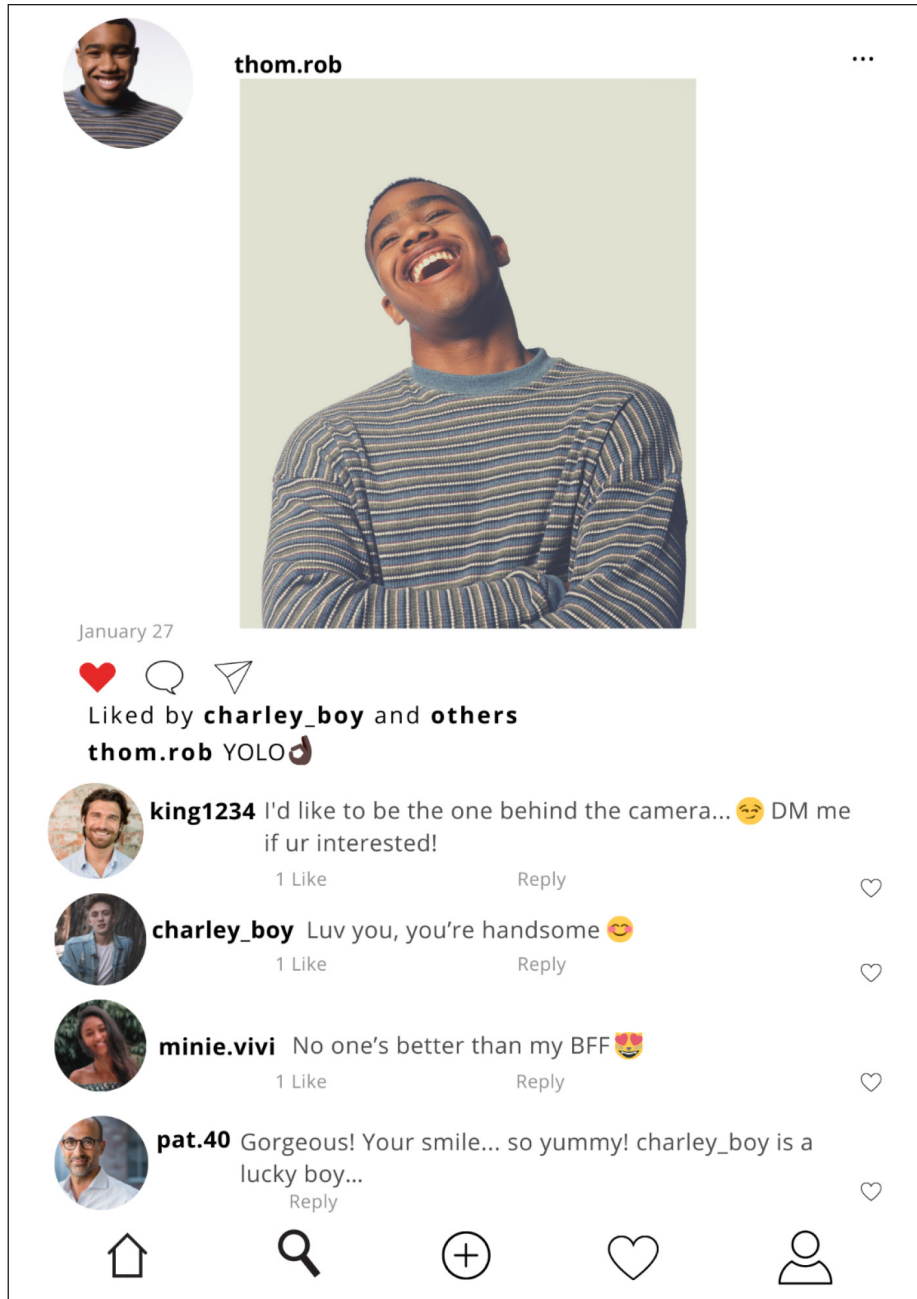
### 2.2b

FOR THE GROUP

Instagram - Thom.rob 

**Instructions**  
Identify any **INFORMATION**  
that may expose Thom to risks  
of sexual solicitations.

The screenshot shows the Instagram profile for 'thom.rob'. At the top left is a back arrow. The profile name 'thom.rob' is at the top right. Below the name is a circular profile picture of a smiling young man with short dark hair, wearing a blue and white striped sweater. To the right of the profile picture are statistics: '78 Posts', '837 Followers', and '482 Following'. Below the statistics is the bio: '14 | Quebec 🇩🇪', 'Artist at heart 🎹 📷', and 'LGBTQ+ 🏳️‍🌈 | @charley\_boy 🧡'. At the bottom of the bio section are three buttons: 'Following' with a dropdown arrow, 'Message', and a three-dot menu icon. Below the bio is a horizontal bar with a grid icon and a person icon. At the bottom of the profile are three image thumbnails: a person playing a keyboard, a hand holding a Canon camera lens, and a person holding a rainbow flag. At the very bottom of the screen is the Instagram navigation bar with icons for home, search, post, activity, and profile.





## SHEET

### 2.2c

FOR THE GROUP

Facebook® - Étienne C. 

**Instructions**  
Identify any **INFORMATION**  
that may expose Étienne to risks  
of sexual solicitations.



## Étienne C.

13 years old 🍷

Next competition 🏆 :

June 15 - 1pm @Parc Jean-Drapeau/MTL

Be there! 😊 / Soyez présents! 😊

 **Message**  

 Works at **Candiac Minor Baseball Association**

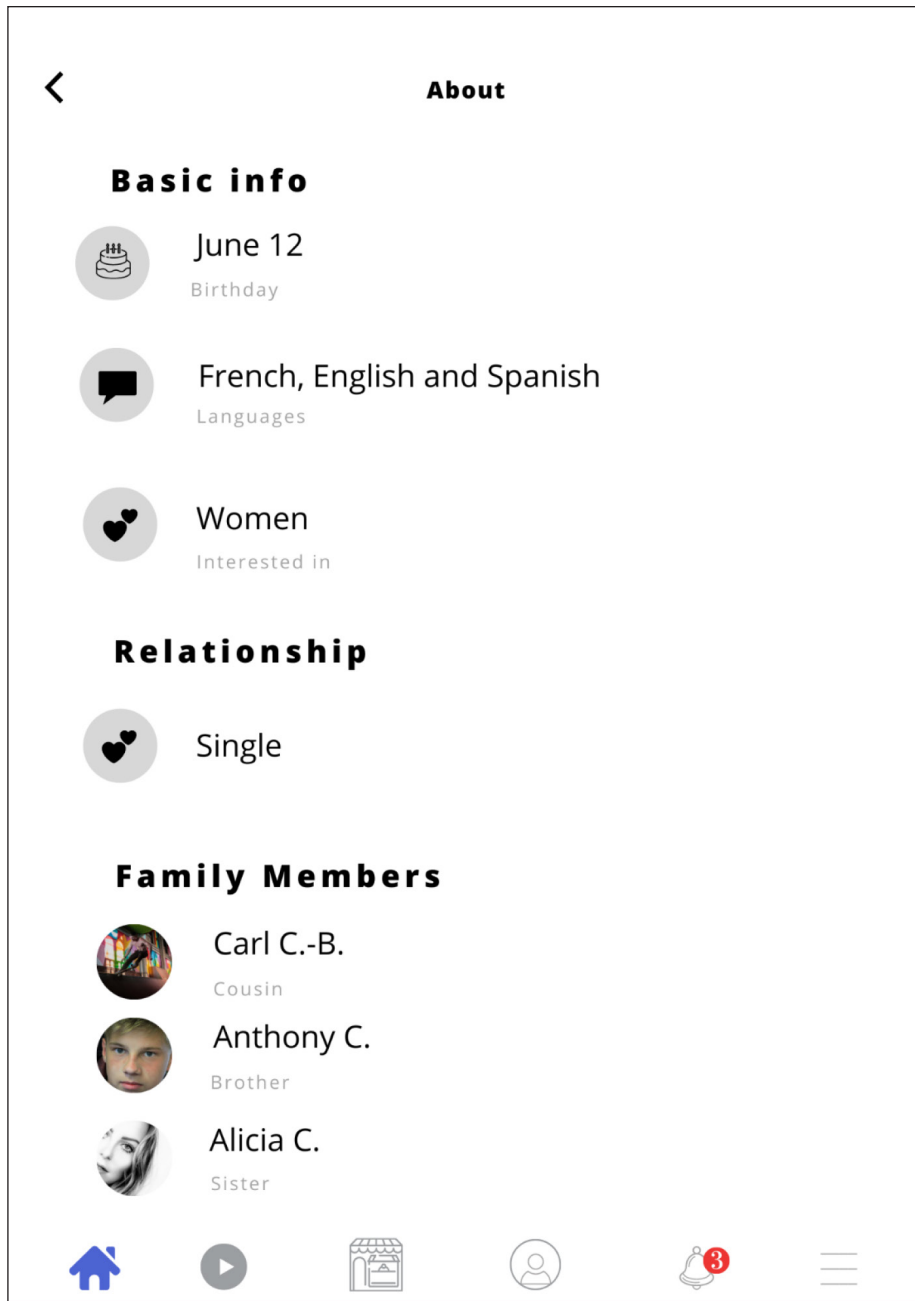
 Goes to **École secondaire Antoine Brossard**

 Lives in **Brossard**

 **Single**

... See Étienne's About Info









## SHEET

### 2.2d

FOR THE GROUP

Twitter - Sabrina L.



**Instructions**  
Identify any **INFORMATION**  
that may expose Sabrina to risks  
of sexual solicitations.

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile of Sabrina L. (@Sab\_sexy13). The profile header includes a back arrow, a circular profile picture of a young woman with curly hair, and icons for direct messages and notifications. A blue 'Following' button is visible. The profile name is 'Sabrina L.' with the handle '@Sab\_sexy13' and location 'Rimouski, Quebec'. It shows 110 followers and 317 following. Below the profile are four tabs: 'Tweets', 'Tweets and replies', 'Media', and 'Likes'. Three tweets are visible:

- Tweet 1:** Posted February 19. Text: "Parents just don't understand 🙄🙄🙄". 35 retweets, 102 likes.
- Tweet 2:** Posted February 16. Text: "Rebel forever 🐾 #CropTopDay 🙌". 1 retweet, 1 like.
- Tweet 3:** Posted February 14. Text: "My parents won't let me see my boyfriend on Valentine's Day? 🙄💔 What to do instead? Photoshoot + quiz about me 🙄". 58 likes.

The bottom navigation bar shows icons for home, search, notifications, and direct messages.



**Tweet**



**Sabrina L.**  
@Sab\_sexy13



My parents won't let me see my boyfriend on Valentine's Day? 🚫💔  
What to do instead? Photoshoot + quiz about me 🤔

1. My birthday : June 15 🎂
2. Name of my boyfriend or girlfriend : Émile 😍 luv u babe ❤️
3. Name of my best friend : Laurie and Zoé, my best bitches 🐱💜
4. My favourite song : Yummy - Justin Bieber 🍷👁️
5. My biggest fear : Losing my bae @emile\_the\_boss 😭
6. What I hate most : My parents 😡🤔 # 🤢🤮
7. My favourite food : Vanilla ice cream with sprinkles 🍦
8. My idol: Kim Kardashian 😍 Wanna be just like her : rich and sexy 💰💋



10 : 11 · February 14

Tweet your reply.








## SHEET

### 2.2e

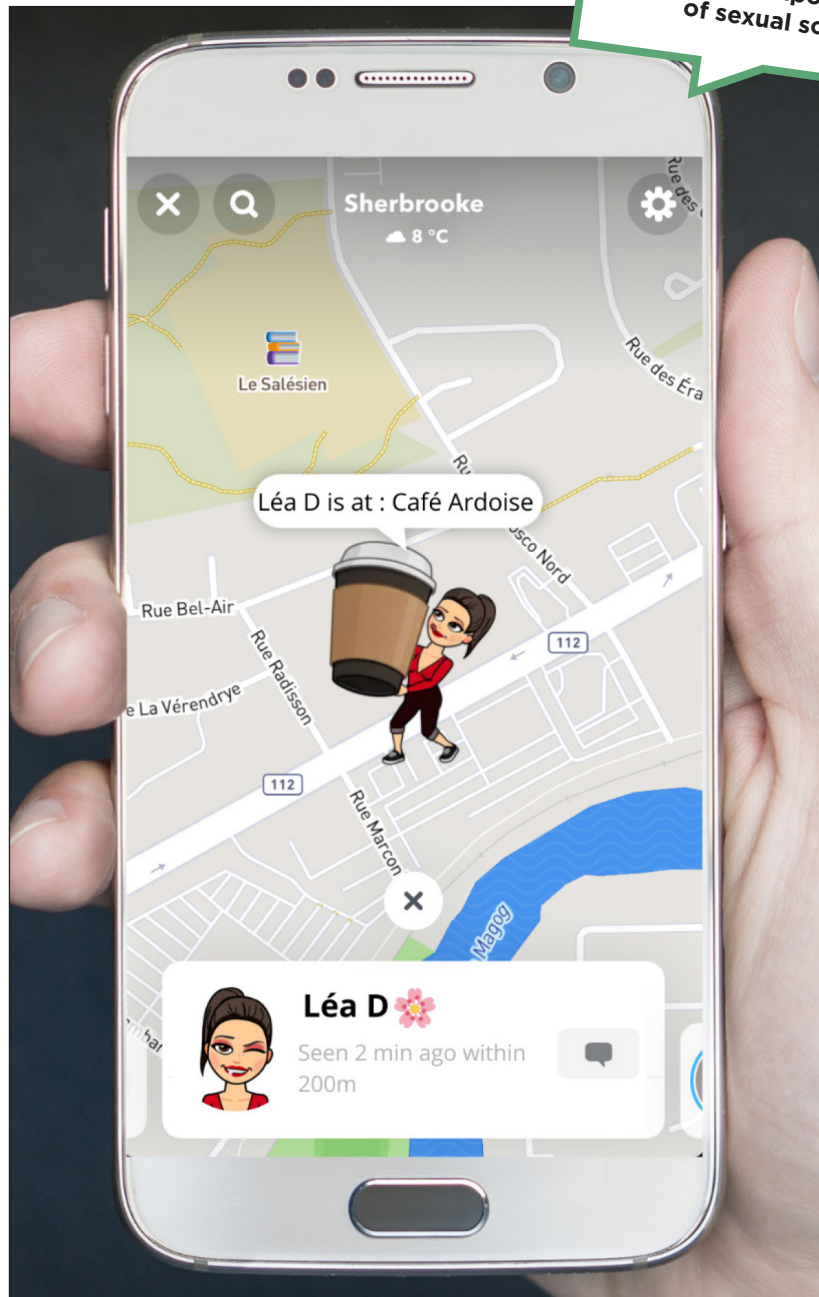
FOR THE GROUP

Snapchat - Léa D.



### Instructions

Identify any **INFORMATION** that may expose Léa to risks of sexual solicitations.





## SHEET

### 2.3

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Checkup Report

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Ask each team to present the “account” that they had to check (Sheets 2.2a to 2.2e) and share the information that they indicated in their “Checkup Report.”
- › To add to their responses, you will find the **INFORMATION** for each account that puts its owner at risk of sexual solicitations. The table below gives the **REASONS** these aspects put the teens at risk.

## INFORMATION on social media that may put someone at risk of sexual solicitations



### Instagram® account @IamJuliette

#### Personally identifiable information:

- › Personal photos of her, her friends, including her BFF, her boyfriend and some soccer teammates.
- › Her boyfriend’s *Instagram* handle (@samthelover) and the name of her best friend (@cathpichette).
- › Her age (13 years old).
- › Her interests: soccer, friendship, love.

#### Personally identifiable information:

- › Personal photos of her, her friends, including her BFF, her boyfriend and some soccer teammates.
- › Her boyfriend’s *Instagram* handle (@samthelover) and the name of her best friend (@cathpichette).
- › Her age (13 years old).
- › Her interests: soccer, friendship, love.

#### Personal information that could identify her location:

- › Her city (Laval) and country (Canada).
- › Field where she plays soccer.

#### Choice of photos:

- › Her interests: soccer, friendship, love.
- › In some of her photos, she is wearing more revealing clothes (midriff shirt).

› **Other important information to consider:**

- Sexual connotations in the choice of photos and comment from one of her friends (cathpichette: “OMG ur so hot”), which could be misinterpreted by people she doesn’t know.
- Access to other people’s comments.
  - Guys she doesn’t know comment on her photos, which may flatter her and make her less careful.
    - jake.shark: “How old are you? Ur so beautiful”
    - will\_the\_chief: “Ur the most beautiful girl I’ve ever seen”
  - Her best friend’s comments about her sexy look may flatter her and, in her eyes, reinforce the importance of being “hot.”
    - cathpichette: “OMG ur so hot.”



**Instagram® account @Thom.Rob**

**Personally identifiable information:**

- › Photos of him and photos of him and his boyfriend holding hands.
- › He names his boyfriend (@charley\_boy).
- › His age (14 years old).
- › Identifies as a member of the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer+) community.
- › Hobbies: music and photography

**Personal information that could identify his location:**

- › His city (Québec City).
- › Since he identifies as LGBTQ+, someone with bad intentions could see what groups he follows and check if he goes to LGBTQ+ organizations in his area to locate him.

**Moods that would help someone engage him in conversation:**

- › He seems friendly and like someone who loves to laugh.
- › Use of the acronym “YOLO” (you only live once). This may suggest that he likes to take risks in his life.
- › Someone with bad intentions could approach him to offer to help him develop his talents as a musician or photographer.

**Choice of photos:**

- › Photos of him and photos of him and his boyfriend holding hands; photos of his interests.

› **Other important information to consider:**

- Access to other people’s comments.
  - His boyfriend and best friend make attentive and affectionate comments on his posts, which is very flattering and confirms that he has a good network.
    - charley\_boy: “luv you, you’re handsome.”
    - mini.vivi: “no one’s better than my BFF.”
  - However, adult males he doesn’t know have also commented on his photos, which may flatter him and make him let his guard down. In fact, one quickly asks for a private conversation and the second, who may be 40 years old, says that Thom’s boyfriend is “very lucky.” Why would adults flirt like this with a teenager?:
    - king1234: “I’d like to be the one behind the camera... DM me if ur interested.”
    - pat.40: “Gorgeous! Your smile... so yummy! charley\_boy is a lucky boy.”



## Facebook® account – Étienne C.

### Personally identifiable information:

- › Photos of him and his family members (sister, brother, cousin).
- › His age (13 years old).

### Personal information that could identify his location:

- › His city (Brossard).
- › The place where he works (Candiac Minor Baseball Association).
- › The place and date of a competition he is going to (Parc Jean-Drapeau, Montreal).
- › The school he attends (École secondaire Antoine-Brossard).

### Moods that would help someone engage him in conversation:

- › His main interest: skateboarding.
- › The three languages he speaks (French, English, Spanish). This increases the number of people that may comment on his page.
- › His relationship status (“single” and “interested in women”).
- › Use of “peace and love” and casual emojis (🕊️😎).

### Choice of photos:

- › Photos of him and photos of skateboarding.

### › Other important information to consider:

- Other information about his personal life: family members, birthday (June 12). Some of this information may let others contact him directly or go through him to gain access to his brother or sister.
- If Étienne’s settings are not set to confidential, a stranger can easily access his email address or phone number.



## Sabrina L.'s *Twitter*<sup>®</sup> account

### Personally identifiable information:

- › Photos of her.
- › Her birthday (June 15).
- › Her profile reveals her name (Sabrina L.) and her age: @Sab\_sexy13 (13 years old).
- › The first names of her two best friends (Laurie and Zoe, whom she calls her “best bitches”) and her boyfriend, Émile.

### Moods that would help someone engage her in conversation:

- › She shares a lot of personal information through different tweets (interests, thoughts, concerns, moods). We learn that she has a tough relationship with her parents and that they aren't allowing her to go out with her boyfriend on Valentine's Day. What may seem exaggerated and unfair to her can become a powerful argument for someone with bad intentions to create a bond of trust, especially since she posted the tweet on Valentine's Day itself. She may be in a highly emotional state.
- › She says that her idol is Kim Kardashian, and she wants to become rich and sexy just like her. Since she seems to like posing as a model “Photoshoot + quiz about me 🤔” someone with bad intentions could offer to pay her to model or be in a music video and invite her to “auditions” that might be risky.

### Personal information that could identify her location:

- › Her city (Rimouski).

### Choice of photos:

- › Her photos and images have sexual connotations: “Hot” written on the picture; image of biting lips; pose (intense gaze) and somewhat revealing clothing (knee-high boots or stockings and a long sweater that do not fully cover her thighs). These aspects could be misinterpreted by others. In no way does a person's perceptions justify derogatory comments.

### › Other important information to consider:

- Twitter handle: “@Sab\_sexy13”
- All of the information in her “quiz about me 🤔” could be used by someone with bad intentions to contact, manipulate or blackmail her.



## Léa D.'s *Snapchat*® account

### Personally identifiable information:

- › Avatar that represents her physically.
- › Her first name and last initial (Léa D.).
- › Location of a high school nearby: we can assume that this is her school (Le Salésien, Sherbrooke).

### Personal information that could identify her location:

- › Precise location in real time: Sherbrooke, Café Ardoise, 2 min. ago.
- › Someone could even figure out her route going by the direction she is travelling in and how many metres away she is (within 200 metres).

### Moods that would help engage her in conversation:

- › Expression of her mood with a flower emoji, plus the happy expression of her avatar, who's giving a knowing wink.

### Choice of photos:

- › Use of an avatar that may suggest that she is older than she is (e.g., makeup).

### › Other important information to consider:

- If Léa often goes to Café Ardoise, it would be easy to follow her habits, the route she takes, and the times that she goes there. If she adds people she doesn't know to her *Snapchat* account, these strangers would have access to this information.

## REASONS why this INFORMATION may expose them to risks of sexual solicitations

- When you have a public account on different social networks, people can use this personal account to find out a lot of information about your life (interests, best friend, boyfriend/girlfriend). Someone with bad intentions could directly contact you and even harass you.
- Online sexual solicitations can be direct and vulgar, but they are not always intended to deceive the person who is being solicited (Wolak, Mitchell and Finkelkor, 2006, cited in Leroux, 2012). It would appear that most teenagers do not take these solicitations seriously and know the appropriate action to take in response (Wolak and al., 2006, cited in Leroux, 2012). However, some messages can be shocking and, above all, give a distorted picture of sexuality.
- Let's take a closer look at some of the things posted on different accounts and why these accounts may put young people at risk of unwanted sexual solicitations.



INFORMATION that could put them at risk	REASONS why this information may expose them to risks of sexual solicitations
<p><b>Photos of the person, friends, etc. in different contexts (sports activities, parties, at the beach)</b></p>	<p>Allows the person and their friends to be identified, and someone could recognize them and even approach them. Social networks (<i>Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat</i>) make it easy to find people in real time with the capability of adding a link to a photo or post.</p> <p>Pictures that are more revealing or considered “sexy” may be misinterpreted. People with bad intentions may think that the young person must be open to sexual advances and may try to sexually exploit them.</p> <p>Young people should be free to post the photos of themselves that they want, as long as the images are not sexually explicit (as this is prohibited for minors under the law). However, in our current reality, all young people need to protect themselves from others with bad intentions, who will look for any detail they can (e.g. from photos, images, comments) to try and manipulate the teen and coax them into providing images that are even more revealing.</p> <p>For example, Sabrina added an image of full lips to her photo with the word “HOT.” This could send the message that she thinks she’s beautiful and sexy. While it’s not a bad thing to think you’re attractive, someone with bad intentions could deduce that Sabrina likes to get compliments about her looks and could start grooming her in this way.</p> <p>As another example, the more revealing photos of Juliette and Sabrina exposing their stomachs or legs could also be interpreted by some that they would be willing to show more or maybe even strip completely.</p> <p><b>Let’s be clear:</b> seeing a person’s legs, stomach or cleavage, for example, does not give anyone the right to make sexual solicitations, insult the person, or share degrading comments. However, you should still show caution about the risk of unwanted sexual solicitations when it comes to anything you want to post online: ask yourself, is it really a good idea to post that photo or comment?</p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>Provides information about the person’s age group.</p> <p>Younger = more naive?</p> <p>Younger can mean more “naive,” i.e. because someone doesn’t have much experience in life, they might fall victim more easily to someone else’s lies.</p>
<p><b>Location (city or town) or real-time location</b></p>	<p>Can be used to find out where the person lives.</p> <p>Some applications make it easier to locate a person in real time (“Context Card” on Snapchat). Someone with bad intentions could try to get the person’s location, go up to them and pretend they were there by accident, or ask them to meet directly since they are so close nearby.</p>
<p><b>Last name, first name and name of friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, etc.</b></p>	<p>A first name makes it easier for someone to make contact.</p> <p>Allows someone to get to know your social circle. A person with bad intentions might try to create meaningful connections with one or more members of the teen’s social circle to get closer to them.</p> <p>Or, conversely, they could go through the account owner to gain access to a friend, brother or sister.</p>



INFORMATION that could put them at risk	REASONS why this information may expose them to risks of sexual solicitations
<b>Name of sports team and location of practices</b>	Provides information about what activities the teen does and when they do them. This would let the teen be located and perhaps even approached at the practice itself.
<b>Personal interests</b>	<p>Would allow someone to get to know someone else on a more “personal” level.</p> <p>Allows someone to approach them online about topics that they know interest them, since the person posted about them publicly.</p>
<b>Place and date of an activity that the person attended</b>	<p>The person can be located at a specific event (date, place, time).</p> <p>This lets the teen be located, and someone could even go directly up to them on the spot.</p>
<b>Email address</b>	<p>You need an email address to open an account on social networks.</p> <p>With instant messaging, email is not as widely used by young people, but someone could also use this method of communication to get in touch with the person.</p>
<b>Handle (Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)</b>	<p>Lets someone contact the person directly and learn more about them by looking at their personal account (interests, images).</p> <p>Someone with bad intentions could use this handle to try to get to know the person, meet up with them, and even harass them.</p>
<b>Phone number</b>	<p>Allows someone to call the person directly.</p> <p>Someone with bad intentions could use the phone number to try to meet up with the person (e.g. use the phone number that appears on Étienne’s <i>Facebook</i> page and pretend to be a potential sponsor for his skateboarding competition and offer to meet him).</p> <p>If the number is a cell phone, the person may be reached at any time without going through the home voice mail, which can make it easier to harass someone.</p> <p>An address can also be found with a home phone number.</p>
<b>The person’s thoughts, concerns, and moods</b>	<p>Talking about concerns and moods can let someone with bad intentions talk to the person about things that affect them, that they need to talk about, and for which they no doubt need support.</p> <p>Sharing this information can make them vulnerable. For example, someone could use information like a rocky parental relationship as a way to empathize with the teen by saying that they know what they’re going through (even if this is not true) and insist that their parents are too strict as a way to “soften them up.”</p> <p>Overall, someone with bad intentions will use every possible detail in photos and posts to their advantage and will use every possible argument to exploit a person’s naivety or vulnerability to get what they want.</p>



## SHEET

### 2.4

FOR THE GROUP

## Your Digital Footprint

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### 1.

Complete this section of the Checkup Report, but this time, **you are the account owner.**

INFORMATION about your social media account(s) that may put YOU at risk of sexual solicitations

**Personally identifiable information?**

› \_\_\_\_\_  
› \_\_\_\_\_

**Information that could locate you?**

› \_\_\_\_\_  
› \_\_\_\_\_

**Moods that would let someone strike up a conversation with you?**

› \_\_\_\_\_  
› \_\_\_\_\_

**Choice of photos?**

› \_\_\_\_\_  
› \_\_\_\_\_

**Other important information to consider?**

› \_\_\_\_\_  
› \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2.

There are 3 golden rules to leaving a safer digital footprint (Radio-Canada, 2018).

Circle **how often** you apply each of these rules.

› **Before posting any information or comments, I think about whether I would say the same thing in public or in front of my class.**

Never    Rarely    Often    Always

› **I refuse requests from people I don't know.**

Never    Rarely    Often    Always

› **I avoid sharing information that is too personal.**

Never    Rarely    Often    Always

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- › Wolak, J., Mitchell, K. J. and Finkelhor, D. (2006). *Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later*. <https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1053&context=ccrc>

## Videos

- › Leblanc, S. (host). (November 14, 2018). *L'identité numérique* [video]. In S. Proulx-Lachance (director), *Le monde est petit*. Société Radio-Canada. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/jeunesse/scolaire/emissions/4842/le-monde-est-petit/episodes/415361/identite-numerique/emission>
- › Common Sense Education (January 12, 2019). *Teen Voices: Oversharing and Your Digital Footprint* [video]. YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ottnH427Fr8>





## Secondary 2 – Session 2 (Part B)

### Preventing the Risks of Sexual Solicitations on Social Media “Online Investigation”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

	Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence</b>	<p><b>Understand your own position on the notion of consent and its application in order to recognize a situation of sexual assault:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Age difference, real or perceived sexual pressure, in the virtual world.</li> </ul>	
	Possible links to the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2021)	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<b>Intellectual competencies</b>	<b>Communication-related competency</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
	<b>Personal and social competencies</b>	<b>Methodological competency</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information and communications technologies</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2021)

**Subject areas**

- Personal development subject area**
- › *Quebec Citizenship and Culture*

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Identities and Belonging

**Disciplinary competencies**

**Studies a cultural reality**

- › Establishes the scope of the object of study
- › Evaluates elements of knowledge
- › Analyzes social relations
- › Demonstrates a more complete understanding

**Reflects on an ethical question**

- › Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation
- › Examines a variety of points of view
- › Develops a point of view
- › Engages in dialogue

**Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School**

**Understand the notion of consent in order to recognize a situation of sexual violence**

- › Consent in virtual contexts

**Understand the importance of empowerment to prevent and report a situation of sexual assault and to support the victim**

- › Self-protection skills in different situations
- › Experience of victims
- › Reactions and helpful attitude of a person acting as a confidant
- › Support resources

**Understand the elements that can support choices related to sexual behaviour in order to have a positive experience**

- › Reasons for accepting or refusing a sexual behaviour
- › Self-knowledge, self-assertion and negotiation
- › Anticipation of positive or negative implications
- › Real or perceived pressure

***Sexual violence may be studied, but it should not be the subject of normative ethical reflection, especially since the values and responses to be fostered have been determined and cannot be the subject of a critical examination.***

**Reflect on the tensions between feelings, values and norms related to sexual behaviour and on the elements that can support choices in order to have a positive experience**





## Educational Goals



**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Get young people to develop strategies to protect themselves from the risks of unwanted sexual solicitations on social networks and instant messaging platforms.**

- 1. Analyze** a conversation between two people on Facebook using the concept of flags (green, yellow, red) to show possible concerns about a situation as well as its possible impacts.
- 2. Provide** age-appropriate advice on how to deal with online sexual solicitations.
- 3. Discuss** strategies that can specifically help teens protect themselves against online sexual solicitations and **choose** the best ones for them.
- 4. Discuss** “sextortion” and the different ways they can protect themselves against it.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

This is the second part (Part B) of the “Preventing the Risks of Sexual Solicitations on Social Media” session. It is therefore important to do the first part (Part A: *Online Safety Checkup*) with the group beforehand.





## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **four activities**.

10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Main concepts from the last session</li> </ul>
30 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Background: Étienne and Philippe</li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Investigation: Étienne and Philippe</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b>  <i>Sheet 2.1: Recap –Étienne C.’s Facebook Page</i>  <i>Sheet 2.2: Chats Between Étienne and Philippe</i>  <i>Sheet 2.3: Chats Between Étienne and Philippe – Conclusion</i></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Protection strategies  <i>Video: “#Keepitprivate”</i>  <i>Presentation of animated digital images (GIFs)</i>  <i>Reply from a teen girl</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b>  <i>Sheet 2.4: Examples of Animated Digital Images (GIFs)</i>  <i>Sheet 2.5: Reply From a Teen Girl</i></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “SEXTORTION, blackmail started after a cybersex offer”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
5 min.	<b>SESSION CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations or situations involving violence. It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the police or Youth Protection Directorate must be contacted.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

### Session Introduction

- › **Begin** by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Then, **tell** the group that this session is a continuation (Part B) of the last session on “Preventing the Risks of Sexual Solicitations on Social Media” called *Online Safety Checkup* (Part A).

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **What were your takeaways from the last session?**
  - **Have you noticed any changes in how you use social media?**

*Get their answers.*

- › **Go over** the main points that you discussed at the previous session:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Social networks provide many benefits in the lives of young people and adults, but we must also be aware of the risks of online sexual solicitations.
- › To have positive experiences on social media, it's important that you carefully choose the information that you reveal about yourself in order to prevent the risks of sexual solicitations.
- › “Online sexual solicitation” means:
  - Receiving sexual messages (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig and Ólafsson, 2011) or nude images or videos (Lenhart, 2009) online.
  - Refers to when someone goes online to incite a young person to talk about sex, give private sexual information or engage in sexual behaviour online, such as taking off their clothes in front of the camera, sending, exchanging or receiving nude photos, etc. (Jones, Mitchell and Finkelhor, 2012; Mitchell, Finkelhor and Wolak, 2007).
  - “Aggressive sexual solicitations” are when individuals solicit kids or teens for more direct encounters, such as convincing them to talk on the phone or meet in person to have sexual contact (Jones and al., 2012).

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

In Part A: *Online Safety Checkup*, the group learned about the three golden rules for a safer digital footprint (Radio-Canada, 2018). Here they are again:

1. Before posting any information or comments, I think about whether I would say the same thing in public or in front of my class.
2. I refuse requests from people I don't know.
3. I avoid sharing information that is too personal.





# 2

## Activity 2



SHEETS 2.1, 2.2 AND 2.3  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



30 MIN.



PRESENTATION



TEAM ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Presentation

- › **Tell** the group that you are going to go back to the example of Étienne, the 13-year-old skateboarder whose Facebook page you analyzed in the last session.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 2.1 : *Recap -Étienne C.'s Facebook Page* to the group and **show** Étienne's Facebook page to refresh everyone's memory.
- › **Tell** the group that they have a new assignment as police investigators. This new case is to perform a check of a conversation on Étienne's Facebook account.
- › **Give** the following instructions: "Your superiors have concerns about Étienne and are asking you to look into a conversation he had with a young man named Philippe who is contacting him over Facebook."
- › **Provide** the following background:

"Étienne, age 13, is brand new to Facebook. Most of his friends are already on this platform and, since his parents are also on Facebook, they agreed to let him have an account. He now finds it easier to keep in touch with his friends. When browsing through his feed one night, he gets a new friend request from someone named Philippe D. This name rings a bell, and when he sees his profile picture, he's sure that he knows Philippe, but he can't remember from where. He notices that his cousin is also friends with him."

### Discussion

- › After reading this background information to the group, **ask** the following question:
  - **Should Étienne accept or ignore Philippe's friend request?**
  - **If so, or if not, why?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › After the group answers these questions, **tell** them that Étienne has decided to accept Philippe's friend request and that they started a conversation.

## Teams Activity

- › **Ask** them to analyze the conversation between Étienne and Philippe (Sheet 2.2: *Chats Between Étienne and Philippe*). They have to do this activity in teams of four.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 2.2: *Chats Between Étienne and Philippe* to each team. **Read it** out loud and then give them a few minutes to answer the questions.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Begin** a discussion with the group by going over the questions on Sheet 2.2: *Chats Between Étienne and Philippe*.
  - **What do you think of the relationship that Étienne has developed online with Philippe?**
  - **One way to answer is to use a “flag” metaphor:**
    - **Green flags:** “These aspects seem fine; we’re not worried about Étienne.”
    - **Yellow flags:** “Some aspects of their relationship worry us.”
    - **Red flags:** “These aspects make us very worried about Étienne.”*Get their opinions.*
  - **Do you think that Étienne can trust Philippe? If yes, why?**  
*Get their answers.*
  - **Conversely, are there things about Philippe that may cast doubt on his intentions? If yes, which ones? If not, why not?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Things about Philippe that could lead Étienne to TRUST him:**
  - Étienne knew Philippe when he was younger.
  - They have someone in common: Étienne’s cousin, who is friends with Étienne on Facebook.
  - Étienne and Philippe had a chat on Facebook and it was nice.
- › **Things that may CAST DOUBT on Philippe’s intentions:**
  - Étienne met him several years ago, but Étienne was a kid, so he doesn’t really remember how they met.
  - Why would a 17-year-old be interested in a 13-year-old boy who isn’t related to him or whom he barely knows?
  - Philippe compliments Étienne even though he doesn’t know him well.
  - Philippe found the information about Étienne’s skateboard competition on his account, but why was he looking at Étienne’s page?

## Teams Activity

- › **Give** each team Sheet 2.3: *Chats Between Étienne and Philippe – Conclusion*, which **concludes** the chats between Philippe and Étienne. Give them a few minutes to answer the questions.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Start** a discussion with the group by going over the questions that the teams were asked to answer.
  - **How do you think Étienne should react to Philippe’s request to “show him his bare chest”?**
  - **What do you think Étienne should do when he gets Philippe’s “dick pic”?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Philippe’s request that he show him a picture of his bare chest:**
  - He should refuse Philippe’s request and tell him that he doesn’t see the point.
  - First, we don’t know if he’ll take a photo (screenshot). Besides, if Étienne accepts, what could Philippe ask for next?
  - This could put Étienne in a vulnerable position.
- › **Getting Philippe’s intimate photo (of his genitals):**
  - He could react by saying that this is a stupid thing to do.
  - He must not send the photo to anyone else.
  - He needs to talk to an adult he trusts.
  - He can block Philippe on social media.
  - He could also tell his cousin.

- › **Provide more details** about the context and resulting investigation by the police using the following content:

#### **BACKGROUND:**

*This investigation was conducted after Étienne’s parents reported that someone had asked their son to undress in front of his web cam. Your team has conducted the investigation.*



**INVESTIGATION RESULTS:**

Your investigation has revealed that “Philippe” is indeed a 17-year-old who used to babysit for the family of Étienne’s cousin. Philippe has several social media accounts and talks with a number of boys between the ages of 11 to 14. He creates stories tailored to each boy and uses any information he gathers about them to start up a conversation. His goal is to gain their trust and let them believe that they have a special relationship so that, after a while, they will talk over video and he can ask them to undress or exchange naked pictures with him (sexting). He records these images on his computer and posts them on the Internet. He may even have had sexual contact with some of these boys. **THE SUSPECT HAS BEEN ARRESTED.**

## Discussion and Presentation

- › Following this new information, **have** a discussion with the group using the suggested questions and content.

- **What is your reaction to the results of the investigation?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › In the wake of the #MeToo movement, many adults (and public figures) reported sexual harassment or assaults that they experienced as teenagers by adults whom they sometimes met online.
- › We also heard stories about adults who lied about their identities online (e.g. they pretended to be a teenager), for example, to gain the trust of young people and get intimate photos of them.
- › However, there have also been many cases of online sexual exploitation between young people, and most often by someone the teenager knows (Wolak, Finkelhor and Mitchell, 2009), as was the case with Étienne and Philippe.
- › Getting attention from someone can make you happy or pique your curiosity, but it can also be embarrassing. One thing is for sure: when someone else becomes interested in your private life and when this interest becomes sexual, it’s important to cut off contact with this person and especially not take the person up on any sexual invitations or propositions.



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

People often think that most online sexual predators are adult males posing as young people. However, a study showed that adults posing as kids account for only 10% of cases; in fact, the majority of cases of online sexual solicitations are between young people (Wolak and al., 2009; cited in Leroux, 2012).

Two years after the #MeToo movement, a wave of people in Quebec reported that many adults, including celebrities (YouTubers, singers, comedians, TV hosts) had sexually harassed or assaulted them when they were teens (MeToo 2.0). “Some women have reported receiving sexual comments online from adult men when they were teenagers. It took me a long time to realize that it’s not normal for a 30-year-old man to talk to a 14-year-old girl about sex and his relationships” (Duchaine and Ferrat, 2020).

- **What clues suggest that this situation might be a risky one? Why?**

*Get their answers.*

- › **Share** the content below about the clues suggesting that this situation was a risky one for Étienne, as confirmed by the investigation:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW



**Green flags: The following aspects seem completely normal, and it’s difficult to get a sense of Philippe’s bad intentions.**

- › At this point, Philippe may seem really nice, especially since he knows Étienne’s cousin really well.
- › He talks to Étienne by using his passion for skateboarding. He says that he shares the same passion in order to start a conversation and create a bond.
- › To gain his trust, he compliments him on his athletic skills and talks about the times they used to spend together.
- › He refers to his cousin again to make Étienne trust him.
- › Once trust has been established, Philippe talks to Étienne regularly. Very quickly, they start talking every day, and Étienne really enjoys their chats.
- › The fact that Philippe said he had a girlfriend may have “reassured” Étienne about his intentions.



**Yellow flags: The following aspects could be worrying.**

- › The age difference is a potential yellow flag: “Why would a 17-year-old be so interested in a 13-year-old boy he barely knows?”.
- › However, it could be that Philippe, who is interested in skateboarding and who knows Étienne’s cousin well, only wants to talk to him about their shared interest.
- › Philippe may also still occasionally see Étienne’s cousin, with whom he is friends on Facebook.



**Red flags: The following aspects should be seen as major red flags.**

- › After a while, the two start talking over video.
- › The conversations quickly turn to more intimate things.
- › Right away, Philippe suggests that they see each other in person and stresses that he wants to see Étienne compete at skateboarding. This may have misled Étienne as to Philippe’s true intentions.
- › Philippe sends Étienne a “dick pic.” Even though Philippe says he did it just as a joke, Étienne may be shocked and uncomfortable at receiving an intimate photo he didn’t even ask for. It’s important for him to trust his instincts and find a way to respond despite his surprise and discomfort.
- › You don’t expose your genitals like this to a stranger, and not even to people you know! Privacy is important.
- › Sharing intimate photos online is complex even when you know the person or the person is your boyfriend or girlfriend.
- › Unfortunately, at this stage, the bond of trust is established, and it is not uncommon for strong feelings of friendship (or even love) to develop, which makes it even more difficult to perceive the danger.
- › Things that should automatically arouse suspicion, fear and outright rejection instead lead to confusion and hesitation. Here, the “trust” that Philippe has established may mean that Étienne doesn’t feel like he’s being taken advantage of and believes what Philippe says.

- **As investigators, can you say what impact Philippe’s actions might have?**

*Get their answers.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Depending on what your investigation reveals, charges could be brought against Philippe.
- › He went online to contact minors with the goal of sexually soliciting them (e.g. talking about sex, engaging in sexual behaviour such as taking off his clothes, asking the other person to do the same and send intimate photos).
- › He has had sexual contact in person with some teens.
- › Even though he himself is a minor, he could have problems with the law because he is in possession of nude photos of several minors (under 18 years of age) and allegedly posted these photos online.
- › Starting from the age of 12, Canadians are responsible for their criminal actions. However, even though they can be charged with the same offences, since they are not yet adults, the legal procedure and sentences are different (Éducaloi, 2017).

- **Since Étienne’s parents were the ones who contacted the police, Étienne most likely told them about the situation. Do you think Étienne did the right thing by telling his parents?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › It must have been hard for Étienne to tell his parents, but he made the right choice. He also could have confided in his best friends, who could have referred him to an adult at school to help him.
- › It is important to tell a trusted adult (school nurse, psychologist, social worker, youth police officer, sexologist) or contact a support resource such as Tel-Jeunes (<https://www.teljeunes.com>), Kids Help Phone (<https://jeunessejecoute.ca>) or Cybertip ([cyberaide.ca/app/en/index](https://cyberaide.ca/app/en/index)).
- › By seeking help, Étienne was able to break the chain of silence. By talking about the situation and reporting it to the authorities, Philippe won’t be able to harm any more young victims.
- › This will also let the victims—and Philippe—get the appropriate help from professionals.



## Activity 3



SHEETS 2.4 AND 2.5

VIDEO

SLIDESHOW (PPT)



15 MIN.



PRESENTATION



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

## Presentation

- › **Remind** the group that they have to be careful about the information they post on social media as well as the friend requests they accept. They must refuse to share intimate images of themselves or of other people. However, it may be difficult for teens to ignore a request to share intimate images (especially if they know or are interested in the person). They may fear that not responding will get them labelled as a “baby” or “immature.”

Here are three different protection strategies they can use to respond to requests for intimate images. These strategies clearly show refusal but use humour:

- **Images from the #Keepitprivate campaign (SPVG, 2017).**
- **Animated digital images: GIFs (Graphics Interchange Format).**
- **Example of a clear response written by a teen girl to a person who asked her to send him an intimate photo.**

Show each strategy and follow with a discussion.

## Protection Strategy 1: Video

- › **Introduce** the first strategy, found in the following video:

## #Keepitprivate (SPVG, 2017)

**Length:** 30 sec.

**<https://vimeo.com/228836104>**



Video



### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

This first strategy is from a prevention campaign launched by the Service de police de la Ville de Gatineau (SPVG). The campaign is described in a short video called *#Gardeçapourtoi* (*#Keepitprivate*), which is available in French only. You can show them the video if you think that the group has enough knowledge of French to understand the message; otherwise, only show the posters (below), which they can send as a response to a sexual solicitation over text.

› **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.

- **What are your takeaways from this video?**
- **What do you think about using these images to respond to unwanted sexual solicitations?**

*Get their opinions.*

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The first protection strategy is a series of images presented in the *#Keepitprivate* video.
- › The goal of the video is to raise awareness among Secondary 1 and 2 students about the importance of preventing sexual solicitations and exploitation, specifically over sexting. For example, teens who are asked to send naked pictures of themselves could respond by sending one of the images in the video and on their website (“your melons”; “your peach”; “your banana”).

- › Ville de Gatineau website: [https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet\\_municipal/police/zone\\_jeunesse/programmes\\_ecoles\\_secondaires/garde\\_ca\\_pour\\_toi](https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet_municipal/police/zone_jeunesse/programmes_ecoles_secondaires/garde_ca_pour_toi)
- › Click on: “Visuels et banque de photos à envoyer” from the left-hand menu (available in English and French):  
[https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet\\_municipal/police/zone\\_jeunesse/programmes\\_ecoles\\_secondaires/garde\\_ca\\_pour\\_toi](https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet_municipal/police/zone_jeunesse/programmes_ecoles_secondaires/garde_ca_pour_toi)



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

The police department of the Ville de Gatineau had a communications company create an awareness campaign about child pornography and sexting, which are increasingly prevalent among young people (Marchand, 2017). The *#Keepitprivate* campaign, written for and by young people in their own language, is meant to reflect their reality (Marchand, 2017).

The goal of the video is to raise awareness among Secondary 1 and 2 students about the importance of preventing sexual solicitations and exploitation, specifically over sexting. For example, teens who are asked to send naked pictures of themselves could respond by sending one of the images in the video and on their website (“your melons”; “your peach”; “your banana”).

Ville de Gatineau website: [https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet\\_municipal/police/zone\\_jeunesse/programmes\\_ecoles\\_secondaires/garde\\_ca\\_pour\\_toi](https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet_municipal/police/zone_jeunesse/programmes_ecoles_secondaires/garde_ca_pour_toi)

Click on: “Visuels et banque de photos à envoyer” from the left-hand menu (available in English and French):

[https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet\\_municipal/police/zone\\_jeunesse/programmes\\_ecoles\\_secondaires/garde\\_ca\\_pour\\_toi/visuels\\_banque\\_photos\\_envoyer#a](https://www.gatineau.ca/portail/default.aspx?p=guichet_municipal/police/zone_jeunesse/programmes_ecoles_secondaires/garde_ca_pour_toi/visuels_banque_photos_envoyer#a)



## Protection Strategy 2: Presentation Of Animated Digital Images (GIFs)

- › **Introduce** them to the second protection strategy, i.e. responding to sexual solicitations with animated digital images (GIFs). Examples of GIFs can be found in Sheet 2.4: *Examples of Animated Digital Images (GIFs)*.
- › **Define** GIFs to make sure everyone knows what they are:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The second protection strategy “against sexual solicitations” consists of using GIFs. GIFs are animated digital images. Most social networks have banks of these images that can be shared on their instant messaging platforms. They can easily be used in conversations in reaction to a comment. You can find GIFs using keywords.
- › Since available GIFs are constantly changing, you need to search for them using keywords and choose the one that best represents the message you want to convey.
- › If you want to stop an online sexual solicitation, the GIF you choose must send a clear message of refusal.
- › Here are some examples of keywords to use:
  - Stop or Arrête
  - No or Non
  - Ridiculous or Ridicule
  - Police
  - Respect
  - Seriously? Sérieusement?

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

CAUTION: Do a test before showing examples of GIFs to the class. When combined with a word such as “sex,” you may get scenes with sexual content. We have provided a selection of GIFs that express a clear refusal and that are also funny.



- › **Ask** the group the following questions:
  - **What do you think of these GIFs?**
  - **What do you think about using GIFs to respond to sexual solicitations (e.g., requests to share nude photos)?**

*Get their opinions.*



## Protection Strategy 3 : Reply From A Teen Girl

- › Using Sheet 2.5: *Reply From a Teen Girl*, **present** the third strategy illustrated by the actual reply from a teenage girl named Alice S. to a young man she didn't know who asked her to send him a naked picture of herself. In this real-life case, the young man insulted her in frustration, but then Alice "clapped back" with a great comment. See her answer!
- › **Get** the group's comments and reactions to this girl's response.
  - **What do you think of her response?**
  - **What are the advantages of reacting clearly and quickly in these kinds of situations?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Start** a discussion with the group using the following questions:
  - **What impacts could these strategies have on the person who asks for or keeps insisting on an intimate photo?**
  - **If you received this kind of request, would you be comfortable using one of the "protection strategies" we just saw? If yes, which ones? Why?**
  - **Do you think that there are other good ways to respond to these situations? Do you have any suggestions?**

*Get their answers.*
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › It can be difficult to know how to react to these types of messages, especially when the person requesting this kind of photo has created a bond of trust or when the person is your boyfriend or girlfriend.
- › You may be uncomfortable; you may also feel pressure to do it, fearing that the person will think you're a "baby" or "sexually immature" if you don't.
- › Using one of these protection strategies is a good way to tell the other person that you don't want to send naked pictures of yourself and that you can stand up for yourself with humour and conviction.
- › You can also tell a trusted adult, who may report the situation to the authorities. Remember: the person who asked for the naked pictures may be trying to victimize other young people.
- › Together, we can keep all young people safe, even online.



## Activity 4



**VIDEO  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MIN.**



**VIDEO**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

## Presentation

- › **Tell** the group you are going to talk about another type of online risk called “sextortion.” **Ask** the group if anyone can explain what this term means.
- › Then **give them** the following definition:
  - “Simply put, sextortion is blackmail. It’s when someone online threatens to send a sexual image or video of you to other people if you don’t pay the person or provide more sexual content.” (Cybertip, n.d.).

## Video

- › **Show** the following video:

**SEXTORTION, blackmail started after a cybersex offer  
(Sûreté du Québec, 2016)**

**Length:** 4 min., 47 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boJ1vyGyUzk>**



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

› **Start** a discussion using the following questions and add to their answers with the content below.

- **What are your takeaways from this video?**
- **What should Manuel do?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Here is what the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (2017) recommends if you are a victim of sextortion:
  - Immediately contact law enforcement or make a report to [Cybertip.ca](http://Cybertip.ca).
  - Don't give in to threats.
  - Stop all communication with the person: block them from all your accounts.
  - Deactivate all accounts used to communicate with this person.
  - Explain the situation to a trusted adult.

- **What advice would you give to other young people to prevent this type of situation from happening to them?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Be careful about the personal information you post on your account. For example, choose a pseudonym instead of your name; don't list your phone number, home address, email, age, etc.
- › Don't accept requests from friends or followers you don't know.
- › Make your account private. **WARNING:** Some social networks (Instagram and TikTok) make biographical information (name, relationship status, date of birth, photos, gender identity) accessible to everyone even if the account is private. It is therefore important to find out how these platforms disclose information. You can also test what information is available by asking your friends what they can see on your account.

- › For requests from people you know, ask yourself:
  - “How will it benefit me to have this person as a friend or follower?”
  - And also: “Why would this person want to connect with me on social media?”
  - Look at the person’s posts and photos. Do they seem realistic? You can also ask your parents what they think.
  
- › For all instant messaging:
  - Think about whether this person’s words are consistent: “Do they contradict themselves?”
  - End the conversation if you have any doubts about the profile of the person contacting you. The danger is that it can take a while before you realize something is wrong. You may also be curious and want to continue the conversation without noticing the real risks of doing so.
  - Don’t forget that you can block access to this person at any time.
  - Stop the conversation as soon as the person makes sexual advances (e.g. asks you to take suggestive poses or get naked). You can block this person from your account.



## Session Conclusion



5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **End** the meeting with the suggested **KEY MESSAGES**:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › When using social media, it is important to be aware of the risks of sexual solicitations online.
- › To have a positive experience on these platforms, you need to carefully choose the information that you reveal about yourself and be cautious whenever you get a request from someone you are connected with on social media.
- › It is important not to share intimate pictures of yourself, as these can put you in a vulnerable situation.
- › If you are having problems or have any particular issues with social media, don't hesitate to talk to a trusted adult.




## SHEET




### 2.1

FOR THE GROUP


## Recap – Étienne C.'s Facebook Page





**Étienne C.**  
13 years old 🙌  
Next competition 🏆 :  
June 15 – 1pm @Parc Jean-Drapeau/MTL  
Be there! 😊 / Soyez présents! 😊


  

---







 Works at **Candiac Minor Baseball Association**

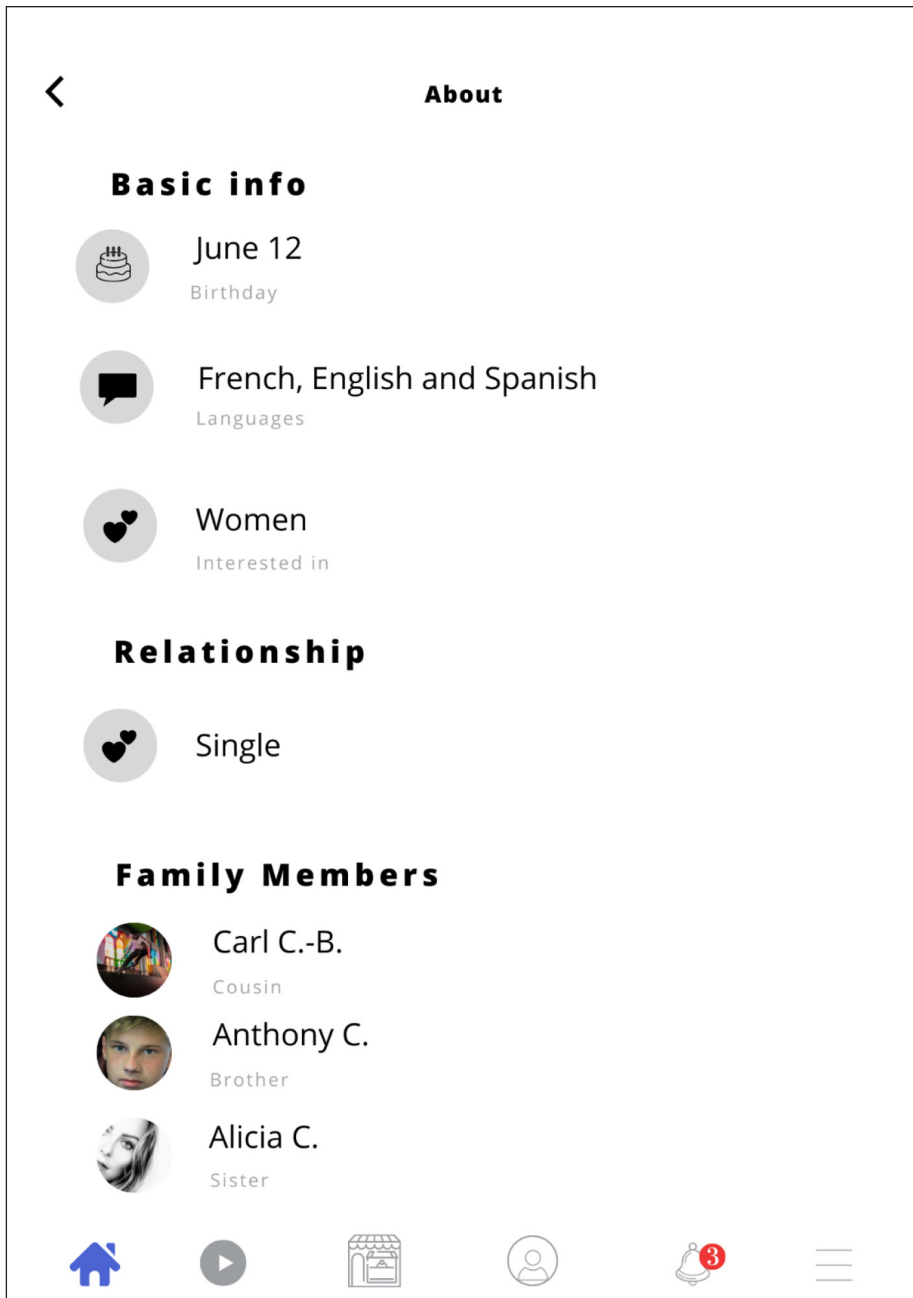
 Goes to **École secondaire Antoine Brossard**

 Lives in **Brossard**

 Single

... See Étienne's About Info





## SHEET

### 2.2





FOR THE GROUP

## Chats Between Étienne and Philippe

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Your superiors have informed you that Étienne has accepted Philippe's friend request and that their conversations continued. Read the rest of the scenario.

Étienne has made a decision. He's curious and wants to know why this person is so familiar to him. He accepts the friend request. Right away, he receives a message from Philippe:

  **Philippe**  

Sup, Étienne! Remember me? Long time, no see.

Hey there. I know we've met, but I don't remember where...

Yeah, you were younger the last time we met. I'm your cousin's old neighbour, I used to babysit him. I babysat both of you once, and we had fake sword fights. You were pretty good at it! We had fun! I saw you like skateboarding. Me too, well it's my new thing -- what's up with the skateboarding competition you talked about on your profile?







It's a project for youth centres on the South Shore. They organize a friendly competition for kids who go to the youth centres. I'm part of it. They've had it for 2 years, but last year I didn't do so well. I want to do better this year.

I'm sure you'll do fine. Even when you were little, I thought you were athletic. You were good at all the games I suggested. I've never seen a skateboarding competition. Can anyone go?

Think so, it's in a park, so it's open to everyone.

OK. Thanks for the deets. I'll check it out! I might even come early to try out my new board. TTYL!

Later!



## INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the rest of the scenario between Étienne and Philippe and answer the questions.

Étienne now remembers Philippe, but he's not sure if he's comfortable with Philippe coming to his competition. He hasn't seen him in a long time and he's not sure what he would say to him. Étienne looks at Philippe's Facebook page. He's now in Secondary 5; he seems to have a busy social life and a girlfriend.

In the following weeks, Étienne chats with Philippe on Facebook. They talk about all kinds of things: skateboarding, high school, his cousin, Étienne's friends, etc.

### QUESTIONS

1. *In your role as investigators, what do you think of the online relationship between Étienne and Philippe?*

One way to answer is to use a "flag" metaphor:

- **Green flags:** "These aspects seem fine; we're not worried about Étienne."
- **Yellow flags:** "Some aspects of their relationship worry us."
- **Red flags:** "These aspects make us very worried about Étienne."

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2. *Do you think that Étienne can TRUST Philippe? If yes, why?*

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3. *Conversely, are there things about Philippe that may CAST DOUBT on his intentions? If yes, which ones? If not, why not?*

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## SHEET

### 2.3

FOR THE GROUP

## Chats Between Étienne and Philippe (Conclusion)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the rest of the scenario between Étienne and Philippe and answer the questions.

Philippe and Étienne end up seeing each other at the skateboard competition and spend some time together. After this meet-up, they chat more and more on Facebook and send each other funny videos of skateboarding fails and mishaps. Philippe asks Étienne if he wants to hang out on a video chat. Philippe seems interested in Étienne's life.

Étienne likes having a confidant and someone older who can give him good advice. One day, he asks a bunch of questions about Étienne's experiences with girls. He tells him that he could work out to build more muscle because girls like that. One night, Philippe asks him to show him his bare chest to see how in shape he is.

A few days later, he sends Étienne a "dick pic," but *"just as a joke,"* he writes.

### QUESTIONS

1. As investigators, what do you think of the relationship between Étienne and Philippe?

Use the flag metaphor:

- **Green flags:** "These aspects seem fine; we're not worried about Étienne."
- **Yellow flags:** "Some aspects of their relationship worry us."
- **Red flags:** "These aspects make us very worried about Étienne."

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2. How do you think Étienne should react to Philippe's request to "show him his bare chest"? Explain your answer.

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3. What should Étienne do when he receives Philippe's "dick pic"?

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## SHEET

### 2.4

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Examples of Animated Digital Images (GIFs)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Provide the group with these GIF suggestions or select others that are up to date.

Keyword: **NO**

<https://giphy.com/gifs/no-green-LOE18jsNKPmzdJYvhJ>

<https://giphy.com/gifs/gnE4FFhtFoLKM>



Keywords: **STOP and NAH**

<https://tenor.com/view/cat-stop-stop-it-now-enough-kitten-gif-16655345>

<https://media.giphy.com/media/10ITU2rwZCyYIU/giphy.gif>



Keyword: **POLICE**

<https://giphy.com/gifs/81xwEHX23zhvy>





## SHEET

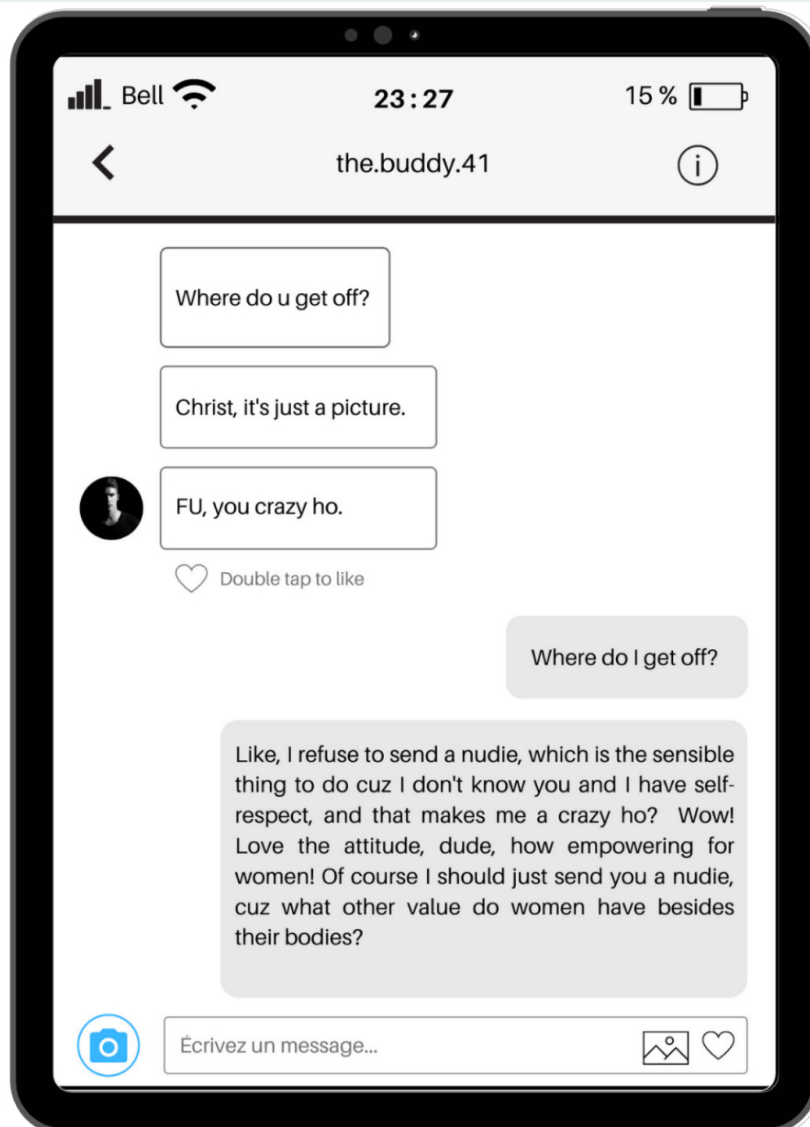
### 2.5

FOR THE GROUP

## Reply From a Teenage Girl

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the conversation between teen Alice S. and the person who asked for her picture.



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## Secondary 2 - Session 3

### Consent

#### “Learn What Consent Really Means!”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence</b>	<p><b>Understand your own position on the notion of consent and its application in order to recognize a situation of sexual assault:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Notion of consent: age difference, reasons for accepting or refusing a sexual behaviour, validity of consent and situations in which consent is not possible.</li> </ul>
Possible links to the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022)	
<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

**Subject areas**

- Personal development subject area**
- › *Quebec Citizenship and Culture*

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Autonomy and Interdependence

**Disciplinary competencies**

**Studies a cultural reality**

- › Establishes the scope of the object of study
- › Evaluates elements of knowledge
- › Analyzes social relations
- › Demonstrates a more complete understanding

**Reflects on an ethical question**

- › Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation
- › Examines a variety of points of view
- › Develops a point of view
- › Engages in dialogue

**Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School**

**Understand the notion of consent in order to recognize a situation of sexual violence**

- › Elements of consent and contexts in which consent is invalid

**Understand the elements that can support choices related to sexual behaviour in order to have a positive experience**

- › Reasons for accepting or refusing a sexual behaviour
- › Self-knowledge, self-assertion and negotiation
- › Anticipation of positive or negative implications
- › Real or perceived pressure

**Understand the impact of myths and prejudices about sexual violence**

- › Myths and prejudices regarding victims and perpetrators of violence based on gender and on context
- › Attribution of blame
- › Obstacles to seeking support

**Reflect on the tensions between feelings, values and norms related to sexual behaviour and on the elements that can support choices in order to have a positive experience**





## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Develop an ability to recognize situations in which consent is not respected and to react when you are concerned about a situation related to consent.**

- 1. Define** the general concept of consent.
- 2. Discuss** things that enable and hold people back from expressing consent/non-consent in real-life situations.
- 3. Recognize** reactions (verbal and non-verbal) that demonstrate whether someone is consenting or not.
- 4. Identify** communication skills that you can develop to express your non-consent to a situation.
- 5. Identify** skills that you can develop to respect someone else's non-consent.
- 6. Define** the concept of consent to sexual activity.
- 7. Determine** what the law says about consent to sexual activity, particularly in relation to age and the legal protective goal.
- 8. Discuss** issues about sexual consent between teenagers when there is an age difference.
- 9. Identify** arguments to help a friend experiencing issues related to sexual consent in their dating life and romantic relationships.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **three activities**.

20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> Everyday consent</li> <li>› <b>Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Group activity:</b> “Camille and Margaret” Situational Exercise <i>Sheet 3.1: Learn More About Consent</i> <i>Sheet 3.2: “Camille and Margaret” Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.3: Answer Sheet: “Camille and Margaret” Situational Exercise</i></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise</li> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> Romantic attraction and consent <i>Sheet 3.4: “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.5: Answer Sheet: “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise</i></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Consent (Part 1)”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
30 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Age differences and consent</li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Learn about legal age and consent</li> <li>› <b>Presentation and Discussion</b> <i>Sheet 3.6: Learn About Legal Age and Consent</i> <i>Sheet 3.7: Answer Sheet: Learn About Legal Age and Consent</i></li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> “Emma and William” Situational Exercise</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 3.8: “Emma and William” Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.9: Answer Sheet: “Emma and William” Situational Exercise</i></li> </ul>
5 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Key Messages</b> from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>).

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Some information (e.g. the “Additional information” section) from Sheet 3.3: *Answer Sheet: “Camille and Margaret” Situational Exercise* or Sheet 3.7: *Answer Sheet: Learning Legal Age and Consent* and Sheet 3.9: *Answer Sheet: “Emma and William” Situational Exercise* may not be in the slideshow accompanying this session. You can share this additional information as needed.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

You can lead this session on sexual consent with another professional, for example, with the special education technician (SET), social worker, psychoeducator, psychologist, or sexologist at your school, as applicable.

Otherwise, BEFORE holding this session, it is a good idea to let a counsellor at your school or organization know that you will be discussing sexual consent with a group of young people. This way, if a teenager confides in you about a situation of concern about sexual consent or discloses a situation of sexual assault, you will know that someone is available to offer support. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the Youth Protection Directorate or police service must be contacted.

You can also refer to the Resources section in the introduction to this program for the contact information of assistance and support organizations. Online resources are provided at the end of the slideshow (PPT) accompanying each of the *Be True to You* sessions.



## Activity 1



SHEETS 3.1, 3.2 AND 3.3  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MIN.



GROUP  
ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › **Explain** that today's session is about *consent in general as well as sexual consent*.

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

For more information about sexual consent and sexual assault prevention, see Sheet 3.1: *Learn More About Consent*. You don't have to share all of this content with the group, but it may be helpful if they ask more in-depth questions about consent to sexual activity. There is also information on how a teen could respond if a friend confides in them that they have been sexually assaulted.



### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Start** the activity by asking the group:
  - **In general, what does it mean to “give consent”?**

*Get their answers.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › “Giving consent is giving permission to do something. However, it is fundamental to the concept of consent that the person give it themselves.” Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
- › **RESPECT is very important when it comes to consent.** “When someone respects another person, they ask for their opinion and take it into account” Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
- › This means that, to get consent, a person must listen and accept the response, whether or not it is consistent with the other person’s desired outcome (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
- › Someone who does not give clear consent is in fact refusing and therefore saying “No.” Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).

- › **Link** consent to everyday situations by asking:

- **Can you name some everyday situations that are EASY to agree (consent) to?**
  - **Give examples having to do with friends, family, school, etc.**

*Get their answers.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Examples of everyday situations that are **EASY** to agree (consent) to.
  - Agreeing to do enjoyable activities, such as:
    - Going shopping with your best friend.
    - Going to your friend’s house to listen to music.
    - Playing a video game with your friend.
    - Going for a bike ride with your family.
    - Having your friend braid your hair.
    - Going to a party with friends.
    - Etc.
  - When you agree to offer help or lend someone something:
    - Helping your little brother with his homework.
    - Lending your bike to your cousin.
    - Explaining the rules of a sport you are passionate about.
    - Etc.

- › **Continue** by stating that:
  - Some factors can make it hard for you to either agree to or refuse what someone is suggesting or asking.
  - For example, if your best friend suggests that you “go shopping” together, it can be hard to make a decision and say yes if:
    - Your friend always borrows money from you when you go shopping and never pays you back.
    - If your friend wants to go shopping at the same time as your mother’s birthday dinner.
    - If your friend has recently been making fun of you on social media.
    - Etc.
- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **Are there other factors that could make “going shopping with your best friend” something hard to agree to?**  
*Get their answers.*
- › **Ask** the group to think of factors that may make it difficult to “give consent” for two more situations:
  - **Are there any factors that might make it difficult for you to agree to “go to a party with friends”?**
  - **Are there any factors that might make it difficult for you to agree to “lend your bike to your friend’s cousin”?**
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Example: “Going to a party with friends.” This might be difficult to agree to if:
  - Your friends insist you go even though you already said no.
  - You know your friend will be upset if you refuse.
  - The party is at the home of someone you don’t like.
  - You know that some people will try to get alcohol, encourage you to drink, and call you a “baby” if you don’t.
  - Your parents don’t want you to go to this party.
  - Etc.
- › Example: “Lending your bike to your friend’s cousin.” This might be difficult to agree to if:
  - Your bike is brand new.
  - Your cousin tends to be careless with their things.
  - You want to use your bike tonight.
  - You worry it might get stolen.
  - Etc.

- › Before agreeing to do something, you have to determine your comfort level in the situation and learn to trust yourself to make the best decision.
- › **A NO is always a NO. And YES will come with conditions** (Rise Above, 2016).

## Group Activity, Discussion and Presentation

- › **Tell** the group that you will now present them with an “everyday situation” about consent that you will discuss together.
- › **Read over** the “Camille and Margaret” situational exercise (Sheet 3.2) and then **ask** the following questions:
  1. **Did Camille consent to Margaret giving her a massage in the cafeteria? What are the verbal signs (words) and non-verbal signs (actions) that tell you whether she consented or not?**
  2. **How could Margaret have offered her friend a “massage” while respecting Camille’s personal space?**
  3. **Why does Camille feel uncomfortable telling Margaret that she doesn’t want a massage? How could she tell her?**
- › **Share** the content for these questions on Sheet 3.3: *Answer Sheet: “Camille and Margaret” Situational Exercise*.
- › **Conclude** this first activity with the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **RESPECT is very important when it comes to consent.** Remember: “When someone respects another person, they ask for their opinion and take it into account” (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
- › Respecting your **BOUNDARIES** and the other person’s is also important.
  - Boundaries are “the limit of what someone considers to be acceptable behaviour” (Boundary, n.d.). Boundaries can also be defined as “the space between you and another person, and the unspoken rules of how you will treat someone and how you expect to be treated” (Educate Empower Kids).
  - Boundaries can also be thought of as “personal space,” or “freedom to be on your own at times; privacy; autonomy” (Personal space, n.d.). Children, adolescents and adults need this space (CHU Ste-Justine, 2018).
    - For example, you may want to hide your sadness from others because you aren’t comfortable sharing that feeling.
    - You may not want to tell your whole family you are in love because you want to keep that feeling private.

- Boundaries and personal space differ for each person and in each situation.
  - For example, you may be comfortable with your little sister playing with your hair at home, but you may not want your friends doing that in the gym at school.
  - For example, Camille and Margaret don't have the same boundaries or limits about touching in public.
- Everyone has their own personal space, and it is important to respect this space. Every time we do something to enter into someone's space, we have to make sure that the other person is comfortable with what we're doing.
- **Another important element of consent is the idea that it is FREELY GIVEN:**
  - Having the feeling of being free to accept or refuse (you do not feel obliged).
  - And that the other person will respect your choice, including the choice to change your mind, without trying to convince you otherwise or manipulate you.





# 2

## Activity 2



SHEETS: 3.4 AND 3.5  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MIN.



TEAM ACTIVITY



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Team Activity

- › Now that you have analyzed what consent means in everyday situations, **explain** that you will now look at consent in the context of romantic relationships and dating.
- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three or four.
- › **Tell them** that they will have to read a situational exercise (see Sheet 3.4: “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise) about consent and that they will have to answer different questions. **Give** them 10 minutes to complete the task.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › After the team activity, have everyone come back into a group. **Read** the situational exercise (Sheet 3.4: “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise) and **ask** each team to share their answers.
- › **Add** to their answers with the information on Sheet 3.5: *Answer Sheet: “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise*.
- › **Go over** the information about sexual consent below and then ask the question provided:
  - Whether in everyday situations or a romantic context, the same consent criteria apply:
    - RESPECT yourself and your partner.
    - Respect BOUNDARIES (yours and your partner’s).
    - Respect FREEDOM OF CHOICE (yours and your partner’s).
  - **What do you think “consent to sexual activity” means?** (“Sexual activity” refers to touching, kissing and any other type of sexual contact [Éducaloi, 2022a]).

*Get their answers.*

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



A Quebec study of over 3,000 people aged 17 to 29 found that most had not experienced a first penetrative sexual encounter by the age of 12 to 14 (Lambert, Mathieu-Chartier, Goggin, Maurais and the PIXEL team, 2016).

- ▶ One in twenty people (6%) of all genders combined had had their first penetrative sexual encounter before the age of 14 (Lambert and al., 2016).
- ▶ Ten out of twenty females (50%) and eight out of twenty males (40%) had experienced their first penetrative sexual encounter before the age of 17 (Lambert and al., 2016).
- ▶ Youths aged 12 to 14 experiment more with sexual activities such as kissing and fondling the body on and below the waist (Médico and Levy, 2008; Williams, Connolly and Cribbie, 2008).

Some specialists (e.g. pediatricians, psychologists, sexologists) consider sex before the age of 14 or 15 to be premature and are concerned about whether these young people have the necessary maturity for a positive experience. Also, people at this age may feel pressure to have sex.

It is therefore important to discuss the meaning of sexual consent and what motivates teens to engage in sexual activity in the early years of high school before they start becoming sexually active. Young people generally have their first sexual encounter spontaneously without planning it (e.g. at a party) (Lieberman, Goldfarb, Kwiatkowski and Santos, 2017). They must therefore have the tools to act in a way that truly aligns with their needs, values and limits while respecting those of their partner.

## Video

- › **Tell** the group that you are going to show them a video about consent.
  - In this video, a teen boy and girl demonstrate the simple steps of consent.
- › **Show** the following video:

**Ask. Listen. Respect: A Video About Consent (Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance, 2015)**

**Length:** 1 min., 11 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6X5I7xoxEY>**



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**
  - **What did you learn about consent?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Continue** the group discussion using the questions below:
  - **Why is it important to get someone's consent before engaging in sexual activity?**
  - **Why do you think we are talking to you about sexual consent at your age?**

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

› **It's important to make sure you get your partner's consent before engaging in any type of sexual activity because:**

- Consent is the basis of human relationships. And it simply means that you need to: Ask. Listen. Respect.
- This lets everyone feel respected and safe.
- When people are respectful and listen to each other, their relationship is based on trust, which is a positive thing!

› **We're talking about sexual consent at your age because:**

- BEFORE you decide to engage in sexual activity, you need to:
  - learn about sexual consent,
  - learn to respect your boundaries and those of others,
  - develop your ability to assert yourself.
- You need to learn about sexual consent and learn to respect your boundaries and those of others and develop your ability to assert yourself BEFORE you decide to engage in sexual activity.
- People your age can all have very different situations. Some people in high school have never dated or aren't interested in dating during this time. Others are currently going out with someone. Some may not want to have sex right now even if they have a boyfriend or girlfriend; however, that doesn't mean they can't kiss or cuddle. Others may have already started engaging in more intimate acts for the first time. Talking about sexual consent now lets you learn about how to act with someone you want to be more intimate with when the time comes.
- Finally, we are talking about consent now because you need to know what the law says about the ages of consent to sexual activity. These laws are in place to protect minors, or people under 18 years of age. This is what we'll go over in the next activity.



## Activity 3



**SHEETS 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 AND 3.9**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**30 MIN.**



**TEAM ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION**

## Presentation

- › **Introduce** the next activity, which aims to give the group a better understanding of sexual consent under the law.
- › **Share** the following information:
  - **What does the law say about the age of consent to sexual activity?**
    - Teenagers can consent to sexual activities. However, their consent is invalid (i.e. not recognized under the law) if they're considered too young to consent or if they're in a position of vulnerability with respect to their partner (Éducaloi, 2022a).
    - Consent to sexual touching means clearly showing that you agree, through your words or actions, to a sexual activity (Éducaloi, 2022b).
    - The age of consent, also known as the “age of protection,” is the age at which young people can “legally” consent to sexual activity (Royal, 2008).
    - In Canada, the “legal age” of consent to sexual activity is 16 (sexual activity is defined as kissing, touching and any other type of sexual contact) (Éducaloi, 2022b).
    - However, the law does have exceptions. For example, before the age of 16, teens can consent to sexual activity if their partner is about the same age; however, there are rules that apply to age differences.
    - It is important to know that, under the law, you cannot consent to sexual activity if you are under the age of 12 (12 years minus 1 day) (Éducaloi, 2022a).

Age and Sexual Consent	
Age of younger partner	Age difference allowed
Under 12 years old	<b>Consent is NEVER valid.</b> Before the age of 12, you can't consent to sexual activity.
<b>12-13 years old</b> For example, if a 13-year-old decides to engage in sexual activity...	<b>Less than 2 years</b> Their sexual partner cannot be 15 or older.
<b>14-15 years old</b>	<b>Less than 5 years</b>

- It is also important to know that consent is not valid if it does not comply with the law regarding the allowed age difference, even if a teen consents to the sexual activity and even if their parents agree.
- **What does it mean when sexual consent is not valid?**  
This means that, if the age difference exceeds the limits set out under the law, any sexual activity could be considered sexual assault even if the younger person consents.
- The older person could then be charged with this crime, which has serious consequences.
- In Canada, sexual assault is when one partner does not consent (agree) to sexual touching (Éducaloi, 2022b).

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of two.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 3.6: *Learn About Legal Age and Consent* to each team, which they will use to determine whether the two characters in the different scenarios would be “legally” allowed to have sex given their age difference. **Give** them 5 minutes to complete the task.

## Presentation

- › **Add** to the information on the legal right to engage in sexual activity for each situational exercise using the suggested content (see Sheet 3.7: *Answer Sheet: Learn About Legal Age and Consent*).

## Discussion

- › **Have** a discussion with the whole group:
  - **Why do you think there is a law about the age of sexual consent?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The purpose of this law is mainly to prevent adults from sexually exploiting “vulnerable” youths (Royal, 2008).
- › A large age difference between two teens who are dating can mean differences in maturity, development, independence, and sexual experiences. And this law is meant to protect the younger person.
- › The goal is to make sure that young teens discover their sexuality at their own pace while preventing an older person (an older adolescent or adult) from taking advantage of the younger person’s inexperience.
- › And even if the two are within the legal age difference, each partner must consent before engaging in sexual activity.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



This activity includes examples with youths who are homosexual, which may or may not elicit responses from the group. If anyone says something, it is important to address the comments to foster a climate of respect and openness to sexual diversity. The idea is not to start a discussion or debate about sexual diversity (this can be done later if necessary) but rather to quickly intervene to protect any sexually diverse youths in the group from derogatory comments.

If someone makes a hurtful comment, simply remind them that we live in a society that values and defends the equality, freedoms and rights of every person. Our society aims to be open and respectful of differences, whatever they may be. In fact, Quebec has a Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms that protects the rights of every person and prohibits against discrimination and harassment. “Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on race, colour, sex, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap” (Tribunal des droits de la personne, 2020, p. 50).

The idea is to get the group to think about why some people might react so negatively to sexual diversity (e.g. lack of knowledge, prejudice, unfounded fears).

This is why the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms is in place: to protect everyone and promote equality among all individuals.

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three. Hand out Sheet 3.8: “*Emma and William*” *Situational Exercise* to each team. After reading the situation, they must answer the questions. **Give** them 5 minutes to complete the task.
- › Then **bring** everyone back into a group; go through each question on Sheet 3.8 and ask the teams to share their answers.
- › **Add** to their answers with the provided content (Sheet 3.9: Answer Sheet: “*Emma and William*” *Situational Exercise*).

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Continue** the activity with the following questions:

- **Would your opinion be the same if the situation involved a 13-year-old boy and a 17-year-old girl? Explain.**
- **What if it were a 13-year-old boy dating a 17-year-old boy?**

*Get their answers.*

› **Add** to their answers with the information below:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Regardless of gender or sexual orientation (e.g. heterosexual, homosexual), there are differences in maturity, development and experience between a 13-year-old and a 17-year-old.
- › In the case of Emma and William, it is important to protect the 13-year-old in a relationship with a 17-year-old to ensure that the younger partner is not being manipulated, controlled or abused.

› **Continue** the discussion with the questions below:

- **If Emma were your friend, why would it be important to react?**
- **Given what you now know about sexual consent, what would you say to Emma if she were your friend?**
- **What would you like to say to William?**

*Get their opinions.*

**Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **As a friend, it is important to react for many reasons:**
  - Emma may feel so in love that she doesn't see the more concerning aspects of the relationship.
  - Talking about your perceptions and concerns may help her think differently about her relationship. It is better to help her reflect on her situation instead of accusing her of making bad choices.
  - To protect your 13-year-old friend, you want to make sure she's in a relationship without pressure, manipulation, etc.



› **What you might say to Emma:**

- First, ask her about her relationship so that you can understand her experience. Show an interest.
- Name your concerns by using “I” statements: “I’m worried” or “I’m concerned about... for x and y reason...”

Examples of concerns:

- That she and William have a really big difference in age and development.
- That the relationship is pushing her to skip steps to get to William’s level.
- That William could be a bad influence on her. For example, he might get her to use alcohol or drugs.
- That William is pressuring her to have sex and she doesn’t know how to say no.
- That William is deciding everything for her since he is older.
- That she has trouble speaking up for what she wants and setting limits.
- That this relationship is taking her away from her friends and that she no longer confides in them.

› **What you might say to William:**

- You could ask him:
  - “Why is a 17-year-old guy interested in a 13-year-old girl? ”
  - “How would he feel at a party with Emma’s friends? Would he have the same interests and things to talk about as 13-year-olds?”
  - “Does he feel that he and Emma are at the same stage in their lives?”
  - “Why isn’t he in a relationship with a girl his own age?”
  - “What are his intentions toward Emma?”
- You could remind him of the law about the age of sexual consent:
  - “If he engages in sexual activity with Emma, who is 13 years old, he could be charged with sexual assault.”

- › If you are concerned about your friend’s safety, it is important to talk to a trusted adult (e.g. your parents, school or youth centre workers, Tel-jeunes, Kids Help Phone, etc.).

- › To end this activity about age differences and sexual consent, **share** the thoughts below of a 9-year-old boy and **ask** the group what they think about what he had to say.

• **Comments from Bertrand, 9 years old.**

During a discussion in an elementary school class, Bertrand, a 9-year-old student, said that he heard about an 11-year-old girl dating a 16-year-old boy. All of the students in the class were shocked. Bertrand shared his thoughts:

“If the boy really loved the girl, he should be the one to realize that she is way too young for him. He’s the older one, and he has to wait until she’s older so that he doesn’t steal her childhood.”

(Lejeune, Grombeer and Duez, 1997).

• **What do you think?**



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.
  - **What did you learn from this session on everyday consent and sexual consent?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to what they say with the following key components:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Some key aspects of sexual consent to remember:**
- › **Listen:**
  - Pay attention to the other person's verbal messages (words) and non-verbal messages (actions).
- › **Go at your own pace:**
  - Don't feel the need to get to the next step in sexual maturity; you don't need to feel pressured to be sexually active. Give yourself time to mature before making these choices; even if you consider yourself "mature," you aren't necessarily mature in all areas of your life.
  - When someone asks you to do something, think about what you want before agreeing.
  - Respect your boundaries and limits and learn to name them.
- › **Respect others:**
  - Respect your partner's boundaries and limits.
  - Ensure you get their verbal consent. If they say that they aren't sure or don't want to, don't insist, don't make them feel guilty, and let them go at their own pace.
  - Allow your partner to make their own choices.
- › A NO is a NO. An I DON'T KNOW is a NO. And YES will come with conditions (Rise Above, 2016).
- › "A yes comes with conditions" means :
  - Even if you say "Yes," you are always allowed to change your mind.
  - You may like to cuddle with your boyfriend or girlfriend and feel like kissing them, but that doesn't mean you have to go any further (e.g. engage in sexual activity).
  - You have to pay attention not only to what your partner says but also to their non-verbal messages. Don't insist when the other person hesitates, doesn't know what to say, or is embarrassed.
- › You can say Yes! You can say No!



## SHEET

### 3.1

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Learn More About Consent

This sheet provides essential information about sexual consent all in one place. You don't need to share all of this content with the group, but it may help you answer their questions. You will find this same sheet in all sessions on consent in the Be True to You program, i.e. those in Secondary 3 and 4. This sheet provides key legal definitions and information but does not replace legal advice.

Also, please note that this sheet was created in 2021; this means that it may not account for any legal changes that occur following the publication of the Be True to You program.

Sexual consent is associated with different criteria in the literature on this topic. For example, there is a distinction between sexual behaviour that is neither desirable nor acceptable in society and behaviour that is punishable by law. This sheet therefore provides the legal and social definitions.

### SEXUAL CONSENT:

#### Legal criteria:

*Free, voluntary, informed consent that can be withdrawn at any time.*

- › **An agreement that a person expresses clearly** through both their words and actions (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- › **Must be free:** This means that consent during a sexual relationship is not obtained through the use of physical coercion, blackmail or threats (Éducaloi, 2022a). Both people in a relationship must have equal power to decide whether they want a sexual relationship or not. Each person must therefore feel free to accept, refuse, or change their mind without fearing the other person's reaction.
- › **Informed:** The person must be in a state to give consent (Éducaloi, 2022a). The law states that a person who is sleeping or unconscious cannot give consent. When it comes to intoxication with drugs or alcohol, legally a person must be in a very advanced state of intoxication to be unable to consent to sexual contact. For example, a person who has consumed alcohol or drugs can consent to sexual activity, unless their condition makes it impossible for them to remember what they are doing.
- › **Can be withdrawn at any time** (Éducaloi, 2022a): Even if you consent to sexual activity, you have the right to change your mind at any time.
- › **Is not valid if one of the partners is in a position of authority or trust or if there is a situation of dependency or exploitation** (Éducaloi, 2022a): For example, even if an adolescent is of the legal age to consent to sexual activity, they cannot consent to sexual activity with a coach or teacher since this person is in a position of authority over them.

- › **Must be given for each individual sexual act:** The person who initiates the sexual activity must always check how the other person feels about each sexual act (e.g. kissing, fondling) (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- › **May not be presumed:** This means that you can never assume that the other person is consenting. You cannot decide on your own whether the other person consents without checking with them first. In the case of sexual assault, the offender cannot defend themselves by saying that they thought that the other person had consented.
- › **Failure to obtain sexual consent from your partner can result in sexual assault, which is a criminal offence that can be punishable by law** (Éducaloi, 2022a). Whether you're in a relationship with someone or dating them or they are just an acquaintance, it's important to make sure the person also wants to have sexual contact.

### Social criteria: enthusiastic consent

- › **Must be expressed in an enthusiastic way:** The act of showing enthusiasm is a criteria that is often described in relation to consent (Duquette, Soubeyrand-Faghel & Paume, 2019; Gouvernement du Québec, 2022). Showing enthusiasm (or not) can help a partner pick up on signs of consent or non-consent. However, this criteria is not included in the sections of the law that relate to consent. It is more of a social criteria. Some signs can indicate a person's enthusiasm: they may respond to the other person's advances, smile, or hug and caress them back, etc. Even adults can find it hard to distinguish between signs of enthusiasm and signs of discomfort or shyness in a partner. That's why it's important to be attentive to the other person at all times when you are being intimate and check in to see how they are feeling.

### Ages to remember:

- › **12 years minus one day:** Consent is never valid.
- › **12 years old:** The age at which a youth can be charged with a crime (Éducaloi, 2017).
- › **16 years old:** The age of sexual consent in Canada (Royal, 2008; Éducaloi, 2022b).
- › **Important to explain:** Although the age of consent is 16, the law does set out exceptions for sexual encounters (e.g. kissing, fondling, sexual relations) between young people of about the same age before they turn 16 (Éducaloi, 2022b).

The following table from Éducaloi (2022b) describes the exceptions for consent between young people under 16 years of age. It gives the age difference that cannot be exceeded in order for consent to be valid.

Age of younger partner	Age difference allowed
Less than 12 years (i.e. 12 years minus one day)	Consent is NEVER valid.
12-13 years old	Less than 2 years
14-15 years old	Less than 5 years

## Definitions that may be useful:

### Behaviour that may lead to legal consequences

- › **Sexual offences:** Refers to all crimes of a sexual nature, including sexual assault (Éducaloi, 2022c).
- › **Sexual assault:** Sexual assault is when one partner does not consent (agree) to sexual touching. Sexual touching can be a kiss, a caress or any other type of sexual act (Éducaloi, 2022a).

### Behaviours that do not always have legal consequences but that are neither desirable nor acceptable in society

- › **Sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment is not a crime, but it is prohibited in the workplace.

The term “harassment” usually refers to repeated acts. However, there may be cases in which the severity or intent could result in the act being considered harassment, even if it only occurred once.

### Sexual harassment can take many forms:

- › **Verbal:** Sexist, crude or degrading jokes; remarks about physical appearance; remarks about someone’s private life; use of slang or degrading, homophobic or sexist terms; use of insinuation; repeated invitations of all kinds; explicit sexual propositions; veiled or open promises in exchange for sexual favours.
- › **Non-verbal:** Whistling; looks with sexual connotations; display of degrading or pornographic material; signs with explicit sexual connotations; the harasser is constantly around; messages of a sexual, sexist or homophobic nature.
- › **Physical:** Intentionally brushing past someone; physical fondling or touching such as slapping the buttocks; tickling; pinching; kissing; pushing into a corner, etc. (Duquette et al., 2019).

**Sexual misconduct:** In the media, we have heard the term “sexual misconduct” used a lot in reference to public figures who have made headlines for questionable sexual behaviour. In an everyday context, sexual misconduct usually refers to behaviour that society considers inappropriate or undesirable. This term can also refer to sexist or sexually degrading comments, homophobic comments and profanity. Overall, this is a very vague term used in many ways to describe all sorts of behaviour. While sexual misconduct is not a crime defined in the criminal code, it may technically include behaviours that are punishable by law.

The term “sexual misconduct” is used in professional codes to refer to prohibited behaviours between professionals and the people they help. In these cases, legal proceedings may be initiated against the offending professionals.

### How a teen could respond if a friend confides in them that they have been sexually assaulted:

- › **Listen to your friend without judging them.** Let them speak at their own pace and in their own words; avoid bombarding them with questions or cutting them off. You don’t need to know the details about the assault. The important thing is to focus on the person’s feelings and what they need (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, n.d.).
- › **Believe what the person says** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, n.d.). Even if the assailant is someone you know and this brings up many emotions for you, it is important not to question what the victim has told you. It takes a lot of courage to tell someone about sexual assault.

- › **Validate their emotions** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, n.d.). If the person tells you that they feel angry or guilty about the assault, you can tell them that it is normal to have these emotions about a sexual assault and that you understand what they're feeling.
- › **Tell the person that they have no need to feel guilty** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, n.d.). Often people think that a sexual assault is their fault. You can tell them that it is not their fault. The assailant was the one who did not check with the person about how they felt and whether they really consented to the act. Some people who sexually assault simply have bad intentions, do not want to hear a “no” from their victim and ignore any signal that shows a lack of consent.
- › **Keep what they say confidential.** Do not repeat it to anyone else so that the person feels safe. However, do not keep the secret at all costs. Do not repeat the story to other kids your age or to your family; however, it is important to tell a trusted adult who can help (e.g. teacher, counsellor, Tel-jeunes, Kids Help Phone).
- › **Refer the person to resources** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, n.d.). You can tell the person that there are trusted adults who can help. If the person is afraid, you can offer to go to the resource with them. For example, you can go with them to see a trusted school counsellor. You can also be there when they call an assistance organization for help.



## “Camille and Margaret” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- › Read the situation to the group and discuss the questions.

### Situational Exercise

**Camille**, 14, is eating in the school cafeteria with her friends.

She saves a seat for her friend **Margaret**, who is supposed to join them. When she arrives, Camille is very happy to see her! Margaret is a very good friend of hers, and they have a strong connection.

While everyone is chatting after lunch, Margaret asks Camille to turn her back to her. Then Margaret starts massaging her shoulders. Camille feels uncomfortable and doesn't know how to react. Margaret keeps massaging her back. Camille tenses up and doesn't dare tell her to stop. She's afraid that if she tells Margaret she doesn't like the massage that she will disappoint her and that she will seem weird if she reacts in front of their friends.

**Ask** the following questions:

1. Did Camille consent to Margaret giving her a massage in the cafeteria? Were there any verbal signs (e.g. words) or non-verbal signs (e.g. actions) indicating whether Camille consented or not?
2. How could Margaret have offered a massage while respecting Camille's personal space?
3. Why does Camille feel uncomfortable telling Margaret that she doesn't want a massage? How could she tell her?



## Answer Sheet: “Camille and Margaret” Situational Exercise

### Situational Exercise

**Camille**, 14, is eating in the school cafeteria with her friends. She saves a seat for her friend **Margaret**, who is supposed to join them. When she arrives, Camille is very happy to see her! Margaret is a very good friend of hers, and they have a strong connection.

While everyone is chatting after lunch, Margaret asks Camille to turn her back to her. Then Margaret starts massaging her shoulders. Camille feels uncomfortable and doesn't know how to react. Margaret keeps massaging her back. Camille tenses up and doesn't dare tell her to stop. She's afraid that if she tells Margaret she doesn't like the massage that she will disappoint her and that she will seem weird if she reacts in front of their friends.

- › **Add** to their answers with the information below.

#### Question 1

#### Possible answers

**Did Camille consent to Margaret giving her a massage in the cafeteria?**

**Were there any verbal signs (e.g. words) or non-verbal signs (e.g. actions) indicating whether Camille consented or not?**

No. Camille agreed to turn her back to Margaret when Margaret asked, but she did not consent to Margaret giving her a massage.

**Verbal signs:**

- › Camille didn't say anything: no verbal sign.
- › But that doesn't mean she consents to or is comfortable with the situation.

**Non-verbal signs:**

- › She tenses up.
- › She feels uncomfortable.
- › She doesn't say anything.

**Additional information:**

It's important to make sure that the other person is comfortable when we enter their personal space. This applies to all situations: borrowing something from someone, asking for a favour or physically touching someone.

Pay attention to the other person's non-verbal signs. If the person doesn't seem to want you to do what you are doing, don't insist. Also, if you don't get a response, the other person may not be paying attention or not know how to say no. The best thing is not to do anything until the other person gives their consent.



## Question 2

## Possible answers

**How could Margaret have offered her friend a “massage” while respecting Camille’s personal space?**

- › Margaret didn’t ask Camille if she wanted a massage. She asked Camille to turn her back to her without explaining why, and then began to massage her shoulders.

### **Margaret should have...**

- › Asked Camille if she wanted a massage.
- › Paid attention to her friend’s non-verbal cues (e.g. she tensed up and stopped talking).
- › And even if Camille clearly agreed to get a shoulder massage, Margaret still needs to ask if she still likes it while massaging her.

### **Additional information:**

Since Camille’s back is to Margaret, Margaret can’t see her face, which means that she can’t visually check whether Camille seems to be enjoying the massage.

We don’t necessarily know the limits of our friends, which is why it is important to respect their personal space and their boundaries:

- › Even if Margaret had good intentions, her friend may not be interested in this kind of physical contact.
- › Some people may not like this kind of touching.
- › For other people, some kinds of touching can trigger bad memories.
- › Also, Margaret giving Camille a massage in the cafeteria might make their other friends at the table uncomfortable. This may not be the best time or place.

### Question 3

### Possible answers

**Why does Camille feel uncomfortable telling Margaret that she doesn't want a massage?**

**How could she tell her?**

- › Camille has a right to feel uncomfortable.
- › But she's afraid of offending her friend by saying she doesn't like it.
- › She's also worried that her friends will think she's weird if she reacts in front of them.

**Camille could have:**

- › Simply told Margaret that it's nice of her but that she doesn't feel like a massage. She could then naturally continue the conversation with Margaret so that she doesn't feel offended (e.g. "How was your Math class this morning?")
- › If she is really too embarrassed to say something, she could find an excuse to leave (e.g. say she has to go get something from her locker).
- › Later, Camille could wait until she is alone with Margaret and talk to her about the situation. Perhaps Margaret sensed Camille's discomfort and they could discuss it.

#### **Additional information:**

Camille may feel uncomfortable for different reasons. This may be because:

- › They are in a public place (e.g. the school cafeteria).
- › She did not expect a massage and did not ask for one.
- › For her, a massage is a more intimate act.
- › She doesn't think that friends should give each other massages.
- › She's afraid that others will think that Camille and Margaret's relationship is more intense than a friendship, which is not the case.
- › Or it could be that Camille has feelings for Margaret and feels embarrassed when she's close to her.
- › Etc.

Even though Camille and Margaret are friends in this case, the situation could still cause discomfort even if they were dating each other. It is important to respect the limits of your boyfriend or girlfriend. You must get consent BEFORE you enter someone's personal space in any way.



## SHEET

### 3.4

FOR THE GROUP

## “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situational exercise and answer the questions.

### Situational Exercise

**Malik**, 15, is at the youth centre. **Alice**, whom he finds very nice, is also there, but he has never dared to approach her at school. Malik screws up his courage and decides to go and talk to her. Luckily, she’s with two of her friends, which makes it easier to strike up a conversation. Every time their eyes meet, they smile at each other. They end up having a lot of laughs together.

Malik feels that there is a vibe between them and wants to get closer to her (which is not easy in a wheelchair). He’s not 100% sure if Alice is interested in him, but he senses there may be something between them. Before leaving, he would like to give her a quick kiss as a way of telling her that he wants to go out with her. He wants to make sure she agrees before he does it, but how should he ask her? He’s afraid he’ll look weird if he asks her if he can kiss her. Is he going too fast?

1. Are there any verbal signs (words) or non-verbal signs (actions) from Alice that would make Malik believe she would agree to kiss him?

Verbal signs: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-verbal signs: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Above all, what do you think Malik should avoid in his interaction with Alice?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What should Malik do to get Alice’s consent before kissing her?

\_\_\_\_\_



## SHEET

### 3.5

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: “Malik and Alice” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situational exercise and ask each team to share their answers.
- › Add to their answers with the content below:

### Situational Exercise

**Malik**, 15, is at the youth centre. **Alice**, whom he finds very nice, is also there, but he has never dared to approach her at school. Malik screws up his courage and decides to go and talk to her. Luckily, she’s with two of her friends, which makes it easier to strike up a conversation. Every time their eyes meet, they smile at each other. They end up having a lot of laughs together.

Malik feels that there is a vibe between them and wants to get closer to her (which is not easy in a wheelchair). He’s not 100% sure if Alice is interested in him, but he senses there may be something between them. Before leaving, he would like to give her a quick kiss as a way of telling her that he wants to go out with her. He wants to make sure she agrees before he does it, but how should he ask her? He’s afraid he’ll look weird if he asks her if he can kiss her. Is he going too fast?

### Question 1

### Possible answers

**Are there any verbal signs (words) or non-verbal signs (actions) from Alice that would make Malik believe she would like to kiss him?**

**There are a few signs that Alice is enjoying his company:**

- › Verbal signs: She chats with him and their conversation is easy.
- › Non-verbal signs: She smiles at him and they laugh together.

**But none of these signs indicate that Alice wants to kiss him.**

- › Alice may enjoy talking to Malik, laugh at his jokes, and find him friendly but not want to go any further.
- › It’s hard for him to know if she wants to get close to Malik or even kiss him without asking her directly.
- › But Malik is right to wonder if he’s taking things too quickly.

## Question 2

## Possible answers

**Above all, what do you think Malik should avoid in his interaction with Alice?**

- › **He shouldn't be too quick to interpret Alice's reactions and should check with her before getting ideas.**
- › **He can't think only about what he wants.**

You can't decide to kiss someone just because you feel like it. Each person has to consent. However, Malik has developed a good attitude of empathy with the reflex of caring about Alice's desires and not just his own.
- › **He should not skip steps.**

It takes a while to get to know someone. Malik doesn't know if his feelings for Alice are mutual, especially since they have only known each other a short time. Kissing her right now could have the opposite effect of what he wants.

## Question 3

## Possible answers

**What should Malik do to get Alice's consent before kissing her?**

- › **He has to ask himself if this is really the right time or if things are going too fast.**

When in doubt, it's best not to try to kiss her and to continue to have fun talking together, without any pressure.
- › **He can analyze her non-verbal language.**

By approaching her, he can see whether his presence makes Alice uncomfortable (e.g. she looks away, stops talking, laughs nervously, freezes). If this happens, it's better not to insist.
- › **He can take a more direct first step.**

First, he can tell her that he really liked spending time with her and that he is already looking forward to seeing her again. "I would like to kiss you, but I don't want to rush anything." Does she feel the same way? Would she agree?
- › **He can even add some humour to the situation.**

Say to her, "How about a multiple-choice quiz: A) "Okay, we can kiss; B) Maybe some other time; or C) It was fun chatting together, but no thanks."
- › **If she refuses, he shouldn't insist.**

Malik must accept the rejection and not question Alice's decision. Most importantly, he must not try to kiss her if she says no.
- › **If she says no, he should not react badly.**

It can be disappointing and even embarrassing to get rejected. These emotions are understandable, but so is the other person's decision. Malik shouldn't manipulate Alice by making her feel bad for saying no. Likewise, he shouldn't blame himself if his approach doesn't work.
- › **If she says yes, he should also not assume that this will lead to anything else.**

He has to get consent every time. If Alice agrees to kiss him, this doesn't mean she wants to do anything more. Malik would have to ask her again in that case. This is also true for Malik. He shouldn't feel obliged to go further after the kiss if he doesn't want to!



# SHEET

## 3.6

FOR THE GROUP

### Learn About Legal Age and Consent

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › First, read the situational exercises as a team and indicate whether the two people in each case are **LEGALLY ALLOWED** to engage in sexual activity and why.

Are these two people LEGALLY ALLOWED to engage in sexual activity?	What do YOU think?	
	YES	NO
<p><b>Zoé, 13, and her boyfriend David, 17.</b></p> <p>Why or why not? _____ _____</p>		
<p><b>Julia, 16, and Chayton, her best friend's 25-year-old brother.</b></p> <p>Why or why not? _____ _____</p>		
<p><b>Shania, 17, and Leo, her 21-year-old volleyball coach.</b></p> <p>Why or why not? _____ _____</p>		
<p><b>Grace, 11 and Alexandro, 12.</b></p> <p>Why or why not? _____ _____</p>		
<p><b>Jonathan, 15, and his boyfriend, Elliot, 19.</b></p> <p>Why or why not? _____ _____</p>		



# SHEET

## 3.7

FOR SESSION LEADERS

### Answer Sheet: Learn About Legal Age and Consent

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Go over the group’s answers by comparing them to what is prescribed by Canadian law.
- › Add to their answers from the content in the table below.

Are these two people LEGALLY allowed to engage in sexual activity?	What do YOU think?	
	YES	NO
<p><b>Zoé, 13, and her boyfriend, David, 17.</b></p> <p>Why, according to the law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Under the law, Zoe could consent if David were between 13 and 15 years old.</li> <li>› Here the age difference is too great.</li> <li>› David is older; he is committing an offence and risks being charged with sexual assault or taken into juvenile services if he engages in sexual activity with Zoé, even if she said yes before, even if she was the one initiated it, and even if their parents agreed to it (Éducaloi, 2022c; Institut national de santé publique, n.d.).</li> <li>› Specialists (e.g. psychologists, sexologists, pediatricians) believe that sex before the age of 14 or 15 is premature and that this is cause for concern regardless of gender or sexual orientation. These specialists wonder if teenagers at this age are mature enough to have a positive experience.</li> </ul>		X
<p><b>Julia, 16, and Chayton, her best friend’s 25-year-old brother.</b></p> <p>Why, according to the law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› At 16, Julia is of legal age to consent to sexual activity.</li> <li>› However, if she is dependent on Chayton, her consent is no longer valid. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For example, if she lives with Chayton and cannot live somewhere else, she cannot consent to sexual activity with him (Éducaloi, 2022c).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	X	

Are these two people LEGALLY allowed to engage in sexual activity?	What do YOU think?	
	YES	NO
<p><b>Shania, 17 years old, and Léo, her volleyball coach who is 21 years old.</b></p> <p>Why, according to the law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The relationship between Shania and her coach is one of authority, trust and dependence. This means that her coach has power in this relationship. Although Shania is 17 years old, if she agrees to engage in sexual activity with Leo, who is her coach, her consent would not be considered valid, i.e., it would not be valid in the eyes of the law.</li> <li>› Because he is her coach and Shania is a minor (under the age of 18), Leo could be charged with sexual assault if he engages in any sexual activity with Shania. It is up to him, the adult, not to start this relationship and to be aware of the legal and psychological consequences that this situation might cause.</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <p>There are also ethical implications to consider about this relationship: can the coach separate the romantic relationship and the coaching relationship?</p> <p>The ins-and-outs of a romantic relationship could take its toll; again, he is the one who must show responsibility and keep a distance between himself and his players.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Can he be as objective and fair with Shania as he is with the other players on the team?</li> <li>› And what happens if they break up? Could he risk blackmailing her and threatening not to give her play time if she doesn't do what he says?</li> </ul>		X
<p><b>Grace, 11 and Alexandro, 12.</b></p> <p>Why, according to the law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› At age 11, sexual activity is completely prohibited by law. Alexandro is committing an offence if he decides to engage in sexual activity with Grace, even if she says yes and even if she was the one who initiated it.</li> </ul>		X

Are these two people LEGALLY allowed to engage in sexual activity?	What do YOU think?	
	YES	NO
<p><b>Jonathan, 15, and his boyfriend, Elliot, 19.</b></p> <p>Why, according to the law?</p> <p>Jonathan can consent to sexual activity with an older partner, but this person cannot be 20 or older.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Although the law recognizes that Jonathan, who is 15 years old, can consent to sexual activity with a 19-year-old young adult, there may be differences in maturity and development between the two. We then worry that the older person may take advantage of the naivety and inexperience of the younger one.</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Their relationship may be very respectful and egalitarian, but one could also wonder why a 19-year-old young adult would be interested in a 15-year-old teenager.</li> </ul>		X





## SHEET

### 3.8

#### FOR THE GROUP

## “Emma and William” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situational exercise and answer the questions.

### Situational Exercise

**Emma**, 13, has been dating **William**, 17, for a few weeks. William invites Emma to a party at a friend’s house. At the party, Emma feels cool around the older kids. She quickly notices that the evening is quite different from the ones with her friends: people are drinking and making out in front of each other.

Seeing that his girlfriend is alone, William comes and sits next to her and kisses her before suggesting they go to a room “to have some alone time.” Emma wonders if she should say yes, because she doesn’t want William to think she’s immature. Then she thinks that William has had girlfriends in the past: she’s afraid that he’ll leave her if she doesn’t have sex with him.

- › What do you think of this situation?

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- › What would motivate a 13-year-old girl to date a 17-year-old boy?

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- › What would motivate a 17-year-old boy to date a 13-year-old girl?

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- › Based on what you now know about sexual consent, what do you think is problematic about Emma and William’s relationship?

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## Answer Sheet: “Emma and William” Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Go over each question with the group and ask the different teams to share their answers.**
- › **Add to their answers with the information below for each question.**

### Situational Exercise

**Emma**, 13, has been dating **William**, 17, for a few weeks. William invites Emma to a party at a friend’s house. At the party, Emma feels cool around the older kids. She quickly notices that the evening is quite different from the ones with her friends: people are drinking and making out in front of each other.

Seeing that his girlfriend is alone, William comes and sits next to her and kisses her before suggesting they go to a room “to have some alone time.” Emma wonders if she should say yes, because she doesn’t want William to think she’s immature. Then she thinks that William has had girlfriends in the past: she’s afraid that he’ll leave her if she doesn’t have sex with him.

- › **What do you think of this situation?**
  - Some people may be okay with this and some may not.
  - Some may consider this relationship to be fine as long as William doesn’t pressure Emma. Others may not be concerned about the consequences of a relationship with such an age difference.
  - Emma’s parents and William’s parents may be concerned about this relationship.
  - When there is an age difference, the two people are likely to be at different stages in terms of their:
    - Development and maturity, e.g. the younger person may be exposed to different situations, activities or topics of discussion that are not appropriate for their level of development (e.g. alcohol, drugs, sexual content).
    - General independence (e.g. the older person may have a driver’s license, more freedom given by their parents).
    - Financial independence (e.g. having a job).
    - Romantic and sexual experiences (e.g. because the younger person has less experience and may look up to their older partner, they may have more difficulty refusing than if they too were 17).
    - Etc.

- The fact that Emma is alone at the party shows she is having trouble fitting in with William's friends. She may not know how to behave with the others out of a fear of coming across "like a baby," or William's friends may not know what to say to her to help her fit in.
- They don't know each other very well yet (they've only been dating for a few weeks) and it may have been too soon to invite her to this party.
- The fact that William doesn't try to help her feel included with his friends and leaves her alone during the party questions the connection between William and Emma in this very new romantic relationship.

› **In your opinion, what would motivate a 13-year-old girl to date a 17-year-old boy?**

- Researchers have asked teens what they think would motivate a 13-year-old girl to date an older boy (Duquet & Quiénart, 2009; Tener, 2020).

These motivations could be:

- Wanting to be cool.
- Wanting to seem more mature than other people her age.
- Wanting to project an image of being more mature.
- Wanting to impress her friends and feel good about herself.
- Wanting to act out against her parents.
- Looking for a boy who is more mature and has more experiences than the boys in her age group.
- Feeling flattered that someone older finds her interesting and wants to be in a romantic relationship with her.
- Not knowing how to refuse someone who asks to be her boyfriend.
- Finding that 17-year-old boys are more physically attractive (Tener, 2020).
- Finding that they offer better emotional support (e.g. listening skills, advice) because of their maturity and experiences (Tener, 2020).
- Finding that he can better meet her needs. Since some older teens have jobs, it can be easier for them to buy things (clothes, jewelry) and pay for activities (movies, restaurants) (Tener, 2020). If her partner has a driver's license and access to a car, they have the freedom to go where they want. Or if her partner has an apartment, they may like having more privacy at this place than at his parents' home.

› **In your opinion, what would motivate a 17-year-old boy to date a 13-year-old girl?**

- Researchers have asked teens what they think would motivate a 17-year-old boy to date a younger girl (Duquet and Quiénart, 2009). These motivations could be:
  - Feeling less of an age difference because some girls this age not only look older but are also more mature for their age.
  - Having difficulty dating girls his own age.
  - Feeling good about himself because his girlfriend admires him.
  - Having more control over a younger girl than a girl his own age; there is a risk he may take advantage of the girl's inexperience and naivety, including when it comes to sexual activity.

› **Based on what you now know about sexual consent, what do you think is problematic about Emma and William’s relationship?**

- This relationship is not based on equality:
  - Emma fears that William may not find her “as mature” as he initially thought. She may pressure herself to be taken seriously by William and the other 17-year-olds, and she may want to pretend to be someone she’s not just to seem cool.
  - The fact that William is older gives him more power in this relationship.
  - There isn’t a strong connection between them: he left her alone during the party until he felt like kissing her and inviting her to a room.
- Sexual consent in this case is not valid:
  - The fact that Emma thinks that William might leave her if she refuses to have sex with him indicates that she is not actually consenting to sexual activity but is instead only agreeing to keep William from breaking up with her.
  - Under the law, Emma’s consent to sexual activity with William would not be valid. Their age difference is prohibited under the law, i.e. less than 2 years when the younger partner is 13 years old. William could therefore be charged with sexual assault, even if Emma says yes in good faith.

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- › Tribunal des droits de la personne. (2020). *La Charte des droits et des libertés de la personne du Québec en bref*. [https://tribunaldesdroitsdelapersonne.ca/fileadmin/tribunal-droits-personne/pdf/Charte\\_en\\_bref\\_version\\_double\\_finale.pdf](https://tribunaldesdroitsdelapersonne.ca/fileadmin/tribunal-droits-personne/pdf/Charte_en_bref_version_double_finale.pdf)
- › Williams, T., Connolly, J., and Cribbie, R. (2008). Light and Heavy Heterosexual Activities of Young Canadian Adolescents: Normative Patterns and Differential Predictors. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 18(1), 145-172. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2008.00554.x>

## Videos

- › Rise Above (February 14, 2016). *What is Consent?* [video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO3i1EJE6DI>
- › Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance (August 31, 2015). *Ask. Listen. Respect: A Video About Consent* [video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6X5I7xoxEY>



## Secondary 2 - Session 4

### First times “How Do You Know If You’re Ready?”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual behaviour</b>	<p><b>Discuss the characteristics of sexual behaviour in adolescence and the motivations behind it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Role of emotional commitment: first sexual contact is often experienced with a romantic partner</li> <li>› Exploratory and progressive nature of sexual behaviour: sequence of sexual behaviours, from exploratory activities (kissing, touching) to genital sexual relations</li> </ul> <p><b>Recognize what can inform your choices concerning sexual behaviour in adolescence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Knowing yourself: attitudes toward sexual behaviours (e.g., masturbation, touching, kissing, embracing), feelings, motivations, expectations, needs and limits</li> <li>› Relationship with your partner: nature and intensity of shared feelings, comfort and trust felt with your partner, ability to respect the needs and limits of your partner</li> <li>› Real or perceived pressure from peers and the media</li> </ul>
<b>Comprehensive view of sexuality</b>	<p><b>Become aware that during adolescence, you will gradually adopt new roles and behaviours related to your sexuality and increasingly make your own decisions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Sexuality and its dimensions: biological, psychoaffective, sociocultural, interpersonal, moral</li> <li>› Construction of a vision and personal choices: wishes, needs, limits and the ability to consider those of others, whether or not to follow various gender stereotypes and social norms</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<b>Health and well-being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good lifestyle habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<b>Intellectual competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<b>Personal and social competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <b>Communication-related competency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Personal development subject area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Autonomy and Interdependence

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<b>Studies a cultural reality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<b>Reflects on an ethical question</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<b>Understand the characteristics of sexual behaviour in adolescence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Exploratory, progressive and emotional nature of sexual behaviour</li> </ul> <b>Understand the elements that can support choices related to sexual behaviour in order to have a positive experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Self-knowledge, self-assertion and negotiation</li> <li>› Characteristics of relationships and mutuality</li> <li>› Anticipation of positive or negative implications</li> <li>› Real or perceived pressure</li> </ul> <b>Understand the notion of consent in order to recognize a situation of sexual violence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Elements of consent and contexts in which consent is invalid</li> </ul>	<b>Reflect on the ambivalence created by some contradictory norms, such as differentiated norms for sexual behaviour in adolescence</b>  <b>Reflect on the tensions between feelings, values and norms related to sexual behaviour and on the elements that can support choices in order to have a positive experience</b>





## Educational Goals



**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Become aware of the challenges faced in terms of first sexual behaviours in adolescence (from the first kiss to first intimate activities).**

- 1. Differentiate** between the concepts of sex and sexuality by considering the more limiting aspects of the former and the more encompassing aspects of the latter.
- 2. Discuss** the reasons why it is important to talk about sexuality, and particularly sexual behaviour, with people their age.
- 3. Discuss** the role of first kisses in adolescence and the worries surrounding the prospect of a first kiss.
- 4. Recognize** the situations where we might be pressured to engage in intimate activities and the signs that we are or aren't ready.
- 5. Distinguish** the different kinds of intimate activities typical of adolescence (affectionate behaviours, sexual behaviours, genital sexual behaviours) based on their perceived level of intimacy.
- 6. Discuss** the various factors that may influence the decision to engage in intimate activities (consent, age, etc.), questions and worries that may arise and ways of communicating whether you're ready or not ready to have these experiences.
- 7. Discuss** the importance of following a progression when exploring sexuality and engaging in sexual behaviours during adolescence, while respecting our boundaries and the other person's boundaries.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **three activities**.

10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Brainstorming:</b> Sex or sexuality?</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Differences between sex and sexuality Dimensions of sexuality</li> </ul>
25 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> The “first kiss”</li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Blog – Questions on the first kiss <i>Sheet 4.1a: “Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #1 and #2”</i> <i>Sheet 4.1b: “Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #3 and #4”</i> <i>Sheet 4.2: Answer sheet: “Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #1 to #4”</i></li> </ul>
30 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Situational exercise on intimate contact</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> How do you know if you’re ready? <i>Sheet 4.3a: Situational exercise: Philip</i> <i>Sheet 4.3b: Answer sheet: Situational exercise: Philip</i> <i>Sheet 4.4a: Situational exercise: Rania</i> <i>Sheet 4.4b: Answer sheet: Situational exercise: Rania</i></li> </ul>
10 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and key messages</b> from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow (PPT)** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)



## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



BRAINSTORMING



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

## Session Introduction

- › **Begin** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Next, **tell** the students the topic of the session: *first intimate activities, including sexual behaviours; including first kisses, snuggling and more intimate sexual contact*, and how to know if you feel ready to have your first sexual experiences.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

The main topic of this session, that is intimate activities, can be a delicate subject, because it has to do with personal intimacy. This topic will be discussed in clear terms, but participants will not have to talk about the details of their private lives or be asked personal questions.

You can also tell the students know that they don't need to have had a boyfriend or girlfriend or even to have had any sexual experiences to be informed on and talk about this topic. Everyone has an opinion on it and gets bombarded with different messages about it. That's why it's important for them to be able to talk about this topic and know what other people their age think about it.

Intimate activities and sexual behaviours will be discussed. Certain parts will not apply to the students' experiences. That's normal. Everyone goes at their own pace and has their own personal tastes. What's important is that people make choices that reflect who they are and what they're comfortable with.



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Begin** the discussion with the following question:
  - **How do you feel about discussing this topic?**
- › **Add** to their answers with the information below:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Emotions you may feel as we discuss the topic of intimate activities and sexual behaviours

- › During this session on intimate activities and sexual behaviours, you may experience a range of emotions: enthusiasm, curiosity, comfort or discomfort, embarrassment, stress, anxiety, indifference, etc.
- › These emotions are normal and valid. However, when we talk about these things with you, we're not trying to shock you. We hope to answer some of the questions people your age have on this topic and to talk about it simply and respectfully.

## Brainstorming

- › Next, **create** two columns on the blackboard, and label one column "Sex" and the other "Sexuality."
- › Next, **ask** the group the following questions:
  - **In your opinion, do the words "sex" and "sexuality" mean the same thing? If not, how are they different?**  
*Get their opinions.*

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

During this activity, the students may say some vulgar things. If this happens, it is important to take the time to calmly redirect the discussion to ensure that the session goes smoothly. Instructions are presented at the start of the companion slideshow (PPT). Get the students to think about the expressions they use to talk about sexual activities (e.g., "screwing," "fucking," "giving a blow job," etc.) and the meaning behind these expressions. Using vulgar language does not paint a welcoming, safe or enjoyable picture of sexuality.



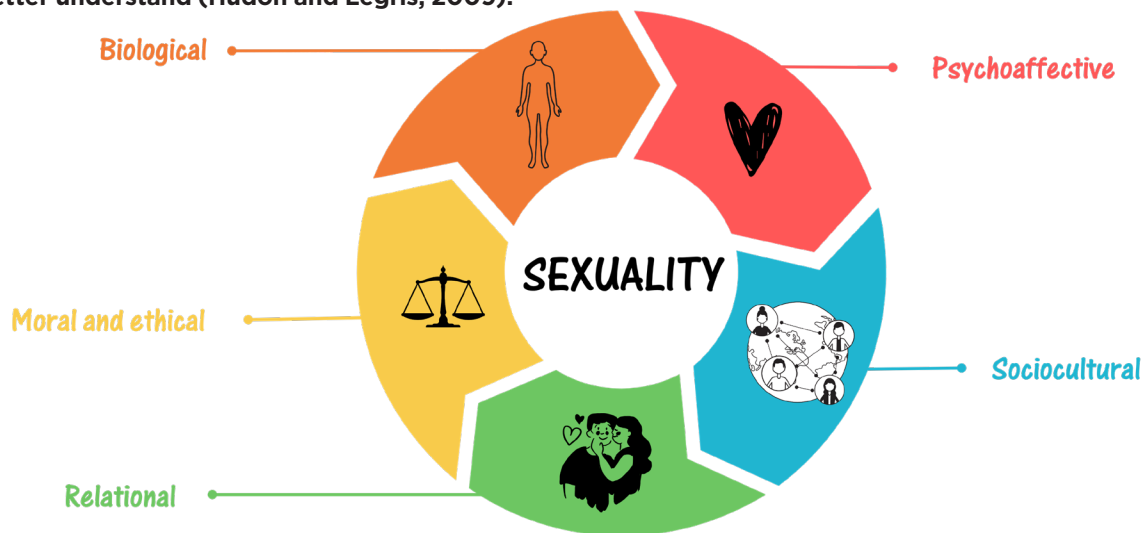
› Next, **share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Differences between “sex” and “sexuality”

- › This word “sex” has a few meanings. It can refer to “biological sex,” i.e., everything related to a person’s reproductive functions, based on their genitalia (e.g., penis, testicles, vulva, vagina, clitoris, etc.), chromosomes and hormones.
- › This word is also used to discuss sexual behaviours and sexual intercourse. In this sense, “sex” refers to “having sex” or “making love.”
- › The word “sexuality” is much broader and touches on various aspects of our lives. Sexuality is present starting from birth and is expressed throughout a person’s life (MEES, 2019b). It relates to your body and body image; your identity, who you are; your relationships with family, friends, peers, boyfriends, girlfriends, etc.; your sexual orientation, your attitudes, your feelings, your values (e.g., respect); sensations, emotions; intimate activities (e.g., kissing, having sex); and more.
- › The way you view sexuality may be influenced by the messages you get from family, friends, media, our culture and your school environment.

Here’s a visual that illustrates the five dimensions of sexuality and some examples to help you better understand (Hudon and Legris, 2009):



1. **Biological:** Physical appearance, anatomical differences between the sexes, puberty, hormones, reproductive system, sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs)
2. **Moral and ethical:** Values and beliefs related to sexuality, choices and responsibilities related to sexuality, respect for the other person
3. **Relational:** Emotional attachments and romantic relationships, attraction and intimacy, communication, conflict and interpersonal challenges

4. **Psychoaffective:** Emotions and feelings, body image, sexual identity, sexual orientation, self-esteem

5. **Sociocultural:** Gender roles, stereotypes and prejudices, sexual rules, laws and norms, environment and its influence (e.g., family, peers, media)

*(In today's session, we'll focus primarily on three of these dimensions: psychoaffective; relational; and moral and ethical).*

- › The five dimensions can intersect. The way we experience sexuality often touches on several dimensions.
- › Let's take "dating" for an example. "Dating" touches on the following dimensions of sexuality:
  - **Biological:** Sensations felt in the body. E.g., nervousness when seeing the person you like, butterflies in the stomach.
  - **Psychoaffective:** Emotions you feel. E.g., feeling interested in the person you like, thinking about them often, feeling like you're in love.
  - **Sociocultural:** How media messages influence our views on dating. E.g., should we take after celebrities or stay true to ourselves?

To sum up, "sex" is part of "sexuality." **SEX** is often associated with **what you DO**. But **SEXUALITY** is not only what your body can do and what you can do with your body—**SEXUALITY** is part of **who you ARE: what you feel, what you think, what you experience in YOUR body, how you act in relationships with others and how you express what you feel** (Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights, n.d.; MEES, 2018, 2019b).

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the following question and **get** the students' answers:
  - **In your opinion, why is it important to discuss sexuality with people your age?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to their answers with the information below:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Importance of discussing sexuality with people your age

- › No matter how old you are, you'll always have questions about sexuality. However, you'll have different questions at 13 or 14 than when you're older.
- › Talking and learning about sexuality in general is also a good way to learn about yourself, specifically:
  - **Your values:** What guides your choices (e.g., self-respect and respect for others, pleasure)
  - **Your preferences:** What you like in particular

- **Your desires:** What you want to try, what appeals to you
  - **Your boundaries:** What makes you feel safe, gives you direction and tells you what you don't want
  - **Your fears:** What worries you (e.g., fear that the other person won't like you, fear of looking inexperienced)
- › When you have accurate information about sexuality and are able to talk about it, this helps you make a decision about whether or not you're ready for your first intimate activities. Intimate activities include first kisses; first time touching certain parts of the body (e.g., neck, back, buttocks, breasts, thighs) over or under the clothes; first sexual acts involving the genitals (e.g., touching your own genitals (masturbation) or another person's genitals); and other sexual acts involving the genitals.

- › **Tell** the group that the next activity will be about “first kisses.”



# 2

## Activity 2



SHEETS 4.1A, 4.1B AND 4.2  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



25 MIN.



TEAM ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

## Discussion and Presentation

- › The second activity of the session is on the “first kiss”.
- › **Lead** a discussion on the first kiss using the following questions, and **get** the students’ answers:
  - **In your opinion, how does it feel when you kiss someone for the first time (body, heart, mind)?**
- › Add to the students’ answers by **sharing** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Here, when we talk about kissing someone for the first time, we mean a first kiss on the mouth.
- › There are a number of reasons to want to experience a first kiss, including (Médico and Lévy, 2005):
  - You have romantic feelings for someone.
  - You want to explore your feelings for someone and let them explore their feelings for you.
  - You want to experience kissing. You’re curious and want to try it.
  - You’re afraid of falling behind your peers.
  - Your friends are putting pressure on you (e.g., during a game of Truth or Dare).
- › The first kiss on the mouth is often memorable. It’s memorable in different ways (good and bad) for different people.
- › It can be a moment of strong emotions, such as feeling excited, energized, happy or light. First kisses like this are enjoyable.
- › It can also be a pretty ordinary moment. You could find it disappointing or even unpleasant (SoulPancake, 2016).



- › Some people get anxious before their first kiss and have a number of “technical” questions (Médico and Lévy, 2005):
  - “How do you kiss? How do you breathe when kissing?”
  - “Should I hold my breath?”
  - “What should I do with the rest of my body? With my arms? How should I move?”
  - “How do you kiss well?”
  - “Will I be disappointed or find it gross? Will the other person be disappointed?”
- › Because of the way dating and love are portrayed in certain media (e.g., love stories in movies or television series or on celebrities’ social media pages), you may imagine a perfect scenario for your first kiss. It’s important to keep in mind that if you have high expectations for your first kiss, you may end up feeling disappointed (McEwan, 2019).
- › If your first kiss was not as you had imagined or was not really pleasant, just remember that future kisses may be completely different.
- › In the course of your life, you may have many “first kisses.” For example, when you have a new boyfriend or girlfriend, you may relive the experience of a first kiss. You will feel new sensations, new emotions, etc.

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three.
- › **Provide** the teams with the **two questions** asked by people their age about the first kiss, from the blog *Sexuality has its questions!* (Sheet 4.1a: *Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #1 and #2* **OR** Sheet 4.1b: *Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #3 and #4*).
- › **Tell** the group that they will have 10 minutes to answer the questions assigned to them. Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group. You can read over the instructions on Sheet 4.1a with the group.
- › When the 10 minutes are up, **ask** the spokespeople for the teams that have Sheet 4.1a (*Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #1 and #2*) to share their answers for each of the questions. Then ask the spokespeople for the teams that have Sheet 4.1a (*Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #3 and #4*) to do the same.
- › **Add** to their answers using the supplementary information for each of the questions (see Sheet 4.2: *Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #1 to #4*).

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information to conclude the activity.

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › You can enjoy kissing but feel like you aren't ready for further intimate activities.
  - › If you don't feel comfortable kissing in a more intimate way (as discussed in the previous activity), isn't this a sign that you aren't ready for more intimate touching or sexual behaviours (e.g., having sex). What do you think?
- › This will be the focus of our next activity: *"How do you know if you're ready for more intimacy?"*



## Activity 3



SHEETS 4.3A, 4.3B, 4.4A AND 4.4B  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



30 MIN.



TEAM ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION

### Team Activity

- › This activity focuses on the pressure teens face to engage in intimate contact. It also explores how teens can tell whether they're ready for their first intimate activities.
- › For the next activity, **tell** the group to stay in their teams.
- › **Hand out** one of the two situational exercises for this activity (Sheet 4.3a: *Situational exercise: Philip*; Sheet 4.4a: *Situational exercise: Rania*).
- › **Tell** the group that they will have 10 minutes to respond to the situation. Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group. You can read over the instructions on Sheet 4.3a with them.
- › Once the 10 minutes are up, **ask** the spokespeople for the teams that had situation 4.3a (Philip) to share their answers for each of the questions. Do the same for the situational exercise 4.4a (Rania).
- › **Add** to their answers with the suggested content for each situational exercise (see Sheet 4.3b: *Answer sheet - Situational exercise: Philip*; Sheet 4.4b: *Answer sheet - Situational exercise: Rania*, which consolidates the information and examples for each situation).

### Discussion and Presentation

- › After the brainstorming, **lead** a discussion using the following question and get the students' answers:
  - **In your opinion, how do you know if you're ready for your first intimate activities (e.g., kisses, touching on certain parts of the body) or first sexual behaviours?**

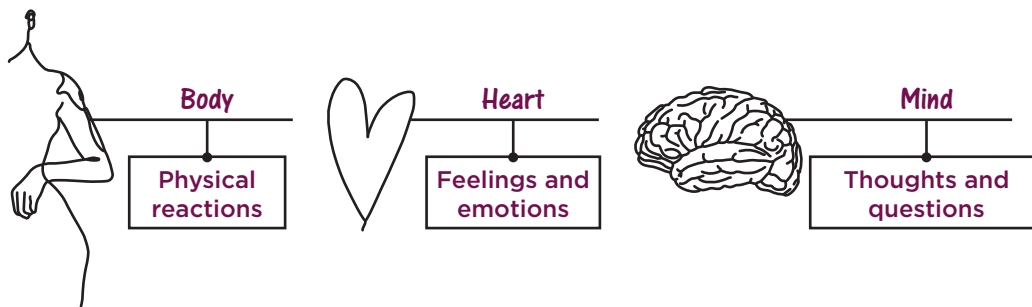
*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

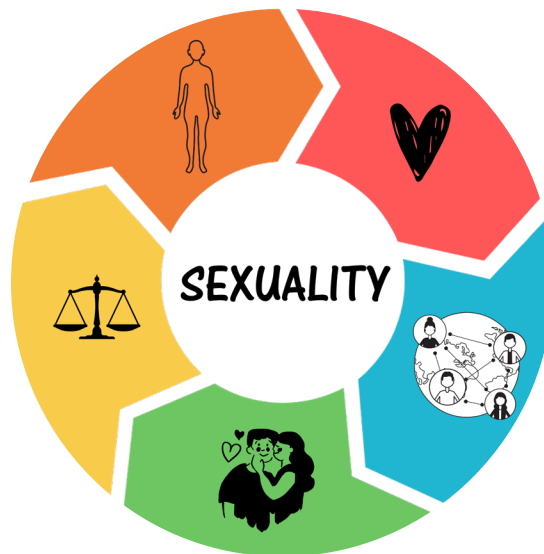
## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Ways to know if you're ready for your first intimate activities (e.g., kisses, touching on certain parts of the body) or first sexual behaviours

- › It's hard to be 100% sure that you're ready or not ready for your first intimate activities. It's normal to hesitate and have doubts...because you don't know what to expect. But certain things can help us make a decision. The **BODY** (physical reactions), **HEART** (feelings and emotions) and **MIND** (thoughts and questions) send us messages that can inform our choices and guide us toward experiences that we want and will enjoy.

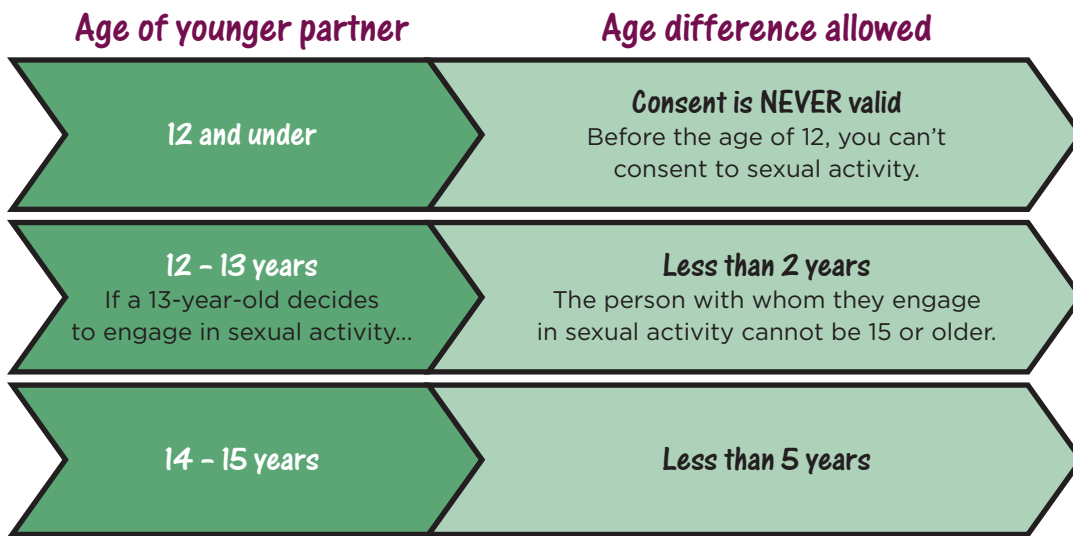


- › Have you noticed that this also touches on the biological, emotional, relational and moral and ethical dimensions of sexuality?



- › Even when someone knows they're ready for their first intimate activities, they may still have a number of questions. No matter their sexual orientation. Here are some examples:

- At this age, is it possible to have a boyfriend or girlfriend without having sex (or intimate activities)?
  - How will I know if they consent?
  - Should I tell them that I've never had sex before?
  - If I don't have sex, will my boyfriend or girlfriend think that I don't love them?
  - Will I feel comfortable using a condom or asking the other person to use a condom? What about contraception?
  - How can I be sure that they won't tell their friends everything?
  - Am I mature enough to have this experience?
  - Is there a legal age for engaging in sexual activities? What if there's an age difference?
- › We saw how **the BODY, HEART and MIND** send us messages. If we're getting negative messages (e.g., tension, uneasiness, discomfort, feeling "frozen," distrust toward the other person, wanting to be somewhere else or do something else, questioning if you really want to have this experience with the person), "we need to be able to talk to the other person about it, whether through words or body language, without giving in to pressure or the fear of looking, ridiculous, childish or uptight" [Translation] (del Carmen Rumoroso, 2011). Although it isn't always easy, it's important to trust yourself and to put yourself first when making decisions—rather than putting others first (e.g., trying please your boyfriend or girlfriend or appear "cool" out of fear of losing them).
- › **The BODY, HEART and MIND** can also send us positive messages (e.g., butterflies in the stomach, shared laughter, a sense of well-being, trust in the other person, desire to kiss them and snuggle against them, desire to have this experience with them, excitement). If you decide to engage in intimate activities or sexual behaviours, you need to be mature enough to discuss prevention (STBBIs, unplanned pregnancy), make sure you have the other person's consent and assert yourself if you change your mind.
- › When deciding whether to engage in your first intimate activities, it helps to consider the following:
1. **The length of the relationship** ("we've been dating for a while") and the feelings you and the other person have for each other (e.g., affection, love, attraction) (MEES, 2019a).
  2. **How much you trust the person** you've decided to have this experience with. Trust develops over time. When you trust someone, you can tell them what you really think without worrying about being judged; you can share personal things with them and know that they won't tell anyone; you feel that you can be intimate with them (nudity, vulnerability, shyness).
- › It's important to consider consent when deciding to be intimate with another person. Age and age difference also need to be considered. Teenagers can consent to sexual activities. However, their consent is invalid (i.e., not recognized under law) if they're too young to consent or are in a position of vulnerability with respect to their partner (Éducaloi, 2021a).
- › In Canada, the legal age of consent to sexual activity is 16 (sexual activity is defined as kissing, fondling and sexual intercourse) (Éducaloi, 2021b). However, the law does have exceptions. For example, before the age of 16, teens can consent to sexual activity if their partner is about the same age. There are also specific rules that apply to age differences.



› **Continue** the discussion with the following question:

- **What are some ways of letting the other person know that you're ready or not ready?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Ways to let the other person know that you're ready or not ready

#### *I don't feel ready*

- › It isn't always easy to say that you don't feel ready to kiss or engage in further intimate activities or other sexual behaviours.
- › You may worry about how the other person will react (e.g., disappointment, inability to understand) and be uncomfortable saying how you really feel. But when someone values and loves you, they'll be able to understand and accept your decision. Also, remember that you can't have sex without the other person's consent.

#### *I feel ready, but I'm nervous*

- › It's totally normal to be nervous, stressed or even afraid about having your first sexual experiences, given that this is new and unknown territory for you.

- › Shyness, doubt and fear are emotions that go along with sexuality. So it's important to be authentic and not to force yourself to do anything. You can also use humour to lighten the mood.
- › There are many ways to let the other person know that **YOU AREN'T READY** for your first intimate activities or sexual behaviours. Here are some examples:

#### **Not ready**

- “I feel good when I'm in your arms, but I'm not ready to kiss yet. I want to take my time.”
- “I like it when we kiss, but I don't want to go any further right now.”
- “I love you very much, but this is going too fast for me. I don't want to do this yet because I feel too young and don't feel ready. Do you understand?”
- “I thought I was ready and wanted to, but now I feel differently. Maybe we can try again another time, okay?”
- “I'm okay with kissing and cuddling, but I don't want to go further right now. I want to wait until I'm 16 or 17 to have sex for the first time.”
- “I love you so much. You're the perfect person for me. But we shouldn't feel like we need to have sex just because we're dating.”
- Etc.

#### **Ready**

- “I love you, and I want to kiss and hold you, if you want it too.”
  - “I feel comfortable with you, and I'm ready for physical closeness and touching. Do you still want that too? But I don't want to go further.”
  - “I love it when we kiss. I feel light, like I'm floating on a cloud. I really trust you. I think I'm ready to have sex with you. Do you feel ready too? We'll go at our own pace, okay? And we can always change our minds along the way.”
  - Etc.
- › “What matters most is feeling comfortable with each other, listening to each other and respecting each other” [Translation] (del Carmen Rumoroso, 2011).



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MINUTES



DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION

› **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**

*Get their opinions.*

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Sexual behaviour can be a delicate subject, because young people may have had many different experiences that they will not necessarily share in class or outside of it. Some young people may experience pressure to experiment sexually from their peers, the people around them or the media. But every young person is different, and some of them will not be interested in sexual behaviour or will not be at that stage yet. That's perfectly normal. It's also possible that some of them will have already had consensual sexual experiences. In your presentation, it's important not to be judgemental of any experience. The goal is to reinforce young people's ability to assert themselves in their choices, no matter what they have experienced previously.

In addition, some young people in your class may have suffered sexual assault in childhood or adolescence. So, be sure to talk about resources for victims of sexual violence and to remind the group that victims are not responsible for what was done to them and should not hesitate to seek the help they need (resources are provided on one of the last slides in the slideshow). There may also be people who have had difficulty with the idea of consent and have already pressured or sexually assaulted another person (child or teen), and they need help, too. This is a criminal act, and support can also be offered to people in this situation.



- › Next, **ask** the group the following questions:
  - **How do you feel about having discussed this topic?**
  - **Why is it important to explore sexuality step by step, without skipping anything?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to what they say with these **KEY MESSAGES:**

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### The importance of exploring sexuality step by step

- › Every young person explores and discovers different sexual behaviours at their own pace, but often following the same sequence and progression: we progress from lower levels of intimacy to higher levels of intimacy (MEES, 2019a).
- › You usually start with affectionate behaviours (e.g., holding hands, hugging, holding each other by the shoulders or waist). Next, if you feel ready, you can gradually explore further intimate activities and other sexual behaviours (e.g., kissing, touching certain parts of the body over and under the clothes).
- › Finally, if you feel ready, you can experiment with certain genital sexual behaviours (e.g., sexual touching, giving or receiving oral sex, vaginal penetration) (MEES, 2019a). It isn't about trying everything. Everyone (teens and adults alike) has their own preferences and decides to engage in certain sexual behaviours but not others.
- › Most people your age haven't had intimate or sexual experiences AND don't want to yet. It isn't a race. Take your time! Not engaging in sexual behaviours doesn't prevent you from experiencing special moments of affection and intimacy with your boyfriend or girlfriend.
- › It's a personal decision. Nothing and no one should force you to choose something you don't want. This is why consent is so important. When two people share these moments after deciding they're ready, it's a better experience for both of them.
- › Often, first sexual experiences are with a girlfriend or boyfriend OR someone you care for and feel comfortable and safe with (Miller and Benson, 1999, in MEES, 2019a; Higgins and al., 2010; Smiler and al., 2005).
- › You want your BODY, HEART and MIND to be sending similar messages: "I feel good and like I can say what I think if I change my mind." – "I've known them long enough to trust them. I don't feel pressured to do this. We both want to." – "I care about the person I'm with, and they care about me. We're mature enough to discuss prevention (STBBIs, pregnancy)." – "We have fun together."



## SHEET

### 4.1a

FOR THE GROUP

**Sexuality**  
HAS ITS QUESTIONS!

**First KISS**

**Question #1**

*I'm 13 and I know that I'm not ready to kiss a guy yet. But if a guy tried to kiss me, I wouldn't know how to say "no."*

*How do I make him understand I'm not ready without upsetting him? 😞*

Adapted from: Tel-jeunes, 2022b - Espace TJ :  
Mon premier baiser.

Add an answer...

# “Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #1 and #2”

## INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, answer questions #1 and #2 from the blog “Sexuality has its questions!” These are questions asked by people your age about first kisses.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the group.

The image shows a browser window with a purple speech bubble graphic containing the text "Sexuality HAS ITS QUESTIONS!" and an illustration of a couple. To the right is a green box with the text "First KISS". Below this is a yellow-bordered box titled "Question #2" containing the text: "When my boyfriend and I kissed, he stuck his tongue in my mouth and I found that really gross. Is that normal? 🤔" and "How do I tell him that I didn't like that without hurting his feelings?". At the bottom of the question box is the text "Adapted from: Tel-jeunes, 2022b - Espace TJ : Mon premier baiser." Below the question box is a large text input field with the placeholder "Add an answer..." and a mouse cursor pointing to it.



## SHEET

### 4.1b

FOR THE GROUP

The image shows a browser window with a search bar and navigation icons. The main content area features a purple speech bubble with the text "Sexuality HAS ITS QUESTIONS!" and an illustration of a man and a woman. To the right is a green box with the text "First KISS". Below this is a question box titled "Question #3" containing the text: "I'm 13 and haven't had my first kiss yet. Is that normal? I don't want to talk about it with my friends because I think they'll laugh at me. I feel like I'm different from everyone else...". At the bottom of the question box is the text "Adapted from: Tel-jeunes, 2022b - Espace TJ : Mon premier baiser." Below the question box is a large orange-bordered box with the text "Add an answer..." and a mouse cursor icon.

## “Sexuality has its questions! – Questions #3 and #4”

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, answer questions #3 and #4 from the blog “Sexuality has its questions!” These are questions asked by people your age about first kisses.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group.

The image shows a simulated web browser interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with back, forward, search, refresh, and menu icons. The main content area features a purple speech bubble graphic with the text "Sexuality HAS ITS QUESTIONS!" and an illustration of a man and a woman. To the right is a green box with the text "First KISS". Below this is a question card titled "Question #4" with the text: "I kissed a girl but I don't know if that means that we're 'dating' now. 🙄" and "I feel uncomfortable. I don't know how to talk about it with her. 😬". At the bottom of the question card, it says "Adapted from: Tel-jeunes, 2022b - Espace TJ : Mon premier baiser." Below the question card is a large orange-bordered text input field with the placeholder text "Add an answer..." and a mouse cursor pointing to it.



## SHEET

### 4.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## “Answer sheet: Sexuality has its questions! Questions #1 to #4”

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Hand out Sheet 4.1a: “Sexuality has its questions! Questions #1 and #2” OR Sheet 4.1b: “Sexuality has its questions! Questions #3 and #4” to the teams. Each team will answer two questions asked by people their age about the first kiss.**
- › **Read the instructions for Sheet 4.1a with the students.**
- › **Tell them that they’ll have 10 minutes to complete the task.**
- › **Once the 10 minutes are up, ask the spokespersons for the teams that were assigned Sheet 4.1a to share their answers for each of the questions. Ask the spokespersons for the teams that were assigned Sheet 4.b to do the same.**
- › **Add to their answers using the supplementary information provided below for each of the questions.**
- › **Next, lead a discussion using the questions from the section “Discussion and Presentation” in Activity 2.**

**Question #1:** I’m 13 and I know that I’m not ready to kiss a guy yet. But if a guy tried to kiss me, I wouldn’t know how to say “no.” How do I make him understand I’m not ready without upsetting him?

- › It’s important to be able to recognize that you’re not ready for certain kinds of intimate activities, such as the first kiss on the mouth. However, it’s true that it can be hard to communicate this to another person.
- › “Concretely, being assertive means: being able to say “yes” to what you want, say “no” when your boundaries are being crossed and to resist pressure” (MEES, 2019a). You can communicate that you don’t want to do something through your body language (e.g., turning your head, backing away) or simply by saying that you don’t want to, that things are moving too fast for you, etc.
- › In addition, before engaging in any intimate or sexual act, you need to get the other person’s consent. Getting the other person’s permission or consent involves listening to what they have to say and accepting their answer, whether you like it or not (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022). In this situation, there’s no need for the other to feel “upset” about getting turned down. Consent is the basis of human relationships. Establishing consent allows everyone to feel safe and respected. When people are respectful to each other, their relationship is based on trust, which is a positive thing!

**Question #2: When my boyfriend and I kissed, he stuck his tongue in my mouth and I found that really gross. Is that normal? How do I tell him that I didn't like that without hurting his feelings?**

- ▶ It's totally normal not to like certain things and to feel surprised when you have this experience for the first time. It's important to listen to yourself (e.g., your natural pace, your feelings) and determine which experiences are positive and pleasant for you. Also, while you may not like kissing in this way right now, you may come to like it in the future.
- ▶ But how do you tell them? It's true that it's hard to tell the person you love that you didn't enjoy the first kiss you shared. One thing is for sure: as long as both people consented, no one is to blame here. There may also be some shyness or awkwardness, which doesn't help the situation (for example, sometimes one person kisses too intensely and moves their tongue around too quickly).
- ▶ You can tell the other person that you felt embarrassed last time and didn't really enjoy the experience. You can also mention what your preferences are (e.g., "Right now I like kissing on the mouth. I don't enjoy kissing with the tongue as much, especially when it happens too quickly or lasts too long."). When we communicate that something makes us feel embarrassed, we are less stress and pressured.
- ▶ And when you're ready to try again, you can let the other person know in a tactful or humorous way.

**Question #3: I'm 13 and haven't had my first kiss yet. Is that normal? I don't want to talk about it with my friends because I think they'll laugh at me. I feel like I'm different from everyone else...**

- ▶ It's totally normal to be 13 and not to have had your first kiss yet. In fact, most young people have their first "romantic" kiss (where there is mutual affection) around the age of 14, and the person they kiss tends to be their boyfriend or girlfriend (Médico and Lévy, 2005). Some of this person's peers may be in the same situation, but they too may be afraid to talk about it.
- ▶ There is no perfect age for your first kiss, but rather a perfect moment, which is whenever you feel ready and really want to, and not because you feel pressured by your friends or peers.
- ▶ In other words, if you want to kiss someone, it should be because it's what your BODY (sensations), HEART (emotions) and MIND (thoughts) want, and not because you think that everyone around you has already done it or because you want to be noticed and accepted by friends or classmates (MEES, 2019a).
- ▶ There is no need to put pressure on yourself.

**Question #4: I kissed a girl but I don't know if that means that we're dating now. I feel uncomfortable. I don't know how to talk about it with her...**

- › Keep in mind that there are different types of kisses. Some kisses are “romantic.” You kiss someone in this way when you have feelings of love and attraction for them. You may also kiss someone out of curiosity or as part of a game such as Truth or Dare. These kisses are just for fun (Médico and Lévy, 2008, in del Carmen Rumoroso, 2011).
- › Ask yourself, what was the context?
  - “It was just for fun, we were being silly!”
  - “It just happened.”
  - “We liked each other for a long time, but from a distance. This moment was magical for both of us.”
  - Etc.
- › Knowing the context (with whom? where? when?) and the intention (why?) can give us a better idea of what the kiss meant to each person.
- › The best way to find out if you're “dating” is to talk about it with the other person. It's completely normal to feel stressed or uncomfortable about having this discussion, as you're in unknown territory and there can be different outcomes (e.g., (1) You have reciprocal feelings for each other, which may lead to the start of a romantic relationship; (2) The other person doesn't feel the same way, which may cause you to feel sad or disappointed).
- › However, if you don't talk with the other person, you'll never get a clear answer, and you will be left waiting and wondering where you stand with them.





## SHEET

### 4.3a

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Philip

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

### Situational exercise: Philip

**Philip** is thinking back to a birthday party he went to at a friend's house when he was 11 and still in primary school. Someone suggested that they play Truth or Dare, and Philip went along because he wanted to fit in. During the game, someone dared him to French kiss one of the girls. He refused, and the others made fun of him, calling him a “pansy” and telling him not to be so “uptight.” He thought that this game was ridiculous and hated being pressured by the others. He has since decided that he would wait until he was in love before being intimate with someone. He's in secondary school now and is in no hurry for this to happen.

- › What do you think of this situation?

- › What do you think Philip means by “being intimate”?

- › Now that Philip is in secondary school, do you think that it will be more difficult for him to handle the peer pressure to have intimate or sexual experiences?



**SHEET**

**4.3b**

**FOR SESSION  
LEADERS**

## Answer sheet – Situational exercise: Philip

### INSTRUCTIONS

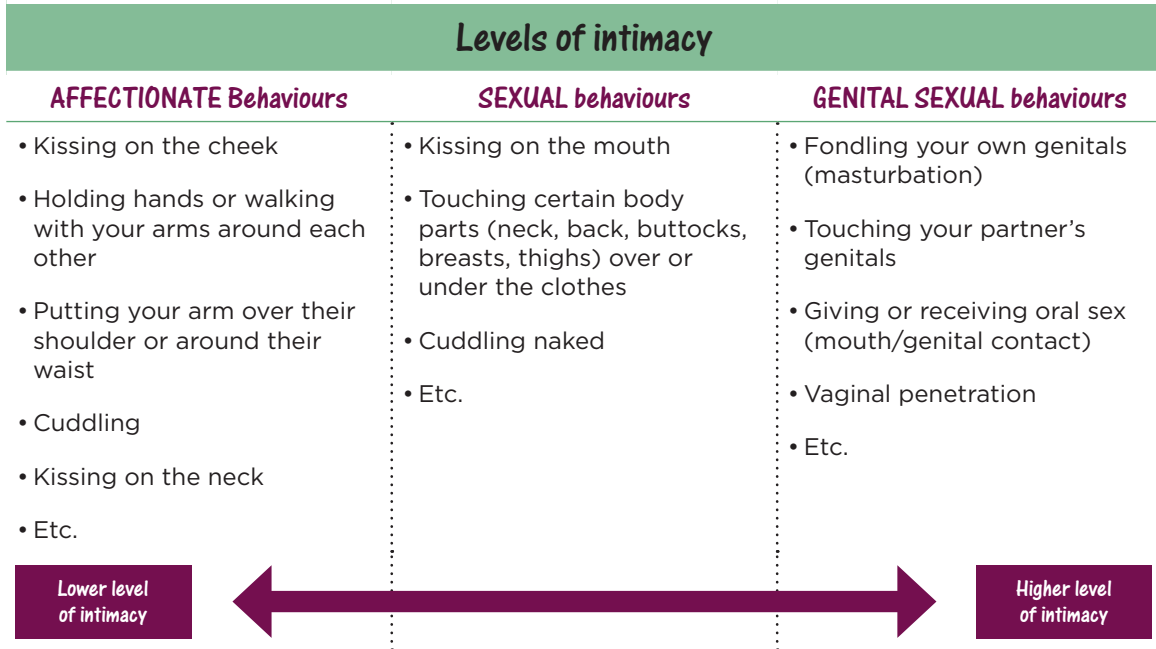
- › The students have 10 minutes to respond to the situational exercise. Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group.
- › Next, add to the students' answers using the suggested information below.

#### › What do you think of this situation?

*Get their opinions.*

#### › What do you think Philip means by “being intimate”?

- “Being intimate” means something different for everyone, and intimacy can change depending on the situation you’re in. There are a number of ways you can be intimate with another person. Here are some examples:
  - Opening up to the other person
  - Holding hands
  - Hugging
  - Kissing for the first time, French kissing
  - Touching over or under the clothes
  - Being naked with someone
  - Etc.
- Often, intimacy follows a natural progression, which is practically the same for everyone. We progress from “lower” levels of intimacy to “higher” levels of intimacy (MEES, 2019a).
- Following this progression allows you take your time, not rush anything and feel more comfortable about moving from one level to the next. You may also choose not to become intimate with someone (or not very intimate).
- Let’s look closer at the levels of intimacy that correspond to various affectionate behaviours, sexual behaviours and genital sexual behaviours (MEES, 2019a).



› **Now that Philip is in secondary school, do you think that it will be more difficult for him to handle the peer pressure to have intimate or sexual experiences?**

- We saw how, in primary school, Philip was able to stand up for himself by deciding not to participate in Truth or Dare and by ignoring what the others were saying about him. Despite the pressure and the name-calling, he remained true to himself and his values.
- In secondary school, there can be increasing pressure not to look uptight or be a virgin. Although most people your age haven't engaged in intimate activities (e.g., genital sexual behaviours), the pressure can become increasingly intense as you get older.
- Although we may expect Philip to stand up for himself as he did before, it isn't always easy to face this dual pressure: the PEER PRESSURE of classmates, friends or the person he's dating; and the pressure to protect his REPUTATION in the face of teasing and name-calling.
- However, this pressure varies depending on your friend group and personality. In the end, being true to your values is what's important.



## SHEET

### 4.4a

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Rania

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situational exercise and answer the questions.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

### Rania

**Rania** is a romantic at heart. She recently fell in love with **Liam**, who is in Secondary 3. They love being together, snuggling and kissing. But she doesn't feel ready to "go further" and is sure that Liam feels the same way. All of her friends tell her that Liam is going to break up with her.

- › What do you think of this situation?

- › What do you think Rania means by "going further"?

- › How do you think Rania should respond to the pressure her friends are putting on her?



## Answer sheet – Situational exercise: Rania

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › The students have 10 minutes to respond to the situational exercise. Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group.
- › Next, add to the students' answers using the content below.

› **What do you think of this situation?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **What do you think Rania means by “going further”?**

- The meaning of “going further” varies from person to person, as everyone explores and experiments with different sexual behaviours at their own pace and according to their desires, all while respecting the person they're with.
- For one person, wanting to “go further” may mean that they're ready to kiss their boyfriend or girlfriend; for someone else, it may mean that they're ready to touch or be touched on certain parts of the body (e.g., buttocks, breasts, thighs, genitals) over or under the clothes.
- In many cases, “going further” means having sex with a person we like, love or are attracted to. Here, Rania is talking about “having sex.” And her friends are worried that Liam is going to break up with her if she doesn't have sex with him. But Liam may feel the same way. Like Rania, he may not feel ready. There's a common misconception that guys “only think about sex.”
- So not wanting to “go further” can mean that we aren't ready to have a sexual relationship with someone, but it could also mean that we aren't ready for more intimate touching (e.g., breasts, buttocks, genitals).
- Plus, having a sexual relationship is not the only way to express that you like or love the person you're with. There are many other ways (Gravel, 2022; Raymond and Gagnon, 2015):
  - Showing interest in the other person
  - Being supportive of them
  - Writing them a love letter, complimenting them
  - Presenting them to friends and family
  - Spending quality time with them (e.g., doing an activity they like)

- Giving them a gift
- Holding them in your arms
- Etc.

› **In your opinion, how might Rania react to the pressure from her friends?**

- In this situation, Rania could react to the pressure from her friends in a number of ways. She could:
  - Talk with her friends and tell them that they're making her feel pressured right now by stirring up her fear of losing Liam.
  - Talk with Liam about the situation to find out how he feels about the matter and let him know the pressure she is dealing with. Does he feel the same way?
  - Stay true to herself and decide not to have sex with Liam and not to worry about what her friends are saying.
  - Take her time. She will see if things change later on, but right now, she appreciates that Liam respects her choice.
  - Etc.
- The fact that Liam is older than Rania may contribute to the pressure she's feeling to go further with him. She may be worried about losing him, and, as a result, may want to show him that she isn't scared, that she's mature for a girl her age.
- The belief that guys care about sex more than girls is a myth. In other words, it's a belief that is popular and widespread but unproven, and it puts as much pressure on guys (e.g., to have sex in order to be popular and be like their peers) as on girls (e.g., to do it in order to be liked or loved).
- Having a boyfriend or girlfriend when you're in secondary school doesn't necessarily mean that you need to be engaged in sexual activities. Even if Rania and Liam are in love, and they love being together, snuggling and kissing, that doesn't necessarily mean that they're ready for further intimate activities (Tel-jeunes, 2022a). This could be a great opportunity for Rania to talk about these things with Liam.

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# SECONDARY 3

Secondary 3

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## Secondary 3 - Session 1

### Body image

### Body Representation in the Entertainment Industry

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

#### Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)

##### Identity, gender stereotypes, roles and social norms

##### Analyze different representations of sexuality in the public space

Messages and images in media: advertising, reality TV, movies, music, social media and other interactive technologies, Internet, sexually explicit material

##### Explain how representations of sexuality in the public space can influence the expression of your sexuality

- › Norms and values conveyed in the public space and by the people around you.
- › Expression of your sexuality in the public space (expressing your identity, relationships), intimate space (shared with a few chosen people) and private space (personal feelings and experiences).

#### Possible links to the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022)

##### Broad areas of learning

**Health and Well-Being:** Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good lifestyle habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.

**Media Literacy:** To enable students to exercise critical, ethical and aesthetic judgement with respect to the media and produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights.

**Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities:** To Encourage students to develop an active relationship with their environment while maintaining a critical attitude toward consumption and the exploitation of the environment.

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul> <p><b>Methodological competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information and communications technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Personal development subject area:</b>	
<b>Subject-specific competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Read and enjoy a variety of texts</li> <li>› Write a variety of texts</li> <li>› Communicates orally, using different methods</li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Culture and Symbolic Productions (Secondary 4)

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand representations of sexuality in a variety of spaces (Secondary 4)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Positive and negative representations of sexuality in the public space and the influence of these representations</li> <li>› Norms, values and messages on sexuality from family, peers and the media</li> <li>› Expressions of sexuality in public, intimate and privacy spaces</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on the ethical issues that may exist with respect to the norms and values related to the legal frameworks applicable to romantic and sexual life, especially regarding appropriate consequences and legal actions that can be taken against violence (Secondary 4)</b></p>



## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Become aware of the sexualized and standardized representation of bodies in the entertainment world and how this influences body image in adolescence.**

- 1. Analyze** how bodies are represented in entertainment media, including video games, reality shows and social media.
- 2. Compare** photos of celebrities taken when they were teens and after they had become famous and identify significant changes, especially changes related to sexualization.
- 3. Discuss** the influence of celebrities and their relationship to their image on their teenage fans.
- 4. Recognize** the potential effects on teens of comparing themselves with adult celebrities.
- 5. Identify** the advantages and disadvantages of using photo editing technologies.
- 6. Discuss** the importance of being critical toward celebrities and others in media who have an unnatural look.
- 7. Discuss** the advantages of seeing greater body and physical diversity, and discuss how sexualization in the media impacts one's body image.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **four activities**.

15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Brainstorming:</b> Entertainment world and body image</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Sheets 1.1a, 1.1b, 1.1c, 1.1d, 1.1e: Video games characters and celebrities</i></p> <p><i>Sheets 1.2a, 1.2b, 1.2c, 1.2d, 1.2e: Answer sheet: The stereotypical bodies of certain video game characters and celebrities</i></p>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> Before and after photos analysis</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 1.3: Before and after photos analysis table</i></p> <p><i>Sheets 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4c, 1.4d, 1.4e: Before and after photos</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 1.5: Answer sheet: Before and after photo analysis</i></p>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Brainstorming:</b> Entertainment world and body image</li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 1.6: Photos of celebrities looking natural</i></p>
10 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Developing a positive body image”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> key messages from the session</li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 1.7: Public awareness campaigns and posters</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 1.8: Self-Evaluation: Who am I on social media?</i></p>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “Be True to You” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)



## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)

BLACKBOARD, CHALK OR MARKER



15 MINUTES



BRAINSTORMING



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

## Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by telling the students that you'll be discussing body image and body representation in the entertainment industry.
- › **Remind** the students about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Students may talk to you about problems with their body image (e.g., weight problems, dissatisfaction with their appearance), or you may suspect that they are having these body image issues. Refer them to professionals at the school for help and support. It's important to protect their confidentiality.

BEFORE leading this session, it's a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported (e.g., difficult personal situations, violence) outside the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the Resources section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



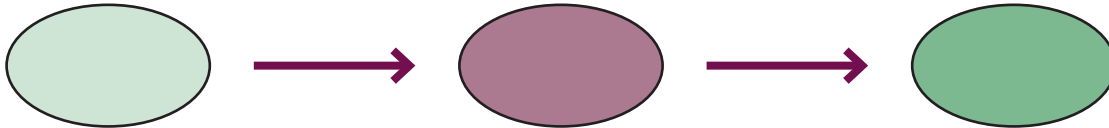
## Brainstorming

- › **Start** the session by drawing three circles on the blackboard. In these circles, you'll write down the students' answers to the questions below.

### 1. Entertainment media

### 2. Body representation in some entertainment media

### 3. Impact on body image



- › **Fill** in circle #1 with the answers the students give to the following question:

- **What type of media do you use for entertainment or passing the time?**

*Get the students' answers and write them in circle #1.*

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Circle #1

- › Entertainment media refers to:
  - Video games and virtual reality
  - Social media and the internet (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, web series, video clips, podcasts, blogs, private websites.)
  - Film and television (movies, television series, sports broadcasts, cultural programs, variety shows, cartoons, etc.)

- › **Write** in circle #2 the answers the students give to the following question:

- **How is the body presented in the different entertainment media listed in circle #1 (video games, social media, internet, television and movies)?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Explain** to the group that circle #3 on the blackboard focuses on the impact that these body representations can have on your body image.



- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Circle #3

- › “*Body image is how you see your body, and how you think others see your body. Your body image may be based on your weight, height, skin colour and any other physical traits*” [translation] (CHU Sainte-Justine, 2018).
- › The way you see your body can be influenced by a number of factors, including the onset of puberty, peer pressure, name-calling, bullying and messages from your environment (Kids Help Phone, 2022).

- › **Tell** the students that circle #3 will remain empty for the moment, and that you’ll return to it later in the session.



## Activity 2



**SHEETS 1.1 AND 1.2 (A,B,C,D)**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MINUTES**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

## Presentation

- › **Tell** the students that you're going to look at how celebrities' bodies are represented in entertainment media and on social media, as well as how bodies are represented in video games. **Start** by sharing the following interesting facts about video games, celebrities and social media.
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Video games

- › There are many types of video games, including shooting games (FPS/TPS), fighting games, role-playing games (RPG), action games, adventure games, puzzle games, etc. (Stuffgaming.fr, n.d.).
- › According to the Entertainment Software Association of Canada (2020):
  - 95% of male teens ages 13 to 17 play video games, and do so for 21 hours per week on average.
  - 79% of female teens aged 13 to 17 play video games, and do so for 9.5 hours per week on average.
  - Teens' favourite games are *Fortnite*, *Call of Duty*, *Minecraft*, *Mario Kart*, *Grand Theft Auto* and *Sims 4*.
- › There are minimum ages for some video games (ESRB, 2022):
  - For *Minecraft*, the minimum age is 10 years and up.
  - For *Fortnite* and *Sims 4*, the minimum age is 12 years and up.
  - For *Grand Theft Auto* and *Call of Duty*, the minimum age is 17 years and up because they contain many scenes of violence. These games also have a lot of sexual content, which is why they are intended for people 17 and older.

#### Celebrities

- › Celebrities are often seen as being out of reach and universally loved, as they represent an ideal figure in modern society (Dubois d'Enghien, 2020).

- › They achieved success and popularity thanks to their talents and/or career (singer, musician, professional dancer, actor/actress, model, comedian, entrepreneur, influencer, etc.).
- › Celebrities use social media as a giant megaphone to stay in direct contact with their fans (Côté, 2016), as well as to reveal and share details and photos of their private lives, which helps them to maintain a close relationship with their fans and offer them new content (Côté, 2016).

### Social media

- › According to 2021 data:
  - 2 billion people use Instagram® (Asselin, 2022b).
  - 1.93 billion people use Facebook® every month (Asselin, 2022a).
  - 500 million use Snapchat® every month (Asselin, 2022c).
  - 396.5 people use Twitter® (Dean, 2022).
  - 1.2 billion people use TikTok® every month (Asselin, 2021).
- › The platform TikTok® is very popular with teens. About 41% of users are ages 16 to 24 (Beer, 2019) and over one-third of them are under 14 years of age (Radio-Canada, 2020).
- › The minimum age to use Instagram®, Facebook®, Snapchat®, Twitter® and TikTok® is 13 (Instagram, 2022; Meta, n.d.; Snap Inc., 2022; Twitter, 2022; TikTok, 2022).
- › According to a 2019 Quebec study by NETendances, 26% of youth between the ages of 6 and 12 use social media to look at or post content or to interact with friends and family, and 22% of them have an online profile and are active on social media (CEFRIQ, 2019).

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Keep in mind that teens' favourite games can change over time. You can check the internet to see which video games are currently most popular among certain age groups. The Entertainment Software Rating Board (2022) is a non-profit organization that, since 1994, has been committed to helping parents and consumers make informed choices about video games by setting the minimum age for playing each game (<https://www.esrb.org>).

Additionally, TikTok® includes a parental control tool called “Family Pairing,” which allows parents of teens ages 13 and up to supervise their teens' use of TikTok® more effectively (TikTok, 2020). This parental control (<https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/tiktok-introduces-family-pairing/>) allows parents to link their accounts to their children's accounts so that they can, for example, set restrictions on screen time and direct messaging (TikTok, 2020).

Another platform that teens use a lot is YouTube®. In 2019, 86% of youth ages 6 to 17 watched videos on the internet, particularly on the YouTube® platform. This is the most popular online activity for young people (CEFRIQ, 2019).



- › **Tell** the group that you're going to look at the physical traits of video game characters and celebrities. **Mention** that some of the examples will focus on stereotypical physical traits that do not promote body diversity.
- › **Tell** them what is meant by stereotypical physical traits and body diversity.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Definition of sexual stereotype

- › Some media in our public space (e.g., ads, video games, reality shows, social media) present youth and adults with unnuanced messages and a narrow perspective on what it means to be a boy and a girl. These are referred to as sexual stereotypes.
- › Stereotypes are preconceived notions and caricatural images that negatively influence how we perceive, interact with and treat other people (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
- › We can sometimes notice that these stereotypes influence our attitudes, our preferences or our appearance. Note that gender stereotypes may change over time.
- › In today's society, when we talk about stereotypical bodies, generally we're referring to the following physical traits (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022; MEES, 2019):
  - **For girls:** Long hair, slim figure, thin waist, full lips, curves (large breasts, round buttocks), tanned skin, etc.
  - **For boys:** Short or medium-length hair, tall, athletic and muscular body, broad shoulders, square jaw, facial hair (beard), etc.

### Body diversity

- › In recent years, there has been a movement in North America to stop promoting just one type of beauty that presents very slim, digitally altered bodies as representing beauty standards.
- › This movement is advocating for more body diversity in the media—in other words, the representation of various body types that don't reflect conventional beauty standards (Bernier, 2021a).
- › Here are some examples (Bernier, 2021a):
  - People of colour (non-white)
  - Fat people
    - (Note: Although this term can have negative connotations, it has been reclaimed by people fighting against fatphobia. Fatphobia refers to discrimination or hostility toward people who are fat, overweight or obese [Bernier, 2021b])
  - Very tall or very short people
  - People with disabilities or with physical limitations (e.g., someone who uses a wheelchair, someone with an intellectual disability, someone with Down's syndrome)
  - People with skin conditions (e.g., vitiligo, eczema, rosacea, psoriasis, acne)
  - People with aesthetic preferences that others may not typically associate with their gender (e.g., nail polish, makeup, hair colour, baggy clothing, jewelry)



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

You can tell the students that, in 2009, the Quebec government introduced the Quebec Charter for a Healthy and Diverse Body Image [Charte québécoise pour une image corporelle saine et diversifiée (CHIC)], which aims to reduce social and cultural pressure associated with the beauty ideals presented in the public space and media and to promote a safe, equal society (Secrétariat à la condition féminine, 2015). Working alongside the government, the fashion, advertising, media, music and video communities developed the following general principles, addressed primarily to the public space and media:

<b>1. Promote</b> a diversity of body images, including different heights, proportions, and ages.	<b>4. Refuse</b> to subscribe to esthetic ideals based on extreme thinness
<b>2. Encourage</b> healthy eating and weight-control habits.	<b>5. Remain</b> vigilant and diligent so as to minimize the risks of anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and unhealthy preoccupations with weight
<b>3. Discourage</b> excessive weight-control practices or appearance modification.	<b>6. Act</b> as agents of change so as to promote healthy eating and weight-control practices and realistic body images
<b>7. Promote the Quebec Charter for a Healthy and Diverse Body Image</b> among partners, clients, and others while actively respecting and adhering to its principles	

Source: Secrétariat de la condition féminine. Gouvernement du Québec. [http://www.scf.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Documents/Stereotypes/Charte\\_8.5X11\\_CHIC.pdf](http://www.scf.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Documents/Stereotypes/Charte_8.5X11_CHIC.pdf)

The Quebec Charter for a Healthy and Diverse Body Image sets out what is expected of organizations and people in the public space and in media; however, as these principles are not enforced, they are not always complied with. Given this, it's important to encourage young people to have a critical attitude toward representations of bodies in society and, at the same time, to make them aware that they have the power to change things—that their voices count and that they deserve to be heard and respected when it comes to body image and body diversity.

## Discussion

› **Ask** the following question:

- **In what ways are the bodies of certain video game characters and celebrities on social media (e.g., singers, influencers, actors and actresses) stereotypical?**

*Get their opinions.*

› To help them answer the question, **show** them images of video game characters and celebrities (see Sheets 1.1a, 1.1b, 1.1c and 1.1d: *Video game characters and celebrities*).

› **Add** to their answers using Sheet 1.2a, 1.2b, 1.2c and 1.2d: *Answer sheet: Stereotypical bodies among video game characters and celebrities*.

› Next, **provide** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Video game characters

- › They often have very stereotypical bodies (e.g., female characters are very thin and male characters have perfect muscles [Martins & al., 2011]).
- › This can cause video game players to feel insecure about their own bodies (Martins & al., 2009; Martins & al., 2011).

#### Celebrities

- › Celebrities belong to the entertainment world (e.g., singers, influencers, actors). They get a lot of public attention and want to remain popular.
- › They then feel pressured to maintain their public image.
- › As a result, some celebrities will have stereotypical physical traits: a perfect body (thin, muscular), a sexy or glamorous appearance, etc.

› **Lead** a discussion using the question below:

- **Are there, on the other hand, video game characters and celebrities that contribute to greater body diversity in media?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Tell** the students about a video game artist who's helping to promote body diversity.
  - 2D artist Loukia Kyriakidou (character designer for the game *Battletoads*) has said that, despite there being a fair amount of diversity in the *Battletoads* characters, she thinks it's unfortunate that all the female characters have hourglass figures (Simard, 2019), which also accentuates their thin waists.
  - She says that the industry has made some progress, but feels that more needs to be done to include more body diversity in video games (Simard, 2019).
  - To promote more body diversity in video games, Loukia Kyriakidou has some tips for other character designers:
    - Create a moodboard, as this forces you to research different images, colours, etc.
    - Start from scratch and don't base your designs on preconceived notions.
    - Expand your definition of beauty.
    - Have your work and your creations reviewed to avoid stereotypes.
  
- › Next, **share** with the students the names and photos of celebrities who contribute to more body diversity.
  - Some celebrities are quite willing to show who they are and are critical of the ideal body image that others try to impose on them.
    - **In Quebec:**
      - Greg Beaudin (Snail Kid) (singer and actor)
      - Mélissa Bédard (singer and actress)
      - Martin Deschamps (singer and musician)
      - Jay Du Temple (comedian and host)
      - Jean-François Guevremont [Rita Baga] (drag queen and host)
      - Justine Legault (plus-size model)
      - Khate Lessard (first trans woman on a Quebec reality show and speaker)
      - Christine Morency (comedian and radio host)
      - Safia Nolin (singer and musician)
      - Chantal Petitclerc (track and field Paralympic champion)
      - Dave Richer (actor)
    - **Around the world:**
      - Ashley Graham (American plus-size model)
      - Winnie Harlow (Canadian model with a skin condition [vitiligo])
      - Daniel Dias (most decorated Paralympic swimmer in the world)
      - George Robinson (British actor in the series *Sex Education*)
      - RuPaul Andre Charles [RuPaul] (American drag queen, host, actor, author and model)



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

This is a non-exhaustive list of celebrities who represent body diversity. As times goes on, there will be other celebrities to mention. Feel free to add them to the list and talk about them with the students.

- › **End** the activity by asking the students the following question:
  - **What are some other examples of video game characters and celebrities who promote body diversity?**
- › Next, **provide** the following information to conclude:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › There should be more body diversity in entertainment media, as we are typically shown body types that few of us actually have (Greenberg & al., 2003).
- › We always appreciate the people and organizations that show NON-STANDARD body types in media. Of course, in real life, body diversity IS STANDARD.
- › This goes to show that a lot of work still needs to be done to make those in the media industry aware of the role they play in sending messages to consumers about the diversity of bodies and their beauty.
- › In the next activity, we'll discuss how the media industry influences young celebrities in their appearance.





## Activity 3



**SHEETS 1.3 AND 1.4 (A,B,C,D,E)**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**20 MINUTES**



**TEAM ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three or four people.
- › **Hand out** to each team Sheet 1.3: *Before and after photos analysis* table and one of the five Sheets 1.4 (a, b, c, d, e) “*Before and after photos*” presenting different public figures:
  - *Sheet 1.4a: Before and after photos: Ariana Grande*
    - Singer, musician and actress, born in 1993
    - Began her career at the age of 15 (Wikipedia, 2022a)
  - *Sheet 1.4b: Before and after photos: Drake*
    - Actor, musician and rapper, born in 1986
    - Began his career as an actor at the age of 16 (Wikipedia, 2022b)
  - *Sheet 1.4c: Before and after photos: Kylie Jenner*
    - Reality television personality, sister of Kim Kardashian, owner of a cosmetics company, born in 1997
    - Began her career at the age of 14 (Wikipedia, 2022c)
  - *Sheet 1.4d: Before and after photos: Selena Gomez*
    - Musician, singer and actress, born in 1992
    - Began her career at the age of 7 (Wikipedia, 2022d)
  - *Sheet 1.4e: Before and after photos: Justin Bieber*
    - Singer and musician, born in 1994
    - Began his career at the age of 13 (Wikipedia, 2022e)
- › **Tell** the students that on Instagram® alone, these public figures are followed by hundred of millions of people, many of whom are teens.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



As of May 9, 2022, these celebrities have this many Instagram® followers:

- › Ariana Grande: 335 million @arianagrande
- › Drake: 119 million @champagnepapi
- › Kylie Jenner: 372 million @kyliejenner
- › Selena Gomez: 351 million @selenagomez
- › Justin Bieber: 235 million @justinbieber

Statistics on Instagram® followers change rapidly, so feel free to verify how many social media followers these celebrities have or check how many followers newer celebrities have.

These numbers were taken directly from these celebrities' Instagram® accounts.

- › **Give** the following instructions:
  - On your Sheet, there will be two photos of a celebrity: a photo taken when this person was a teenager, and a more recent photo (adult).
  - You will have 5 minutes to analyze these photos and fill out Sheet 1.3: *Before and after photo analysis table*.
  - When the time is up, you'll share your answers with the rest of the group.

## Discussion

- › **Lead** a discussion with the students by showing them the images on Sheets 1.4a, 1.4b, 1.4c, 1.4d and 1.4e: *Before and after photos*, and ask the teams to share their answers.
- › To add to the students' answers on the physical appearance, clothing and look, attitude and other features (e.g., posture) of the five celebrities, refer to Sheet 1.5: *Answer sheet: Analysis of celebrities' before and after photos*.
- › **Continue** the discussion with the questions below:
  - **What did you learn from this exercise?**
  - **How do you explain the differences between the BEFORE and AFTER photos?**
  - **Do the AFTER photos of these celebrities have anything in common? If so, what exactly?**

*Get their opinions.*

# Presentation

› **Add** to their answers if necessary with the information below:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Differences between the BEFORE and AFTER photos:

- › We can see that these celebrities underwent many changes, and these changes fall into various categories.
  - **Their appearance:** These changes may be partly attributable to their age, as they were teenagers and have now become adults. But there are additional factors that may explain the changes in appearance.
  - **Their clothing or their look:** At times “sexy,” stylish, professional, casual, etc.
  - **Their attitudes:** Celebrities are used to being in front of cameras. As a result, their image is often calculated and lacks spontaneity (unnatural postures, intense stares, etc.).
- › Setting aside Drake’s photo, we can see that some of the AFTER photos are more sexualized—in other words, certain physical traits are emphasized in these photos. For example: clothing that reveals certain parts of the body (e.g., low-cut shirts, bare chest); “duck face” (a facial expression made by pushing forward the lips so that they resemble a duck’s beak) (Duckface, 2021), which accentuates the lips; postures that accentuate certain sexual attributes (e.g., buttocks, chest, abs); etc.
- › Selena, Kylie and Ariana have similar facial features, which correspond to what is known as “Instagram face” (RAD, 2020).
  - “Instagram face” refers to facial features (e.g., plump lips, slender nose, arched eyebrows, small forehead, large eyes with no dark circles) that were popularized on Instagram®, primarily by women whose appearances are shaped by the beauty industry (e.g., actresses, celebrities, influencers).
- › Some people (mostly girls and women) want to permanently change how their faces look based on the changes they can make in photo editing and filter apps like Snapchat®, and they seek plastic surgery to achieve this appearance (RAD, 2020). This results in unrealistic expectations (Telle est la question, 2021).
- › This isn’t about judging whether cosmetic surgery is good or bad, but rather examining what motivates celebrities to invest so much money in their appearance when they become rich and famous. Plus, with cosmetic surgery, isn’t there the risk of everyone looking the same (e.g., full lips, thin nose, prominent cheeks)?
- › There is also a financial incentive to conforming to beauty standards. Take the story of Kylie Jenner, a celebrity with hundreds of millions of followers on Instagram® (Legendre, 2019):
  - In 2015, Kylie Jenner admitted that she had gotten injections that made her lips fuller. Seeing the popularity of her photos and posts on social media showing her full lips, she explored how this same result could be achieved without injections. This led to her launching her own cosmetics company.
  - The first products her company launched were 15,000 “Lip Kits,” and these sold out in under a minute. Her celebrity status made it much easier to sell the product, which was associated with her NAME!

- › The word “showbiz” is short for “show business.” (Notice the word “business.”) We shouldn’t be naive about or blind to the intentions of the entertainment industry. The more you grow your audience or user base, the more money you make. For example, in April 2021 alone, the video game industry brought in an estimated \$300 billion in revenue (Agence France-Presse, 2021).
- › Note: The entertainment industry is vast. It includes actors and actresses, singers, people working in television, film, theatre and technology (e.g., video games), influencers, producers and others.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



According to a statistical report by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (2020), over 220,000 cosmetic surgeries were performed in the United States on individuals between the ages of 13 and 19. The most popular cosmetic surgeries were laser hair removal (47 850), laser skin resurfacing (47 979), nose reshaping (44 686), ear surgery (17 340), Botulinum Toxin (e.g., Botox injections) (12 767), eyelid surgery (5 301), breast augmentation (3 233) and cheek implant (3 033). Just note that there were 879 labiaplasty.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the following question:
  - **In your opinion, what influences celebrities or public figures to change their appearance, demeanour or conduct?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to their answers if necessary with the information below:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### What influences someone to change their appearance or conduct

#### Appearance

- › It’s normal and fine for someone to want to change their appearance or look, whether they’re a teen, adult, public figure or celebrity.
- › When the person is well known or famous, they’re often concerned about maintaining a good image in the eyes of their admirers and conforming to a beauty ideal.

- ▶ Beauty ideals are generally based on a sexualized image of people with white skin. Among female models, this means having big eyes, full lips, round buttocks, shapely hips, large breasts and a thin waist (Laforte, 2017; RAD, 2020). Although these beauty ideals may vary between countries and time periods, and today there is much more openness to body diversity, “*the influence of white culture on beauty is definitely still dominant*” [translation] (Laforte, 2017).
- ▶ Among male models, beauty ideals involve having a very muscular build, little chest hair and no belly fat (LaPresse, 2018).
- ▶ For public figures and celebrities, it can be very profitable for them to conform to beauty standards in order to get noticed and advance their career.
- ▶ Social media, which is such a big part of our lives, often shows us only one beauty ideal (Telle est la question, 2021). There can be a big difference between the photos we see posted on social media and what people look like in real life (Telle est la question, 2021). If we compare ourselves with these photos, we may be unsatisfied with our appearance and want to change it to fit these beauty ideals (Telle est la question, 2021).
- ▶ However, it’s important to distinguish between “*looking after your appearance*” and/or wanting to be “*fashionable*” AND being constantly dissatisfied with your body and wanting to improve your appearance at all costs to fit a beauty ideal.

#### **Influences that cause someone to adopt sexualized behaviours and attitudes**

- ▶ Plus, some celebrities like to present a more sexualized image of themselves. While there’s nothing wrong with artists wanting to develop the “*sexy*” side of their personality, it’s important to consider the reasons motivating them to showcase these sexualized attitudes and behaviours.
- ▶ Some media show women as having a very “*sexy*” and seductive attitude—i.e., a suggestive look, low-cut top, tight-fitting clothing, etc., which can give the impression that women are valued mainly for their bodies and their sexuality (RQASF, 2006a; RQASF, 2006b).

#### **Reasons for adopting sexualized behaviours and attitudes**

- ▶ Some people use sexuality to advance their careers. However, this can have negative consequences. For example, these people may be trapped by the one image others have of them, which is as a sex object.
- ▶ Sexualized images sell and are popular in the entertainment world. We can see this, for example, with participants on reality shows, when they have to “*show off their charm*” and become popular right away without demonstrating any artistic talent (RQASF, 2006a; RQASF, 2006b).

- ▶ To sum up, some celebrities and public figures may change their appearance and adopt sexual behaviours as a result of certain influences. Since these celebrities are looked up to as role models, some people will use photo editing and filter apps to try to look like them and conform to the beauty standards on social media. Others even opt for cosmetic surgery as a way to permanently change their bodies (RAD, 2020).

- › The next activity focuses on how photo editing and filter apps are used to make faces conform to these beauty standards.

## Presentation and Discussion

- › **Tell** the students that the next activity will be done as a class.
- › Next, **show** them the following photos:



Image source: [https://www.terrafemina.com/article/reseaux-sociaux-ce-photographe-expose-les-consequences-des-filtres-chez-les-ados\\_a348047/1](https://www.terrafemina.com/article/reseaux-sociaux-ce-photographe-expose-les-consequences-des-filtres-chez-les-ados_a348047/1)



Image source: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/249521>

- › **Explain** that these images represent photos in which someone's facial features were altered to conform to beauty standards on social media.
- › **Ask** the students the following question:
  - **Which facial features have been digitally altered in the photo of the female model?**
  - **And in the photo of the male model?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Presentation

- › **Add** to the students answers with the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Facial features of the female model:

- › Pale complexion
- › Smooth skin
- › Eye colour a deeper blue
- › Makeup around the eyes
- › Thin, straight nose
- › Pink, full lips
- › Ears closer to the face
- › More slender face
- › Etc.

#### Facial features of the male model:

- › Slightly tanned complexion
- › Smooth skin and freckles less visible
- › Lines and wrinkles less visible
- › Thin, straight nose
- › Eyebrow piercing removed
- › Moles removed
- › Etc.

- › After identifying which facial features were digitally altered in the two photos, **add** the observation that the changes to the female model's facial features are much more obvious, and that the digitally altered photo hardly resembles the original.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the students the follow question:
  - **Photo editing and filter apps: Are they useful or harmful?**  
*Get their opinions.*

- › **Add** to the students' answers using the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Arguments for HARMFUL...to your self-esteem

- › The beauty ideals and body types that we see everywhere in media, starting from childhood, become a social norm (Es-tu malade, 2019), and we feel pressured to conform and follow the norm.
- › It's during adolescence that we build our identity and cultivate the look or image we want to put forward. This is no small matter. In fact, it's very important. When we are only shown "perfect" bodies and pictures that have been enhanced with photo editing and filters, we can begin to feel very dissatisfied and insecure about OUR appearance.
- › This can cause us to have an unrealistic idea of what our body should look like, and we may idealize a digitally altered version of our face (Reilly and Keon, 2020).

### Arguments for USEFUL...for having fun

- › Some people use filters to have fun with their friends (Moyens I/O, 2020). Filters can also be used to create and act as funny characters.
- › Plus, most of these filters are free and easy to use.

### Arguments for USEFUL...or are they?

- › Filters and photo editing apps can be used to present an enhanced image of ourselves, which may help us feel more beautiful and more comfortable in our own skin (Apple Store, 2022).
- › We may feel satisfied with the image of ourselves we see reflected in these apps.
- › But is this really an advantage, given that we risk hurting our self-esteem?

### But... THINGS ARE CHANGING!

- › Some companies and magazines are making efforts to talk about fatphobia (fatphobia refers to hostile attitudes and discrimination toward fat people (Grossophobie.ca, 2021)) and are showing models with different bodies, without using filters. For example, the magazines *Elle Québec* (2017) and *Châtelaine* (2018) were the first magazines in Quebec to address the topic of fatphobia (Grossophobie.ca, 2021).
- › Since then, some companies have refused to use Photoshop to digitally alter the photos used in their ads. One example is the company *Dove* (Es-tu malade, 2019).
- › Plus, some Instagram accounts aim to promote different body types or even to humorously criticize ads that reinforce beauty ideals (Es-tu malade, 2019).





## Activity 4



**SHEET 1.6**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MINUTES**



**BRAINSTORMING**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Tell** the students that you're going to examine some photos of celebrities taken while they're looking NATURAL. Using Sheet 1.6: *Photos of celebrities looking natural*, show the different photos of celebrities.
- › Next, **ask** the following question:
  - **What do you notice?**
  - **In your opinion, how does comparing oneself with these grown-up celebrities impact the body image of teens your age?**
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Comparisons with celebrities

- › During adolescence, we go through major changes, including changes in body weight and shape (NousTV, 2016).
- › At this age especially, we want to follow the norm and be like others, and for this reason we compare ourselves with our friends, our classmates and celebrities.
- › However, we need to keep in mind that most celebrities and public figures are already adults so their bodies have already fully developed.
- › Plus, they have an entire team of professionals helping them enhance their image (e.g., makeup, hairstyle, clothing style), not to mention that some of them have had cosmetic surgery to conform to beauty standards.

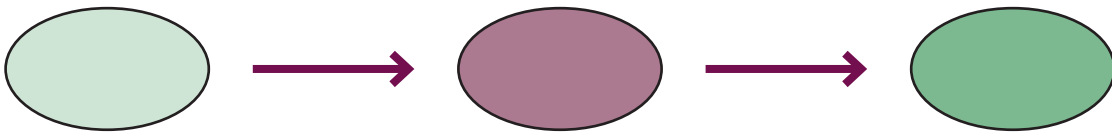
## Brainstorming

- › **Return** to the three circles from Activity 1 and tell the students that they will fill in circle #3 based on what they learned during the session.
- › **Remind** the students that circle #3 corresponds to how our body image is impacted by body representations in some entertainment media.
  - Body image refers to how we perceive our body and how others perceive it. Our body image may be influenced by our weight, height, skin colour or any other physical traits (CHU Sainte-Justine, 2018).

**1. Entertainment media**  
(e.g., video games, social media,  
internet, television, film)

**2. Body representation in  
some entertainment media**

**3. Impact on body image**



- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **During this session, we saw how stereotypical bodies in entertainment media (e.g., movies, ads, web series, video games) can impact the body image of people your age. What other impacts can you think of?**
- › **Write** their answers in circle #3.
- › Next, **share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Impact of seeing stereotypical bodies in entertainment media

- › The consumption of entertainment media plays a key role in influencing our body image and tends to be associated with body dissatisfaction because we may start to devalue our body, see it in a negative light and feel a sense of disappointment (Fardouly & al., 2015; Fardouly and Vartanian, 2016; Franchina and Lo Coco, 2018; HabiloMédias, n.d.; Holland and Tiggemann, 2016; Telle est la question, 2021).
- › Comparing oneself to these unrealistic and unattainable beauty standards can cause teens (as well as adults!) to feel dissatisfied and frustrated because they feel like they don't measure up. They may even get discouraged and may not feel like themselves (Raymond and Lebel, 2021).
- › A study looking at Instagram found that this app "easily makes girls and women feel as if their bodies aren't good enough" (Royal Society for Public Health, 2017).
- › For some people, this may also increase their risk of developing an eating disorder (Bachner-Melman & al., 2018; Chang & al., 2019; Cohen and Blaszczynski, 2015; Rousseau and Eggermont, 2018).

- › Fortunately, we're starting to see more and more body diversity in media. Seeing different body types should help us to see our own bodies and others' bodies in a more positive light (Paul, 2018).

- › **Lead** a discussion using the following question:

- **In your opinion, why is it important to have a critical attitude toward the highly stereotypical body types we see in media?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The photos of celebrities that we see in the media are staged photos—in other words, the clothes are carefully selected, and the poses are practised beforehand.
- › There's a team of professionals making sure that these photos are flattering. Everything has to be perfect, from the makeup and hair to the lighting. However, like us, these celebrities have normal moments in their everyday lives when their makeup and hair weren't done by their team. So it's important to keep in mind that most of these staged photos aren't taken in realistic, natural settings, unlike the photos we take ourselves.
- › It's normal to want to improve our appearance, but some changes made with photo editing and filter applications go far beyond this. When we use these apps frequently, it becomes difficult to present ourselves in any other way, as this technology completely alters our image and appearance. For instance, we can change the shape of the face, the nose, the cheekbones and silhouette.
- › For some people, the use of these technologies causes them to idealize and/or trivialize body alterations, and this may lead them to permanently change their bodies in extreme ways.



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MINUTES



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION



VIDEO

## Discussion, Presentation and Video

› **Share** the following with the students:

- **More and more now, we're seeing a willingness to change the stereotypical or unrealistic beauty standards conveyed in media or on social media and to show more body diversity.**

› **Show** the following video:

**Developing a positive body image (Paluumimi, 2019)**

**Length:** 2 min., 25 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ7rVSu0qDM>**



Video



› After the video, **ask** the following questions:

- **What are your takeaways from this video?**
- **This video presents some advice for developing a positive body image. What are some other things you could do to develop a positive body image?**

- › **Share** with the students some ways to develop a positive body image:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Ways to develop a positive body image

- › Try to have a positive view of yourself, of your strengths and qualities (Tel-Jeunes, 2017).
- › Do things that make you feel good and that you're passionate about (Tel-Jeunes, 2017).
- › Surround yourself with caring, positive people who value you (Tel-Jeunes, 2017).
- › Be yourself: for example, dress in a way that makes you feel comfortable with yourself, try different looks, etc. (Kids Help Phone, 2022).
- › Challenge or question messages, ads and photos that make you feel bad or that promote unrealistic body representations (Kids Help Phone, 2022).
- › On social media, choose to follow people, artists, companies and organizations that promote body diversity and a positive body image (Kids Help Phone, 2022).
- › Etc.

- › Next, **show** the students examples of public awareness campaigns aimed at promoting self-acceptance and a positive body image. Refer to Sheet 1.7: *Public awareness campaigns and posters*.
- › **Ask** them to pay attention to which message speaks to them the most.
  - **Which message speaks to you the most in the public awareness campaigns and posters on positive body image?**
  - **Why that one in particular?**
- › **Tell** the students the following: *“Commit to memory the message that spoke to you the most. That way, when you have days or moments when you don't feel good about who you are, you can remember this message and repeat it to yourself!”*
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Show** the students a succession of images of teens in their living environments who represent body diversity as well as ethnic diversity, religious diversity and disability diversity.
- › **Conclude** the meeting by telling the students that by “being true to themselves” and appreciating their body the way that it is, they're helping to spread the message that body diversity is beautiful!

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Depending on the mood in the classroom and the student's interest, you may choose to hand out Sheet 1.8: *Self-Evaluation: Who am I on social media?* You would do so at end of the session, or before the students leave the classroom. Explain to the students that this is an individual, personal exercise that gets them to think about the photos they post on social media. The sheet won't be collected; the students can keep it.





## SHEET

### 1.1a

FOR THE GROUP

## Video game characters: Mario Bros.

### I. VIDEO GAMES - MARIO BROS.

Princess Peach	Mario
	
<p>Image source: <a href="https://play.nintendo.com/themes/friends/princess-peach/">https://play.nintendo.com/themes/friends/princess-peach/</a></p>	<p>Image source: <a href="https://www.corriere.it/tecnologia/videogiochi/21_settembre_25/super-mario-film-cast-392bddbe-1d44-11ec-a854-dd0bdfa3385.shtml">https://www.corriere.it/tecnologia/videogiochi/21_settembre_25/super-mario-film-cast-392bddbe-1d44-11ec-a854-dd0bdfa3385.shtml</a></p>



**SHEET**

**1.1b**

**FOR THE GROUP**

## Video game characters: Sims 4

### 2. VIDEO GAME - SIMS 4

Sims



Image source: <https://www.jeuxactu.com/les-sims-4-la-creation-du-personnage-en-video-93107.htm>








## SHEET

### 1.1c

FOR THE GROUP

## Video game characters: Fortnite

### 3. VIDEO GAMES - FORTNITE

Sorana	Ranger	Penny
		
<p>Image source: <a href="https://www.deviantart.com/vasiaklimov/art/Fortnite-Sorana-834728918">https://www.deviantart.com/vasiaklimov/art/Fortnite-Sorana-834728918</a></p>	<p>Image source: <a href="https://progameguides.com/fortnite-cosmetic/ranger/">https://progameguides.com/fortnite-cosmetic/ranger/</a></p>	<p>Image source: <a href="https://www.deviantart.com/joecalzon/art/SFM-Fortnite-Female-Constructor-Penny-739385896">https://www.deviantart.com/joecalzon/art/SFM-Fortnite-Female-Constructor-Penny-739385896</a></p>



**SHEET**

**1.1d**

**FOR THE GROUP**

## Celebrities: Kim Kardashian and Miley Cyrus

### 4. CELEBRITIES

**Kim Kardashian (influencer)**



Image source: <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/style-beauty/fashion/a19713484/kim-kardashian-met-gala-2018/>

**Miley Cyrus (singer)**



Image source: Miley Cyrus' Instagram® account (2022)



# FICHE SUPPORT

## 1.2a



FOR SESSION LEADERS

### Answer sheets: Video game characters: Mario Bros.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Here are the answers to share with the students about the stereotypes in certain video game characters and celebrities.

#### I. VIDEO GAMES - MARIO BROS.

	Princess Peach	Mario Bros
		
Answers	<p><b>Stereotypical traits:</b> Slim figure, lots of makeup, “princess” stereotype, etc.</p>	<p><b>Stereotypical traits:</b> Mario doesn’t represent a specific body stereotype. His appearance is funny and cartoonish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The scenario of “Super Mario” is full of stereotypes. For example, we see the damsel in distress stereotype (Princess Peach) (Lanctot, 2020). Also, in several Mario Bros. Games, Princess Peach is kidnapped by Bowser, who embodies malice and evil (Lanctot, 2020). Mario’s quest is to free the princess. Peach his reward. This is an example of the stereotype of the helpless woman (Lanctot, 2020).</li> </ul>



## Answer sheet: Video game characters: Sims 4

### 2. VIDEO GAMES - SIMS 4

#### Sims



Answers

**Stereotypical traits:** Although players get to create their own characters in The Sims game, these characters can have stereotypical traits. The character on the left has chiselled abs and a very muscular build. The person on the right has a very slim waist and broader hips, giving her an “hourglass figure.”






# FICHE SUPPORT

## 1.2c

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer sheet: Video game characters: Fortnite

### I. VIDEO GAMES - FORTNITE

	Sorana	Ranger	Penny
			
<b>Answers</b>	<b>Stereotypical traits:</b> Tight-fitting clothes, high-heeled boots, lots of makeup, very slim waist, etc.	<b>Stereotypical traits:</b> Very muscular build.	<b>Stereotypical traits:</b> Tight-fitting clothes, low-cut top, large breasts, curvy figure, sexy look, etc.





## FICHE SUPPORT

### 1.2d

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Celebrities: Kim Kardashian and Miley Cyrus

### 2. CELEBRITIES

Kim Kardashian (influencer)



**Stereotypical traits:** Lots of makeup, full lips, high-end manicure, tight-fitting clothing, large breasts and a low-cut dress, accentuated buttocks, etc.

Miley Cyrus (singer)



**Stereotypical traits:** makeup, visible tattoos, full lips, high-heeled shoes, sexy outfit, skimpy clothing, etc.

Answers



## SHEET

### 1.3

FOR THE GROUP

## Before and after photo analysis table

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Write down the name of the celebrity whose photo you will be analyzing.
- › As a team, look carefully at the before and after photos and, in the table below, write down what you notice about the person's (a) physical appearance, (b) clothing and look, (c) attitude and (d) other features.

Name of the celebrity: \_\_\_\_\_

	Before Photo	After Photo
› A) Physical appearance		
› B) Clothing and look		
› C) Attitude What attitude do these photos convey? (e.g., a sexy, glamorous, confident, reserved or natural attitude)		
› D) Other features (posture)		



**SHEET**

**1.4a**

**FOR THE GROUP**

## Before and after photos: Ariana Grande





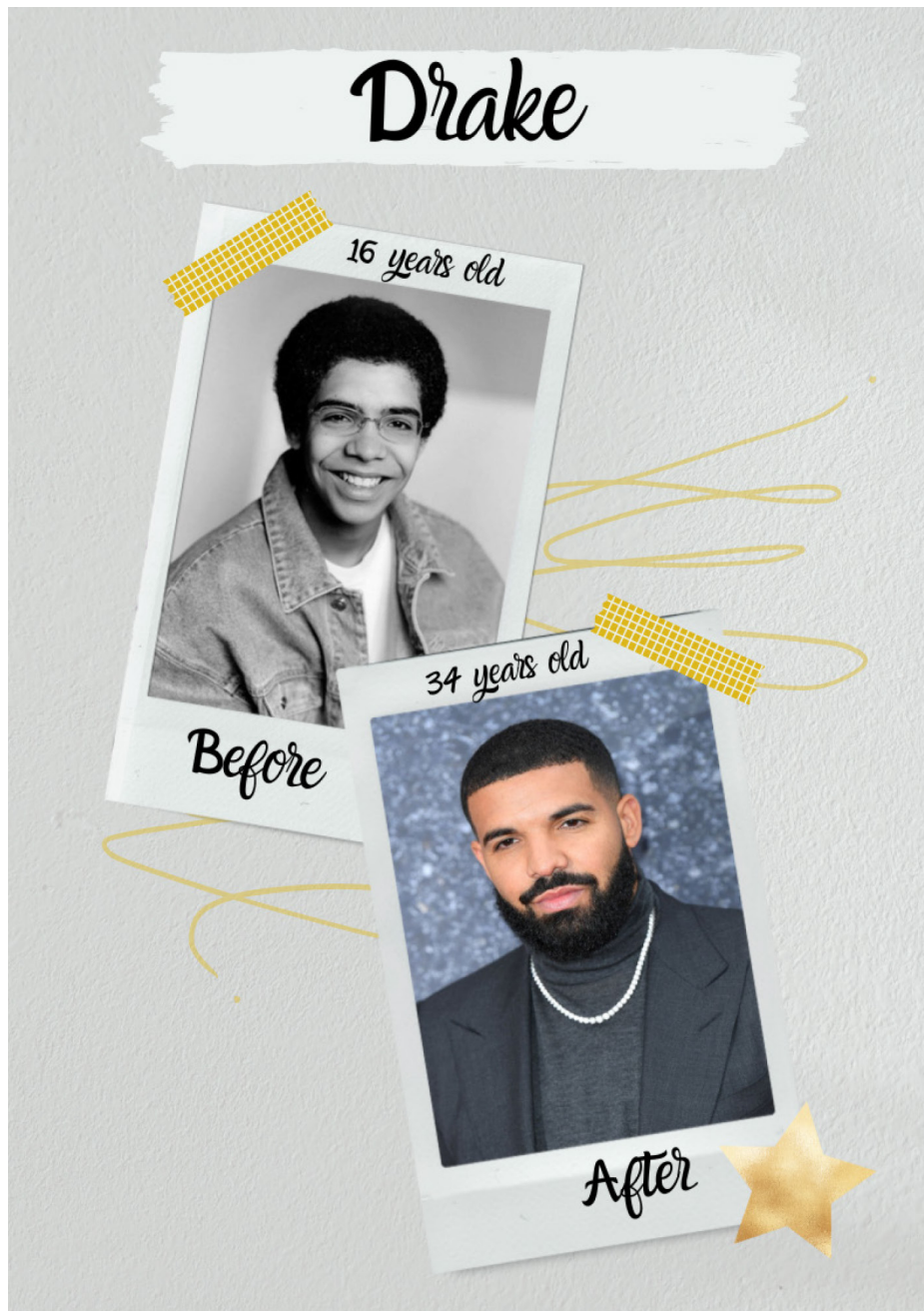


## FICHE SHEET

1.4b

FOR THE GROUP

### Before and after photos: Drake





**SHEET**

**1.4c**

**FOR THE GROUP**

## Before and after photos: Kylie Jenner







**SHEET**

**1.4d**

**FOR THE GROUP**

## Before and after photos: Selena Gomez





**SHEET**

**1.4e**

**FOR THE GROUP**

## Before and after photos: Justin Bieber





# FICHE SUPPORT

## 1.5

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer sheet: Analysis of before and after photos

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Using the answers below, lead a discussion with the students by showing Sheet 1.2a (Ariana Grande) and 1.2b (Drake) and asking the teams to share their answers.

	A) Physical appearance	B) Clothing and look	C) Attitude <i>What attitude do the photos convey?</i>  E.g., a sexy, glamorous, confident, reserved or natural attitude?	D) Other features (posture)
<b>Name of the celebrity: Ariana Grande</b>				
<b>Before photo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural hairstyle</li> <li>› Light makeup</li> <li>› More natural eyebrows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Casual clothing</li> <li>› Youthful look</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural</li> <li>› Cheerful and relaxed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural posture</li> </ul>
<b>After photo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Straightened, long hair</li> <li>› Lot of eye makeup</li> <li>› Fuller lips</li> <li>› Better defined eyebrows using makeup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Much fancier clothing, like you would see at a show or gala</li> <li>› Sexy, low-cut outfit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Intense stare</li> <li>› Similar to the “duck face,” which accentuates the lips. (A facial expression made by pushing forward the lips so that they resemble a duck’s beak.) (Duckface, 2021)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Unnatural posture, profile photo</li> </ul>
<b>Name of the celebrity: Drake</b>				
<b>Before photo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Glasses</li> <li>› Natural hairstyle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Casual clothing</li> <li>› Youthful look</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Cheerful</li> <li>› Confident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural posture</li> </ul>
<b>After photo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› No glasses</li> <li>› Buzz cut</li> <li>› Moustache and beard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Fancier clothes</li> <li>› Jewelry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Confident</li> <li>› Serious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural posture</li> </ul>

## INSTRUCTIONS

- › Using the answers below, lead a discussion with the students by showing Sheet 1.2c (Kylie Jenner), Sheet 1.2d (Selena Gomez) and Sheet 1.2e (Justin Bieber) and asking the teams to share their answers.

	A) Physical appearance	B) Clothing and look	C) Attitude <i>What attitude do the photos convey?</i> E.g., a sexy, glamorous, confident, reserved or natural attitude?	D) Other features (posture)
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### Name of the celebrity: *Kylie Jenner*

	A) Physical appearance	B) Clothing and look	C) Attitude	D) Other features (posture)
Before photo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural hair colour</li> <li>› Natural lips</li> <li>› Natural nose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Low-cut dress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Cheerful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Straight, natural posture</li> </ul>
After photo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Coloured hair</li> <li>› Lengthened eyelashes</li> <li>› Arched eyebrows</li> <li>› Plump lips</li> <li>› Thinner nose (cosmetic surgery)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Casual clothing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Intense stare</li> <li>› Similar to the “duck face,” which accentuates the lips</li> <li>› (A facial expression made by pushing forward the lips so that they resemble a duck’s beak.) (Duckface, 2021)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Head tilted to the side</li> <li>› Filter seems to have been used</li> </ul>

### Name of the celebrity: *Selena Gomez*

	A) Physical appearance	B) Clothing and look	C) Attitude	D) Other features (posture)
Before photo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Light makeup</li> <li>› Natural eyebrows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Casual clothing</li> <li>› Youthful look</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural</li> <li>› Cheerful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural posture</li> </ul>
After photo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Lengthened lashes</li> <li>› Arched eyebrows</li> <li>› Light makeup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Jewelry</li> <li>› Sexy outfit, low-cut top</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Intense stare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Unnatural posture, with her hands on her collar</li> </ul>

### Name of the celebrity: *Justin Bieber*

	A) Physical appearance	B) Clothing and look	C) Attitude	D) Other features (posture)
Before photo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural hair colour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Casual clothing</li> <li>› Youthful look</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Cheerful</li> <li>› Relaxed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Natural posture</li> </ul>
After photo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Coloured hair</li> <li>› Tattoos</li> <li>› Muscles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Little clothing</li> <li>› Sexy outfit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Intense stare</li> <li>› Context: photo for an ad for Calvin Klein underwear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Showing off his body</li> <li>› Sexy posture, with his shirt lifted so that his abs are visible.</li> </ul>





## SHEET

1.6

FOR THE GROUP

## Photos of celebrities looking natural

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Look at the different photos of celebrities *looking natural*.





## SHEET

### 1.7

FOR THE GROUP

## Public awareness campaigns and posters that promote a positive body image

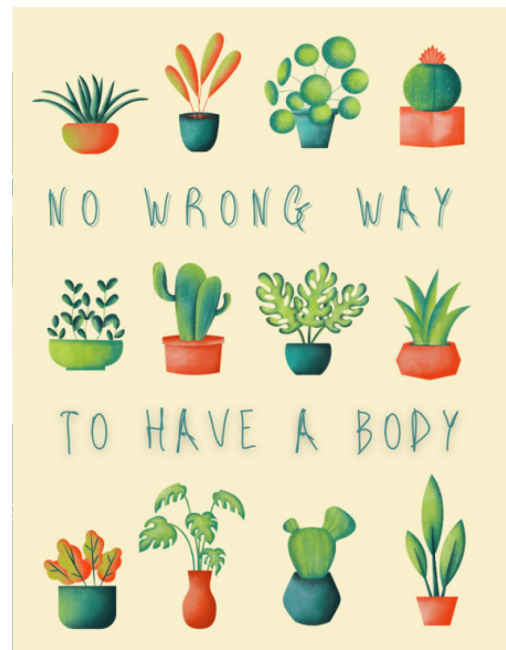
### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Ask yourself which message speaks to you the most in the following public awareness campaigns and posters.

#### #1 Poster to raise awareness about the importance of body diversity

Text:

No wrong way to have a body



Inspired by Redbubble

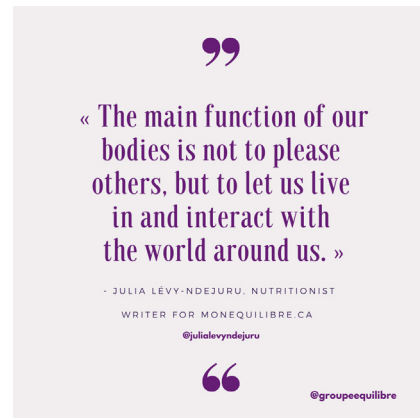
<https://www.redbubble.com/fr/i/poster/Pas-de-mauvaise-fa%C3%A7on-dand-39-avoir-un-corps-par-glorifyobesity/16446689.LVTDI>



**#2** Poster by the organization **ÉquiLibre** on the main function of the body (2021)

Text:

“The main function of our bodies is not to please others, but to let us live in and interact with the world around us.”



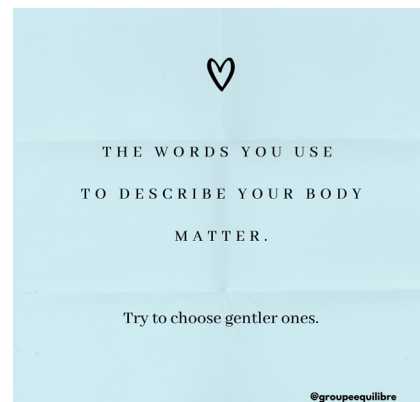
ÉquiLibre. (February 22, 2021). [Instagram post].

**#3** Poster by the organization **ÉquiLibre** on the words we use to describe our body (2021)

Text:

The words you use to describe your body matter.

Try to choose gentler ones.



ÉquiLibre. (February 25, 2021). [Instagram post].

**#4** Poster by the organization **ÉquiLibre** on what we need to be (2022)

Text:

I need to be:  
~~good-looking~~  
~~thin~~  
~~attractive~~  
~~sexy~~  
~~perfect~~  
Myself.

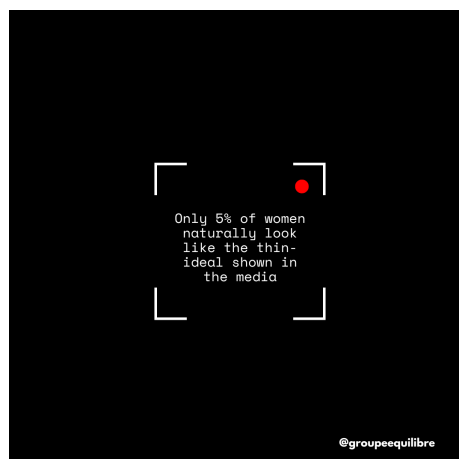


ÉquiLibre. (March 4, 2022). [Instagram post].

## #5 Publication by the organization ÉquiLibre on how many women naturally meet the thinness ideal (2021)

Text:

Only 5% of women naturally meet the thinness ideal shown in the media.



ÉquiLibre. (March 16, 2021). [Instagram post].

## #6 Poster by the organization ÉquiLibre on tips for accepting parts of your body (2021)

Text:

Learning to accept your body doesn't mean thinking that every part of it is perfect. It means recognizing your value even if there are certain parts of your body that you like less!

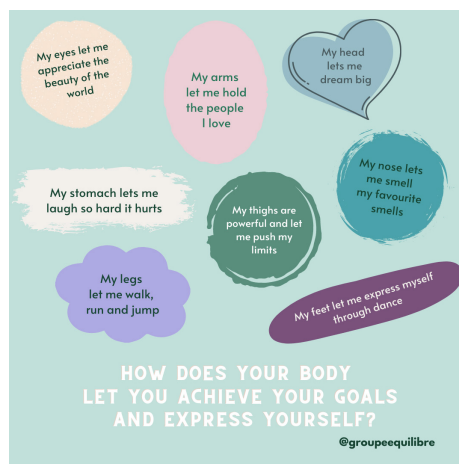


ÉquiLibre. (December 21, 2021). [Instagram post].

## #7 Poster by the organization ÉquiLibre on what our body allows us to do (2021)

Text:

My eyes let me appreciate the beauty of the world  
My arms let me hold the people I love  
My head lets me dream big  
My stomach lets me laugh so hard it hurts  
My thighs are powerful and let me push my limits  
My nose lets me smell my favourite smells  
My legs let me walk, run and jump  
My feet let me express myself through dance  
How does your body let you achieve your goals and express yourself?



ÉquiLibre. (November 12, 2021). [Instagram post].



# SHEET

## 1.8

FOR THE GROUP

### Self-assessment: Who am I on social media?

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › This exercise is done individually. You don't need to share your answers if you don't want to. It's a personal exercise.
- › As you examine the photos that you posted on social media, what do you notice regarding (a) your physical appearance, (b) your clothing and your look, (c) your attitude and (d) other aspects or features.
- › For each of the questions below, indicate the FREQUENCY at which this behavior occurs .

#### Self-assessment: Who am I on social media?

	NEVER 1	SOMETIMES 2	OFTEN 3	ALWAYS 4
				Write the number that corresponds to how often you do these things
<b>My physical appearance</b>		I use a filter before posting a photo/video on social media.		
		Before posting a photo/video on social media, I digitally alter it with an app.		
		I smile in the photos/videos I post. 😊		
		I make silly faces in the photos/videos I post.		

### Self-assessment: Who am I on social media?

	NEVER 1	SOMETIMES 2	OFTEN 3	ALWAYS 4
				Write the number that corresponds to how often you do these things
<b>My clothing and my look</b>		I spend several hours choosing my look before taking a photo to post on social media.		
		I try to replicate the looks of my favourite celebrities in the photos I post.		
		In the photos I post on social media, I wear clothes that I wouldn't wear in my everyday life.		
		I put on makeup when taking photos that I plan to post on social media.		
<b>My attitude</b>		I make pouty faces in the photos/videos I post on social media (nonchalant look, etc.).		
		I do a "duck face" (a facial expression that accentuates the lips, like a duck's beak) in the photos/videos I post on social media.		
<b>Other factors or features</b>		Photos of me on social media taken by my friends in which I'm "tagged."		
		I do the same poses and postures as my favourite celebrities.		
		If I don't get many "likes" on a photo I post, I remove it from social media.		

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## Secondary 3 - Session 2

### Romantic relationships - “Loving and Being Loved: Not Always Easy!”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

#### Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)

#### Emotional and Romantic Life

##### Become aware of the benefits of a romantic relationship based on mutuality

- › Consideration of each partner’s needs: to love and be loved, to assert yourself and be listened to, to recognize the other and be recognized, to feel safe, to have space for yourself and leave space for your partner in the relationship, to respect your sexual needs and those of your partner

##### Identify the importance of healthy conflict management in a romantic relationship

- › Difficulties in a romantic relationship: sharing time between your friends and your partner, jealousy, cheating, violence
- › Behaviours that promote conflict resolution: listening, communication of feelings, proposal of mutually satisfying solutions, compromise, seeking of help from the people around you and from school personnel
- › Separation: reasons to separate and ways of separating

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good lifestyle habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<b>Intellectual competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul>	<b>Personal and social competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <b>Communication-related competency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Personal development subject area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec citizenship and culture</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Subject-specific competencies (MEES, 2009)</b>	<b>Reads and enjoys a variety of texts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Builds meaning</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul> <b>Writes a variety of texts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<b>Communicates orally, using different methods</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Gives oral presentations</li> <li>› Adopts a critical attitude</li> </ul>

pas clair si je garde ces compétences subject-specific

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Autonomy and Interdependence (Secondary 2)

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<b>Studies a cultural reality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<b>Reflects on an ethical question</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<b>Understand romantic relationships in adolescence (Secondary 2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diversity of possible relationship paths</li> <li>› Positive and negative norms and social pressures</li> <li>› Importance attributed to being in a romantic relationship</li> <li>› Breakups and heartbreak</li> </ul> <b>Understand healthy conflict management in a romantic relationship (Secondary 2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Difficulties experienced in a romantic relationship</li> <li>› Behaviours that promote conflict resolution</li> <li>› Reasons and ways to break up</li> <li>› Support resources and solutions</li> </ul>	<b>Reflect on tensions between own feelings and the feelings of others in first dating relationships (Secondary 2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Divergent expectations, needs, motivations and limits</li> </ul> <b>Reflect on tensions experienced while managing conflict in romantic relationships (Secondary 2)</b>



## Educational Goals



**Session length:**

75 minutes

**Develop skills to deal with various possible outcomes in an adolescent romantic relationship (e.g., conflict management, breakup, heartbreak).**

- 1. Discuss** the aspects that make an adolescent romantic relationship *work, go downhill or fall apart*.
- 1. Identify** the possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship (e.g., relationship is going well, conflict, breakup).
- 2.** Based on situations that illustrate different sources of conflict in an adolescent romantic relationship, **indicate** the behaviours and attitudes that promote conflict resolution.
- 3. Discuss** the various questions that a romantic breakup raises.
- 4. Analyze** the consequences of an adolescent romantic breakup for the person being broken up with and the person doing the breaking up.
- 5. Suggest** respectful and kind ways of breaking up, including in the era of technology.
- 6. Respond** to clichés about heartbreak and acknowledge the importance of self-care when you experience heartbreak.
- 7. Recognize** that loving and being loved is an essential need, and that it can be expressed and experienced in different ways.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **four activities**.

10 min.	ACTIVITY 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship</li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship when “the relationship is going well” <i>Sheet 2.1: Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Aspects that make a romantic relationship work, go downhill or fall apart <i>Sheet 2.2: Aspects that make a romantic relationship work, go downhill or fall apart</i></li> <li>› <b>Videos:</b> “Obsession” and “Isolation”</li> </ul>
20 min.	ACTIVITY 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> “There’s a conflict” <i>Sheet 2.1: Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship</i></li> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> Romantic conflict: how to respond <i>Sheet 2.3: Romantic conflict: how to respond</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Behaviour that promotes conflict resolution with your partner</li> </ul>
25 min.	ACTIVITY 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> “We broke up” <i>Sheet 2.1: Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship</i></li> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> Situations involving romantic breakups <i>Sheet 2.4a: Situational exercise: Clémentine and Hugo</i> <i>Sheet 2.4b: Situational exercise: Delia and Jacob</i> <i>Sheet 2.4c: Situational exercise: Charles and Dimitri</i> <i>Sheet 2.5: Answer Sheet: Situational exercises</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>



10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Stages of heartbreak <i>Sheet 2.1: Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship</i></li> <li>› <b>Raised Hand Survey:</b> Heartbreak <i>Sheet 2.6: Heartbreak</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
5 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Teens Talk About Love”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Key messages from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)



## Activity 1



**SHEETS 2.1 AND 2.2**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**10 MIN.**



**VIDEOS**



**TEAM  
ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or in the companion slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › **Explain** to the group that today's session is about romantic relationships, more specifically the possible outcomes and difficulties of an adolescent romantic relationship.

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations (e.g., romantic breakup, romantic rejection, questions about sexual orientation). It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.

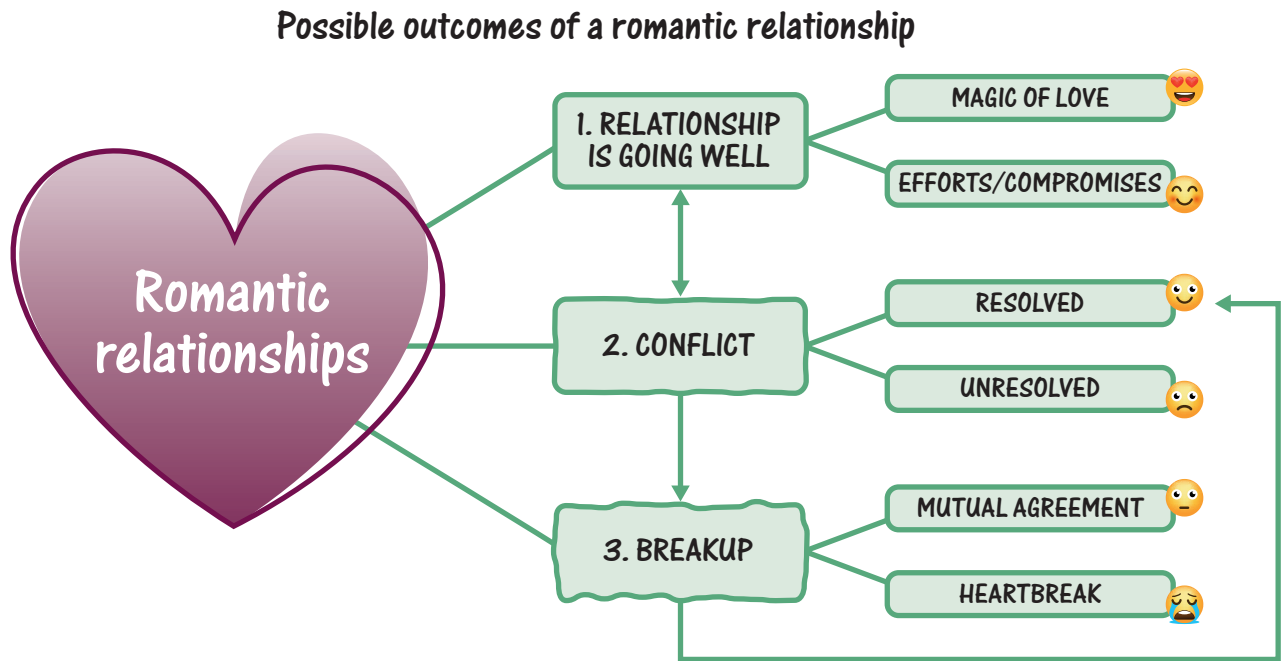
### Discussion

- › **Ask** the group to identify the possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship, namely the various ways that it can change over time.
  - **How do you think a romantic relationship can change over time? In other words, what can happen? What are some possible scenarios?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Presentation

- Following the discussion, **add to** the answers using the image and the proposed information (see Sheet 2.1: *Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship*). The possible outcomes are: “The relationship is going well”; “There’s a conflict”; “We broke up.” Since, for each of these outcomes, others are added, it’s important to follow the order in which they are presented.



## Discussion and Presentation

- Continue** by creating two columns on the blackboard titled as follows:
  - “Romantic relationship that is working”
  - “Romantic relationship that has gone downhill or fallen apart”
- Discuss** as a group the aspects that make an adolescent romantic relationship work, go downhill or fall apart. To do so, **address** the class as two distinct groups: Group 1, on the left side of the classroom, will answer the first question and Group 2, on the right side of the classroom, will answer the second question.
  - Group 1: What do you think makes a romantic relationship work?**
  - Group 2: What do you think makes a romantic relationship go downhill or fall apart?**
- Write** their answers on the blackboard.
- Go over** the information related to the first section entitled “The relationship is going well” on Sheet 2.1: *Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship*.
- Add to** the answers using the detailed information on Sheet 2.2: *Aspects that make a romantic relationship work, go downhill or fall apart*.

- *Aspects that make a relationship work:* respect for the needs of both people, trust and emotional intimacy, kindness with respect to yourself and the other person, communication and conflict management
- *Aspects that make a relationship go downhill or fall apart:* presence of dominant, possessive, demeaning or manipulative behaviour

## Videos and Presentation

- › End the activity by **showing two 15-second videos** that illustrate situations in which a given behaviour makes the romantic relationship seem appropriate or inappropriate.

### Obsession (JoinOneLove, 2016)

**Length:** 0 min., 15 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtdqEllsSQ4>



Video



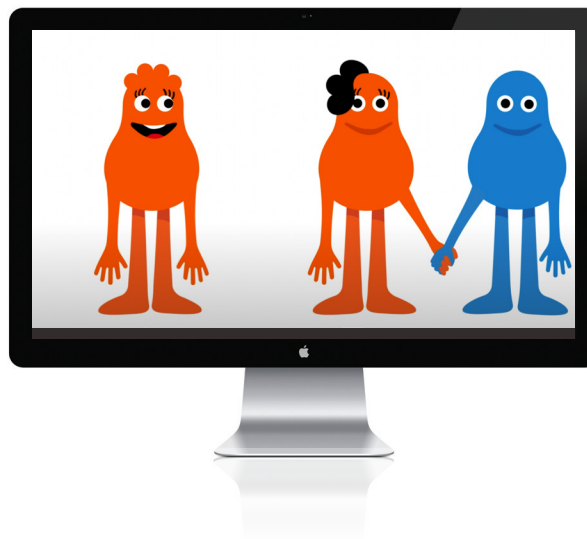
### Isolation (JoinOneLove, 2016)

**Length:** 0 min., 15 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PCsnO2oWV0>



Video



› After viewing these two short videos, **get** their opinions:

- **What are your takeaways from these short videos?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Conclude** the activity with the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### In these videos:

- The boyfriend or girlfriend makes strong demands on and exerts control over the other person.
- Too much intensity and a desire to control the other person harm the relationship and, in particular, limit the freedom of the person being controlled.
  - For example: following someone you like on Instagram is very different from constantly texting the person to always know where they are.
  - For example: not being available to do an activity with your friend because you've already planned to spend time with your boyfriend or girlfriend is very different from never seeing your friend because your boyfriend or girlfriend insists that you always be together.
- It's important to be aware of these signs to ensure your well-being (physical, psychological and emotional) and safety in a romantic relationship.

› **Explain** that the upcoming activities will deal specifically with conflict resolution in a romantic relationship, the consequences of a breakup, how to be kind when breaking up and how to get over heartbreak.



# 2

## Activity 2



**SHEETS 2.1 AND 2.3**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**20 MIN.**



**PRESENTATION**



**TEAM  
ACTIVITY**

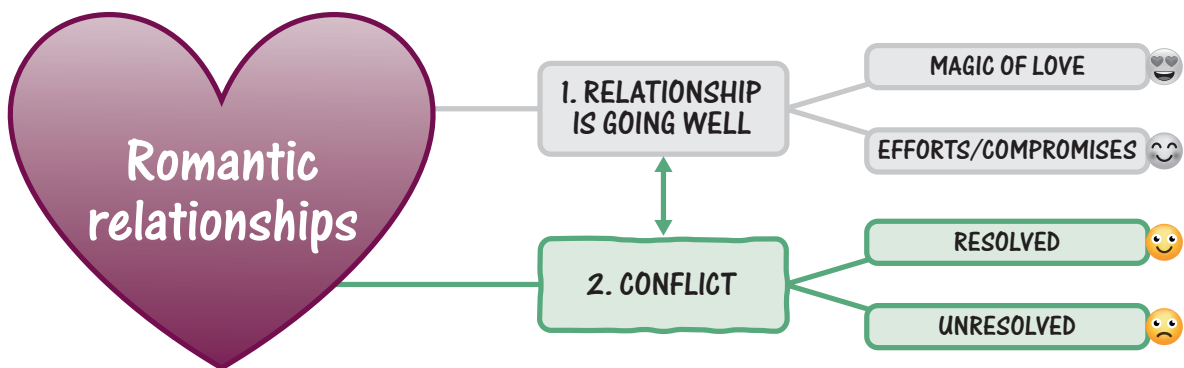


**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Presentation

- › **Continue** with the question of conflict in a romantic relationship. **Go over** all the information in the “Conflict” section of Sheet 2.1.

## Conflicts



### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three for a brief activity.
- › Before the start of the activity, you will have cut out all the statements from Sheet 2.3: *Romantic conflict: how to respond*, in order to hand one out to each team.
- › **Give** the group the following instructions:
  - The following activity deals with conflict situations that may be experienced in an adolescent romantic relationship. You will be presented with a conflict that may be experienced in a romantic relationship and the source of that conflict.
  - The team must read the statement that they were assigned and answer the related question.
  - Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group.

- › **Give** them five minutes to complete this task.
- › Once the five minutes are up, **ask** the spokesperson for each team to share their answers for each question.
- › **Add to** their answers by **sharing** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Behaviour that is conducive to resolving a conflict

- **Managing your emotions:** A conflict (an argument) or a misunderstanding can sometimes lead you to experience intense emotions, which is entirely normal. However, reacting strongly can cause you to say things that you don't really mean and that you might regret afterwards (Tel-jeunes, 2022c). To avoid disrespecting or hurting your partner, you can use several strategies to manage your emotions, whether that's taking some time for yourself to calm down (e.g., doing breathing exercises, writing in a journal, doing sports, listening to music) or reflecting on the conflict and possible ways of resolving it (MEES, 2019). By putting these strategies into practice, you become more comfortable with communicating your concerns and thoughts to the other person in a respectful way.
- **Communicating and listening:** Non-violent communication in which respect, kindness and honesty are key is essential if you want to resolve a disagreement or a conflict. Using "I" statements, you can identify specifically what you observed or heard that bothered or hurt you (e.g., "The other day, it hurt my feelings when you told me you didn't like my new haircut," instead of saying: "You never think I'm pretty.") It's an effective way of expressing and making the other person understand why you're angry or disappointed (Tel-jeunes, 2022b). It gives both people the chance to explain and clarify their point of view, while still being heard by the other person (MEES, 2019).
- **Choosing the right time:** When a conflict erupts with your partner, it's important to choose a time when both people feel ready to discuss it (open to listening to the other person), safe and free from pressure (free from the scrutiny of others) and comfortable sharing their opinions/perceptions of the situation (Tel-jeunes, 2022c).
- **Looking for shared solutions:** The solutions should be suitable for both partners. It's not a real compromise if one person feels that their solutions or needs are often disregarded when a difficulty arises (MEES, 2019).
- **Seeking help from family, friends and school staff:** Sometimes, talking to a trusted person can help you see a situation differently, and consider the possible options/solutions in order to make the best decision for you, namely for your physical, psychological and emotional well-being and safety (MEES, 2019). Online resources, such as Tel-jeunes, Kids Help Phone and Interligne, are also available to provide information and assistance.

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Lead** a discussion using the following question and **get** their answers:

- **Why do you think it's important to resolve conflicts with your boyfriend or girlfriend?**

› **Add** to their answers by sharing the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Importance of resolving conflict with your boyfriend or girlfriend:

- Resolving a conflict shows that you place importance:
  - on your romantic relationship,
  - but also on your partner's concerns and boundaries
- Seeking common ground is an opportunity for both people to express themselves, but also to hear what the other person has to say.
  - It allows you to correct a situation that may have upset the other person.
  - It allows you to better understand how the other person perceived the situation, and how they felt about it.
  - It may help prevent another similar conflict from arising.

› **Explain** that the next activity will deal with breakup.



# 3

## Activity 3



SHEETS 2.1, 2.4A, 2.4B, 2.4C AND 2.5  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



25 MINUTES



PRESENTATION



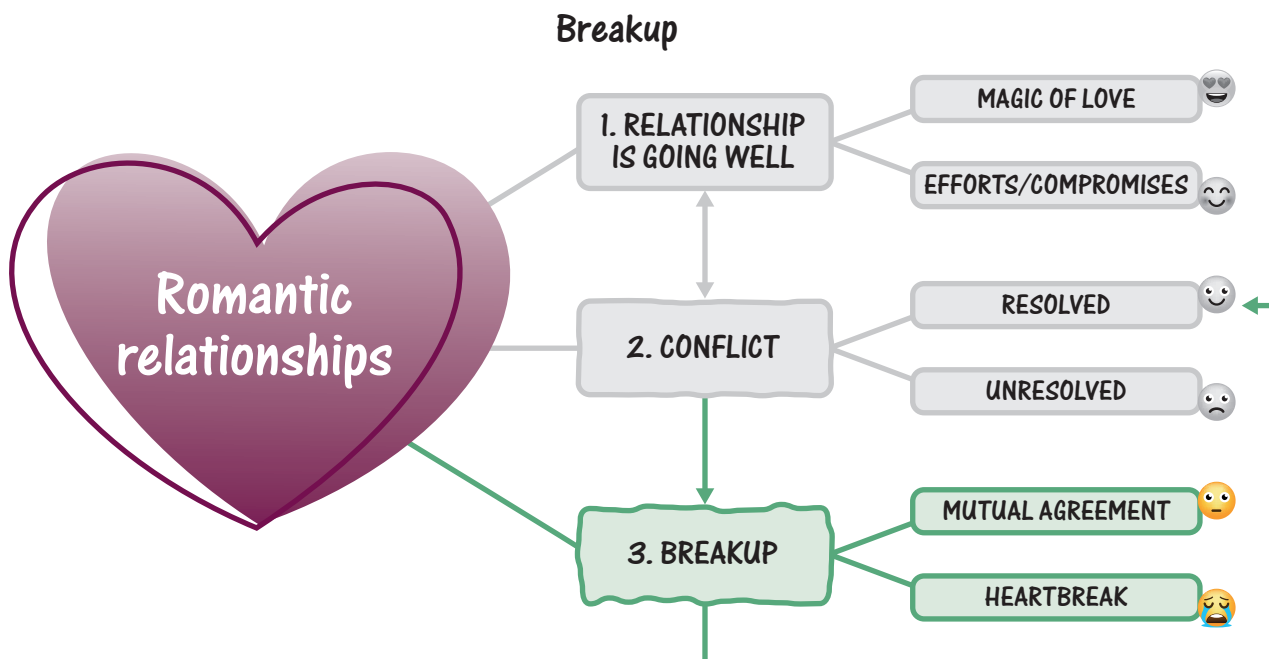
TEAM ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Presentation

- › **Go over** the information in the “Breakup” section of Sheet 2.1, leaving out the part that deals with heartbreak (which will be covered in Activity 4).



### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion on breakup using the following questions, and **get** their answers:

- **How do you think you might feel:**
  - **BEFORE** a breakup?
  - **AFTER** a breakup?

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Add** to their answers by sharing the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Feelings BEFORE/AFTER a breakup

- Everyone experiences a romantic breakup differently. It can be minor/liberating for one person and painful for the other (Tel-jeunes, 2022a). The end of a romantic relationship can cause several different emotions and raise many questions (before and/or after the breakup).

#### a. BEFORE the breakup

Emotions you might feel: discomfort, depression, sadness, relief, eagerness, etc.

Questions you might have:

- Do I really love him or her?
- Do I still love him or her?
- Am I with him or her to avoid being single or to be like everyone else?
- How do I feel when I'm with him or her?
- Does my partner really love me?
- What will happen if we break up? Will I have a bad reputation?
- How will our friends react when they find out we broke up? Will I see them less often? Will they take sides?
- Is it better to maintain some type of relationship? What type of relationship would be best (e.g., friendship in the real world or on social media)? Would it be best to cut ties or at least put some distance between us for some time? Why or why not? (MEES, 2020)
- Etc.

#### b. AFTER the breakup

Emotions you might feel: sadness, depression, relief, freedom, discomfort, regret, etc.

Questions you might have:

- Did I really love him or her?
- Do I still love him or her?
- How do I know whether he or she really loved me?
- What will I do without him or her?
- What did I do wrong that led to this breakup?
- Will I eventually stop thinking about him or her?
- How do I get over my heartbreak?
- Why? Why didn't our relationship work out?
- How should I act if I run into my ex in the hallway at school? in class? on my way to catch the bus? at the youth centre?
- How will I react if I see him with a new girlfriend or boyfriend?
- Etc.

## Discussion and Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group the following question:
  - “**What do you think are the possible consequences of a breakup?**”  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three.
- › **Hand out** one of the three situations proposed for this activity (Sheet 2.4a: *Situation: Clémentine and Hugo*; Sheet 2.4b: *Situation: Delia and Jacob*; or Sheet 2.4c: *Situation: Charles and Dimitri*).
- › **Tell** the group that they will have 10 minutes to respond to the situation, namely to say what they think about that way of breaking up and the possible consequences of that type of breakup and suggest a kind way of breaking up. Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group. You can read over the instructions on Sheet 2.4a with them.
- › Once the 10 minutes are up, **ask** the spokespeople for the teams that had situation 2.4a (Clémentine and Hugo) to share their answers for each of the questions. Do the same for situation 2.4b (Delia and Jacob) and then for 2.4c (Charles and Dimitri).
- › After examining all the situations, **add** to their answers using the information proposed for each situation (see Sheet 2.5: *Answer Sheet: Situations*, which consolidates the information and examples for each situation).

## Discussion and Presentation

- › After the brainstorming, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and get their answers:
  - **What do you think about using technology to break up (e.g., text message, phone call, FaceTime®, social media)?**
  - **Do you think there are advantages to using technology to break up?**
    - **If so, which ones?**
  - **Are there advantages to breaking up in person?**
    - **If so, which ones?**
  - **Why is it important to be kind when breaking up?**  
*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Advantages of using technology (e.g., text message, phone call, FaceTime®, social media) to break up**

- Since there's no face to face, it can be less embarrassing, less intimidating.
- Being able to tell the person in writing what you think and feel gives you the impression that you can say whatever you want, without worrying about being interrupted.
- When you have a long-distance relationship (e.g., your boyfriend or girlfriend lives in another city, has moved away or is on a student exchange), it can be easier for the person who wants to break up to do so using technology rather than wait to see the other person face to face.

- › **Advantages of breaking up in person**

- When you choose to break up face to face, there's less room for interpretation, both for the person doing the breaking up and person being broken up with. You see how the other reacts to what you are saying and you can respond to that wave of emotions.
- In addition, there's less of a chance that rumours will spread since both people have taken the time to discuss the situation together before telling their family, friends and classmates.

- › **The importance of being kind when breaking up**

- Even if the relationship at that moment is no longer working for you, you've still shared memories, confidences and intimate moments with the other person, which is why it's important to be respectful when the time comes to break up.
- Breaking up in person (e.g., face to face, FaceTime®, Zoom®) lets the other person know that they are still important enough for you to take the time to offer explanations and listen to what they have to say in return (e.g., feelings, emotions).
- Being kind when breaking up doesn't mean you don't take your own well-being into account, but it does mean being sensitive to the other person vulnerabilities.

- › **Explain** that the next activity will deal with heartbreak.



## Activity 4



SHEETS 2.1 AND 2.6  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



RAISED HAND  
SURVEY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Presentation

- › Start the activity by **explaining** to the group the stages of heartbreak (Shock, Denial, Sadness, Acceptance) on Sheet 2.1: *Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship*.

### Raised Hand Survey

- › **Tell** the group that they will have to answer a show-of-hands survey on heartbreak in which they indicate whether they agree or disagree.
- › For each statement, **share** the information on Sheet 2.6: *Heartbreak*, which concludes this activity.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the following question and **get** their answers:
  - **Why do you think self-care is important when you experience heartbreak?**
- › **Add to** their answers by sharing the following information:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

##### Importance of self-care when you experience heartbreak:

- Self-care means making your needs a priority.
- Doing things that you enjoy, discovering new interests and surrounding yourself with people who make you feel good are all ways of getting over heartbreak.
- Expressing how you feel allows you to break the isolation and get advice and support from your family and friends (MEES, 2020).
- It's not about pretending that the heartbreak doesn't exist, but rather choosing when to give in to it and when to turn your attention to something else (Tel-jeunes, 2017).



## Session Conclusion



10 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Show** a video that illustrates the fact that loving and being loved is an essential need in a person's life, and that it can be expressed and experienced in different ways.

### Teens Talk About Love (KidsHealth, 2013)

**Length:** 2 min., 5 sec.

**[https://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/Patients-Families/Health-Library/HealthDocNew/Teens-Talk-About-Love-\(Video\)](https://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/Patients-Families/Health-Library/HealthDocNew/Teens-Talk-About-Love-(Video))**



Video



- › After the video, **get** their opinions:
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**

- › **Add** to their answers with the following **KEY MESSAGES**.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Being in love is very enjoyable and uplifting, and makes you feel important and special in the eyes of the other person.
- › In a relationship, small conflicts can occur without you immediately thinking about breaking up or calling into question your love for the other person.
- › However, when things are no longer going well, it can be hard to decide to break up. It's understandable to want to end a relationship that doesn't make you feel good, but you have to prepare your "exit strategy" and understand that the other person may be shocked and saddened.
- › Similarly, the person who is being broken up with has to try to understand the other person's decision (even if it makes them sad). And, although breaking up is painful, doing it with respect, consideration and kindness will likely cause fewer bitter memories.
- › One thing's for sure, romantic relationships help us learn about ourselves and about how we connect with others.



## SHEET

### 2.1

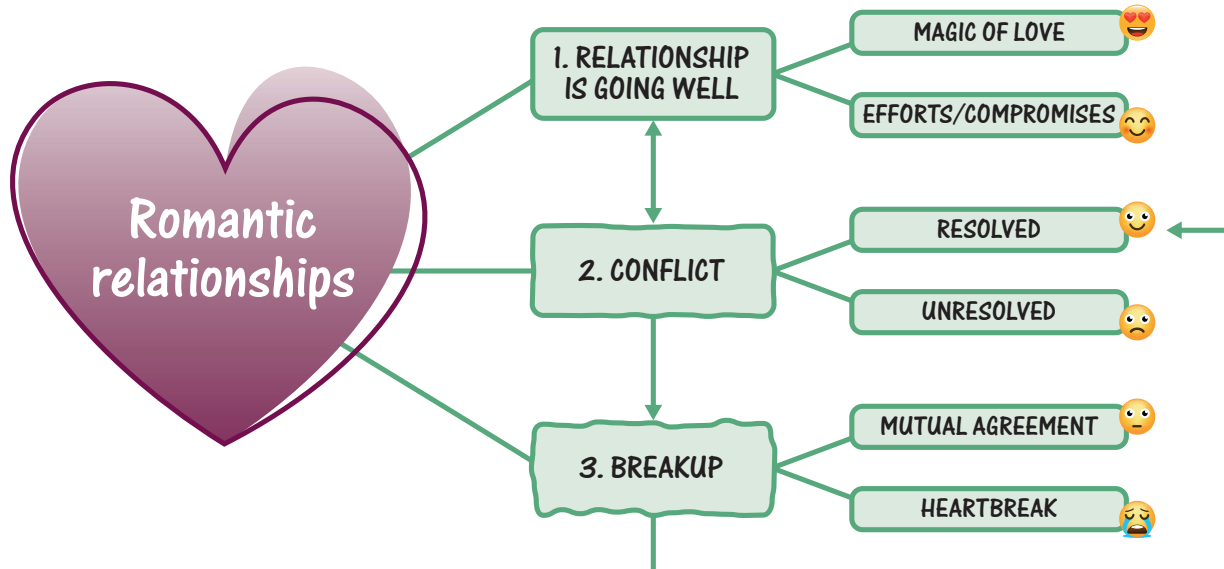
FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › During the brainstorming, get the information provided by the group. Suggest the items of information specified below, one after the other.

### Possible outcomes of a romantic relationship





## 1. The relationship is going well

- › One of the possible outcomes of an adolescent romantic relationship is that it's going well, and you want it to continue.
- › When you're with your boyfriend or girlfriend, you have several things going on in your **MIND** (e.g., "I'm always thinking about him"; "What activity would she enjoy?"), your **HEART** (e.g., "I like her"; "I feel safe with him") and your **BODY** (e.g., "I get chills/butterflies in my stomach when I'm around her"; "I always want to cuddle up to him").

### The magic of love

- › The magic of love is at play when everything's going well in the relationship that you're building with the other person, and it's easy and light: you feel good with the other person; you don't have to make any major efforts/compromises; you never argue because you're comfortable discussing any problems that come up and you manage to resolve minor frustrations; you like the same things; you feel like you have space in the relationship, etc.

### Efforts/compromises

- › Even when the romantic relationship you're in is going well, both people have to do their share by making efforts and compromises. A compromise is an arrangement involving mutual concessions [Translation] (Le Robert, n.d.)
- › In other words, both people have to strike a balance in the relationship, whether by making sure to place importance on what matters to each person (e.g., plans, ideas, values, expectations), but still allowing each person to make decisions (Tel-jeunes, 2022b).
- › The following are a few examples of possible efforts/compromises in a romantic relationship: accompanying your boyfriend or girlfriend to an event that is important to them; willingly discussing their interests and concerns; understanding that your partner prefers spending an evening with her friends, even if you really want to see her; going to dinner at his family's, even if you're really shy; coming up with activities that she would really enjoy, etc.

## 2. Conflict

- › One of the possible outcomes associated with an adolescent romantic relationship is conflict.
- › Disagreements, misunderstandings or conflict in a romantic relationship are completely normal, and not necessarily associated with something negative (Fernet, Hébert, Moreau, St-Hilaire, Blais and équipe PAJ, 2016). In fact, a conflict can be a perfect opportunity to reiterate your expectations, needs and boundaries in a romantic relationship (Fernet and al., 2016). Conflict resolution also helps you learn how to communicate.
  - Examples of possible needs: “How do I want us to show affection?” “How often do I need to be connected to my partner?” “What am I not prepared to share with my partner?” (Healthy Relationships Initiative, 2019)
  - Examples of boundaries that you can communicate: “To feel independent, I need to have activities where we’re not always together. We’re at choir together, but I want to do kickboxing on my own.” “I like it when we text, but not 24/7.” (Healthy Relationships Initiative, 2019)
- › It’s not helpful to fly off the handle during a conflict, which will likely only make the situation worse. It’s best to just give your opinion in a respectful way, without hurting or putting down the other person.
- › Be careful! A conflict is an indication of a disagreement, irritation, etc. The tone of the conversation may not be pleasant, but there’s discussion. If it turns into endless shouting, disparaging comments and vicious remarks, it’s no longer simply a conflict, it’s violence. If the situation becomes abusive and degrading for you, don’t hesitate to go get help to ensure your physical, psychological and emotional safety.

### Resolved

- › During a conflict, one person can be disappointed, frustrated or angry with the other person, but decide to put the romantic relationship first, which is their reason for wanting to resolve the problem.
- › Conflict resolution requires that both people take the time to identify where they went wrong in the situation, show openness and be prepared to calmly discuss the problem (Tel-jeunes, 2022c).

### Unresolved

- › Sometimes, an unresolved conflict can lead to a romantic breakup, even if both partners made a real effort to find common ground (MEES, 2020).

### 3. Breakup

- › A breakup, whether or not it's the result of a mutual agreement, occurs when a romantic relationship ends.
- › That said, a breakup does not necessarily lead to heartbreak or feelings of intense loss. Depending on the context, a breakup can be entirely welcome (by one or both people), and even seen as liberating (e.g., getting out of a relationship in which you did not feel good, or you just weren't in love) (MEES, 2020).
- › There are several reasons why one or both people decide to end a relationship. According to a Quebec study on adolescent romantic relationships (Lavoie and al., 2015b) conducted on young people aged 14 to 18, the main reasons for breakups are a lack of shared interests or different values, and infidelity.
- › However, other reasons lead adolescents to want to end their committed relationships. In a Canadian study (Connolly and McIsaac, 2009) of young people aged 15 to 18, the main reasons used to justify a breakup were as follows (in order of importance): geographic distance, lack of time together, infidelity, boredom, different personalities, lack of love, distrust/dishonesty, lack of shared interests and conflict. Sometimes the romantic relationship ends following a conflict, even after genuine efforts were made to try to resolve it (MEES, 2020).
- › What is important when you decide to break up is adopting a kind/respectful attitude toward the other person.

#### Mutual agreement

- › When both partners agree to end the relationship, the breakup is said to be the result of a mutual agreement. The partners may have realized that the relationship they were building was no longer working for them, and they decide to break up.
- › Even if both partners agree to end the relationship, they may still feel sad, have doubts, be fearful and/or experience feelings of emptiness (Tel-jeunes, 2021a). It's normal to feel unsettled and confused when a romantic relationship ends, since it can represent a significant loss for you (MEES, 2020).

#### Heartbreak

- › The emotional period that follows the end of a romantic relationship is what is referred to as heartbreak (On parle de sexe, 2018).
- › The intensity with which someone experiences this heartbreak depends on several things, such as the length of the relationship, the intensity of the feelings for the other person and the context in which the breakup occurs (e.g., reasons for and ways of breaking up) (Morin, 2009).
- › The stages of heartbreak are comparable to those that a person may experience with mourning. Each of these stages can be experienced differently, that is, in an order and to an extent that is specific to each person (MEES, 2020; On parle de sexe, 2018). The stages generally include the following: **1) Shock:** you don't understand what's happening and you feel powerless to deal with the situation; **2) Denial:** you can't believe that the relationship is really over, which can lead you to want to get back together with the person; **3) Sadness:** you're convinced that you'll never be able to love anyone the way you loved this person and you believe that you're incapable of being loved by anyone else; you may feel abandoned and alone; and **4) Acceptance:** you understand why the relationship was no longer working and you're able to identify the positive aspects (here, the hope of ever loving and being loved again gradually returns) (Morin, 2009).



## SHEET

### 2.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Aspects that make a romantic relationship work, go downhill or fall apart

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Get the information provided by both groups and suggest the information below.
- › First, it's important to know that no romantic relationship is perfect. However, you have to keep in mind that specific aspects must be there for it to work (in the short, medium or long term) and for you to feel good about it.

Aspects that make a romantic relationship <i>WORK</i>	Definition	Examples
<b>The needs of both partners are listened to and respected</b>	<p>In general, taking the needs of both partners into account makes it possible to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› “Love and be loved (and feel loved)</li><li>› Assert yourself and be listened to by the other person</li><li>› Acknowledge the other person and be acknowledged (be appreciated for who you are and feel it in a tangible way)</li><li>› Feel safe (physically and psychologically)</li><li>› Have space for you and leave space for the other person</li><li>› Respect your sexual needs and those of the other person (e.g., expectations, boundaries) (MEES, 2019).”</li></ul> <p>In other words, partners, as well as their interests and desires, must be equal in the relationship.</p>	<p>“The other evening, my girlfriend mentioned that she felt like spending the evening with her best friend. I was happy for her and told her that we’d see each other this weekend.”</p> <p>“Étienne and Sandrine are really in love, and it shows when they’re together. However, for now, Étienne isn’t ready to go any further and engage in sexual activities. Sandrine told him that she loved him, and that she’d be ready whenever he was.”</p>

<p><b>Trust and emotional intimacy</b></p>	<p>Trust develops as the relationship with your partner grows. It's about knowing that you can count on the other person at any time, regardless of day-to-day events or situations that come up (One Love Foundation, 2021a; PREVNet, 2019), but it's also about trusting the other person's honesty and believing that they will keep their promises (Kids Help Phone, 2018). When the romantic relationship is based on trust, both partners protect and support one another, and are easily able to share emotional intimacy (Kids Help Phone, 2018).</p> <p>Emotional intimacy is a safe space (e.g., respect, non-judgment, active listening) that is created as a relationship develops between two people and in which it is possible to open up to the other person (e.g., experiences, feelings for the other person, concerns) (MEES, 2019). This space allows both partners to express and assert themselves, and to take their needs and boundaries into account (MEES, 2019).</p>	<p>"I'd never talked about that with anyone. With her, I feel like I can. She doesn't judge me. I feel like she really listens to me. And, I'm there for her when she needs me." (MEES, 2019).</p>
<p><b>Kindness toward yourself and the other person</b></p>	<p>Kindness is what allows relationships to contribute to well-being (PREVNet, 2019). It is the quality of being generous, friendly and considerate toward others in a selfless and comprehensive way (LInternaute, 2021).</p> <p>Being kind to yourself in a romantic relationship means, for example, taking the time to recognize and listen to your inner voice (e.g., your needs, feelings, boundaries, values). Moreover, being affectionate (e.g., holding your partner's hand, hugging, kissing) toward your partner and taking an interest in their world, namely their interests, dreams and fears, are examples of kindness.</p>	<p>"My best friend Cassie's girlfriend Laura has been coming to watch our soccer games ever since Cassie told her that it was important to her."</p> <p>"Rose likes that Philippe takes the time to compliment her. Having Philippe hug or kiss her makes her feel good, like she was floating on a cloud."</p> <p>"I worry about her. I ask her questions when I see that she's not feeling well." (MEES, 2019)</p>
<p><b>Communication and conflict management</b></p>	<p>Good communication between partners is one of the key components to building and maintaining a romantic relationship. Whether verbal (e.g., words) or nonverbal (e.g., gestures, actions), communication allows partners to express what they feel is important, while listening to what is important to the other person (Kids Help Phone, 2018).</p> <p>It's also being able to explain problems honestly, respectfully and kindly (PREVNet, 2019), namely without hurting the other person. The use of nonviolent communication makes it possible to manage and/or resolve conflict calmly and in a way that shows respect for the other person (Tel-Jeunes, 2021b).</p>	<p>"I love it when we're together: I feel so good by your side, but I don't understand why, as soon as we're with your friends, you change your attitude toward me. I feel alone then, and I get the feeling that you'd prefer if I weren't there."</p> <p>"Thanks for not insisting that I come over tonight. I really have to study for my exam."</p>

- After a while, you may realize that the romantic relationship that you're in no longer meets your needs or is affecting your well-being. The following are some of the signs that a romantic relationship has gone downhill or fallen apart.

Aspects that make a romantic relationship GO DOWNHILL OR FALL APART	Definition	Examples
<b>Dominant behaviour</b>	When one partner has more power than the other in a relationship, that partner is said to exhibit dominant behaviour. For example, when one partner exhibits dominant behaviour over the other, it can give an impression of superiority, in particular by putting pressure on the person and/or forcing the person to do things that they don't want to do, such as have sex (Murphy, 2011).	"My girlfriend often puts pressure on me to send her nude photos, sexy videos or sexts."
<b>Possessive behaviour</b>	Generally, possessive behaviour occurs when one partner is jealous and/or has very intense feelings for the other person to the point of wanting to control various aspects of their partner's life (e.g., social circle and frequency of get-togethers, way of dressing) (One Love Foundation, 2021b). In other words, the person who exhibits this type of behaviour believes that they own the other person.	"Mathis says he gets jealous when his girlfriend Léa talks to other boys in her class. He even refused to let her team up with one of them for a visual arts project."
<b>Belittling behaviour</b>	Belittling behaviour occurs when one person attempts to diminish or demean the other person through the use of words or actions (One Love Foundation, 2021b). The use of insults, criticisms or hurtful comments is an example of belittling behaviour (One Love Foundation, 2021b).	"Nathan often says that his boyfriend Lucas is good for nothing because he has trouble in school."
<b>Manipulation</b>	Although difficult to see most of the time, manipulative behaviour occurs when one partner tries to control the other one's feelings, thoughts and actions (One Love Foundation, 2021b).	"The other day, my boyfriend said that if I didn't sleep with him, he'd leave me."  "Katia's boyfriend Lewis said that he'd hurt himself if she left him."

- If you experience these behaviours in a romantic relationship, or if you witness them, you should never hesitate to get help from the people around you (e.g., family, friends, school professionals, community organizations or teachers). Sometimes, talking to a trusted person can help you see a situation differently, and consider your options/possible solutions in order to make the best decision for you (MEES, 2019). In cases of violence, you should never downplay the situation or isolate yourself.
- It's important to keep in mind that the only person who is responsible for these words and actions (e.g., dominant, possessive, belittling or manipulative behaviour) is the person who uses them, not the person who is subjected to them.



## SHEET

### 2.3

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Romantic conflict: how to respond

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Cut out the various statements and hand one out to each team.
- › Tell them that they will have to read about a conflict that might occur in a romantic relationship and identify the way in which the main character can resolve the conflict.
- › Get the information provided by the teams.

#### Source of conflict: Lack of shared interests

Felix's girlfriend Jade says she doesn't like climbing, which is Felix's favourite hobby. She often tells him that she finds he spends too much time at the climbing centre, which is a source of conflict between them. She insists they cycle together. For some time now, Félix has been distant with Jade because he feels torn between his passion for rock climbing and Jade's repeated demands.

- In this situation, how could Félix respond to resolve this conflict?

#### Source of conflict: Pressure to send explicit sexual content

Béatrice's girlfriend, Claire, often puts pressure on her to send nude photos, sexy videos of herself or sexts. Since Béatrice is uncomfortable with these requests, she refuses to respond. The situation is really starting to bother her because she feels that Claire isn't hearing her refusal.

- In this situation, how could Béatrice respond to resolve this conflict?

#### Source of conflict: Difference of opinion on sex

Zoé's boyfriend Anthony often tells her that he's ready for them to have sex, since they've been together for over six months. Zoé says she wants to take things slow and doesn't feel the need right now. The situation is starting to worry her because she's afraid that Anthony will leave her if she refuses to have sex with him.

- In this situation, how could Zoé respond to resolve this conflict?

#### Source of conflict: Jealousy regarding partner's choice of company

Mathis says he gets jealous when his girlfriend, Léa, talks to other boys in her class. He even refused to let her team up with one of them for a visual arts project. Disappointed by Mathis's reaction, Léa wonders whether her boyfriend will often forbid her from hanging out with boys. She doesn't want to be subject to such ridiculous bouts of jealousy.

- In this situation, how could Léa respond to resolve this conflict?

#### Source of conflict: Difficulty accepting the other person's ex-partner

Zack's boyfriend, Thomas, often tells him that he doesn't like the relationship that Zack has with his ex. Since Zack plays on the same elite soccer team as his ex, he chose to stay on good terms with him, out of respect for his other teammates. However, Thomas thinks that Zack still has feelings for his ex.

- In this situation, how could Zack respond to resolve this conflict?







## SHEET

### 2.4a

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Clémentine and Hugo

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

### Clémentine and Hugo

After a year together, **Clémentine** texts her boyfriend **Hugo** to say that she's leaving him. She tells him she doesn't love him anymore and prefers to spend more time with her friends. The following week, Clémentine is seen walking through the school hallway holding hands with Hugo's best friend **Théo**, whom she's had a crush on since the beginning of her relationship with Hugo. A few days later, Hugo finds out from a classmate that his best friend and ex-girlfriend have been texting for the past two months. Since learning this news, Hugo has felt confused, and often cries when he's alone. He was absent from school three days this week.

- › What do you think of this way of breaking up (by text)?

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- › What do you think the consequences would be of this type of breakup for ...

- the person being broken up with (Hugo)?
- the person doing the breaking up (Clémentine)?

---

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- › What do you think would be a respectful and kind way of breaking up?

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## SHEET

### 2.4b

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Delia and Jacob

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

### Delia and Jacob

While checking out her boyfriend **Jacob's** profiles (Instagram®, Facebook® and Twitter®), **Delia** notices that he has deleted all photos of them together and changed his relationship status from “in a relationship” to “single.” In shock, Delia tries calling Jacob, but he ignores her calls and won't answer.

A few hours later, Delia gets about twenty messages from friends and classmates, who noticed the same things as her. Panicked about this rejection, she quickly posts a sexy selfie on her Instagram account, with the following comment: “Stronger than ever!” Although she gets a lot of “Likes” and flattering comments, Delia can't stop thinking about the situation with Jacob.

- › What do you think of this way of breaking up (via social media)?

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- › What do you think the consequences would be of this type of breakup for ...

- the person being broken up with (Delia)?
- the person doing the breaking up (Jacob)?

---

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- › What do you think would be a respectful and kind way of breaking up?

---

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## SHEET

### 2.4c

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Charles and Dimitri

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

### Charles and Dimitri

**Dimitri** and **Charles** have been going out for six months. Dimitri finds out from his best friend that Charles wants to break up with him. Charles apparently told friends on his hockey team that he and Dimitri don't have the same interests or the same circle of friends, which is bothering him more and more. Sad and disappointed by this news, Dimitri tries to reach Charles several times, but is unsuccessful. Instead, Dimitri decides to send the following message to all his Instagram followers: "Charles texted me to say he was leaving me for someone else. He didn't even bother telling me face to face." In fact, Charles is not with anyone else, but it's true that he's been thinking about breaking off the relationship. That said, the rumour has already gone viral on social media and the following comments start circulating: "Charles is really disgusting. He cheated on his boyfriend. Hockey players are such 'players.'" "Charles is totally out of line. He should have talked to Dimitri directly."

- › What do you think of this way of breaking up (through a friend)?

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- › What do you think the consequences would be of this type of breakup for...
  - the person being broken up with (Dimitri)?
  - the person doing the breaking up (Charles)?

---

---

- › What do you think would be a respectful and kind way of breaking up?

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## SHEET

### 2.5

FOR THE GROUP

## Answer Sheet: Situational exercises

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › The teams read the situation that was assigned to them (Clémentine and Hugo, Delia and Jacob or Charles and Dimitri) and answer the questions.
- › A spokesperson will share their answers.

#### › Consequences of this type of breakup for ...

##### a. the person being broken up with (Hugo, Delia and Dimitri)

In a romantic breakup, the person who is being broken up with can experience the following difficulties: trouble at school, trouble sleeping, loss of appetite, loss of friends that they had in common with their ex-partner, dark thoughts.

However, the type of consequences related to a breakup, and their intensity and duration vary from person to person.

The following are some of the consequences that Hugo, Delia and Dimitri might experience.

- › Not really understanding the reason why they were broken up with, since they didn't take the time to discuss the situation together, and the decision seems rather sudden
  - For example, the situation that Hugo, Delia and Dimitri seem to be experiencing
- › Not feeling important in the eyes of their ex, who chose to break up using technology or through a friend
  - For example, the situation that Hugo, Delia and Dimitri seem to be experiencing
- › Feeling cheated on and deceived by their ex, but also by others in their peer group who were aware of the breakup before they were
  - For example, when Hugo realizes that Clémentine has had a crush on Théo (his best friend) since the start of their romantic relationship and that they have been texting for the past two months, without him knowing about it, he might feel betrayed.
  - For example, when Delia discovers that some of her classmates heard the news
  - For example, when Dimitri realizes that Charles's hockey team and his best friend were aware of the situation, but he wasn't

- › All-consuming feelings of sadness, anger, incomprehension and/or disappointment
  - For example, Hugo might feel sad and/or angry, not only because of the break up with Clémentine, but also because of the situation with his best friend, which might lead him to question the friendship that he had/will have with Théo (“Was he always being honest with me when he said that we couldn’t get together?”, “Will we continue to be friends?”, “Do I still want us to be friends?”).

› **Consequences of this type of breakup for ...**

**a. the person doing the breaking up (Clémentine, Jacob and Charles)**

The person who makes the decision to break up can also be affected by the situation. Ending a romantic relationship can cause the person to feel guilty of hurting their partner, and lead to changes in their social life (e.g., being judged negatively by others for ending the relationship; losing friends that they had in common) and habits (e.g., no longer writing to or confiding in their partner on a daily basis, having more time for themselves) (On parle de sexe, 2018).

The following are some of the consequences that Clémentine, Jacob and Charles might experience:

- › Being stressed and uncomfortable and/or feeling guilty for leaving their partner, since they didn’t take the time to explain the reasons for wanting to break up and are aware that their partner might feel hurt
  - For example, when Clémentine leaves Hugo to start a relationship with Théo
- › Being more comfortable and less embarrassed communicating their feelings in writing (e.g., text message, email) out of fear of forgetting to say specific things or seeing the other person’s reaction in person when they announce the breakup
  - For example, when Clémentine breaks up with Hugo by text
  - For example, when Jacob decides to break up with Delia by changing his relationship status and deleting all the photos of them together from his various profiles (Instagram®, Facebook® and Twitter®)

› **Consequences of this type of breakup for ...**

**a. the person doing the breaking up (Clémentine, Jacob and Charles)**

- › Being judged by their classmates, namely being seen as the “bad guy” in the situation, for leaving the person that way
  - For example, when various negative comments about Charles start circulating on social media
  - For example, when Delia’s classmates notice that Jacob deleted everything associated with their relationship from his various profiles (Facebook®, Instagram® and Twitter®)
- › Being happy to start a relationship with someone new
  - For example, Clémentine can now come out about her feelings for Théo, whom she’s had a crush on for nearly a year.
- › Having more free time for them, to do the things that they really enjoy (e.g., spending time with friends/family, doing their favourite activity)
- › Having a better understanding of their expectations, needs and boundaries when it comes to a future romantic relationship (in the short or medium term)
- › No longer being subject to the other person criticisms or demands
- › Etc.

› **Respectful/kind ways of breaking up with a partner:**

- › Breaking up is hard to do. However, the following are a few things to keep in mind when it comes to breaking up in a respectful and kind way:
- › **Try putting yourself in the shoes of the person being broken up with:** there's no point in being mean to your ex, or demeaning the romantic relationship in order to hurt the person and/or get revenge. That will likely amplify the person's feelings of sadness, anger, disappointment and/or incomprehension.
- › **Breaking up in person is the best choice,** even though this can result in feelings of incomprehension, tears, etc. However, if you have experienced violence in the romantic relationship, it's preferable to break up using technology in order to ensure your safety and well-being (MEES, 2019).
- › **Be honest:** There's no point in beating around the bush or making up reasons for wanting to end the relationship (Kids Help Phone, 2018). The important thing when breaking up is to listen to your inner voice and find a bit of courage to clearly explain why the relationship no longer works for you.



## SHEET

### 2.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

# Heartbreak

## INSTRUCTIONS

- › Tell the group that they will have to answer a raised hand survey on heartbreak in which they indicate whether they agree or disagree.
- › As a group, read the first statement.
- › Ask them: “Do you agree or disagree?”
- › Let them take a position and add to the information proposed below.
- › Repeat the same steps for the following statements.

### Statement 1: Heartbreak should never last more than three months.

- › The duration and intensity of heartbreak varies from person to person. In fact, it depends on a number of things, including the way in which you broke up.
- › Heartbreak can cause you to experience all kinds of moods (e.g., having trouble concentrating on day-to-day tasks, feeling depressed or abandoned, feeling pain and/or a sense of emptiness) (Tel-Jeunes, 2022a).
- › If you feel that the heartbreak is overwhelming and that you’ve been isolated for too long, seeking help from a professional is a good way to get over this tough obstacle.

### Statement 2: Adolescent heartbreak isn’t anything serious.

- › No matter how old you are, heartbreak is something serious, and it’s a difficult period to get through. It causes changes in your life since you have to drop some of the plan that you had together. It is normal to feel confused by it all.
- › Often, you imagine that you’re the reason for the breakup, that you weren’t “enough of this or that,” and you carry the weight of the separation on your shoulders.
- › There’s no point in being hard on or blaming yourself. That only increases the pain. What you have to remember is that the other person had their reasons for no longer feeling good in the relationship, and that it was no longer working for them.
- › Although that won’t stop you from feeling sad, it might keep you from shouldering all the blame.

**Statement 3: When you go through heartbreak, you have to get rid of all the things associated with your ex (e.g., text messages, photos, gifts).**

- › You don't have to get rid of all the items that remind you of your ex. Each person can decide what to do with the things that remind them of the other person.
- › Maybe for the time being, to help you get over your grief, you can just put all those things away (e.g., store them in a box) to put a bit of distance between you and the other person (SimonGIOfficial, 2015).
- › In other words, it's not about erasing, discarding or eliminating all the happy memories that you created and shared with the person, but rather about putting them aside until you feel better. Once you do, they will still be there if you want them.

**Statement 4: A person going through heartbreak wants all the attention.**

- › Often, a person going through heartbreak is more disconnected from day-to-day life, and therefore seems less well. At those times, you attract sympathy from the people around you, and that's OK, but you also have to learn to take care of yourself.
- › A difficult situation, like heartbreak, can turn into an opportunity to develop resilience, that is, your ability to deal with difficulties by drawing on your personal strengths (Lavoie and al., 2015a).
- › Doing things you enjoy, surrounding yourself with the right people and giving yourself time to heal are all strategies that allow you to bounce back from a difficult situation (Tel-jeunes, 2022a).

**Statement 5: Anyone who is broken up with will necessarily go through heartbreak.**

- › It's possible to leave on good terms, where both people agree that the relationship is over. It doesn't keep you from feeling disappointed that it didn't work out between you, but you avoid any suffering, intense crying or anger.



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- › Interline: [interligne.co/en](http://interligne.co/en)

## Secondary 3 - Session 3 Part A - Part B

### Sexual Consent “Consent: Facts and Acts”



This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

	Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)
Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence	<p><b>Become aware of the active role you can play in preventing or reporting a situation of sexual assault</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Situations requiring the use of self-protection skills: with a friend, an acquaintance, a romantic partner or ex-partner.</li><li>› Factors of vulnerability in each situation.</li></ul> <p><b>Understand the experience of people who are victims of sexual assault in order to react appropriately if a friend confides in you.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Helpful attitudes: listening, empathy, non-judgmental attitude, believing the person, confidentiality, not insisting on hearing details of the assault, referral to a person who may be able to help (person at school or an organization).</li><li>› Resources that can help: at school, in the community.</li></ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Citizenship and Community Life:</b> Enable students to take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity.</p>	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Ethics and Religious Culture (Cycle One)</li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Autonomy and Interdependence (Secondary 2)  
Justice and the Law droit (Secondary 4)

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand the notion of consent in order to recognize a situation of sexual violence (Secondary 2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Elements of consent and contexts in which consent is invalid</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the main legal frameworks applicable to romantic and sexual life (Secondary 4)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Consent in the Criminal Code</li> <li>› Sexual and domestic violence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sexual violence may be studied, but it should not be the subject of normative ethical reflection, especially since the values and responses to be fostered have been determined and cannot be the subject of a critical examination.</b></p> <p><b>Reflect on the ethical issues that may exist with respect to the norms and values related to the legal frameworks applicable to romantic and sexual life, especially regarding appropriate consequences and legal actions that can be taken against violence (Secondary 4)</b></p>



## Educational Goals



**Session length:**  
130 minutes

**Help young people develop skills to react if they find themselves in a situation involving the concept of sexual consent.**

- 1. Identify** the non-verbal signs of unease and discomfort from a video so that they can go on to decode these signs during intimate activities.
- 2. Illustrate** the concept of sexual consent using the metaphor of road signs.
- 3. Decode** the verbal and non-verbal “signs” of consent or non-consent in different situational exercises.
- 4. Discuss** communication skills that they need to develop to:
  - i. Assert themselves in a situation they do not consent to.
  - ii. Respect someone else’s non-consent to a situation.
  - iii. React after witnessing a non-consensual situation.
- 5. Identify** the criteria of valid sexual consent (e.g. free and voluntary, informed, can be withdrawn at any time).
- 6. Discuss** the importance and benefits of getting their partner’s consent.



## Sequence

## Part A - Part B



This **130-min.** session has **two parts** and includes **three activities**.

### Part A

55 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “People stare at each other for 4 minutes – Social experiment.”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 3.1: Learn More About Consent</i></li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Traffic signs <i>Sheet 3.2: Traffic Signs</i> <i>Sheet 3.3: Traffic Signs and Sexual Consent</i> <i>Sheet 3.4: Answer Sheet: Traffic Signs and Sexual Consent</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
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### Part B

45 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Situational Exercises on Sexual Consent <i>Sheet 3.5a: “Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony”: Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.5b: “Christopher and Zach”: Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.5c: “Noémie and Amir”: Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.6a: Answer Sheet: “Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony”: Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.6b: Answer Sheet: “Christopher and Zach”: Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 3.6c: Answer Sheet: “Noémie and Amir”: Situational Exercise</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Individual activity:</b> The Key Components of Valid Sexual Consent <i>Sheet 3.7: Key Components of Valid Sexual Consent</i> <i>Sheet 3.8: Answer Sheet: Key Components of Valid Sexual Consent</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Sexualités et le consentement: la zone grise” (<i>Sexuality and Consent: a Grey Area</i>)</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
10 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Key messages from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

You can lead this session on sexual consent with another professional, for example, with the special education technician (SET), social worker, psychoeducator, psychologist, or sexologist at your school, as applicable.

Otherwise, **BEFORE** holding this session, it is a good idea to let a counsellor at your school or organization know that you will be discussing sexual consent with a group of young people. This way, if a teenager confides in you about a situation of concern about sexual consent or discloses a situation of sexual assault, you will know that someone is available to offer support. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the Youth Protection Directorate or the service de police must be contacted.

You can also refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program for the contact information of assistance and support organizations. Online resources are provided at the end of the slideshow (PPT) accompanying each of the *Be True to You* sessions.



## Part A



### Activity 1



SHEETS 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 AND 3.4

SLIDESHOW (PPT)



55 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



VIDEO



TEAM  
ACTIVITY

## Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › **Explain** that today's session is on sexual consent.
- › **Explain** that the most important part of consent is verbal and non-verbal communication and the ability to decode other people's signals. This is what this session will be about.

## Video

- › **Explain** that they are about to watch a video of people who don't know each other and who will look at each other for four minutes, face to face, without saying a word (not in a sexual way). This is an exercise in non-verbal communication. **Ask** them to pay attention to the reactions of the different people in the video and to think about how they relate to intimacy.
- › **Introduce** the video by instructing the group to pay attention to what the characters are communicating non-verbally.

**People Stare at Each Other For 4 Minutes – Social Experiment (Facts, 2015)**

**Length:** 2 min., 27 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqF1kWXUFwk>





Video



## Discussion and Presentation

› After the video, **ask** the following questions:

- **In this experiment, people had to look at each other for 4 minutes without talking. How do you think they felt during the experience?**
- **What “non-verbal” signs support your answer?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### In the context of this experiment: people’s reactions and emotions

- › Simply looking into someone’s eyes can trigger different reactions and emotions. For example, some of them:
  - Took a deep breath before starting.
  - Giggled (nervous laughter).
  - Grinned.
  - Made noise with their feet.
  - Etc.
- › All of these reactions seemed like distractions from the discomfort of having to look at the other person.
- › Because even just looking into someone else’s eyes can be an intimate act, hence the embarrassment and discomfort.

**In the context of more intimate situations:**

- › Even for things as simple as kissing or cuddling, it is important to be in tune to the other person's non-verbal reactions.
- › If you pay attention, you will notice whether your partner is showing any discomfort signalling that they don't want to go any further.
- › It's always best to verbally ask the other person if they agree with (i.e. want to do) what you are doing before doing anything more intimate.

- › **Mention** that consent to sexual activity may seem simple on the surface, but in reality consent has many aspects that you have to consider. This includes learning to decode your partner's signs of consent or non-consent.

**NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER**

For more information about sexual consent and sexual assault prevention, see Sheet 3.1: *Learn More About Consent*. You don't have to share all of this content with the group, but it may be helpful if they ask more in-depth questions about consent during this session. There is also information on how a teen could respond if a friend confides in them that they have been sexually assaulted.



## Presentation

- › **Continue** with Sheet 3.2: *Traffic Signs*, which has a description of various traffic signs. The group will then be asked to link these signs (Transports Québec, 2013) to the different aspects of consent.



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Impact techniques are simple activities that use movement or objects and metaphors (in this case, traffic signs) to illustrate abstract concepts using an image. In this case, the technique facilitates learning since the group will have to make different associations between the traffic signs and consent. The goal is to help them retain the information more easily (Beaulieu, 2014). After the activity, and for the rest of the session, refer to the traffic sign activity as often as applicable.

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of two and **give** the following instructions:
  - Each team will receive **Sheet 3.3: Traffic Signs and Sexual Consent**, which has a table.
  - The left-hand column of the table shows the different traffic signs.
  - The right-hand column has short definitions of consent.
  - The teams have to match these short definitions of consent with the different traffic signs. This is a 5 minutes speed activity.
  - Since the teams only have 5 min. to complete the activity, they may not have time to match all of the definitions in the table (six traffic signs).
  - You can therefore ask half of the teams to start with the first three signs and the other half to do the last three signs on Sheet 3.3.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 3.3: *Traffic Signs and Sexual Consent* to the different teams so that they can start the activity.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › Once the 5 min. is up, **ask** the teams to share their answers with the rest of the group. You can use the information on Sheet 3.4: *Answer Sheet: Traffic Signs and Sexual Consent* to add to their answers. **Provide** an initial definition of sexual consent and ask them which sign they would match it with, and so on.

This metaphor exercise will provide the group with a basic illustration of sexual consent to help them understand the importance of decoding signs and checking in with their partner. **Conclude** the activity:

*“While it can seem like the road ahead is clear, in reality, we often have to slow down for obstacles, observe what is going on around us, take a different route, ask for directions, or stop altogether. If you aren’t paying attention, you may have an accident. To make your trip safe and enjoyable, you need to pay attention to and respect the rules of the road. The same goes for sexual consent!”*

- › Then **tell** the group that in the next activity, they will analyze different situational exercises to test their knowledge about sexual consent.

## Part B



### Activity 2



**SHEETS 3.5A, 3.5B, 3.5C, 3.6A, 3.6B AND 3.6C**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**45 MIN.**



**TEAM ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Team Activity

- › **Explain** that in the next activity they will work in teams of four on a situation about sexual consent and decode things such as verbal and non-verbal signs to understand someone's response.
- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of four.
- › **Give** the teams one of the following Situational exercises: "Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony" (Sheet 3.5a), "Christopher and Zach" (Sheet 3.5b) and "Noémie and Amir" (Sheet 3.5c). **Give** the teams 10 min. to read the situations and answer the questions.
- › After the team activity, **go over** the situation exercise as a group and ask the teams to share their answers to the different questions.
- › **Add** to their answers with the content for the situational exercises (see Sheet 3.6a: *Answer Sheet: "Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony": Situational Exercise*; Sheet 3.6b: *Answer Sheet: "Christopher and Zach": Situational Exercise*; Sheet 3.6c: *Answer Sheet: "Noémie and Amir": Situational Exercise*).

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

One situation in this activity is about two homosexual boys, which may or may not elicit responses from the group. If anyone says something, it is important to address the comments to foster a climate of respect and openness to sexual diversity. The idea is not to start a discussion or debate about sexual diversity (this can be done later if necessary) but rather to quickly intervene to protect any sexually diverse youths in the group from derogatory comments.

If someone makes a hurtful comment, simply remind them that we live in a society that values and defends the equality, freedoms and rights of every person. Our society aims to be open and respectful of differences, whatever they may be. In fact, Quebec has a Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms that protects the rights of every person and



prohibits against discrimination and harassment. “Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on race, colour, sex, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap” (Tribunal des droits de la personne, 2020, p.50).

The idea is to get the group to think about why some people might react so negatively to sexual diversity (e.g. lack of knowledge, prejudice, unfounded fears).

This is why the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms is in place: to protect everyone and promote equality among all individuals.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

A Quebec study of over 3,000 people aged 17 to 29 found that most had not experienced a first penetrative sexual encounter by the age of 12 to 14 (Lambert, Mathieu-Chartier, Goggin, Maurais and the PIXEL team, 2017).

- ▶ One in twenty people (6%) of all genders combined had had their first penetrative sexual encounter before the age of 14 (Lambert and al., 2017).
- ▶ Ten out of twenty females (50%) and eight out of twenty males (40%) had experienced their first penetrative sexual encounter before the age of 17 (Lambert and al., 2017).
- ▶ Youths aged 12 to 14 experiment more with sexual activities such as kissing and fondling the body on and below the waist (Médico and Levy, 2008; Williams, Connolly and Cribbie, 2008).

Some specialists (e.g. pediatricians, psychologists, sexologists) consider sex before the age of 14 or 15 to be premature and are concerned about whether these young people have the necessary maturity for a positive experience. Also, people at this age may feel pressure to have sex.

It is therefore important to discuss the meaning of sexual consent and motivations for sexual activity in the early years of high school before young people start becoming sexually active. Young people generally have their first sexual encounter spontaneously without planning it (e.g. at a party) (Lieberman, Goldfarb, Kwiatkowski and Santos, 2017). They must therefore have the tools to act in a way that truly aligns with their needs, values and limits while respecting those of their partner.



## Discussion and Presentation

- › After going over the situational exercises as a group, **lead** a discussion using the questions below. **Split** the blackboard in half and **write** down the participants' responses about which verbal or non-verbal signs correspond with "consent" or "non-consent."
  - **What are some concrete verbal and non-verbal SIGNS that indicate a person is CONSENTING?**
  - **What are some concrete verbal and non-verbal SIGNS that indicate a person is NOT CONSENTING?**

*Get their answers.*
- › **Share** the following content (not an exhaustive list):

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **VERBAL signs indicating that SOMEONE IS CONSENTING:**
  - The person clearly says: "Yes"; "I agree"; "I really want to"; "Sure"; "That would be fun"; "I like it"; "I want to"; "I'm enjoying this, let's keep going"; etc.
- › **NON-VERBAL signs indicating that SOMEONE IS CONSENTING:**
  - Looking relaxed.
  - Smiling while looking the other person in the eyes.
  - Nodding.
  - Physically approaching the person; cuddling; kissing.
  - In a more intimate setting, the person may respond to their partner's advances by caressing them back, etc.
- › **VERBAL signs indicating that a PERSON IS NOT CONSENTING:**
  - The person clearly says: "No"; "I don't want to"; "I don't feel like it"; "Maybe some other time, but not now"; "I can't tonight"; "I don't have time"; "I don't feel good"; "I don't feel ready"; "I know we planned this, but I've changed my mind"; "I'd like to stop," etc.
  - Expressing things that show hesitation: "I'm not sure"; "Ummm, okay"; "Maybe" said in a shy way.
  - **A hesitation is not a YES. A hesitation is actually a NO** (Teen Talk, n.d.)
- › **The NON-VERBAL signs that tell us that a PERSON IS NOT CONSENTING:**
  - Being quiet; wincing; hesitating; avoiding eye contact; staying still or freezing; backing away; removing the other person's hand or, conversely, lying/sitting right next to the person to avoid their gaze and trying to change the subject; being very nervous; moving away or leaving the room; etc.
  - Non-consent that is expressed non-verbally can be difficult to detect. It is important to distinguish between signs of enthusiasm and signs of shyness that may hide discomfort. For example, a person can smile sweetly and still be shy, or they can be nervous on the inside yet seem very enthusiastic on the outside. In neither case is this person's behaviour an expression of consent to sexual activity.
  - To know whether sexual consent is "valid," you need to consider both what someone says (verbal) **AND** what they do (non-verbal).

› **In concrete terms, what can you do to make sure your partner is consenting?**

- To make sure your partner is consenting, it is important to...
  - Ask how they feel and verbally ask for their consent:
    - “Do you want to...?”
    - “What do you feel like doing?”
    - “Would you like to... ”
    - “Are you still comfortable with this?” (Tel-jeunes, 2022).
    - “I understand if you don’t feel ready. You just have to tell me.”
    - “Are you okay?”
    - “Do you want to keep going?”
    - “You seem nervous; do you want to stop?”
    - “Don’t hesitate to tell me if you want to keep going or to stop” (Tel-jeunes, 2022).
    - “We can stop if you want.”
    - “I don’t want you to feel like you have to.”
    - “It’s okay if you change your mind.”
    - “I feel nervous; how about you? Maybe we should do this another time?”
    - Etc.



## Activity 3



**SHEETS 3.7 AND 3.8**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**20 MIN.**



**INDIVIDUAL**  
**ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND**  
**PRESENTATION**



**VIDEO**

### Individual Activity

- › **Begin** by telling the group that they will be doing an activity on their own to identify the key elements of “valid” sexual consent, i.e. consent that is “free and voluntary,” “informed” and “can be withdrawn any time.” It can also be “enthusiastic.” **Give** the following instructions:

- **Explain that each person will receive Sheet 3.7: Key Elements of Valid Sexual Consent.**
- **Box 1 presents short statements that illustrate “valid” sexual consent.**
- **They must match each statement to one of the boxes below that identify an aspect of “VALID” sexual consent:**

**According to the law:**

- 1. Free and voluntary.**
- 2. Informed.**
- 3. May be withdrawn at any time.**

**In general:**

- 4. Enthusiastic.**

- **The group will have 5 minutes to match each statement to the box that they think is the most appropriate.**
- › **Hand out** Sheet 3.7: *Key Elements of Valid Sexual Consent* so that the group can start the activity.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › Once the 5 minutes are up, have everyone come back into a group and **ask** them to share their answers. You can use the information on Sheet 3.8: *Answer Sheet: Key Elements of Valid Sexual Consent*.



- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

› **Free consent:**

- The person isn't pressured to say yes. If the person seems very withdrawn or doesn't say anything or says they are unsure or don't want to, the other person doesn't insist, doesn't make them feel guilty, and respects their decision.

› **Voluntary consent:**

- Consent is not obtained through the use of physical coercion, blackmail or threats (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- The person isn't pressured to say yes. They must therefore feel free to accept, refuse or change their mind without fearing the other person's reaction.

› **Informed consent:**

- The person must be in a state to give consent (Éducaloi, 2022a). By law, a person who is asleep or unconscious cannot consent to sexual activity (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- For example, under the law, a person who has consumed alcohol or drugs can consent to sexual activity unless their condition makes it impossible for them to remember what they are doing (highly intoxicated state) (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- You have to be careful when alcohol or drugs are involved. It can be difficult to know for sure whether your partner is aware of what they are doing. You need to take reasonable steps to check that the other person is consenting. They must always check that the other person is in a condition to consent.

› **Consent may be withdrawn at any time:**

- The person who initiates the activity (e.g. kissing, fondling) must pay particular attention to the other person's reactions before going further (e.g. do their words [verbal signs] or behaviour [non-verbal signs] indicate consent and interest) (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- Even if a person says yes, they also have the right to change their mind at any time and say no. During intimate activities, consent must be obtained for each new sexual act. A person may also say yes to one thing but no to another.

Overall, as per the **LAW**, consent must be free and voluntary, informed and given freely and may be withdrawn at any time (Éducaloi, 2022a).

› **Consent can be enthusiastic:**

- Another possible sign that is not a legal concept is the concept of enthusiastic consent: the person is actively participating in the activity and responding to the other person's advances (e.g. gets closer, smiles, hugs back).
- However, you have to be careful and still get consent because someone can respond like this and still not be "enthusiastic."
  - For example, someone may smile awkwardly and say "Yes" but with a tone of discomfort ("Ummm, yeah I guess"), etc.

## Video, Discussion and Presentation

› Show the following video:

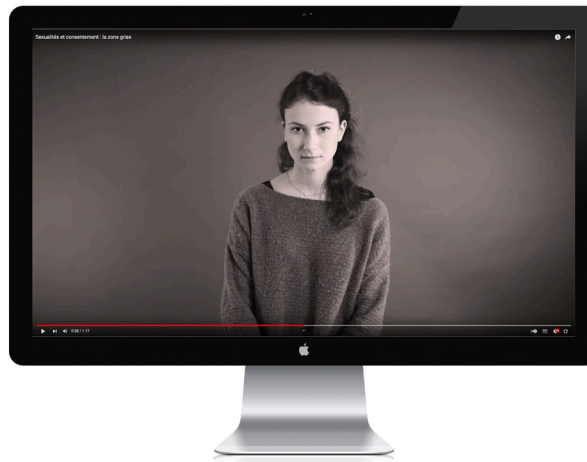
**Sexualités et consentement: la zone grise (Sexuality and consent: a grey area)  
(Espace Santé Étudiants Bordeaux, 2017)**

**Length:** 1 min., 17 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSzqASpmEWA>**



Video



### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Although most of the characters speak French, it is still easy to grasp the message of the video. To help the group understand, here are some of the statements translated into English:

0:20 seconds (Character A): *“Sure, if that’s what you want.”*

0:26 seconds (Character B): *“If you insist.”*

0:42 seconds (end text) : *“Not really a yes? Not really a no? When it comes down to it, consent isn’t always simple... If you aren’t sure what your partner wants, ask them!”*

› After the video, **ask** the following questions:

- **What do you think about this video?**
- **What is the main message?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **End** the activity with the following **KEY MESSAGES**:

- **Consent isn’t always simple.**
- **Hesitation should be understood as a “No.”**
- **If you aren’t sure whether the other person is really consenting, ask them.**



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

› **Ask** the group:

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **End** the session with the following **KEY MESSAGES**:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Sexual consent is an agreement that:
  - A person clearly expresses freely and voluntarily and in an informed way.
  - Can be withdrawn at any time.
  - Must be given for each sexual activity.
- › Some circumstances make sexual consent impossible or invalid:
  - Depending on the age of the partner (e.g. being under 12 years of age or if the age difference between partners is too great).
  - Depending on the relationship with the partner (e.g. relationship of dependency or authority).
  - Depending on the person's ability to "physically" give consent (e.g. intoxicated or asleep or unconscious).
- › It is our responsibility to get our partner's consent by being aware of their:
  - Verbal signs
  - Non-verbal signs
- › Whether the person is your girlfriend or boyfriend, a "date," a new acquaintance, or your ex, you need to make sure they also want to be intimate. If not, it is important to respect the person's "No" without pressuring them or making them feel guilty.

- › **DISAPPOINTMENT?** It is possible to not like an experience that you have **consented** to (e.g. a kiss that is too wet, an awkward caress, feeling embarrassed throughout). Experiences that aren't great (without being traumatic) will help you learn about yourself, your preferences, your limits, etc.
- › **DISCOMFORT?** When you're in a situation that makes you uncomfortable and that you **have not consented to**, it is important to react by respecting your own limits (e.g. speaking up that you don't like something; deciding to leave the room without saying a word and without justifying yourself; if the other person insists, making up an excuse to get out of the uncomfortable or worrying situation).
- › **FEAR?** You may feel trapped and have trouble speaking up and reacting. In this case, you can call for help (e.g. friends in the next room, your parents or other trusted adult or 911).
- › **ASSAULT!** Anyone who has experienced situations of sexual violence (e.g. humiliating comments, harassment, unwanted touching, sexual assault) should not be left alone or keep the experience to themselves. Trusted adults and professionals can help victims regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, religion or age.
- › No matter what the situation, the person who perpetrated the sexual assault, not the victim, is the one responsible. However, this person also needs help to stop this violent behaviour from happening again.

**Remember:**

- › **CONFIDENCE.** We agree to engage in sexual activities (e.g. kissing, fondling, intercourse) because we really want to and feel confident and ready. The important thing is for each partner to experience sexual activity at their own pace so that the experience is enjoyable for both people.
- › **SAFETY and WELL-BEING.** Both partners must consent to sexual activity and this consent is important because it gives each person:
  - A feeling of respect and safety.
  - A sense of well-being.
- › **IT'S YOUR DECISION.** You don't have to have sex right now. You can think about it and when the time is right, discuss it with your partner and decide what is right for both or you.
- › **Remember: To really say yes, you have to learn how to really say no.**



## SHEET

### 3.1

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Learn More About Consent

This sheet provides essential information about sexual consent all in one place. You don't need to share all of this content with the group, but it may help you answer their questions. You will find this same sheet in all sessions on consent in the *Be True to You* program, i.e. those in Secondary 2 and 4. This sheet provides key legal definitions and information but does not replace legal advice.

Also, please note that this sheet was created in 2021; this means that it may not account for any legal changes that occur following the publication of the *Be True to You* program.

Sexual consent is associated with different criteria in the literature on this topic. For example, there is a distinction between sexual behaviour that is neither desirable nor acceptable in society and behaviour that is punishable by law. This sheet therefore provides the legal and social definitions.

### SEXUAL CONSENT:

#### Legal criteria:

#### Free, voluntary, informed consent that can be withdrawn at any time.

- › **An agreement that a person expresses clearly** through both their words and actions (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- › **Must be free:** This means that consent during a sexual relationship is not obtained through the use of physical coercion, blackmail or threats (Éducaloi, 2022a). Both people in a relationship must have equal power to decide whether they want a sexual relationship or not. Each person must therefore feel free to accept, refuse, or change their mind without fearing the other person's reaction.
- › **Informed:** The person must be in a state to give consent (Éducaloi, 2022a). The law states that a person who is sleeping or unconscious cannot give consent. When it comes to intoxication with drugs or alcohol, legally a person must be in a very advanced state of intoxication to be unable to consent to sexual contact. For example, a person who has consumed alcohol or drugs can consent to sexual activity, unless their condition makes it impossible for them to remember what they are doing.
- › **Can be withdrawn at any time** (Éducaloi, 2022a): Even if you consent to sexual activity, you have the right to change your mind at any time.

- › **Is not valid if one of the partners is in a position of authority or trust or if there is a situation of dependency or exploitation** (Éducaloi, 2022a): For example, even if adolescent is of the legal age to consent to sexual activity, they cannot consent to sexual activity with a coach or teacher since this person is in a position of authority over them.
- › **Must be given for each individual sexual act:** The person who initiates the sexual activity must always check how the other person feels about each sexual act (e.g. kissing, fondling) (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- › **May not be presumed:** This means that you can never assume that the other person is consenting. You cannot decide on your own whether the other person consents without checking with them first. In the case of sexual assault, the offender cannot defend themselves by saying that they thought that the other person had consented.
- › **Failure to obtain sexual consent from your partner can result in sexual assault, which is a criminal offence that can be punishable by law** (Éducaloi, 2022a). Whether you're in a relationship with someone or dating them or they are just an acquaintance, it's important to make sure the person also wants to have sexual contact.

### Social Criteria: Enthusiastic Consent

- › **Must be expressed in an enthusiastic way:** The act of showing enthusiasm is a criteria that is often described in relation to consent (Duquette, Soubeyrand-Faghel and Paume, 2019; Gouvernement du Québec, 2022). Showing enthusiasm (or not) can help a partner pick up on signs of consent or non-consent. However, this criteria is not included in the sections of the law that relate to consent. It is more of a social criteria. Some signs can indicate a person's enthusiasm: they may respond to the other person's advances, smile, hug them, caress them. Even adults can find it hard to distinguish between signs of enthusiasm and signs of discomfort or shyness in a partner. That's why it's important to be attentive to the other person at all times when you are being intimate and check in to see how they are feeling.

### Ages to remember:

- › **12 years minus one day:** Consent is never valid.
- › **12 years old:** The age at which a youth can be charged with a crime (Éducaloi, 2017).
- › **16 years old:** The age of sexual consent in Canada (Éducaloi, 2022b; Royal, 2008).
- › **Important to explain:** Although the age of consent is 16, the law does set out exceptions for sexual encounters (e.g. kissing, fondling, sexual relations) between young people of about the same age before they turn 16 (Éducaloi, 2022b).

The following table from Éducaloi (2022b) describes the exceptions for consent between young people under 16 years of age. It gives the age difference that cannot be exceeded in order for consent to be valid.

Age of younger partner	Age difference allowed
Less than 12 years (i.e. 12 years minus one day)	Consent is NEVER valid.
12-13 years old	Less than 2 years
14-15 years old	Less than 5 years

### Definitions that may be useful:

#### Behaviour that may lead to legal consequences:

- › **Sexual offences:** Refers to all crimes of a sexual nature, including sexual assault (Éducloai, 2022c).
- › **Sexual assault:** Sexual assault is when one partner does not consent (agree) to sexual touching. Sexual touching can be a kiss, a caress or any other type of sexual act (Éducloai, 2022a).

#### Behaviours that do not always have legal consequences but that are neither desirable nor acceptable in society:

- › **Sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment is not a crime, but it is prohibited in the workplace.

The term “harassment” usually refers to repeated acts. However, there may be cases in which the severity or intent could result in the act being considered harassment, even if it only occurred once.

Sexual harassment can take many forms:

- **Verbal:** Sexist, crude or degrading jokes; remarks about physical appearance; remarks about someone’s private life; use of slang or degrading, homophobic or sexist terms; use of insinuation; repeated invitations of all kinds; explicit sexual propositions; veiled or open promises in exchange for sexual favours.
  - **Non-verbal:** Whistling; looks with sexual connotations; display of degrading or pornographic material; signs with explicit sexual connotations; the harasser is constantly around; messages of a sexual, sexist or homophobic nature.
  - **Physical:** Intentional touching; physical touching such as slapping someone’s buttocks; tickling; pinching; kissing; pushing into a corner, etc. (Duquette, Soubeyrand-Faghel and Paume, 2019).
- › **Sexual misconduct:** In the media, we have heard the term “sexual misconduct” used a lot in reference to public figures who have made headlines for questionable sexual behaviour. In an everyday context, sexual misconduct usually refers to behaviour that society considers inappropriate or undesirable. This term can also refer to sexist or sexually degrading comments, homophobic comments and profanity. Overall, this is a very vague term used in many ways to describe all sorts of behaviour. While sexual misconduct is not a crime defined in the criminal code, it may technically include behaviours that are punishable by law.

- › The term “sexual misconduct” is used in professional codes to refer to prohibited behaviours between professionals and the people they help. In these cases, legal proceedings may be initiated against the offending professionals.

### **How a teen could respond if a friend confides in them that they have been sexually assaulted**

- › **Listen to your friend without judging them.** Let them speak at their own pace and in their own words; avoid bombarding them with questions or cutting them off. You don’t need to know the details about the assault. The important thing is to focus on the person’s feelings and what they need (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019).
- › **Believe what the person says** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). Even if the assailant is someone you know and this brings up many emotions for you, it is important not to question what the victim has told you. It takes a lot of courage to tell someone about sexual assault.
- › **Validate their emotions** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). If the person tells you that they feel angry or guilty about the assault, you can tell them that it is normal to have these emotions about a sexual assault and that you understand what they’re feeling.
- › **Tell the person that they have no need to feel guilty** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). Often people think that a sexual assault is their fault. You can tell them that it is not their fault. The assailant was the one who did not check with the person about how they felt and whether they really consented to the act. Some people who sexually assault simply have bad intentions, do not want to hear a “no” from their victim and ignore any signal that shows a lack of consent.
- › **Keep what they say confidential.** Do not repeat it to anyone else so that the person feels safe. However, do not keep the secret at all costs. Do not repeat the story to other kids your age or to your family; however, it is important to tell a trusted adult who can help (e.g. teacher, counsellor, Tel-jeunes, Kids Help Phone).
- › **Refer the person to resources** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). You can tell the person that there are trusted adults who can help. If the person is afraid, you can offer to go to the resource with them. For example, you can go with them to see a trusted school counsellor. You can also be there when they call an assistance organization for help.





# SHEET

## 3.2

FOR SESSION LEADERS

## Traffic Signs

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Present the images (Transports Québec, 2013) to the group and ask them why we have traffic signs on the roads.



“**Emergency Parking**” indicates an off-highway parking area for emergencies.



“**Stop**” means you have to stop at an intersection.



The “**Bicycle Boulevard Ahead**” sign indicates that a bicycle lane is coming up.



“**Slippery Pavement**” indicates that the pavement may be slippery in some areas.



“**Pedestrian Detour**” indicates the direction pedestrians have to walk due to construction work.



A “**Signals Ahead**” sign indicates in advance that an intersection up ahead has traffic lights.

### Why do we need signs?

#### Regulatory signs

(White, black or red background)

- Indicate something you either must or must not do.
- A reminder of the law.

#### Danger ahead

(Yellow background)

- Warns of something on the road ahead you must pay attention to for everyone’s safety.
- Tells you to slow down, stop or even change lanes.

#### Consistent understanding

- The consistent design helps everyone on the road understand the signs.

### Possible connections to consent

#### Signs that we should not go down a particular road because there may be legal consequences if we do:

- Sexual consent is governed by the law (Government of Canada, 2017).
- To protect younger people, the age of consent for sexual activity is 16.
- There are exceptions that allow people under the age of 16 to engage in sexual activity, and the allowed age differences are set out under the law (Government of Canada, 2017).
- Regardless of age, it is a criminal offence to engage in sexual activity without someone’s consent, and doing so can lead to penalties (Government of Canada, 2017).

#### Signs that we should watch out for the risks of inappropriate behaviour:

- The ways in which people act can be similar to road signs (Beaulieu, 2013).
- You have to show caution and look for the signs telling you to slow down or stop.
- You need to get the other person’s consent while avoiding pressuring them, making them uncomfortable, or jeopardizing their safety.

#### Social responsibility

- Consent is everyone’s responsibility.
- You must ensure you have your partner’s consent before engaging in any sexual activity with them (e.g., kissing, fondling, having sex).



# SHEET

## 3.3

FOR THE GROUP

### Traffic Signs and Sexual Consent

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › In the previous exercise, we saw that traffic signs give us specific directions on how to drive safely. We made possible connections with these signs (in the left column) to consent to sexual activity (e.g. kissing, fondling, intercourse).
- › Match the correct sign in the left-hand column with the description of consent in the right-hand column by drawing an arrow from the sign to the definition.

#### Traffic signs

	<p><b>"Pedestrian Detour"</b> indicates the direction pedestrians have to walk due to construction work.</p> <input type="radio"/>
	<p>The <b>"Bicycle Boulevard Ahead"</b> sign indicates that a bicycle lane is coming up.</p> <input type="radio"/>
	<p><b>"Emergency Parking"</b> indicates an off-highway parking area for emergencies.</p> <input type="radio"/>
	<p><b>"Stop"</b> means you have to stop at an intersection.</p> <input type="radio"/>
	<p><b>"Slippery Pavement"</b> indicates that the pavement may be slippery in some areas.</p> <input type="radio"/>
	<p>A <b>"Signals Ahead"</b> sign indicates in advance that an intersection up ahead has traffic lights.</p> <input type="radio"/>

#### Definitions of consent to a sexual activity

BEFORE engaging in any sexual activity (e.g. kissing, fondling, intercourse), you need to remember the signals for recognizing consent: a real yes (keep going) or a hesitation or no (put on the brakes or stop).	<input type="radio"/> 1
If your partner tells you or shows you that they aren't comfortable, you have to stop and make sure you have their consent.	<input type="radio"/> 2
When you try to initiate sexual activity with your partner but aren't sure they are into it, you risk having an "accident."	<input type="radio"/> 3
When one partner does not respect consent (e.g. through aggressive behaviour or attempts to humiliate) or doesn't follow limits or rules, it is important to stop and call for help ("S.O.S.").	<input type="radio"/> 4
To respect consent, we sometimes have to wait longer and take a "longer" but safer route to respect our partner's choice.	<input type="radio"/> 5
To respect consent, both partners need to ensure that they want to go in the same direction when it comes to sexual activity. For example, they have to agree on what they want to do and at what pace and how far they want to go.	<input type="radio"/> 6



## SHEET




### 3.4

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Traffic Signs and Sexual Consent

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Using this sheet, add to the information.

Traffic signs	Consent
<p>5</p>  <p>“Pedestrian Detour” indicates the direction pedestrians have to walk due to construction work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› To respect consent, we sometimes have to wait longer and take a “longer” but safer route to respect our partner’s choice.</li><li>› Respecting personal choices and consent will make it more likely for sexual activity to be pleasurable for both people.</li><li>› You have to know how to listen to your own signs and the signs of the other person. If you don’t feel comfortable with what’s going on, you need to let the other person know.</li></ul>
<p>6</p>  <p>The “Bicycle Boulevard Ahead” sign indicates that a bicycle lane is coming up.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› To respect consent, both partners need to ensure that they want to go in the same direction when it comes to sexual activity. For example, they have to agree on what they want to do and at what pace and how far they want to go.</li><li>› You cannot decide on the other person’s consent without checking with them.</li></ul>
<p>4</p>  <p>“Emergency Parking” indicates an off-highway parking area for emergencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› When one partner does not respect consent (e.g. through aggressive behaviour or attempts to humiliate) or doesn’t follow limits or rules, it is important to stop and call for help (“S.O.S.”).</li><li>› Resources are available to help you learn to pay attention to your own signs and those of other people to ensure that both partners are consenting!</li></ul>

## Traffic signs

## Consent

2



“Stop” means you have to stop at an intersection.

- › **If your partner tells you or shows you that they aren't comfortable, you have to stop and make sure you have their consent. It's important to respect their NO.**
- › As soon as the other person says a word or does something indicating they aren't comfortable, you have to stop and get their consent before continuing.

3



“Slippery Pavement” indicates that the pavement may be slippery in some areas.

- › **When you try to initiate sexual activity with your partner but aren't sure they are into it, you risk having an “accident.”**
- › If in doubt, think of the situation like an area of slippery pavement: if you go too fast and pressure the other person, you run the risk of not respecting your partner's consent.
- › Not respecting consent can have severe consequences, meaning that one or both partners can get hurt.

1



A “Signals Ahead” sign indicates in advance that an intersection up ahead has traffic lights.

- › **BEFORE engaging in any sexual activity (e.g. kissing, fondling, intercourse), you need to remember the signals for recognizing consent: a real yes (keep going) or a hesitation or no (put on the brakes or stop).**
- › **Green:** I have gotten consent **BEFORE and DURING** the activity; this means we can keep going.
- › **Yellow:** I'm not sure if my partner is consenting, so I want to slow down to make sure.
- › **Red:** My partner is not consenting and is expressing this with both non-verbal and verbal signs. I must stop and respect their decision.



## SHEET

### 3.5a

FOR THE GROUP

## “Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony”: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.

### Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony

For **Lily-Rose**'s 14th birthday, her best friend **Yasmine** has organized a party at her house. During the evening, **Anthony** dares them to make out in front of everyone. Uncomfortable, Yasmine looks away and says, “Why would we do that?” Anthony replies: “Come on Yasmine, you’re no fun. It’s no big deal.” Lily-Rose, who is just as embarrassed as her friend but wants to seem older and more mature, says, “Come on Yasmine, it’s not a big deal, it’s just for laughs.” Yasmine blushes, freezes and avoids looking at everyone else. She doesn’t want to do it and doesn’t know how to react.

- › What are the verbal and non-verbal **SIGNS** showing that Yasmine does not want to kiss Lily-Rose?

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- › What do you think of **Anthony and Lily-Rose’s REACTIONS** to Yasmine’s decision not to kiss Lily-Rose?

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- › Anthony and Lily-Rose are not paying attention to Yasmine’s discomfort.

What **COULD Yasmine SAY or DO** to let them know she doesn’t want to play this “game”?

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- › How **COULD others** witnessing this scene **REACT** to Anthony and Lily-Rose insisting that Yasmine do this?

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## SHEET

### 3.5b

FOR THE GROUP

## “Christopher and Zach”: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.

### Christopher and Zach

It's Saturday and 15-year-old **Christopher** is spending the evening watching an action movie at the home of his 17-year-old boyfriend. After the movie is over, **Zach** asks Christopher to stay over. While cuddling against him, Christopher tells him that he has to go home. Zach says, “You could stay over for once. My parents aren't home.” Christopher hesitantly avoids his gaze and adds, “I can't. My parents wouldn't want me to stay over.” Zach continues to insist and says, “If you really loved me, you would stay. We can make up a story so your parents don't worry.” Christopher doesn't want to disappoint him and feels nervous. He doesn't want to stay and doesn't know how to react.

- › What are the verbal and non-verbal **SIGNS** indicating that Christopher does not want to stay over at his boyfriend's house?

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- › What do you think of **Zach's REACTION** to Christopher's hesitation and refusal?

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- › What **COULD Christopher SAY or DO** to make Zach understand that he won't be sleeping over?

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- › How **COULD Zach REACT** to Christopher's reluctance to sleep over?

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## SHEET

### 3.5c

FOR THE GROUP

## “Noémie and Amir”: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.

### Noémie and Amir

**Amir**, 15, is heading to the park with his friends. On the way, he tells them that he hopes **Noémie** will be there. “I finally kissed her at the party last week. I’m going to do everything I can to ‘hit that.’” For fun, his friends tell him that if he can score with her, they will be impressed. After arriving at the park, Amir sees Noémie and sits down next to her on the bench without realizing that she doesn’t seem too happy about it. The more she moves away from him, the closer he gets to her. Noémie seems shy and looks away. Amir’s friends watch him, intrigued to know what he’ll do. Amir puts his hand on Noémie’s thigh. She pushes his hand away and tries to get away, seeming uncomfortable. He whispers into her ear, “Don’t be such a tease, you liked it last time.” Deeply embarrassed, Noémie doesn’t know how to react. The other kids around don’t dare intervene.

- › What do the expressions “hit that” and “to score” mean? What does this say about Amir’s intentions?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- › What are the verbal and non-verbal **SIGNS** indicating that Noémie isn’t interested in getting close to Amir?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- › What do you think of Amir’s **REACTION** to Noémie’s discomfort and withdrawal?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- › What **COULD** Noémie **SAY OR DO** to indicate to Amir that she doesn’t want to get close to him?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- › How **COULD** Amir’s friends and the other young people at the park **REACT** to Amir’s insistence on getting closer to Noémie, who is visibly uncomfortable?  
\_\_\_\_\_



**SHEET**

**3.6a**

**FOR SESSION  
LEADERS**

## Answer Sheet: “Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony”: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situation and ask each team to share their answers.
- › Add to their answers with the information below.

### Yasmine, Lily-Rose and Anthony

For **Lily-Rose**'s 14th birthday, her best friend **Yasmine** has organized a party at her house. During the evening, **Anthony** dares them to make out in front of everyone. Uncomfortable, Yasmine looks away and says, “Why would we do that?” Anthony replies: “Come on Yasmine, you’re no fun. It’s no big deal.” Lily-Rose, who is just as embarrassed as her friend but wants to seem older and more mature, says, “Come on Yasmine, it’s not a big deal, it’s just for laughs.” Yasmine blushes, freezes and avoids looking at everyone else. She doesn’t want to do it and doesn’t know how to react.

- › What are the verbal and non-verbal **SIGNS** showing that Yasmine does not want to kiss Lily-Rose?

- **Verbal signs:**

- She contests the idea of kissing her best friend by asking why they should do that.

- **Non-verbal signs:**

- Uneasiness (you could also imagine the nervousness in her voice).
- Averts her eyes and avoids the gaze of others.
- Blushes.
- Freezes; etc.

- › What do you think of **Anthony and Lily-Rose’s REACTIONS** to Yasmine’s decision not to kiss Lily-Rose?

*Get their opinions.*



- › **Anthony and Lily-Rose are not paying attention to Yasmine’s discomfort.**

What **COULD Yasmine SAY or DO** to let them know that she doesn’t want to play this “game?”

---

- **Yasmine can show that she does not want to kiss her friend by:**

- Clearly saying that she doesn’t want to do it.
- Refusing to do it. Saying: “No, I’m not interested.”
- Asking Anthony how he would react if she insisted that he kiss his best friend.
- Saying that she doesn’t want any activities or games at her party that make people uncomfortable.
- Deciding to leave the room where the game is taking place.
- If the situation is too much to handle, she can discreetly ask her parents to tell everyone that the party will end soon.
- Etc.

- › **How COULD others witnessing this scene REACT to Anthony and Lily-Rose insisting that Yasmine do this?**
- 

- **They could intervene in several ways, i.e. by:**

- Telling Anthony that he should stop insisting, since Yasmine doesn’t want to do it and insisting is only making her more uncomfortable.
- Asking him how he would react if he were forced to do something he didn’t want to do in front of everyone.
- And whether he would agree to do the same thing with his best friend.
- Telling Yasmine that she has the right to say no and that she doesn’t have to play this “game” if she doesn’t feel like it. Besides, kissing is intimate, so it’s understandable if she finds it uncomfortable.
- By telling Lily-Rose that she must respect Yasmine’s refusal. Otherwise, she’s not respecting her friend’s right not to consent.
- Etc.



**SHEET**

**3.6b**

**FOR SESSION  
LEADERS**

## Answer Sheet: “Christopher and Zach”: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situational exercise and ask each team to share their answers.
- › Add to their answers with the information below.

### Christopher and Zach

It’s Saturday and 15-year-old **Christopher** is spending the evening watching an action movie at the home of his 17-year-old boyfriend. After the movie is over, **Zach** asks Christopher to stay over. While cuddling against him, Christopher tells him that he has to go home. Zach says, “You could stay over for once. My parents aren’t home.” Christopher hesitantly avoids his gaze and adds, “I can’t. My parents wouldn’t want me to stay over.” Zach continues to insist and says, “If you really loved me, you would stay with me. We can make up a story so your parents don’t worry.” Christopher doesn’t want to disappoint him and feels nervous. He doesn’t want to stay and doesn’t know how to react.

- › What are the verbal and non-verbal **SIGNS** indicating that Christopher does not want to stay over at his boyfriend’s house?

- **Signs that he might want to:**

- His body posture (cuddling up to him) (non-verbal)
- Etc.

- **Signs that he doesn’t want to stay:**

- He is hesitant; he doesn’t want to disappoint his “boyfriend.”
- He avoids his gaze.
- He feels nervous.
- He finds reasons other than telling his boyfriend that he doesn’t feel like it (e.g. “My parents won’t want me to stay over.”) (verbal)
- He makes it clear twice that he doesn’t want to stay. He says once that he has to go home and a second time he says, “I can’t” when Zach invites him again.

• **A hesitation is really a “no”!**

- Sometimes you feel torn between two choices. When this happens, it can be even harder to give a clear answer. The other person may interpret this as a yes, but it isn't really.
- Christopher may feel torn between not wanting to disappoint his boyfriend and not wanting to disappoint his parents.
- Also, we don't know much about Christopher and Zach's relationship. Have they been together for long? Have they engaged in sexual activity before? Christopher may also not feel ready to engage in sexual activity right now, as he doesn't want his first sexual encounter to be something he decides on at the spur of the moment; perhaps he doesn't have protection (a condom); or he may fear the reactions of his parents who are expecting him to come home; etc.
- However, even if Christopher has had sex with his boyfriend before, he may still not want to stay over or even have sex that night.
- No matter what his reasons are, whenever a situation is ambiguous and one person hesitates, this is considered a no!

› **What do you think of Zach's REACTION to Christopher's hesitation and then refusal?**

---

*Get their opinions.*

› **What COULD Christopher SAY or DO to make Zach understand that he won't be sleeping over?**

- 
- Christopher could say he doesn't like it when Zach insists like that. He doesn't feel listened to and doesn't feel comfortable because he is afraid of disappointing him.
  - Christopher could tell Zach that he's not ready to stay over or doesn't want to sleep over and would appreciate it if Zach respected his choice.
  - Christopher could repeat that his parents don't want him to stay at his boyfriend's house and that he wants to go home.
  - Christopher could tell Zach that he's worried that he doesn't have the same expectations given their difference in age or experience. He's worried that his invitation to stay over is like an invitation to “have sex” and that he doesn't feel ready for that right now.
  - Christopher could tell him that he would like to sleep over some other time when he doesn't feel rushed. Etc.
  - We don't know whether Christopher's parents know that he is romantically involved with Zach. If his parents aren't aware, this makes it more difficult for him to spend the night away from home with his boyfriend. But even if his parents know about and accept this relationship, that doesn't mean they would let their son spend the night at his boyfriend's place, given that he is only 15 years old.

› **What do you think of Zach's REACTION to Christopher's hesitation and refusal?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **How COULD Zach REACT to Christopher's reluctance to sleep over?**

- Simply accept his refusal without pressuring him by stating that he was happy to spend the evening with him.
- It's understandable that Zach wants to be with his boyfriend, but it is unacceptable to use emotional blackmail to convince him to stay.
- Try to understand why Christopher doesn't want to or can't sleep over, such as his parents' concern, his embarrassment. Are there any other reasons? Maybe he doesn't feel ready to sleep with his boyfriend or to engage in sexual activity? Maybe he is wondering if their expectations and experiences are different (15 years old compared to 17). Have they ever talked about having sex? Etc.
- Given that Zach is two years older than Christopher, he is expected to be the one to make sure his boyfriend doesn't feel pressured and he must respect his partner's decision.

- **What does the law say about the age of consent for sexual activity?**

- "A teenager may consent to sexual activity. However, their consent is invalid if they're considered too young to consent or if they're in a position of vulnerability with respect to the partner" (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- In Canada, the legal age of consent to sexual activity is 16 (sexual activity is defined as kissing, fondling and sexual intercourse). The age of consent, also known as the "age of protection," is the age at which young people can "legally" consent to sexual activities (Royal, 2008).
- The law does set out exceptions for sexual encounters before the age of 16, but with specific age differences.
- The law also specifies that anyone under the age of 12 (12 years minus 1 day) cannot consent to sexual activity (Éducaloi, 2022a).

**Age and Sexual Consent**

Age of younger partner	Age difference allowed
Less than 12 years	Consent is NEVER valid.
12-13 years old	Less than 2 years
14-15 years old	Less than 5 years

- For 14- to 15-year-olds, the legal age difference for consenting to sexual activity is less than five years (Éducaloi, 2022b). This means that a 14-year-old cannot consent to sexual activity with a 19-year-old, and a 15-year-old cannot consent to sexual activity with a 20-year-old.
- It is important to know that even if the teenager wants to have sex and says yes, their consent is not valid if it does not respect these legal age differences. This is true even if the parents agree. The older person could be charged with sexual assault.

- The two-year age difference between Christopher and Zach is within the legal age gap for consent to sexual activity.
- If the person has a relationship of trust or authority over the adolescent, the adolescent cannot legally consent even if he or she is of legal age (16) and gives consent (Éducaloi, 2022a). For example, you can't engage in sexual activity with a coach, teacher or another employee who is your superior.
- Consenting to one type of sexual activity (e.g. kissing) does not mean consenting to all types of sexual activity (e.g. fondling, having sex). You can say NO to any new sexual act at any time (Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick, 2017).
- Christopher, for example, might want to kiss his boyfriend and cuddle with him but not want to consent to anything else. He has the right not to feel ready for any other type of sexual activity. Even during sexual activity that both of them consented to, Christopher may agree to one sexual act but not another.
- Similarly, a person can consent to sexual activity and then change their mind even once they have started. In this case, the other partner must immediately stop the activity (Éducaloi, 2022a).



**SHEET**

**3.6c**

**FOR SESSION  
LEADERS**

## Answer Sheet: “Noémie and Amir”: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situational exercise and ask each team to share their answers.
- › Add to their answers with the information below.

### Noémie and Amir

**Amir**, 15, is heading to the park with his friends. On the way, he tells them that he hopes **Noémie** will be there. “I finally kissed her at the party last week. I’m going to do everything I can to ‘hit that.’” For fun, his friends tell him that if he can score with her, they will be impressed. After arriving at the park, Amir sees Noémie and sits down next to her on the bench without realizing that she doesn’t seem too happy about it. The more she moves away from him, the closer he gets to her. Noémie seems shy and looks away. Amir’s friends watch him, intrigued to know what he’ll do. Amir puts his hand on Noémie’s thigh. She pushes his hand away and tries to get away, seeming uncomfortable. He whispers into her ear, “Don’t be such a tease, you liked it last time.” Deeply embarrassed, Noémie doesn’t know how to react. The other kids around don’t dare intervene.

- › What do the phrases “hit that” and “to score” mean and what does this say about Amir’s intentions?

- The phrase “hit that” can mean using another person for personal pleasure and seducing them for the sole purpose of having sex.
- “Scoring” means having sex with someone and generally in the sense of a “conquest.”
- The expressions “hit that,” “score,” and “a tease” are disrespectful ways to refer to a sexual activity or someone in particular. No one enjoys being used by another person or being the target of sexual insults.

› **What does this say about Amir’s intentions?**

---

- This gives the impression that he only wants to be with Noémie to satisfy his own sexual needs and desires without considering what Noémie wants. There is no indication that he wants to have a relationship with her and that he cares about her “consent.”
  - How does he perceive Noémie? Or girls in general?
  - What exactly does he want? Physical contact? Attention?
  - Is the way he talks about Noémie simply clumsy or his way of trying to impress people?
  - Is his behaviour due to a lack of knowledge about how to attract someone? Or is this a “macho” vision related to how he was brought up?

**One thing is certain, this is not the right way to get Noémie to like him.**

› **What are the verbal and non-verbal **SIGNS** indicating that Noémie isn’t interested in being close to Amir?**

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• **Non-verbal signs**

- She pulls away from him when he tries to get closer.
- She blushes and looks away when he tries to get closer.
- She pushes his hand away when he tries to touch her.
- She’s uncomfortable.
- She freezes at his advances.

• **Verbal signs**

- None.
- She says nothing. She is too intimidated to say something even when he calls her a “tease.”

› **What do you think of Amir’s **REACTION** to Noémie’s discomfort and withdrawal?**

---

*Get their opinions.*

› **What *COULD* Noémie SAY or DO to indicate to Amir that she doesn't want to be close with him?**

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- Tell him she doesn't want him to get close to her.
- Tell him to stop (when he tries to touch her).
- Say that she isn't interested in his advances.
- She may also decide to leave the bench and go sit somewhere else.
- Although Noémie does not “verbally” say that she doesn't want Amir to get close to her, many non-verbal signs clearly indicate that she isn't comfortable with the situation. Amir should quickly realize that she doesn't want to be near him and respect her refusal right away.

› **How *COULD* Amir's friends and the other people at the park REACT to Amir's insistence on getting closer to the Noémie?**

---

- Sit between Amir and Noémie on the bench to make Amir understand that what he's doing isn't right.
- Invite Noémie to come and sit next to them (so that she's safe) and asking her if she needs help.
- Instead of just watching them, his friends could tell Amir to stop insisting with Noémie, who is obviously uncomfortable and not interested. His friends could ask themselves how they would react if this were happening to someone close to them, like their own sister? Would they have the reflex to quickly protect her?
- One of his friends could take Amir aside and explain that just because he and Noémie kissed once doesn't mean she has to do it again (and we don't know the context of that kiss: did he act the way he's acting now?).
- If things get too intense, they can go find an adult (e.g. parents, school or youth centre staff member). If they are concerned about the person's safety, they need to tell a trusted adult quickly.

› **It is *important* to REACT to:**

- Show your disagreement with what is happening.
- Empower the non-consenting person and disempower the person who is insisting or who doesn't realize that the other person is not consenting.
- Prevent a possible situation of harassment or sexual assault. However, remember that the person who commits the assault is the only one RESPONSIBLE for their actions.
- There are major consequences for the victims of sexual violence and for those who engage in these behaviours (sexual assault is a crime punishable by law).
- As a society, we want these behaviours to stop.





# SHEET

## 3.7

FOR THE GROUP

### Key Components of Valid Sexual Consent

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Sexual consent **MUST** be “free and voluntary,” and “informed”; it “may be withdrawn at any time” and it can be “enthusiastic.”
- › Read the sentences below, which represent different ways of giving or not giving consent to sexual activity.
- › Write the sentence number in the box that you think corresponds to the type of consent.

#### Key Components of Valid Sexual Consent

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. I really want to kiss the person.                         | 5. I was not under the influence of alcohol or drugs when my partner and I decided to have our first sexual encounter. |
| 2. I know and understand what I’m getting into.              | 6. Before we had sex, I told my partner that I had been tested for an STI (sexually transmitted infection).            |
| 3. I wanted to cuddle at first, but I don’t want to anymore. | 7. We were kissing, but before we went any further, I asked my partner if they wanted to.                              |
| 4. I don’t feel obliged to sleep at their place.             |  |

FREE AND VOLUNTARY

INFORMED

CAN BE WITHDRAWN AT ANY TIME

ENTHUSIASTIC


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## Answer Sheet: Key Components of Valid Sexual Consent

### Key Components of Valid Sexual Consent


1. I really want to kiss the person.
2. I know and understand what I'm getting into.
3. I wanted to cuddle at first, but I don't want to anymore.
4. I don't feel obliged to sleep at their place.
5. I was not under the influence of alcohol or drugs when my partner and I decided to have our first sexual encounter.
6. Before we had sex, I told my partner that I had been tested for an STI (sexually transmitted infection).
7. We were kissing, but before we went any further, I asked my partner if they wanted to.



**4** I don't feel obliged to sleep at their place.

**5** I was not under the influence of alcohol or drugs when my partner and I decided to have our first sexual encounter.


**FREE AND VOLUNTARY**



**2** I know and understand what I'm getting into.

**6** Before we had sex, I told my partner that I had been tested for an STI (sexually transmitted infection).


**INFORMED**



**3** I wanted to cuddle at first, but I don't want to anymore.

**7** We were kissing, but before we went any further, I asked my partner if they wanted to.

**CAN BE WITHDRAWN AT ANY TIME**



**1** I really want to kiss the person.

**ENTHUSIASTIC**

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## Image

- › Transports Québec. (2013). *Répertoire des dispositifs de signalisation routière du Québec – Signs*. Gouvernement du Québec. <http://www.rsr.transports.gouv.qc.ca/Dispositifs/Panneaux.aspx>



## Secondary 3 - Session 4

### Sexualized Behaviour and Social Activities

#### “Sex at Parties: Embarrassing, Shocking and... Risky? ”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Identity, Gender Stereotypes and Roles, and Social Norms</b>	<p><b>Explain how representations of sexuality in the public space can influence the expression of your sexuality:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Norms and values conveyed in the public space and by the people around you.</li> <li>› Personal norms and values.</li> <li>› Expression of your sexuality in the public space (expressing your identity, relationships), intimate space (shared with a few chosen people) and private space (personal feelings and experiences).</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence</b>	<p><b>Become aware of the active role you can play in preventing or reporting a situation of sexual assault:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Situations requiring the use of self-protection skills: with a friend, an acquaintance, a romantic partner or ex-partner, a stranger in the real or virtual world.</li> <li>› Factors of vulnerability in each situation.</li> </ul>
Possible links to the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022)	
<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Citizenship and Community Life:</b> Enable students to take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity.</p>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

**Cross-curricular competencies**

**Intellectual competencies**

- › Uses information
- › Exercises critical judgment
- › Solves problems

**Personal and social competencies**

- › Achieves his/her potential
- › Cooperates with others

**Communication-related competency**

- › Communicates appropriately

**Subject areas**

**Personal development subject area:**

- › *Quebec Citizenship and Culture*

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Autonomy and Interdependence (Secondary 2)  
Culture and Symbolic Productions (Secondary 4)

**Disciplinary competencies**

**Studies a cultural reality**

- › Establishes the scope of the object of study
- › Evaluates elements of knowledge
- › Analyzes social relations
- › Demonstrates a more complete understanding

**Reflects on an ethical question**

- › Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation
- › Examines a variety of points of view
- › Develops a point of view
- › Engages in dialogue

**Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School**

**Understand the importance of empowerment to prevent and report a situation of sexual assault and to support the victim (Secondary 2)**

- › Self-protection skills in different situations
- › Reactions and helpful attitude of a person acting as a confidant

**Reflect on the ambivalence created by some contradictory norms, such as differentiated norms for sexual behaviour in adolescence (Secondary 2)**

**Understand the characteristics of sexual behaviour in adolescence (Secondary 2)**

- › Norms and myths regarding adolescent sexual behaviour

**Reflect on the tensions between feelings, values and norms related to sexual behaviour and on the elements that can support choices in order to have a positive experience (Secondary 2)**

**Understand the elements that can support choices related to sexual behaviour in order to have a positive experience (Secondary 2)**

- › Reasons for accepting or refusing a sexual behaviour
- › Self-knowledge, self-assertion and negotiation
- › Anticipation of positive or negative implications
- › Real or perceived pressure

**Understand representations of sexuality in a variety of spaces (Secondary 4)**

- › Norms, values and messages on sexuality from family, peers and the media
- › Expressions of sexuality in public, intimate and privacy spaces

**Reflect on tensions between the norms and values promoted in the media and by family and peers, and between own values and representations of the self (Secondary 4)**



## Educational Goals



**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Inform the group about the different ways that they can respond to intimate acts in public (including sexual ones) that make them uncomfortable or that they think are risky.**

- 1. Discuss** the reasons for discomfort with intimate or sexual acts in public (i.e. at a party), types of dilemmas in these situations, and possible ways to react.
- 2. List** the potential consequences for a person who engages in intimate or sexual acts in public (i.e. at a party) depending on how the people around them react.
- 3. Discuss** why it is important to do something when being asked to perform an intimate act in public (i.e. at a party) that could be uncomfortable or lead to risks.
- 4. Analyze** situations related to intimate acts in public and switch the genders of the main characters to **identify** double standards.
- 5. Determine** realistic ways to respond to these uncomfortable or risky situations based on rules they decide for themselves or to uphold or protect the privacy of their friends.
- 6. Identify** their own comfort level with different types of intimate acts in public.
- 7. Analyze** different factors explaining one's comfort or discomfort depending on whether the intimate or sexual act is in public or in private.



## Sequence



This **75-min** session has **four activities**.

5 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Parties</li> <li>› <b>Personal reflection :</b> Dilemma in parties</li> <li>› <b>Presentation :</b> Dilemma</li> </ul>
40 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Intimate and sexual acts at parties  <i>Sheet 4.1: Situational Exercise: My Friend</i>  <i>Sheet 4.2: Situational Exercise: At the Youth</i>  <i>Sheet 4.3: Situational Exercise: My Best Friend</i>  <i>Sheet 4.4: Answer Sheet: Situational Exercise: My Friend</i>  <i>Sheet 4.5: Answer Sheet: Situational Exercise: At the Youth Centre</i>  <i>Sheet 4.6: Answer Sheet: Situational Exercise: My Best Friend</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Possible responses</li> </ul>
10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Strategies to help you and your friends protect yourselves and each other in high-risk situations at parties</li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Protection strategies</li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Intimacy</li> <li>› <b>Individual quiz:</b> Connection to private / public context  <i>Sheet 4.7: Answer Sheet: Connection to private / public context</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
5 min.	<b>SESSION CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Key messages from the session</li> </ul>



It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations or situations involving violence. It’s important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the police or Youth Protection Directorate must be contacted.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.





## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



5 MIN.



PERSONAL REFLECTION



PRESENTATION

## Session Introduction

- › **Begin** by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).

## Presentation

- › Then **share** the following content with the group and tell them that this session will be about respecting privacy and specifically about how witnessing or engaging in intimate or sexual acts in a public context (particularly at parties) can cause discomfort:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Parties can be opportunities for young people to hang out with each other outside of school in a less formal setting.
- › Parties are where you are supposed to have fun with your friends. And that's usually what happens.
- › However, parties can also be places where young people engage in intimate or other behaviour that they would not necessarily do at school under adult supervision.
- › At parties, this behaviour can be:
  - Silly.
  - Funny (e.g. joking around, making silly mistakes without consequences).
  - Embarrassing (e.g. witnessing intimate acts).
  - This behaviour can also lead to unpleasant and hurtful situations (e.g. being ridiculed by everyone, receiving or witnessing sexual insults).
  - Situations that pose a risk of harassment and sexual violence (e.g. unwanted sexual contact).
- › Whether teens engage in these different types of behaviour can be influenced by the level of supervision (e.g. whether adults are there or not), the number of people at the party, their age, and the use of alcohol or drugs, which can affect judgment.

- › Parties can be fun times with friends, but you may also come across “uncomfortable” or “risky situations.”
  - An **uncomfortable** situation is one that surprises, embarrasses or shocks you.
  - A **risky** situation is one in which you perceive a risk to your safety or the safety of another person or other people.

## Personal Reflection

- › **Ask** the group to answer the suggested questions. However, tell them that they don’t have to share their answers with the rest of the group. They just have to think about their answers on their own.
  - **Have you ever been at a party or with friends and witnessed outrageous sexual comments, sexual insults, or intimate acts in public, etc. that embarrassed, worried or shocked you?**
    - **If so, what made you uncomfortable?**
  - **Did you know how to react?**
    - **Were you reluctant to do something? If so, why?**
    - **What was the exact DILEMMA (or reluctance) that prevented you from responding?**

## Presentation

- › **Define** the meaning of “dilemma.”
  - **A dilemma is “a difficult choice you have to make between two things you could do”** (Dilemma, 2021).
  - **“Situations of conflicting values and principles that make decisions difficult”** (CEST, 2020).
- › **Explain** the following to the group:

You may witness situations at a party or with friends (or on social media) that make you feel embarrassed, shocked, or unsafe.

- Many youths interviewed in one research study mentioned that it was hard for them to respond to these situations, especially when they witnessed sexual acts (Duquet and Quéniart, 2009).

These situations can make us feel uncomfortable: we don’t want others to judge us and we don’t want to disappoint them; we feel torn between different ways of responding (e.g. pretending you didn’t see or hear anything or deciding to say or do nothing **OR** deciding to react, to leave, etc.). These situations put us in a dilemma.

This is why the next activity will focus on the different responses that you may have to intimate or sexual acts that take place in public (i.e. at a party).



# 2

## Activity 2



**SHEETS 4.1 TO 4.6**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**40 MIN.**



**TEAM ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Team Activity

- › **Divide** the group into teams of two.
- › **Mention** that they will have to read a situation that describes intimate acts at parties. As a team, they will have to express their possible reactions to these situations (e.g. discomfort, ease, indifference, possible spontaneous responses/encouragement of the act).
- › **Hand out** one of the three situations to each team (see Sheets 4.1 to 4.3: *Situational Exercises: My Friend; Situational Exercise: At the Youth Centre; Situational Exercise: My Best Friend*). Give them about ten minutes to answer the questions.
- › **Read** each situation out loud and ask the teams to share their answers with the rest of the group.
- › If necessary, **add** to the group's answers with the information on Answer Sheets 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 (*My Friend; At the Youth; My Best Friend*).

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

In their answers, the group could mention that the people in the scenarios regret what they did. Remember that the actions themselves are not really the problem. Wanting to impress others is normal. However, someone may regret what they did because of the unpleasant and disproportionate consequences, even though the person who committed the disrespectful act (e.g. rumours, humiliation, sharing intimate photos of someone without that person's permission) or illegal act (e.g. sharing intimate photos of a minor, sexual assault) is the one at fault. At the same time, some behaviours can damage a person's reputation, as their actions may be considered morally or socially unacceptable. This can unfortunately have unpleasant impacts. The goal is to get young people to think about how to protect themselves and others.



## Discussion and Presentation

› **Lead** a discussion using the questions below:

- **At a party, why is it important to respond to a situation that makes you uncomfortable OR that could put you or someone else at risk?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Hanging out with your friends or going to a party is meant to be fun. Occasionally, “dumb things” may happen, especially when everyone has been drinking (and even though people under the age of 18 are not allowed to drink!); however, even something dumb should not have negative consequences!
- › If something happens that makes you uncomfortable or puts you or someone else at risk, it is important to respond, for various reasons:
  - To reduce the chance that the embarrassing behaviour is photographed or recorded and then posted online against the person’s wishes. People can easily photograph or record others without their knowledge using a cell phone.
  - To show support for your friends, i.e. doing for others what we would like others to do for us. You could one day find yourself in a situation that you didn’t expect or don’t want to be in, and you would want the people around you to “protect” you from insults or other types of public humiliation, including on social media.
  - To watch out for people who have been drinking (or taking drugs), as people may consent to sexual acts that they would not otherwise agree to when under the influence of substances. Being at a party and consuming alcohol (or drugs) can make it easier to sometimes go beyond your own limits or ignore those of others.
    - “A person who has consumed alcohol or drugs is usually able to consent to sexual touching, even if impaired. But their consent is invalid if they no longer realize what they’re doing or if they’re unconscious” (Éducaloi, 2022a).
    - To reduce the risk of negative or non-consensual sexual experiences, it is important for everyone to be aware that you must get consent from your partner before engaging in any sexual activity and to be vigilant when it comes to at-risk situations.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Many people who have had non-consensual sexual experiences find the term “sexual assault” too strong to describe their experience and instead prefer “negative sexual experience” or “non-consensual sexual experience.” In fact, many people do not identify themselves as “survivors” or “victims of sexual assault” and find these terms pejorative. This appears to be particularly true for boys (Lin6, 2021). This is why it’s important to use all of these terms so that more people can identify with them, if applicable.

› **Continue** the discussion by using the same situation to ask the group the questions, but this time switch the gender of the characters. Here are the suggested questions:

- **If a girl were the one doing the striptease, would you have reacted in the same way?**
- **If two boys instead of two girls were dancing close together, would you have reacted in the same way?**
- **If, instead of a girl, it was a drunk boy who had been dragged into the room by a girl (or by a boy) he didn’t know, would you have reacted in the same way?**
- **In these situations, why is one gender often judged more severely than another for the same behaviour?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

› We often react in different ways depending on whether a boy or a girl is the one exhibiting a behaviour. Yet the issues at stake **are the same**.

### › **Situation 1 (My Friend).**

- A girl doing a striptease will probably not be perceived the same as if a boy did it. Although the girl may get laughed at (just like a boy would), she would also likely generate a lot more curiosity, interest and “desire” than a boy would.
- Although the girl may be perceived as “down for it,” “hot,” etc., she is more likely to be labelled negatively. People may insult her and call her names (e.g. “slut”, “whore”) that could negatively impact her reputation.
- Boys, on the other hand, may also be perceived as “down for it” but also as fun, outgoing, sexy, hot, etc. These situations seem to have less impact on boys’ reputations.

› **Situation 2 (At the Youth Centre)**

- Two boys dancing closely may not be perceived in the same way as two girls doing the same thing. Two boys could be seen as just clowning around, but they could also be called “homos” or ridiculed as “fags” and then be harassed by other kids.
- However, many young people and people in general these days are more open to homosexuality, and this may not provoke homophobic reactions.
- Other people may think two girls kissing in public (e.g. at a party) is “hot.” They may also be the victims of sexual insults (e.g. “whores,” “sluts”) or homophobic insults.

› **Situation 3 (My Best Friend)**

- People will usually have different concerns if a girl drags a drunk boy into a bedroom and the boy barely knows her. For example, we generally wouldn’t be afraid that the girl would take advantage of him. We wouldn’t necessarily think of his regretting being sexually active in this context. Unfortunately, many people wouldn’t think that he might experience this negatively or even be sexually assaulted.
- On the contrary, his friends may be happy for him, encourage him to go to the room with this girl, and congratulate him without worrying about it.
- Since the boy in this situation is very drunk, he cannot give informed consent; this would constitute sexual assault, and the girl could be charged (even if she did not initially have these intentions).
- The same would be true if it were another boy who took him into the room.

› Generally speaking, these situations show a double standard.

- A double standard means perceiving or judging a behaviour by a girl differently from how we would if the action were done by a boy (de Senarclens, 2017).
- For the same behaviour, people may:
  - Judge girls more harshly than boys (e.g. insult them).
  - And, conversely, may be less concerned about situations that put boys at risk (e.g. less concerned about their sexual consent).

› As we have seen, both boys and girls can have embarrassing or worrisome experiences in this situation, and it’s important to RESPOND and not trivialize what happens to them.

› When we downplay a behaviour for either girls or boys and don’t worry about what could happen to them, some teens who are the victims of violence (for example) may be less likely to talk about it or get help for fear of being ridiculed (Arel, 2020).

› Anyone is at risk of receiving sexual insults, having their reputations damaged, having negative sexual experiences, getting into situations of sexual exploitation, or experiencing sexual abuse.

› For example, at a party where people are drinking alcohol (or using drugs), limits may be less clear; hence the importance of being vigilant and helping everyone avoid situations that could pose a risk, for example, to someone’s psychological health.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



In a survey of Quebec youths, 16.8% of the girls and 5.4% of the boys reported having experienced sexual violence in a romantic relationship (Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2018). Not being as concerned about boys' welfare compared to that of girls may make boys less likely to talk about a problem for fear of being ridiculed (Arel, 2020).

- › **Wrap** up the activity by **highlighting** the steps they went through to analyze the situations and develop empathy and support for others:
  - **Identify the emotion and feeling (comfort or discomfort).**
  - **Determine why the person is acting this way.**
  - **Name the possible consequences for your friend if no one does anything.**
  - **Describe how you could respond and determine the impact of your response on the situation.**
  - **Choose the best course of action so that your friend (or anyone else) doesn't get made fun of, harassed or even assaulted.**





## Activity 3



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



PRESENTATION



TEAM ACTIVITY

### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the teams to discuss and identify three REALISTIC ways of responding to sexual situations at parties that could make them uncomfortable. A helpful tool is thinking about the rules that they and their friends have agreed to in order prevent negative and/or at-risk sexual experiences.
- › These can be rules recommended by adults they know, rules they already apply when they go out with friends, or rules inspired by the situations that the teams have worked on. You can also share these examples of responses from young people:

*“We know boys who have taken advantage of drunk girls to have sex with them, and that worries me, so I’m careful about how much I drink.” (Tamara, 15)*

*“We guys help each other out. For example, if one of us has had too much to drink, we keep an eye on him so that he doesn’t do or say stupid things that could hurt him and come back to haunt him. We don’t take ourselves too seriously, but we’re a group of guys who do the right thing; we’re fed up that guys are always seen as irresponsible.” (Julien, 16)*

- › **Tell** the teams that they will take turns sharing one of their rules with the rest of the group.

## Presentation

- › If necessary, **add** to their answers with the content below:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Watch how much you drink.
- › Don't let anyone take a picture or video of you without your consent.
- › Allow yourself to tell those who make derogatory comments about other people that it is neither funny nor nice.
- › Avoid people whose behaviour you disapprove of.
- › Stay with at least one friend during the party and "watch out for each other" throughout the night.
- › If you see a friend who's very drunk and is with someone else who appears to be making sexual advances or is touching the person, intervene since your friend cannot give consent.
- › Don't hesitate to find someone you trust if you or your friends need help and you don't know what to do.
- › At the end of the night, leave with your friends or make sure that all your friends are safe before leaving, even if it means offering them a ride.
  - A golden rule: We came to the party as a group, and we're leaving the party as a group. We never leave someone alone at a party. If we do, we must at least make sure that everything is okay and that someone there will make sure they stay "safe."
- › Some of these rules may also apply to the use of social medias. When intimate and sexual acts are posted and create discomfort or put young people at risk of receiving sexual advances online: respond to derogatory comments or shocking images, tell an adult you trust, block the person online.



## Activity 4



**SHEET 4.7**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**15 MIN.**



**PRESENTATION**



**INDIVIDUAL  
QUIZ**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

- › **Tell** the group that this activity will be about intimate acts in public. We've seen that it can be embarrassing to hear or witness INTIMATE words or acts at parties. But what does "intimate" mean?

## Presentation

- › **Clarify** what "intimate" means and the factors that may determine how comfortable or uncomfortable it is to witness acts considered intimate.

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Intimacy

- › *"Intimacy" refers to our own private space where we keep our thoughts, dreams and desires. This is a part of ourselves that we only share with people who are very close to us and whom we trust.*
- › *Sex / sexuality is intimate: This means that parts of the body (e.g. private parts, being nude, etc.) as well as sexual acts are considered "intimate."*

#### Our comfort level with intimate acts depends on different factors

- › *Our comfort or discomfort with being intimate with others or seeing other people being intimate with each other will depend on different factors:*
  - **Where these acts take place:** It is important to distinguish between a PRIVATE and PUBLIC place. For example, making out with your boyfriend or girlfriend at home when you both are willing participants (private place) is perfectly acceptable, but the same thing in class at school (public place) would be very embarrassing.
  - **Nature of the acts:** Some acts are not as intimate as others. For example, there's a difference between holding hands and kissing. Similarly, there is a difference between kissing each other for a long time ("making out") and caressing each other on and under clothing.
  - **The intensity of the act:** Intensity may influence how comfortable someone is witnessing people being intimate with each other. For example, two people sitting next to each other

on the couch at a youth centre usually won't embarrass anyone; but if the same couple makes out for a long time while one sits astride the other can be embarrassing for other people. This isn't because these acts are wrong (it's normal to want to get close to your boyfriend or girlfriend) but because they are so intense that you get the impression that they should be done in private.

- **How we are raised and our personal values:** Our family's rules, our cultural or religious beliefs, our experiences, our personal sense of modesty, etc. will influence whether we are comfortable with some intimate or sexual acts both in public and in private.
- **The values of our society:** In Quebec, for example, the values of respect and equality as well as openness to sexuality are important. Things that we can and can't do in public (i.e. nudity or sexual acts that are deemed unacceptable) are dictated by the values of our society and are represented in our laws (Éducaloi, 2022b).

## Individual Quiz

- › **Present** five situations to the group and ask them to determine their personal comfort with witnessing these situations.
- › **Go over** the following rating scale:



- › **Explain** that they will use this scale to determine how comfortable they are witnessing these situations. There are no right or wrong answers; everyone may have a different level of comfort in each situation. They don't have to share their answers with the group; they can just think about them in their heads. Everyone should exercise discretion.
- › **Read** each situation below and give everyone time to think about their comfort level and the reasons for their discomfort (if applicable) based on the information presented above:
  1. You are walking in a park and see an elderly couple sitting on a bench kissing on the mouth.
  2. You're at the mall and two men in front of you are holding hands.
  3. During a performance by the school's dance troupe in the auditorium, a couple of Secondary 4 students sitting next to you are making out, and you notice the boy's hand under his girlfriend's sweater.
  4. Your best friend, who has a girlfriend for the first time, asks you to go with him to her place to watch a funny movie. He's too embarrassed to go by himself. You're therefore alone with both of them. Throughout the film, they sit close together and hold hands.
  5. You're at a party at a friend's house. A small group has formed around a boy who is showing porn on his cell phone. Just for fun, he turns up the sound: everyone can hear sex noises and moaning.

- › Using Sheet 4.7: *Answers: Connection to private / public context*, **analyze** the five situations presented above based on the different factors listed.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **What would be the difference if these situations occurred in private versus public?**
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Being intimate with someone is perfectly normal, acceptable, and enjoyable when both people are consenting. However, it is important to distinguish between intimate or sexual acts that are done in private or in public.
- › The same sexual acts in private would not have the same impact, and each of you would surely assess them differently.
- › Sexuality is part of everyone's private or intimate life, and witnessing this facet of someone's life in public can be embarrassing.
- › For example, an intimate or sexual act in private may not create discomfort, but it could if it takes place in public and you are there to see it.
- › In fact, laws exist to prevent certain sexual acts in public: *"An example of an indecent act is a man showing his genitals in public. Whether or not an act is indecent depends on the act and the situation. It's up to the courts to decide whether an act is indecent"* (Éducaloi, 2022b). Some laws are in place to ensure that generally agreed-upon rules in society are respected.



## Session Conclusion



5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**
  - **Why is it important to do something when you or a friend is in an embarrassing situation?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Add** to what they say with the suggestions below.

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › It's important to remember that an intimate and sexual act is not bad in itself. On the contrary, it feels good to know someone well enough to be intimate, and especially sexually intimate, with them.
- › But some media and online environments constantly bombard us with private and intimate acts (e.g. sexting, suggestive poses, nudity) that can give the impression that everyone is doing it, especially on social media (or at parties).
- › But there is a big difference between intimacy in private and intimacy in public. We have to consider various factors to determine whether being intimate with someone will create public discomfort and be perceived as appropriate or inappropriate.
- › When we feel uncomfortable with this type of situation, we may wonder why we feel this way:
  - Is it because some people use sex/sexuality to make fun of someone or humiliate them in front of everyone (sexual insults)?
  - Is it because we are witnessing something intimate that usually takes place in private and not in public?
  - Or is it because what's happening could put someone at risk of a negative or non-consensual sexual experience (sexual assault)?
- › You can respond in different ways when you witness an embarrassing or at-risk situation at a party (for example) to protect yourself or others.

- › If you find yourself in this type of situation and don't know what to do or if what you're doing isn't working, you can contact a trusted adult or call a helpline such as Tel-Jeunes (<https://www.teljeunes.com>) or Kids Help Phone (<https://kidshelpphone.ca/>) via chat, text message or phone.
- › Their counsellors can help you assess the situation and find other possible solutions.
- › **Enjoy the Party!... but remember: keep private acts private.**



## SHEET

### 4.1

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational Exercise: My Friend

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situation.
- › In teams of two, complete the sentences about your reactions to this situation. Emotions may vary from person to person.

“At a party, you and your friends are playing truth or dare. One of your friends is dared to do a striptease in front of everyone. When he starts to undress, someone starts recording with their cell phone.”

This situation  
**MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

OR

This situation  
**DOESN'T MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

I think my friend is doing this because...

\_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



### If no one does anything...

The following could happen to my friend...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### If I do something...

I could do something  
in this situation by...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

If I do something,  
my friend might...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

His reaction  
could make me feel...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Overall...

I think that the **best thing to do** in this situation is to...

---

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## SHEET

### 4.2

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational Exercise: At The Youth Centre

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situation.
- › In teams of two, complete the sentences about your reactions to this situation. Emotions may vary from person to person.

“At a party at the Youth Centre, where close dancing isn’t allowed, two of your girlfriends are ‘grinding’ against each other. They are giggling because they know it’s not allowed and that they’ll get attention.”

This situation  
**MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

OR

This situation  
**DOESN'T MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

I think my friends is doing this because...


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### If no one does anything...

The following could happen to my friends...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### If I do something...

I could do something  
in this situation by...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

If I do something,  
my friends might...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Their reaction  
could make me feel...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Overall...

I think that the **best thing to do** in this situation is to...

---

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## SHEET

### 4.3

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational Exercise: My Best Friend

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situation.
- › In teams of two, complete the sentences about your reactions to this situation. Emotions may vary from person to person.

“At a party at your best friend’s house, you see that she is very drunk and going into her room with a guy she barely knows.”

This situation  
**MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

OR

This situation  
**DOESN'T MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

I think my best friend is doing this because...


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### If no one does anything...

The following could happen to my best friend...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### If I do something...

I could do something  
in this situation by...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

If I do something,  
my best friend might...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Her reaction  
could make me feel...



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Overall...

I think that the **best thing to do** in this situation is to...

---

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## SHEET

### 4.4

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Situational Exercise: My Friend

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Get everyone back in the group and go over each of the situations. Collect the teams' answers while highlighting the different reactions depending on whether the main character is a boy or a girl.
- › Add to their answers if necessary with the information below:

### My Friend

"At a party, you and your friends are playing truth or dare. One of your friends is dared to do a striptease in front of everyone. When he starts to undress, someone starts recording the scene with their cell phone."

This situation  
**MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

- › My friend is probably not aware of what he's doing.
- › I'm surprised at his attitude.
- › It's embarrassing. I don't want to see him like this.
- › If he's recorded, he won't have control over where the video is posted.
- › My friend may regret doing this even though he's not responsible for someone else recording a video of him.
- › Etc.

This situation  
**OR DOES NOT MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

- › I don't mind. I think it's funny.
- › My friend likes to be the centre of attention.
- › It's just a dare.
- › We're with our friends.
- › Everyone is laughing and no one cares.
- › Lots of people show practically nude pictures of themselves on social media, including celebrities, so it's really not something to panic over.
- › Etc.

› **I think my friend is doing this because...**

- He's up for the dare and really not shy.
- He doesn't want to be seen as a coward or "chicken" in front of everyone.
- He wants to be popular.
- He wants to make people laugh. He wants to stand out and be the centre of attention.
- He couldn't refuse.
- He's not aware of what he's doing given how much he's had to drink.
- He doesn't care what people might say about him, although he doesn't know someone is recording him.
- Etc.

**If no one does anything...<sup>1</sup>**

› **The following could happen to my friend...**

- Videos or photos of him could be posted online and on social media.
- He might not realize what he's done because he's had too much to drink.
- He might not remember what he did the next day.
- People might laugh at him.
- Others may give him a bad "reputation" and spread a rumour about him at school and on social media, even though he's not responsible for someone else recording a video of him.
- He might get harassed.
- He might regret what he did and feel embarrassed and even shame; his parents might find out, disapprove, and ground him.
- Etc.

› **The following could also happen:**

- He may become popular and be admired by others.
- He might make people laugh, which could make the party even more fun.
- He might go viral online.
- Etc.

**If I do something...**

› **I could do something in this situation by...**

- Going to see him and asking him directly what he's going to do.
- Taking him aside and telling him that I'm worried about him doing this and that he's had a lot to drink.
- Making him realize that he might not do the same thing if he hadn't been drinking.
- Making him realize that someone is recording him and he doesn't know where the video might end up.
- Saying in front of everyone, in as light a tone as possible, that this isn't something to dare someone to do and ask them to suggest something else.

<sup>1</sup> Note that the information in the "If no one does anything" and "If I do something" sections are not in the PowerPoint for this activity. It is up to the session leader to provide these answers.

- By preventing him from doing the striptease or insisting to others that it's ridiculous or "silly."
- Saying to the person who made the dare whether he would find it as funny if he were the one dared to do it?
- Asking the person recording to stop immediately because this isn't a game and telling the person to erase the video from their cell phone in front of you.
- Changing the mood by suggesting another dare or another game.
- Telling your friend that you need him (e.g. "I have an emergency") to create a distraction.
- Leave the game, say that you're uncomfortable seeing your friend strip down in front of others, and write him a text message to explain your reason for leaving.
- Etc.

› **If I do something, my friend might...**

- Not understand my reaction and tell me to mind my own business.
- Despite my intervention, decide to go ahead with the striptease.

› **But he might also:**

- Realize that he shouldn't go through with it as he's under the influence of alcohol and he's being recorded.
- Be happy and reassured that I intervened and even thank me (the next day!) for doing what I did.
- Etc.

› **I would feel...**

- Depending on my friend's reaction to what I did, my feelings might vary:
  - For example, I could feel bad and get down on myself that I didn't mind my own business and that I shouldn't have gotten involved; that I'm not open-minded enough; or be worried. Or I could feel reassured, satisfied that I did something, etc.

› **I think the best thing to do in this situation is to...**

- **DO SOMETHING.** It's important not to stay passive in these situations.
- But there isn't just one way to act. Regardless of my friend's reaction to what I say, the fact that I am doing something shows that I care about him and that I don't want anything to happen to him that he might regret (e.g. photos posted on social media).
- It's important that he know my fears about the situation. Because I would want him to do the same for me.
- I can also try to find help if my friend doesn't want to listen to me.
  - Note that the law prohibits people from sharing private images of someone under the age of 18. Therefore, you cannot share photos or videos of minors showing certain body parts of the body, like breasts or genitals or explicit sexual activity (Éducaloi, 2022c).
  - It's important to talk to a trusted adult to prevent a serious and illegal situation from occurring.





## SHEET

### 4.5

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Situational Exercise: At the Youth Centre

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Get everyone back in the group and go over each of the situations. Collect the teams' answers while highlighting the different reactions depending on whether the main character is as a boy or a girl.
- › Add to their answers if necessary with the information below:

### At the Youth Centre

"At a party at the Youth Centre, where close dancing isn't allowed, two of your girlfriends are 'grinding' against each other. They are giggling because they know it's not allowed and that they'll get attention."

This situation  
**MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

- › This kind of dancing isn't allowed. This is a rule at the youth centre.
- › This situation could be embarrassing because they are being intimate with each other in public.
- › I know they're doing this just to get other people excited and not because they are dating and want to be closer. Even if they were dating, dancing like that is too intimate in public (the same thing would be true if the couple were a boy and a girl).
- › Someone may be recording them without their knowledge and they would have no control over where the video is posted.
- › They may regret doing this even though they are not responsible for someone else recording a video of them.
- › Etc.

OR

This situation  
**DOESN'T MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE**  
because...

- › They have the right to do what they want. We're not at school.
- › It's none of my business.
- › It's just a dance like any other. They're just doing what you see in music videos.
- › They are getting other people's attention. It's "hot."
- › It's just something they're experimenting with.
- › They're just having fun.
- › Etc.

› **I think my friends are doing this because...**

- They just want to dance and have fun.
- They want to dance like they do in music videos.
- They want to have a new experience.
- They know it's not allowed and want to challenge authority.
- They want to attract attention.
- They want people to think they are popular.
- Etc.

**If no one does anything...<sup>2</sup>**

› **The following could happen to my friends...**

- They might get a warning from the youth centre counsellors and may even get kicked out of the dance or the Youth Centre for a while, if this isn't the first time they have violated the rules.
- People could make fun of them.
- People could spread rumours about them and give them a bad "reputation."
- They might get harassed.
- Someone could record them and post the video on social media. They may regret it.
- Etc.

› **The following could also happen:**

- They might not get a warning from the youth counsellors.
- They might like dancing together and kissing each other.
- They may really enjoy getting the boys excited and turning them on.
- They may be more successful with boys in the future.
- They may become more popular at school and on social media.
- Etc.

**If I do something...**

› **I could do something in this situation by...**

- Going to see them to ask them if they know they're not allowed to dance like that at the Youth Centre.
- Asking them directly what they're doing. Since I know them well, I could tell them that I find it embarrassing to see them dancing like this because they're doing something that should generally only be done in private.
- Taking them aside to tell them that I'm worried people will spread rumours about them and give them a bad reputation.

---

2 Note that the information in the "If no one does anything" and "If I do something" sections are not in the PowerPoint for this activity. It is up to the session leader to provide these answers.

- Going to dance near them and quietly leading one of my two friends off the dance floor.
- Suggesting another activity (e.g. going outside to get some air).
- Etc.

› **If I do something, my friends might...**

- Not understand my reaction and tell me to mind my own business and not to care what other people think of them.
- Make fun of me, say that I'm "out of it" or "old fashioned."
- Ignore me and continue what they're doing on the dance floor.

› **But they also might:**

- Realize that it's better for them to respect the rules and stop what they're doing, since this is not allowed at the Youth Centre.
- Be happy and reassured that I intervened and even thank me.
- Etc.

› **I would feel...**

- Depending on my friend's reaction to what I did, my feelings might vary:
  - For example, I might feel: uncomfortable and get down on myself for not minding my own business; that I shouldn't have gotten involved; that I'm not open-minded enough; be worried. Or I could feel reassured and satisfied that I did something, etc.

› **I think that the best thing in this situation is to...**

- Again, the best thing in this situation is to **DO SOMETHING**. It's important not to stay passive in these situations.
- But there isn't just one way to act. Regardless of my friends' reaction to what I say, the fact that I am doing something proves that I care about them and that I don't want anything to happen to them that they might regret (e.g., they might get suspended from the youth centre since this isn't the first time they have violated the rules; the youth centre may contact their parents; other people may post photos or video on social media, which will turn the experience into a bad memory, etc.). It's important that they know that I am worried about the situation. More than that, I would hope that they'd do the same for me.



## SHEET

### 4.6

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answers: Situational Exercise: My Best Friend

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Get everyone back in the group and go over each of the situations. Collect the teams' answers while highlighting the different reactions depending on whether the main character is a boy or a girl.
- › Add to their answers if necessary with the information below:

### My Best Friend

"At a party at your best friend's house, you see that she is drunk and going into her room with a guy she barely knows."

This situation

#### MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE

because...

- › My friend's alcohol consumption means she may not be fully aware of what is happening or what she is doing.
- › This boy she barely knows is taking her to a room even though she has been drinking heavily.
- › We don't know what's going to happen in her room.
- › I'm worried about my best friend.
- › I'm afraid that she will have a negative sexual experience or engage in a sexual act to which she is not in a condition to truly consent (sexual assault).
- › Etc.

This situation

#### OR DOES NOT MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE

because...

- › She knows him a little bit.
- › She's old enough to know what she's doing.
- › I'm not her mother; it's not up to me to tell her what to do.
- › He's someone she's probably had a crush on for a while, she just never told me about him.
- › She probably wants to.
- › Etc.

› **I think my best friend is doing this because...**

- She isn't fully aware of what she's doing (effect of alcohol).
- She doesn't want to disappoint the boy.
- She isn't able to say no.
- She feels like being alone with this boy.
- She feels like having sex.
- Etc.

**If no one does anything...<sup>3</sup>**

› **The following could happen to my best friend...**

- She might have sexual experience with someone she barely knows; it could even be her first time.
- She might not remember what happened with the boy the next day.
- Other people might give her a bad "reputation" and tell everyone at school and on social media.
- She might engage in sex without really wanting to just to please the other person.
- She might have unprotected sex (e.g. condoms, contraception); she is at risk of contracting an STI (sexually transmitted infection) or becoming pregnant.
- She might not be able to consent because she's had too much to drink.
- The boy might take advantage of her.
- She might have a sexual experience that she doesn't consent to, i.e. sexual assault.
- Etc.

› **The following could also happen...**

- She may simply spend time talking to the boy in her room.
- She may just fall asleep without anything bad happening to her, i.e. the boy may not take advantage of the situation to engage in sexual activity because she's not in a state in which she can consent.
- If my best friend has been drinking but she is not that intoxicated and can give her consent, she may have a good time with this boy (e.g. just hugging, kissing, engaging or not engaging in sexual activity).
- Etc.

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<sup>3</sup> Note that the information in the "If no one does anything" and "If I do something" sections are not in the PowerPoint for this activity. It is up to the session leader to provide these answers.

## If I do something...

### › I could do something in this situation by...

- Stopping her from going into her room while telling the guy to try again when she's not drunk and when she can remember him and the time they spent together.
- Telling the boy that obviously she is not in a condition to give consent to sexual activity and that engaging in sex with her would be sexual assault. He might be accused of something serious even if they both liked each other at first, had fun, and could have had a good time together. If they want to, they can see each other again another time.
- Going to see her and telling her that I'm worried about her going to her room with a boy she doesn't really know and that, on top of it all, she's had a lot to drink and can't consent.
- Finding an excuse to see my best friend and keep her from going to her room with this boy (e.g. "Your mom called," "I really need you," "If you go to your room, no one will be there to keep an eye on the party at your house.>").
- Etc.

### › If I do something, my best friend might...

- Not understand my reaction and tell me to mind my own business.
- Get angry (since she is under the influence of alcohol).
- Decide to go to the room with the boy anyway no matter what I say.

### › But she could also:

- Realize on her own that she shouldn't go to her room with the boy since she has had a lot to drink and that, indeed, she barely knows the boy. If they were already dating (boyfriend/girlfriend), the reasoning would be the same; she can't give real sexual consent in her current state.
- She might say that the party is at her place and that she has to keep an eye on things, so she has to be around (even if she isn't completely with it!).
- Be happy and reassured that I said something and even thank me for doing so (the next day!).
- Etc.

### › I would feel...

- Depending on my best friend's reaction to what I did, my feelings might vary:
  - For example, I may feel bad and get down on myself that I didn't mind my own business; tell myself that I shouldn't have gotten involved; or be worried. Or I could feel reassured or satisfied that I did something in time, etc.

› **I think the best thing in this situation is to...**

- **DO SOMETHING.** It's important not to stay passive in these situations.
- But there isn't just one way to act. Regardless of my friend's reaction to what I say, the fact that I did something shows that I care about her and that I don't want anything to happen to her that she might regret, even if what happens isn't her fault.
- It's important that she know that I have fears about the situation. And I can only hope that she'd do the same for me.
- It's important for the boy to know that this situation is unacceptable (because my friend cannot give informed consent) and that this can result in legal action (even if he did not initially have bad intentions).
- I can also go find help if my friend doesn't want to listen to me.



## SHEET

### 4.7

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answers: Connection to Private / Public Context

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › When you bring everyone back as a group, go back over the five situations and add to them if necessary with the suggested content.

<b>1.</b>	<b>You're taking a walk in a park and see an elderly couple sitting on a bench kissing on the mouth.</b>
<b>Location</b>	Public place with lots of foot traffic. On a bench where people may sit close together and show affection for each other.
<b>Type of intimacy</b>	Whatever their age, a couple kissing on the cheek is a sign of affection; kissing on the mouth is more intimate. Not very disturbing in public - depending on the intensity.
<b>Intensity</b>	Act of love and tenderness. If this is a simple kiss on the mouth, which is more intimate than a kiss on the cheek, it's not necessarily shocking.
<b>Family / personal values</b>	Generally speaking, people are not going to pay much attention to it, especially if they kiss quickly and discreetly. However, some people may get embarrassed at seeing older people kissing.
<b>Social values</b>	In Quebec society, it is generally quite acceptable and rather touching to see seniors give this sign of affection in public.



<b>2.</b>	<b>You're at the mall and two men in front of you are holding hands.</b>
<b>Location</b>	A busy public place where it's common to see couples holding hands.
<b>Type of intimacy</b>	This is a perfectly acceptable thing to do. Sign of affection. Usually, holding hands is not considered all that intimate. It is therefore not at all disturbing to see this done in public.
<b>Intensity</b>	Sign of affection. Not particularly intense in nature.
<b>Family / personal values</b>	Most people won't even notice. However, some people may be embarrassed at seeing two men holding hands, and people may stare at them. Some people, depending on how they were brought up and their culture and beliefs, may be shocked not by the act itself (holding hands) but rather by the fact that two men are doing so.
<b>Social values</b>	In Quebec society, it is generally very accepted to see homosexual couples display affection in public. The Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms prohibits anyone from harassing or discriminating against anyone because of their sexual orientation (CDPDJ, 2021).
<b>3.</b>	<b>During a performance by the school's dance troupe in the auditorium, a couple of Secondary 4 students sitting next to you are making out, and you notice the boy's hand is under his girlfriend's sweater.</b>
<b>Location</b>	Public place. A place where young people may strangely feel "alone in the world" and start being intimate with each other.
<b>Type of intimacy</b>	Very intimate gestures (making out and fondling under clothes). Can be disruptive in public.
<b>Intensity</b>	Young people may often engage in this type of behaviour in public places. However, the more "intimate" the touching, the more intense it will be considered in public. How appropriate this act is will be different depending on whether it is done in private or public. The goal is not to judge them for getting close or for touching each other or wanting to experience strong sensations or desire, etc. Instead, they should understand that people around them don't need to see them being intimate with each other like this, as they should be in private.
<b>Family / personal values</b>	How people feel about this type of situation can vary greatly. Some people will be embarrassed while others will be completely indifferent; few people would tell them to stop.
<b>Social values</b>	In Quebec society, in general, intimate touching should take place in private. However, some young people have a hard time finding a place to be intimate with each other. That's why it can sometimes be "tolerated" (e.g. in a movie theatre) but when it gets too intense, it can be offensive to others' sense of modesty.

<b>4.</b>	<b>Your best friend, who has a girlfriend for the first time, asks you to go with him to her place to watch a funny movie. He's too embarrassed to go by himself. You're therefore alone with both of them. Throughout the film, they sit close together and hold hands.</b>
<b>Location</b>	Private place.
<b>Type of intimacy</b>	Sign of affection. Act of love and tenderness.
<b>Intensity</b>	What they are doing is not really intense. The discomfort may be more associated with being the only person there and feeling like a third wheel.
<b>Family / personal values</b>	How people feel about this type of situation can vary greatly. Some people will be embarrassed while others will be completely indifferent, and few people would tell them to stop.
<b>Social values</b>	In Quebec society, being around a couple holding hands is considered entirely appropriate. Again, the fact of being a third wheel and feeling that you are “horning in” on their romance is what creates the discomfort.

<b>5.</b>	<b>You're at a party at a friend's house. A small group has formed around a boy who is showing porn on his cell phone. Just for fun, he turns up the sound: people all around hear the sex noises and moaning.</b>
<b>Location</b>	Private place. But the fact that a party is going on means that the place is more “public” in nature.
<b>Type of intimacy</b>	Very sexual acts. Pornographic images. Explicit sex sounds and moaning from the characters in the video that no one can ignore.
<b>Intensity</b>	Intense and sometimes violent sexual scenes where women and men are often presented as objects.  Cyberpornography is illegal for minors.
<b>Family / personal values</b>	How people feel about this type of situation can vary greatly. Some people will be embarrassed to watch these sexual scenes; others will be very shocked. Some may laugh to deal with their discomfort. It can be a turn-on to watch these images in a group, but they can also create worries (e.g. <i>Do we have to do it like that?</i> ), even if people were just curious at first and made jokes or enjoyed seeing the naked images.
<b>Social values</b>	In Quebec society, it is generally considered inappropriate to watch porn in public. It is also illegal to watch pornography before the age of 18 and to entice a minor to watch it. It may also be concerning that pornography is widely available to a young audience and that no adults appear to be around to intervene and simply talk to the young people about it.  Pornography is a good example of the “commodification” of sex, and pornographic scenes can be very “raw” and explicit. Seeing images and hearing (often intense) sounds can also offend people's sense of modesty.

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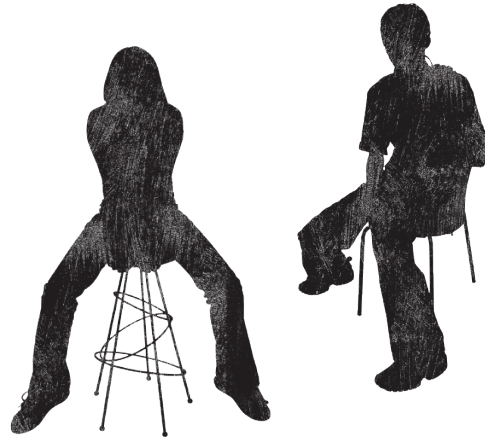
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## Secondary 3 - Session 5

### Sexual behaviour “Let’s Talk About It”



This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

#### Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)

##### Sexual behaviour

##### Reflect on the importance of desire and pleasure in sexual behaviour

- › Place of desire and romantic and sexual fantasies
- › Place of psychological and physical pleasure: positive feelings that go with sexual behaviours (feelings of closeness, intimacy, well-being), sexual response (desire, arousal, orgasm, relaxation)

##### Become aware of the factors that can influence sexual relations in adolescence

- › Internal motivations: to express your sexual desire, feel pleasure, release sexual tension, express love, explore, satisfy curiosity
- › External motivations: to keep up with your peers in terms of experimentation, to escape from your problems, to keep your partner, to please someone else, to impress others, to be popular, to reject parental norms, to acquire social status, to avoid conflict
- › Conditions for enjoyable sexual relations: to express your needs and limits (sense of self-efficacy), to respect them and respect those of the other person, to confront obstacles (perception of control: being able to stop sexual relations at any time if they are no longer desired), to be able to talk about it with someone you trust (people around you, school personnel, health professional), as needed

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good lifestyle habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</li> <li>› <b>Media:</b> Enable students to exercise critical, ethical and aesthetic judgment with respect to the media and produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights.</li> </ul>		
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>Intellectual competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>Personal and social competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <b>Communication-related competency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<b>Intellectual competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<b>Personal and social competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <b>Communication-related competency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
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<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Personal development subject area:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>		

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Culture and Symbolic Productions (Secondary 4)  
Relationships and Caring (Secondary 4)

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<b>Studies a cultural reality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<b>Reflects on an ethical question</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<b>Understand representations of sexuality in a variety of spaces (Secondary 4)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Positive and negative representations of sexuality in the public space and the influence of these representations</li> <li>› Norms, values and messages on sexuality from family, peers and the media</li> </ul> <b>Understand the importance of desire and pleasure with regard to sexual behaviour (Secondary 4)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Place of desire and romantic and sexual fantasies</li> <li>› Place of psychological and physical pleasure</li> <li>› Phases of sexual response</li> </ul> <b>Understand the factors that influence sexual relations in adolescence (Secondary 4)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Context (sexual relations with or without commitment, planned or spontaneous, protected or unprotected sexual relations)</li> <li>› Internal and external motivations</li> <li>› Differentiated norms related to sexual behaviour</li> </ul>	<b>Reflect on tensions between the norms and values promoted in the media and by family and peers, and between own values and representations of the self (Secondary 4)</b>  <b>Reflects on tensions and ambivalence surrounding desire and sexual pleasure (Secondary 4)</b>  <b>Reflect on the tensions between feelings, differentiated norms related to sexual behaviour and peer pressure related to sexual behaviour (Secondary 4)</b>



## Educational Goals



**Session length:**  
90 minutes

**Get young people to establish the essential criteria to make an informed decision whether or not to engage in sexual activity or have sex, given the possible contexts, influences and motivations.**

- 1. Explain** the meanings of the terms “sexual activity” and “having sex,” and how to distinguish between affectionate behaviours, sexual behaviours and genital sexual behaviours.
- 2. Name** the societal and environmental influences (positive and negative) that can have an effect on teens’ decision to engage in sexual activities or have sex.
- 3. Identify** the personal reasons and motivations (internal and external, good and not so good) that can lead to the decision to engage in sexual activities or have sex.
- 4. Discuss** the “ideal” or desirable situation in which to engage in sexual activities or have sex for the first time (e.g., age, length of time, relationship of trust, romantic relationship, no pressure).
- 5. Discuss** the importance of identifying the questions and fears young people might have when engaging in sexual activities or having sex.
- 6. Identify** the place that desire and pleasure can have in teenage sexual behaviour.
- 7. Discuss** the importance of thinking about what one hopes to experience in sex or sexual activities and of asserting one’s beliefs and values.



## Sequence



This **110-min.** session has **three activities.**

30 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Influences and motivations that can lead teens to decide to engage in sexual activity or have sex <i>Sheet 5.1: "Influences on sexuality!"</i> <i>Sheet 5.2: Answer Sheet: "Influences on sexuality!"</i></li> </ul>
45 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Survey:</b> Sex and sexual activity</li> <li>› <b>Diagrams and demonstrations:</b> Questions you might have... <i>Sheet 5.3: "Sex and sexual activity"</i> <i>Sheet 5.4: "Questions you might have..."</i></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> "Glitch"</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Desire and pleasure</li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and key messages</b> from the session <i>Sheet 5.5: "Personal reflection - Deciding to have sex: questions to ask yourself"</i></li> </ul>



It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

The main topic of this session, sex and sexual activities, can be a delicate subject, because it has to do with personal intimacy. The topic will be discussed in clear terms, but participants will not have to talk about the details of their private lives or be asked any personal questions.

You can also tell the students that they don't need to have had a “boyfriend” or a “girlfriend,” or even to have had any sexual experiences to be informed on and talk about this topic. Everyone has an opinion on it and gets bombarded with different messages about it. That's why it's important for them to be able to talk about this topic and know what other young people think about it.

Certain parts will not apply to their experiences. That's normal. Everyone goes at their own pace and has their own personal tastes. What's important is that people make choices that reflect who they are and what they're comfortable with.





## Activity 1



**SHEETS 5.1 AND 5.2**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**30 MINUTES**



**TEAM**  
**ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND**  
**PRESENTATION**

### Session Introduction

- › **Begin** by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › **Explain** to the group that today's session is about sex and sexual activities, and the importance of thinking about the motivations and pressures (influences) to engage in sexual activities or have sex.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › Then, **lead** a discussion about sexual activities and having sex, using the following questions:
  - **How do you feel about discussing this topic?**
  - **In your opinion, do “sexual activities” and “having sex” mean the same thing?**
  - **What is the difference between these two things?**

*Get their opinions.*

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

During this activity, the students may say some vulgar things or refer to more specific sex acts (e.g., “anal,” “threesomes”). If this is the case, it will be important to take the time to calmly redirect the discussion using the instructions to ensure that the session goes smoothly. Instructions are presented at the start of the companion slideshow (PPT). Get the students to think about the expressions they use to talk about sexual activities (e.g., “screwing,” “fucking,” “giving a blowjob”) and the meaning behind these expressions. Using vulgar language does not paint a welcoming, safe or enjoyable picture of sexuality.



- › **Add** to their answers with the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Emotions students might feel about discussing the topic of sexual activities and having sex

- › During this session on sexual activities and having sex, you may experience all kinds of emotions: enthusiasm, curiosity, comfort or discomfort, embarrassment, stress, anxiety, indifference, etc.
- › These feelings are all normal and valid. However, when we talk about these things with you, we're not trying to shock you. We hope to answer some of the questions people your age have about this topic and to talk about it simply and respectfully.

### Differences between “sexual activity” and “having sex”

- › It's important to remember that **BEFORE any intimate activities, there are steps to go through.** That's when things like sense of humour, charm and kindness come into play... dating, basically.
- › When two people are interested in each other and want to show it, they will very often start with demonstrations of affection like hugging, cuddling, kind words, etc.) (MEES, 2019).
- › According to Éducaloi (2023a), **“sexual activity”** includes kissing, touching and having sex.
- › Meanwhile, “having sex” is typically associated with vaginal penetration, when a penis enters the vagina. However, this view of sex implies that only heterosexual couples (a man and a woman) can have sex, which is not the case.
- › It can also give the false impression that other kinds of touching or sexual acts don't count, because the people didn't “go all the way,” as if that one sexual behaviour were the ONE AND ONLY end goal. It can also put pressure on some people to experiment right away, even if they don't feel ready yet.
- › There are many different sexual behaviours, but it's not a “sex act to-do list” that you need to complete in a certain order. Everyone, teens and adults, has preferences and gets to decide what they do OR don't want to do and what they like OR don't like. Everyone gets to decide what level of intimacy they want to share with someone else.

## Levels of intimacy

AFFECTIONATE behaviours	SEXUAL behaviours	GENITAL sexual behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kissing on the cheek</li> <li>• Holding hands or walking with your arms around each other</li> <li>• Putting your arm over their shoulder or around their waist</li> <li>• Cuddling</li> <li>• Kissing on the neck</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kissing on the mouth</li> <li>• Touching certain body parts (neck, back, buttocks, breasts, thighs) over or under the clothes</li> <li>• Cuddling naked</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fondling your own genitals (masturbation)</li> <li>• Touching your partner's genitals</li> <li>• Giving or receiving oral sex (mouth/genital contact)</li> <li>• Vaginal penetration</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>

Lower level of intimacy
←————→
Higher level of intimacy

(MEES, 2019a)

- › The important thing is “essentially feeling comfortable with the person you’re having this experience with, and having fun. And above all, feeling respected.” [translation] (Daguzan Bernier, 2019).
- › In other words, engaging in sexual activity or having sex means first and foremost doing that activity with a person, their sensitivities, their personal history, their body, their desires and their boundaries.

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of three.
- › **Tell** them that the next activity is about the things that can lead teens to decide to engage in sexual activities or have sex. As a team, they will have to name the internal influences (from the self: values, religious principles, education, boundaries, etc.) and external influences (from outside pressures: friends, boyfriend or girlfriend, parents, media, online influencers, etc.), positive or negative, that can lead teens to decide to engage in sexual activity or have sex.
- › **Hand out** a copy of Sheet 5.1: “*Influences on sexuality!*” to each team. **Explain** that, for each category listed on Sheet 5.1, they are to write down the things that might influence them to choose to experiment with sexual activities as teens.
- › **Give** them approximately 10 minutes to complete this task.
- › **Review** the activity by naming each category given on Sheet 5.1 and asking the students to give their answers. **Correct** their answers as needed using Sheet 5.2: “*Answer Sheet: Influences on sexuality!*”.

## Discussion and Presentation

› After the brainstorming, **lead** a discussion using the following question:

- **In your opinion, why is it important to recognize the things that can influence us in our decision to engage in sexual activities or have sex?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Add** to their answers with the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Importance of recognizing the things that can influence the decision to engage in sexual activities or have sex

- Every day, we are exposed to images and messages about sexuality.
- In the **MEDIA**:
  - Body image: perfect bodies and retouched photos in ads, TV shows, video games, etc.
  - Dating and love stories: characters and celebrities on TV, in movies or on social media, etc.
  - Hypersexualization, access to images of nudity or sex: videos, pornography, etc.
  - Etc.
- Within our **FAMILIES**, we see how our parents and siblings react to certain topics related to sexuality, and these things might be discussed more or less explicitly.
  - You might have open, serious conversations related to specific events or simply hear comments or warnings about going out and dating.
  - Etc.
- With our **FRIENDS**, these conversations might be more intense and open, but they also might not, if we are afraid of being judged.
  - We comment on what our peers are doing (e.g., who's dating who?) and their how they look, and sometimes making sexual jokes. We might also share our feelings and emotions with true friends, but we also might just make jokes and crude comments about sexuality.
- All the messages we receive about sexuality combine to tell us:
  - What is desirable, what we should want...
  - What is attractive, what pleases people...
  - What is and isn't acceptable...
  - What we have to do...
  - Etc.
- We can see these messages as “expectations” from our peers, the people around us, our family and the media (MEES, 2019). These “expectations” (or external pressures) can influence our perceptions, attitudes and choices about sexual behaviour (MEES, 2019).
- External pressures have a big influence on the choices teens make, especially when it comes to engaging in sexual activities or having sex (MEES, 2020a).
- Knowing yourself is helpful for making informed choices about engaging in sexual activity or having sex, so that you can have the sexual experiences that feel right for you (MEES,

2019). Knowing your body and how it feels, what you want, what you like and what you prefer, as well as your worries and boundaries, will make it easier to experiment with sex or sexual activity in a self-respectful way. You'll feel ready, comfortable, trusting, heard and understood, etc.



# 2

## Activity 2



**SHEETS 5.3 AND 5.4**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**45 MINUTES**



**SURVEY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**



**DIAGRAM AND  
DEMONSTRATIONS**

## Survey and Presentation

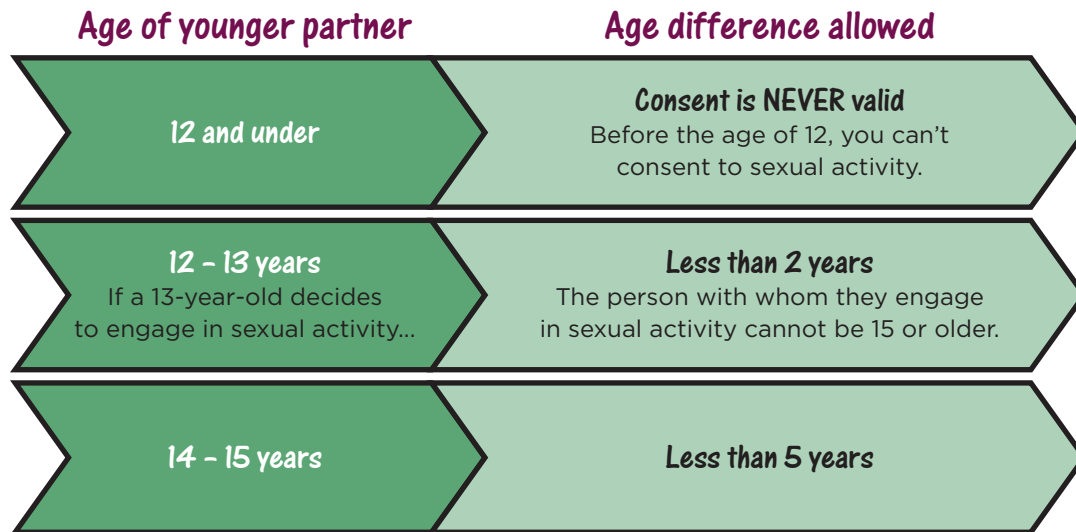
- › **Tell** the group that this activity will be about sexual activities and having sex.
- › **Specify** that the activity will be done individually and anonymously. The questions will include the topics of the “ideal” age to have sex for the first time, pressure that people their age may feel to engage in sexual activities, etc. They will not have to write their names on the sheet.
- › **Specify** that no one will be asked any questions about their private lives during the entire activity.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 5.3: *Sexual activities and having sex*.
- › **Give** the group about ten minutes to fill out the sheet.
- › As session leader, you **may** choose to collect the answer sheets after the survey to compile the results and generate statistics, OR you **may** choose not to collect them.
- › Once the 10 minutes are up, **share** the content overview below that match questions 1-4 from Sheet 5.3: *Sexual activities and having sex* (we’ll come back to questions 5 and 6 after the Diagram and Demonstrations activity).

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### The “ideal” age to engage in sexual activities or have sex for the first time

- › There isn’t really any “ideal age” to engage in sexual activities or have sex for the first time; it’s different for everybody.
- › However, we can say that there is an “ideal moment” with “someone kind and respectful.” For some people, that ideal moment will happen when they are 15, 16 or 17 years old, but for others, it will be when they are 18, 20, 25 or even older.
- › It’s important to know though that according to Canadian law, it is IMPOSSIBLE for any person under 12 years old to consent to sexual activity (Éducaloi, 2023b). It is only at age 16 that a person’s sexual consent becomes legally valid (Éducaloi, 2023b). That doesn’t mean that you can’t engage in sexual activity before age 16, but there are certain rules you must follow:

- **Rule number 1:** Under age 12, it's ILLEGAL. People under the age of 12 cannot legally consent to sexual activities (Éducaloi, 2023b).
- **Rule number 2:** There is a maximum age difference between partners. There must be a specific age difference between the two partners in order for the younger person's consent to be POSSIBLE and VALID (Éducaloi, 2023b):



- “The older partner could be charged with a crime if the age difference exceeds the above, even if the younger partner expressed his or her agreement to the relationship and the parents agree as well.” (Éducaloi, 2023b).

### The “ideal” amount of time between when two young people meet each other, when they start dating AND when they decide to have sex

- › It's hard to pinpoint an IDEAL amount of time between these two moments. Technically, engaging in a sexual activity or having sex is pretty simple. But feeling comfortable around the other person and trusting them is a little more complicated. It takes time. So there's no point in trying to race through all the steps.
- › How do you know for sure if you're ready to have your first sexual experience?
- › Two factors can help us make the decision:
  - 1. LENGTH OF THE RELATIONSHIP:** You've known each other for a while (Higgins & al., 2010; Smiler & al., 2005) (for example, you didn't just meet at a party), etc.
  - 2. RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST:** You feel that this person is safe, trustworthy, discreet and a good listener. You've built up this trust over time. Both of you want to be more intimate with each other.
  - **And don't forget to use some form of protection (like a condom) and/or a contraceptive (like the pill).**
  - These are important factors to consider to avoid feelings of regret or remorse later on about your first sexual experience.



### Is it different to engage in sexual activities or have sex for the first time with someone you love and who loves you, versus someone who doesn't love you the same way you love them?

- › Yes, it's different! When you engage in sexual activities or have sex for the first time with someone you love and who loves you, you can create a space where you feel safe, heard and not judged, and that makes it easier to talk about your wants, preferences and worries.
- › It's true that you can still have fun or or like/have a crush on/be interested in someone who doesn't necessarily feel the same way about you (Harden, 2014), but sometimes it means that the trust bond and attachment isn't there, and that can make communication a bit harder (Widman & al., 2006).
- › In either one of these situations, it's important to make sure that the person you're sharing this experience with has agreed and wants to do it.

### Pressure to engage in sexual activities or have sex at your age

- › Not all people your age will experience pressure to engage in sexual activities or have sex, but some of you will.
- › Whether it comes from your environment or the media (e.g., advertisements, social media, pornography), this real or perceived pressure can lead some young people to have their first sexual experiences when they don't really want to, for example, to do what their friends are doing, to be popular or "cool," to avoid losing their partner, etc.
- › You can say **NO** to sex or a sexual activity if you're not ready or if you feel embarrassed, uncomfortable or worried.
  - No one EVER has to agree to sex or sexual activity, no matter what (e.g., kissing, being naked in front of someone). You also never have to "go all the way" if you don't want to.
- › You can say **YES** to sex or a sexual activity if you feel that you can TRUST the other person. Saying YES to sex or a sexual activity should mean that you feel responsible and mature enough to use a contraceptive AND a means of STI protection.
- › **You have to know how to truly say NO to be able to truly say YES.** Truly saying YES means that you don't feel pressured by your partner or by others.

## Diagram and Demonstrations

- › **Tell** the group that the pressure to engage in sexual activities or have sex—real or perceived, from the environment or media—can leave teens with a lot of questions.
- › **Tell** them that the next activity will be about the questions they might have at each stage that can lead to sexual experiences (attraction, expressing interest and making a first connection).
- › For this activity, **refer to** the information on Sheet 5.4 ("*Questions you might have...*").

## Survey and Discussion

- › Then, **complete** the “Survey” activity (Questions 5 and 6 on Sheet 5.3 about the fears) by sharing the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Fears about the idea of having sex

- › There are different fears people can have about the idea of engaging in sexual activity or having sex. They can be related to things such as:
  - **Appearance** (e.g., fear of not pleasing the other person, fear of not having a good-looking enough body [thighs, stomach, penis, breasts, hair, muscles, vulva, etc.]).
    - It's important not to be too hard on yourself about your appearance! Beauty is found in body diversity!
  - **Being inexperienced** (e.g., fear of not knowing what to do, fear of showing my lack of experience).
    - There's a first time for everything. Maybe your partner is inexperienced too. Why not talk about it together?
  - **Sexual health** (e.g., fear of getting a sexually transmitted and blood-borne infection (STBBI), fear of pregnancy).
    - It's important to protect yourself from STIs and unplanned pregnancies! It's one less thing to stress about.
  - **“Technical difficulties”** (e.g., fear of not having an erection or lubrication, fear of ejaculating too fast).
    - This kind of thing can happen to anyone. You can use humour to break the tension.
  - **Being intimate** (e.g., fear that it will be too intimate, fear of being naked in front of someone else).
    - It's normal to be shy about being intimate with someone. With time and good communication, you'll grow less embarrassed.
  - **Your own reaction** (e.g., fear of being disappointed, fear of regretting it, fear that it will hurt, fear of hurting the other person, fear of not liking it).
    - All of these worries are valid. It can be reassuring to talk about it with an adult you trust.
  - **The other person's reaction** (e.g., fear of getting let down after, fear that the other person will tell their friends everything, fear that the other person will make fun of me).
    - Trusting the other person will make it easier to talk openly about your fears before being intimate with them.
  - Etc.

### Importance of identifying the fears you might have BEFORE engaging in sexual activities or having sex

- › Taking the time to think about these fears can help you:
  - **Feel reassured.** It is completely normal and valid to have worries about having a new experience, and even more so when it involves being intimate with another person. Talking about your fears with someone you trust (e.g., a parent, sibling, friend, school staff member, sexologist, psychologist) can help you get more informed on the topic, which can mean that your fears don't take up so much mental space when it comes to engaging in a sexual activity or having sex.
  - **Trust yourself.** If some of these fears are taking up too much of your mental space, that means something (e.g., I'm not ready, I care about my sexual health, I don't feel comfortable with this person). In these moments, it's important not to ignore your inner voice, but to listen to it, whether that means waiting longer or talking about it with the other person.
  - **Think about how to talk to the other person about it.** Thinking about which fears you want to discuss with the other person and how you want to do it is an essential step. You don't want to list all your worries to them at once, as this can make you more vulnerable. But you do want to be true to yourself and be able to say what makes you uncomfortable BEFORE engaging in a sexual activity or having sex, so that you can enjoy it when you do. Taking the time to name your fears to the person you're engaging in sexual activity or having sex with has many benefits, such as creating a bond between you and fostering self-respect (respecting your own pace, boundaries, needs and wants, values, etc.).



# 3

## Activity 3



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MINUTES



PRESENTATION



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

### Video

- ▶ Before playing the video, **explain** that it's an animated short film about the pressure that can be put on us to match societal expectations and ideals about people's traits and characteristics (e.g., appearance, personality) in order to be attractive and desirable. Although the people in the video are adults, the fears shown are things that can be experienced at any age, including as a teen.
- ▶ **Play** the video. The language is French (minimal dialogue), but you are recommended to play it with English subtitles (see Note to the Session Leader below).

#### Glitch (Esma Movies, 2021)

**Length:** 6 min., 26 sec.

<https://youtu.be/ZwgWmmPpqjA>



Video



### NOTE À L'INTERVENANT ET L'INTERVENANTE

To play the video with English subtitles, you must play the video on YouTube using the browser Google Chrome. In the video settings, select "Subtitles," "Auto-translate" and "English."



## Discussion and Presentation

› **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.

- **What do you think about this video?**
- **In this video, the fears and questions we ask ourselves and the pressure we feel to fit fashion ideals and have “perfect bodies” are represented by little creatures. In your opinion, what are the main character’s fears leading up to his date?**

› **Show** the group the different image sequences from the video.

› For each sequence, **ask** the group to identify the different emotions the character is feeling.

### • Sequence 1

- Benji is getting ready calmly, listening to music that he likes.
- He seems happy about the outing he has planned.



### • Sequence 2

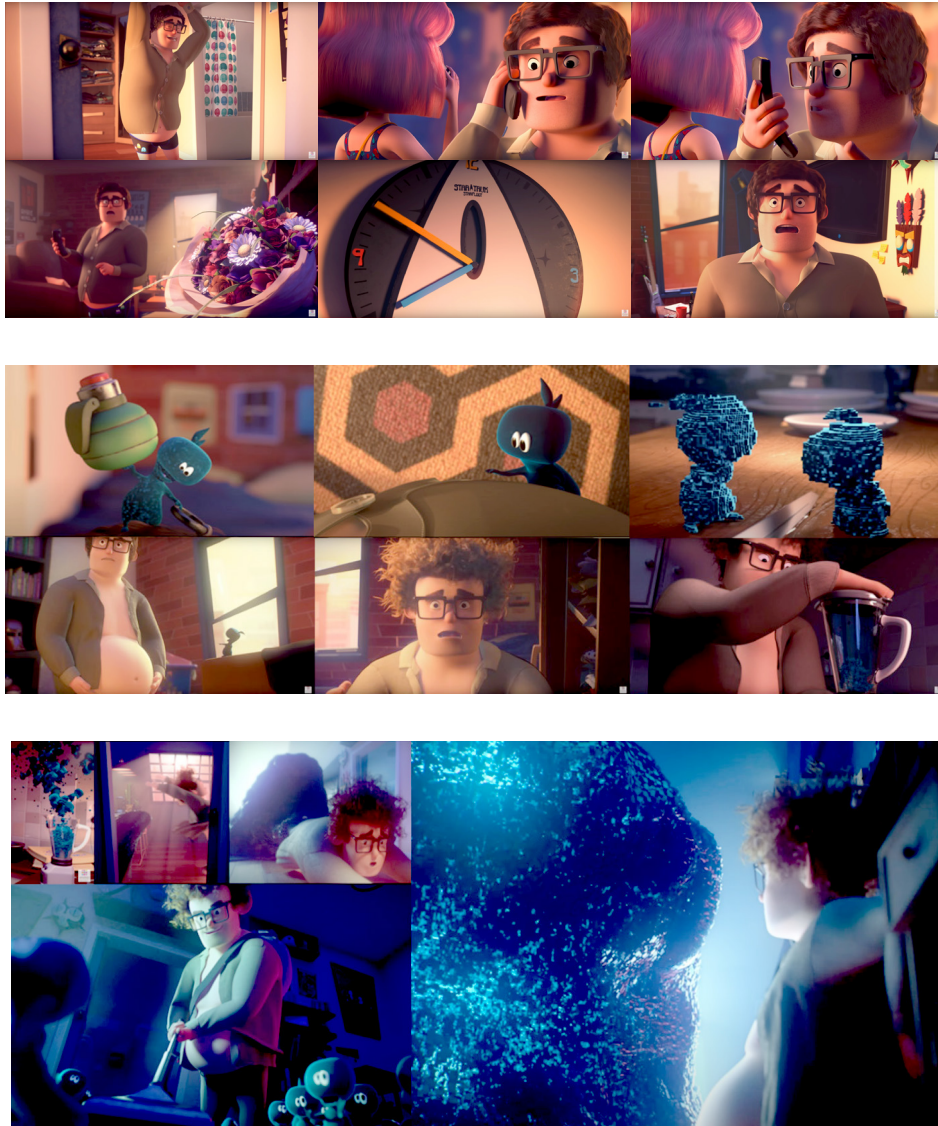
- He seems preoccupied about his appearance. He looks in the mirror and doesn't seem satisfied with what he sees.
- Benji then tries to change his appearance, imitating characters from movies, before finally deciding to wear a button-down shirt and gel down his naturally curly hair.





• **Sequence 3**

- Benji's plans for the night change suddenly, and he completely freaks out! Some of his fears start to materialize (appear physically) and he tries to shred them (suppress his fears).
- He can no longer contain his fears, and they keep multiplying, even as he tries to vacuum them up (push the thoughts from his mind).
- ...Eventually, he feels his fears will literally consume him.



• **Sequence 4**

- Then, Benji sees a photo of himself with his friends, a happy memory that reminds him of people who appreciate him the way he is.
- He decides to wear the same clothes he did on that fun day, which makes him feel comfortable and himself, rather than like a forced, edited version of him.
- He greets his date, who seems very comfortable in her own skin.
- At the end of the night, we see them get close. It looks like they had a good time and like each other.

- She motions for him to come into the bedroom, but he hesitates.
- We then hear the creatures buzzing again, implying that they might come back...



- › Then, **continue** the discussion using the following question:
  - **In your opinion, what are the possible outcomes of Benji's date?**
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › At the end of the video, it is implied that Benji's fears are starting to come back, which seems to make him hesitant to respond to the advances of the woman he likes.
- › Benji could...
  - Decide to tell his date that he's feeling embarrassed. Sometimes, starting a conversation about your fears can bring you even closer to the other person. He could also use humour to lessen his embarrassment.
  - Decide that he doesn't want to go any further right now—you can always change your mind. Benji could suggest that they do something else, like watch TV and make some popcorn.
  - Choose to approach her and have an intimate moment. But he might not be fully in the moment, and his fears could get the better of him.
- › No matter what Benji chooses, if he decides not to talk to the girl he likes about his fears, they will probably not go away on their own and instead come back stronger than ever.
- › Whether or not you decide to engage in sexual activity or have sex, the important thing is that you have a good, enjoyable time together and don't feel like you have to agree to anything.
- › Also keep in mind that sometimes, you can get over certain fears, and that intimate moments don't have to be PERFECT (e.g., the perfect place, the perfect line, the perfect body, the perfect moment).
- › These moments can also be simple, light and humorous. Being with someone you trust can help you get over some of your fears.
- › This can help you have a good time and enjoy being intimate!

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information and explain that you will be looking at the meanings of “desire” and “pleasure” in both a general context and a sexual context:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › As we have just seen, engaging in sexual activities or having sex involves your **BODY** (sensations), **HEART** (emotions and feelings) and **MIND** (thoughts and questions).
- › Your **BODY**, **HEART** and **MIND** all send you messages about **DESIRE** (“Do I want to...?”) and **PLEASURE** (“Do I like this?”) This happens before, during and after engaging in sexual activities or having sex.
- › Before making the choice to engage in a sexual activity or have sex, you have to really want it (desire) for it to be enjoyable in the moment (pleasure).
- › But what are desire and pleasure in a **GENERAL** context? And what are desire and pleasure in a **SEXUAL** context?
  - **Desire in a general context**
    - A desire is a feeling that you want something or want to do something (Desire, 2022).
  - **Desire in a sexual context**
    - Sexual desire can start with attraction to a particular person. It can develop through actions, words, images, looks and attention and can look like wanting to be close to another person, to kiss or touch them, to engage in sexual activity or have sex with them, etc. (Télé-Québec, 2018). Feeling desire can mean wanting to be close to another person, wanting to date them and/or feeling sexually excited by them.
    - Signs of sexual excitement include erection of the penis or enlargement of the clitoris and lubrication of the vagina.
  - **Pleasure in a general context**
    - In general, pleasure is a feeling of happiness, satisfaction or enjoyment (Pleasure, 2022).
  - **Pleasure in a sexual context**
    - Experiencing sexual pleasure is related to discovering different sensations, particularly in sensitive body parts that react to touches that you find enjoyable (e.g., ear lobes, lips, breasts, lower back, back of the neck, head, scalp, inner thighs, lower stomach, feet, penis, vulva, buttocks, clitoris).
    - During sex or sexual activities, you may feel psychological pleasure (i.e., well-being) in the form of genuine positive feelings due to being very intimate with someone. You may also feel physical sexual pleasure from kissing and touching that you enjoy.





## Session Conclusion



SHEET 5.5



15 MINUTES



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › Then, **ask** the following questions:
  - **How do you feel about having discussed this topic?**
  - **Why is it important to talk about sex and sexual activities with people your age?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › Then, **add** to what they say with the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Importance of talking to people your age about engaging in sexual activities and having sex

- › You should know that the majority of people your age have not had sex or engaged in sexual activity. According to a study conducted in Quebec secondary schools, 24% of students in Secondary III had had consensual sex at least once (Street, 2018, in MEES, 2020a).
- › No matter your age and whether or not you've had a sexual experience or a boyfriend or girlfriend, it's normal to have questions about sex and sexual activity.
- › Talking and learning about this topic lets you not only identify your fears and take the time to address them but also find out what you like and find reassuring. That way, you can imagine how good the experience can be, as long as you feel confident in your ability to assert yourself.
- › When the time comes to engage in sexual activity or have sex with a partner you like and care about, it will be easier to stay true to yourself by confidently addressing your questions, boundaries and preferences.

- › **Add** to what they say with these **KEY MESSAGES**:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › It can be hard to make the decision. It often comes with a fear of disappointing the other person or being judged. Talking about your worries with friends and trusted adults is important and can yield very helpful answers.
- › Whether it's "sexual activity" or "having sex," what matters most is everything to do with the relationship with the other person—and that's much more than just "sex."
- › It's also knowing yourself and each other (e.g., bodies, preferences), being intimate and sharing affection, having a sense of trust and non-judgement, respecting yourself and each other (e.g., sexuality-related values and beliefs, going at your own pace), asserting yourself and communicating, caring and making sure that both people really want to do it, are enthusiastic (sexual consent) and are enjoying it, etc. (Bérard, 2008).
- › No one EVER has to agree to sex or sexual activity, no matter what. You never have to "go all the way" if you don't want to. Saying NO to sex has benefits: it prevents unplanned pregnancy, reduces the risk of getting an STI and gives you time to think. Saying NO is always an option, even if you said YES before (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, n.d.). You have to know how to truly say **NO** to be able to truly say **YES**.

- › **Conclude** the session by **giving** the group questions to answer individually (Sheet 5.5: *Personal reflection - Deciding to have sex: questions to ask yourself*), also available at this link: [https://www.canva.com/design/DAFGIdXtnMI/i0nqrO\\_a\\_qBrzWLW7wkHtg/edit?utm\\_content=DAFGIdXtnMI&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFGIdXtnMI/i0nqrO_a_qBrzWLW7wkHtg/edit?utm_content=DAFGIdXtnMI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)
- › **Give** the group the following instructions:
  - Here are a few questions to get you started with thinking about the topic. You do not have to share your answers with anyone. All you have to do is think about them.
  - **If I'm going out with someone right now, do I feel pressured to engage in sexual activity or have sex?**
  - **What would be THE IDEAL AGE FOR ME to engage in sexual activity or have sex?**
  - **What would make me decide to have sex for the first time or with a new person?**
  - **What am I hoping for in the other person? What qualities would that person have to possess (e.g., good listening, respect, humour, gentleness, comfort, patience) for me to decide to be intimate with them (e.g., touching, nudity, sexual contact)?**
  - **What am I hoping for in that experience? What do I want to remember about it?**
  - **What do I definitely not want out of sex? What will I not agree to? Why?**



# SHEET

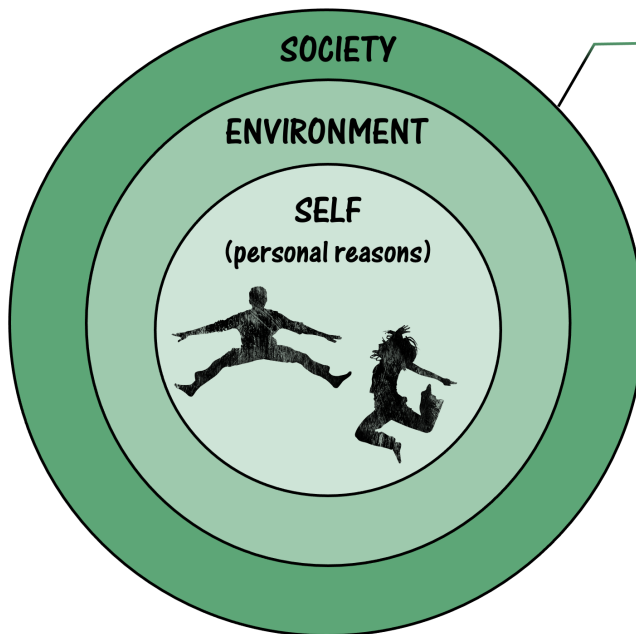
## 5.1

### FOR THE GROUP

## Influences on sexuality!

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Name four different kinds of influences (at least one in each category in the diagram below) that can lead teens to decide to engage in sexual activities or have sex. Refer to the questions below for ideas.
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.



How does **SOCIETY** (advertisements, influencers, video games, movies, etc.) influence people your age in choosing to engage in a sexual activity or have sex?

Examples : \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

How does **ENVIRONMENT** (family, friends, school, etc.) influence people your age in choosing to engage in a sexual activity or have sex?

Examples : \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

In your opinion, what are the **SELF-motivated** (personal) **REASONS** that people your age decide to engage in a sexual activity or have sex?

Examples : \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from: Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory (1979)

- › In your opinion, are there **GOOD** and **NOT SO GOOD** reasons?

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## SHEET

### 5.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Influences on sexuality!

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Review the activity by naming each category given on Sheet 5.1 and asking the students to give their answers. Correct their answers as needed using the information below.
  
- › **SOCIETAL influences (advertisements, influencers, video games, movies, etc.) on teen's choice to engage in sexual activities or have sex**
  - We sometimes look to the media for examples of fashion, beauty, how to treat someone that you like, desire and pleasure, sex and sexual activity, etc. But the purpose of some media isn't to help you understand things, but to make money by selling products or entertainment.
  - Certain types of media (e.g., advertisements, videos, reality TV, social media, video games, pornography) often present exaggerated models of what men and women should be, whether in terms of: (1) Body image (e.g., perfect bodies), (2) Dating (e.g., being hot or sexy), (3) Romantic relationships (e.g., millionaires and top models) and (4) Sex and sexual activity (e.g., performance).
  - That's why it's important to be critical of what's presented to us in the media, and even be able to laugh at it. Otherwise, the build-up of messages can have an effect on how we view **(1) our bodies** e.g., undervaluing yourself or believing in the impossible); **(2) dating** (e.g., thinking that you always have to be hot and sexy); **(3) sexual activities and having sex** (e.g., thinking you have to do anything or want to do anything to please and be wanted).
  
- › **ENVIRONMENTAL influences (e.g., family, friends, school) on teen's choice to engage in sexual activities or have sex**
  - Although it may seem less obvious, it's important to know that your environment can also have an impact on whether or not you engage in sexual activity. Friends, family and school also send you different messages, whether implicit ("unspoken" rules, implications, things that aren't clearly explained) or explicit (things that are clearly explained, meaning that there are no grey areas), about the kinds of behaviour, attitudes and values you should adopt regarding sexuality (MEES, 2020b).
  - Everyone is affected by the messages that the media sends about sexuality.
  - In order to be accepted or please their friends or family, some people choose to act according to other people's ideas or imitate others, even if it goes against or beyond their own values (MEES, 2020b).

› **Self-motivated (personal) REASONS to decide to engage in sexual activities or have sex**

- Teenagers have many reasons for wanting to have their first sexual experiences. Some of these reasons come from the self (internal motivations), while others come from outside influences and pressures (external motivations) (MEES, 2020a). Here are a few examples:

- **INTERNAL motivations**

- Because I want to
- Because it's a good way to be close with my partner and express my love for them
- To try new things
- To have fun, to have a good time
- For the “thrill” of having done it
- To get attention
- To give or get affection
- To express my sexual desire (MEES, 2020a)
- To release tension, to relax (MEES, 2020a)
- To satisfy my curiosity (MEES, 2020a)
- Etc.

- **EXTERNAL motivations**

- To do what others are doing
- To prove that I can attract someone
- Because I don't know how to say no
- Not to disappoint my boyfriend or girlfriend, or lose them
- Not to look silly
- To be popular in the eyes of others
- To keep up with my peers in terms of experimentation (MEES, 2020a)
- To avoid conflict (MEES, 2020a)
- Etc.

› **GOOD and NOT SO GOOD reasons**

- How do you know if your reasons for engaging in sexual activity or having sex are GOOD or NOT SO GOOD? Sometimes, it can be different to tell the difference, but the IMPORTANT thing is to make choices “*that account for our needs, limits and values (personal motivations), in order to have enjoyable and positive sexual experiences.*” [translation] (MEES, 2020a).



## SHEET

### 5.3

FOR THE GROUP

## Sexual activities and having sex

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Individually answer the questions below. Don't write your name on the sheet.
- › You will not have to share your answers with others.

1. In your opinion, what would be the **IDEAL** age to engage in sexual activity or have sex for the first time?  
Check **ONE BOX** only.

- 13-14
- 15-16
- 17-18
- 19 or older
- I don't know

2. In your opinion, what would be the **IDEAL** amount of time between when two young people *meet each other*, when they start dating and when they *decide to engage in sexual activity or have sex*?  
Check **ONE BOX** only.

- A few hours
- Less than 2 weeks
- 2 weeks to a month
- 1-3 months
- 3-6 months
- 6 months to a year
- More than a year
- I don't know

**3. In your opinion, what would be the IDEAL amount of time between when two young people meet each other and when they decide to engage in sexual activity or have sex, without necessarily dating each other? Check ONE BOX only.**

- Less than 2 weeks
- 2 weeks to a month
- 1-3 months
- 3-6 months
- 6 months to a year
- More than a year
- I don't know

**4. In your opinion, do people your age experience PRESSURE to engage in sexual activities or have sex? Check ANY or ALL boxes that BEST represent what you think.**

- Yes, a lot. At our age, we're heavily influenced by what we see in the media, on social media, on the internet, etc.
- Yes, especially from friends.
- Yes, especially from our boyfriend or girlfriend.
- No, we don't experience too much pressure. Most people our age decide on their own to engage or not in sexual activities or have sex.
- No, not at all.
- No, we're too young to have a sex life.
- We mostly experience pressure from our parents, NOT to have sex at our age.
- I don't know

**5. In your opinion, what FEARS might young people have about engaging in sexual activities or having sex?**

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**6. In your opinion, why is it IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY our fears BEFORE engaging in sexual activities or having sex?**

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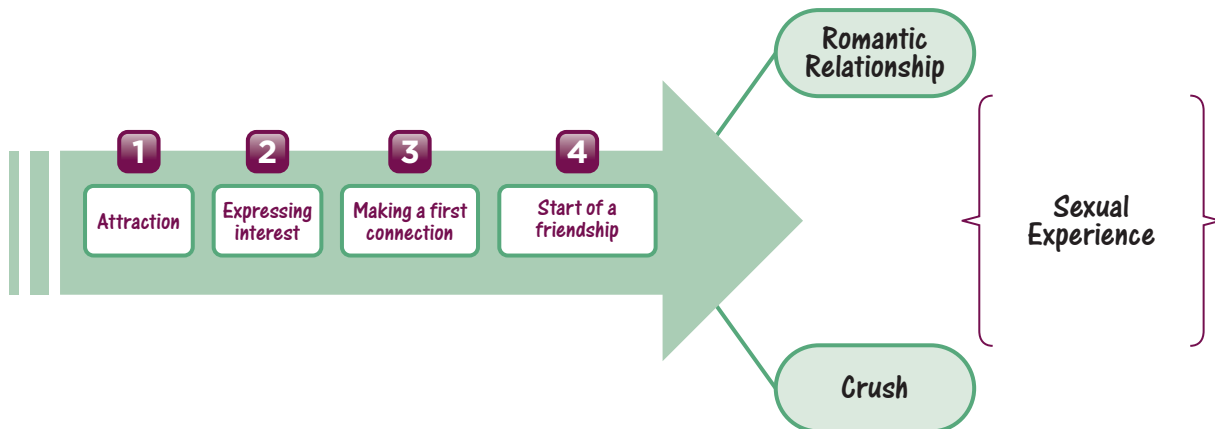


### Questions you might have...

#### INSTRUCTION

- › Show the diagram of stages that can lead to sexual experiences and briefly explain each stage.

1



1. **Attraction:** “Wow, that person is so good-looking!” 😍
2. **Expressing interest:** “I hope they notice me. How can I get them to notice me?” 😬
3. **Making a first connection:** “I want to get to know them better.” 😊

- › Then, **using** the slideshow and the information below, **show** the questions that people might have at each of the aforementioned stages, and **ask** the group:
  - **What are some questions you might have BEFORE making the choice to engage in a sexual activity or have sex?**  
*Get their answers.*
- › **Explain** to the group that these stages can lead to sexual experiences, but that they don't strictly have to follow this sequence.



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Sexual behaviour can be a delicate subject, because young people may have had many different experiences that they will not necessarily share in class or outside of it. Some young people may experience pressure to experiment sexually from their peers, the people around them or the media. But every young person is different, and some of them will not be interested in sexual behaviour or will not be at that stage yet. That's perfectly normal. It's also possible that some of them will have already had consensual sexual experiences. In your presentation, it's important not to be judgemental of any experience. The goal is to reinforce young people's ability to assert themselves in their choices, no matter what they have experienced previously.

In addition, some young people in your class may have suffered sexual assault in childhood or adolescence. So, be sure to talk about resources for victims of sexual violence and to remind the group that victims are not responsible for what was done to them and should not hesitate to seek the help they need (resources are provided on one of the last slides in the slideshow). There may also be people who have had difficulty with the idea of consent and have already pressured or sexually assaulted another person (child or teen), and they need help, too. This is a criminal act, and support can also be offered to people in this situation.

## 2

### › **QUESTIONS you might have BEFORE making the choice to engage in sexual activities or have sex with someone you like**

- Each of these stages comes with its share of questions and worries.

#### **1. Attraction**

- Do they like me back?
- Did they notice me?
- Am I their type?

#### **2. Expressing interest**

- How do I approach them?
- What should I say?
- Why do I feel this way when this person is around me? Is it love, or do I just like feeling like this?
- How will they react if I talk to them?
- What if I blush?
- Am I going to stammer?
- And if they're not interested in me, what am I going to do?

### 3. Making a first connection

- Are they going to contact me (phone call, social media, text, email, etc.)?
- Do they think I'm funny? Interesting?
- Do they like spending time with me?
- What are their interests? What do they like?
- Do they want things to be more serious between us?
- Do they want to be my boyfriend or girlfriend? How do I ask them?
- Am I in love?
- Why do I want to be around them all the time?
- Do they feel the same way about me?
- Do they think about me when I'm not around?
- Can I trust them?
- Are they interested in other boys or girls?
- Are we going to kiss?
- Have they ever had a partner before? Have they had a lot of them?
- Are they only interested in having sex with me?

### 4. Sexual experiences

- Can people our age have a boyfriend or girlfriend without feeling pressured to engage in sexual activities or anything needing to happen?
- How can I tell them I don't want to engage in sexual activities at my age?
- Can we go out together without feeling like we have to touch too intimately?
- Does my boyfriend or girlfriend want to have sex with me?
- How will I be able to tell if they consent?
- Should I tell them I've never had sex before?
- Will my boyfriend or girlfriend think I don't love them if we don't have sex?
- Am I embarrassed to be naked in front of them?
- Do they (or will they) like my body?
- Will my boyfriend or girlfriend make fun of part of my body?
- Will I seem inexperienced?
- Do I have to do everything?
- Do I feel comfortable using or talking to them about using a condom? What about contraceptives?
- Does having sex hurt?
- Will I like the experience? Will they like it?
- How can I make sure that they don't tell all their friends?
- Etc.

---

› Then, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and **get** their answers:

- **Do you think that it's difficult for someone your age to have the answers to all these questions and worries? Why?**
- **How can we find the answers to these questions?**

- › **Add to** what they say by sharing the following information:

3

- › **Do you think that it's difficult for someone your age to have the answers to all these questions and worries? Why or why not?**

- When you go through these stages one at a time and at your own pace, you start to notice the questions and worries that come with having this experience with someone you like.
- But, if you skip one of these stages or try to move past it too quickly, those questions and worries will start to pile up, and it becomes harder and harder to answer or even keep up with them all. This can make you feel overwhelmed, trapped, uncomfortable, alone, like you don't know what to do, etc.

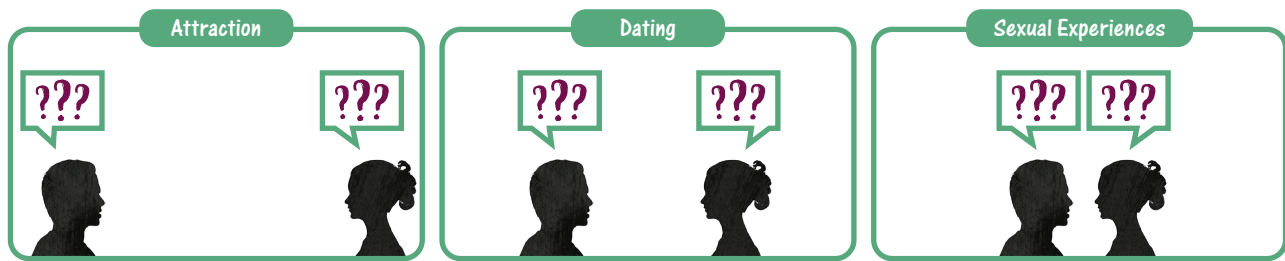
- › **How can we find the answers to these questions?**

- Take your relationship one step at a time, get to know each other and yourselves, tell each other what you're feeling and if there's anything you're concerned or worried about, etc.
- This can help you answer questions as they come up and prevent them from piling up and going unanswered, which can make you stressed, afraid doubtful, jealous, etc.
- You can also talk about it with close friends or an adult you trust, and ask them your questions. Unlike you, these people aren't personally affected by the situation and can help you take a step back, better understand what's happening and, hopefully, make better decisions.

- 
- › Using the slideshow, **show** each of the demonstrations about the questions that can come up at each stage that can lead to sexual experiences.
  - › For each demonstration, **ask** the group the following question and **add** to their answers with the information below.

- **What did you notice?**

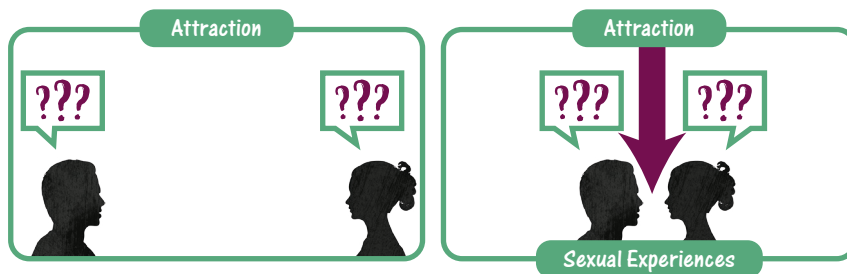
*Get their answers.*



› **Demonstration shown in the slideshow.**

› **What did you notice?**

- Once you've been going out together for a while, it's easier to talk about your questions and worries together, because you've already established a relationship of trust. That doesn't mean that you won't have any questions or worries at all, but you will feel more comfortable sharing them with each other.



› **What did you notice?**

- When we move quickly from the attraction stage (I've got a "crush" on them, I'm "crazy" about them) to the sexual experiences stage, we notice that the questions pile up and take up more and more mental space... sometimes ALL of it!

› To end this activity, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and **get** their answers:

- **Is it possible to go directly from the attraction stage to the sexual experiences stage? Is it a good thing?**
- **What are some questions to ASK YOURSELF BEFORE deciding to engage in sexual activities or have sex?**

- Yes, it's definitely possible! But, it's not necessarily a good thing.
- Some young people believe that, if they get to the sexual experiences stage quickly, the other person will fall in love with them. Which isn't necessarily true.
- Not to mention, in such a short time you can't get to know each other well enough. This can lead to disappointments, unrealistic expectations, performance anxiety, etc.
- That's why parents and other adults sometimes worry when people your age move quickly into engaging in sexual activity or having sex. They are afraid that teens feel like they have to and aren't able to assert themselves.
- Engaging in sexual activity or having sex can be fun, enjoyable, gentle and exciting. It can bring two people closer together. But, if you move too fast without getting to know each other well and trusting each other enough, it can lead to regrets.

› **Important things to keep in mind!**

- Not wanting or not bothering to answer the questions that you have can put you in a situation where things are left unsaid, which can lead to stress and negative thoughts.
- However, it's important to keep in mind that it can be hard for people your age to find the answers to all these questions. The reason is simple: as teenagers, you're experiencing and dealing with feelings of love and attraction for the very first time. So, you can't rely on past experiences to tell you whether you're in love or just attracted to someone.
- To figure it out, it's best to go through the stages that can lead to sexual experiences gradually, at your own pace, so that you can get to know yourself and the other person.

› **Questions to ASK YOURSELF BEFORE deciding to engage in sexual activities or have sex**

- With that said, BEFORE you decide to engage in sexual activity or have sex, here are a few questions you can ask yourself to help you make the choice:
  - Am I ready?
  - Do I really want to? Am I doing it for me, or just to avoid displeasing the other person?
  - Do I want to have this experience with this person?
  - Do I feel comfortable being intimate (e.g., naked) with this person? Do I feel safe?
  - Are we going to use contraception to prevent an unplanned pregnancy?
  - Do I feel comfortable talking about using protection (e.g., a condom) to prevent sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBI)?
  - Do I feel that this person will be respectful and sensitive, no matter what happens (e.g., it doesn't work, we're too embarrassed, there are certain sexual acts I don't want to do)?
  - Do I have any fears?



## PERSONAL REFLECTION

### Deciding to have sex: questions to ask yourself

It's great to have sex that matches your ideal perfectly, but keep in mind that you can still enjoy it even if it's not exactly what you expected. Sex often doesn't go quite the way we imagined—there might be funny situations, pleasant surprises, disappointments or other unpredictable things that can make you feel differently than you did at the start. Good sexual experiences are ones where you feel good together and trust each other. Keeping a good sense of humour can also help take some of the pressure off if you're feeling stressed.

- 1 Here are a few questions to get you started with thinking about the topic of "having sex." You do not have to share your answers with anyone. All you have to do is think about them.
- 2 For help with this reflection, you can refer back to the **summary from today's session**, which you'll find on the **back** of this page.

**#1**  
**What would make me  
decide to have sex for  
the first time or with  
a new person?**

**#2**  
**What am I hoping for  
in that experience?**  
  
**What do I want to  
remember about it?**

**#3**  
**What am I hoping for in the  
other person?**  
**What qualities would that person  
have to possess for me to decide  
to be intimate with them  
(touching, nudity,  
sexual contact, etc.)**

**#4**  
**What do I definitely  
not want out of sex?**  
**What will I not agree to?**  
**Why?**

3

Here is a list of common fears about having sex.  
**Circles the ones that you relate to.**

- a) Fear of not pleasing the other person
- b) Fear of not having a good-looking enough body (thighs, stomach, penis, breasts, hair, muscles, etc.)
- c) Fear of being disappointed
- d) Fear of not knowing what to do
- e) Fear of being rejected
- f) Fear of showing my lack of experience
- g) Fear of disappointing the other person
- h) Fear of the other person thinking I'm easy
- i) Fear that it will be too intimate
- j) Fear of what other people will think
- k) Fear of the other person wanting nothing but sex
- l) Fear of regretting it
- m) Fear that it will hurt
- n) Fear of hurting the other person
- o) Fear of being naked in front of someone else
- p) Fear of getting a sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- q) Fear of getting pregnant (or getting my girlfriend pregnant)
- r) Fear of not having an erection or lubrication
- s) Fear of ejaculating too fast
- t) Fear of not liking it
- u) Fear of getting let down after
- v) Fear that the other person will tell their friends everything
- w) Fear that the other person will make fun of me

Adapted from: « Dans les coulisses de l'intimité sexuelle », BCJ, 1980)

**If you circled 10 or more fears, you're in the majority.**

Don't isolate yourself. Talking about your fears can make them smaller.

- ✳ No one EVER has to agree to sex or sexual activities, no matter what. You also never have to "go all the way" if you don't want to.

**You have to know how to truly say NO to be able to truly say YES.**

- ✳ You can say YES to a sexual activity if you feel that you can TRUST the other person. Saying YES to a sexual activity should mean that you feel responsible and mature enough to use a contraceptive AND a means of STI protection.

**Truly saying YES means that you don't feel PRESSURED by your partner or by others, and that you aren't putting expectations on yourself about your performance.**

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# SECONDARY 4

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## Secondary 4 - Session 1

### Intimacy and Values - “Putting Values Into Action”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual behaviour</b>	<p><b>Understand your position on different issues related to sexual relations in adolescence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› New socio-sexual realities: non-committed relationship and use of social media to express your sexuality.</li> <li>› Alcohol and drug consumption.</li> <li>› Slander of reputation and double standards in the perceptions of girls and boys who engage in sexual behaviour.</li> <li>› Consent.</li> <li>› Differences between the expectations and motivations of partners.</li> </ul>
Possible links to the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022)	
<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Citizenship and Community Life:</b> Enable students to take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity.</p>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Subject-specific competencies</b>	<p><b>Reflects on ethical questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Analyzes a situation from an ethical point of view</li> <li>› Examines a variety of cultural, moral, religious, scientific or social references</li> <li>› Evaluates options or possible actions</li> </ul> <p><b>Engages in dialogue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Organizes his/her thinking</li> <li>› Interacts with others</li> <li>› Develops a substantiated point of view</li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Relationships and Caring

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Studies a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Establishes the scope of the object of study</li> <li>› Evaluates elements of knowledge</li> <li>› Analyzes social relations</li> <li>› Demonstrates a more complete understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflects on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation</li> <li>› Examines a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develops a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand the factors that influence sexual relations in adolescence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Context (sexual relations with or without commitment, planned or spontaneous, protected or unprotected sexual relations)</li> <li>› Differentiated norms related to sexual behaviour</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the conditions conducive to positive emotional and sexual experiences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Emotional intimacy between partners</li> <li>› Capacity for sexual intimacy</li> <li>› Free and informed decision-making</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on the tensions between feelings, differentiated norms related to sexual behaviour and peer pressure related to sexual behaviour</b></p>



## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
75 minutes

**Help young people develop their ability to assert their values and convictions in situations involving intimacy and moral issues, while taking into account the importance of dignity, compassion and safety.**

1. Based on questions, **differentiate** between what constitutes a hobby or pastime and what informs us about someone's values.
2. **Define** a value.
3. **Rank** the acceptability of the behaviour of four characters experiencing situations involving shared intimacy and moral issues, then **repeat** the activity while reversing the characters' genders.
4. **Argue** their choice for each character to arrive at a team consensus for their ranking.
5. **Discuss** the values at stake in different situations and the questions that they raise.
6. **Define** compassion, dignity and safety and clarify questions that help elucidate these concepts.
7. **Identify** what they should do in the initial situations involving moral issues regarding shared intimacy and connect these actions to the concepts of compassion, dignity and safety.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **two activities**.

10 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Reflection activity:</b> Interests or values?</li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Definition of value <i>Sheet 4.0 Who Here ... ?</i></li> </ul>
60 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Individual activity:</b> Clarifying your values</li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Clarifying your values</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Desired attitudes and behaviours <i>Sheet 4.1 Clarifying Your Values</i> <i>Sheet 4.2 Team Consensus</i> <i>Sheet 4.3 Situational Attitudes and Behaviours: Connections to Compassion, Dignity, Safety</i></li> </ul>
5 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Key messages from the session</li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Mr. Indifferent”</li> </ul>



It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow (PPT)** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “Be True to You” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website **[www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca)** (Volet 3 : Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: Oser être soi-même). <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations or situations involving violence. It's important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the police or Youth Protection Directorate must be contacted.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



## Activity 1



SHEET 4.0 (OPTIONAL)  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



REFLECTION  
ACTIVITY



PRESENTATION

### Session Introduction

- › **Begin** by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Next, **tell** the students that the topic of the session will be behaviours and values involving shared intimacy.

### Reflection Activity

- › **Ask** the group to answer the questions below by raising their hands to indicate yes:
  - **Who here:**
    - Has a pet?
    - Didn't get a good night's sleep last night?
    - Plays video games more than three nights/week?
    - Plays a musical instrument?
    - Has a brother or sister OR more than one brother or sister?
    - Would like to get a motorcycle one day?
    - Would like to become a farmer?
    - Is passionate about fashion?
    - Is a fan of two or more YouTubers?
    - Can knit a scarf?

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Another more “kinesthetic” way of doing this exercise is suggested in Sheet 4.0: *Who Here ...?* in which the group walks around the room to find classmates who can answer yes to these same questions and who can sign their sheet. Each question must be signed, but the same person can't sign a sheet more than once.



- › This exercise has given us a bit more information about some of you (e.g. interests, hobbies, siblings). However, we still don't really know **WHO YOU ARE**, i.e. what you **BELIEVE IN**, your **VALUES**, or what you would be willing to defend publicly.
- › But it would be different if we have asked these following questions instead...
- › **Mention** that they do not have to share their answers with others. They just have to think about it on their own. Here are values that can be associated with these behaviours and which can be identified thereafter.

- **Who here:**

- **Regularly helps their grandparents and enjoys doing so?**  
Support
- **Lied in the past and then decided to tell the truth, despite the possible repercussions?**  
Honesty
- **Stood up to someone in their family or a friend to defend equal rights between girls and boys?**  
Equality
- **Regularly takes concrete action to protect the environment?**  
Respect
- **Protected a sibling or friend by standing up to teasing or insults or by physically protecting them from being pushed around or beat up?**  
Support, protection
- **Advocated for the rights of the LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, +) community or is an ally in your school?**  
Respect for human rights
- **Is someone who is discreet, listens to the problems of their friends or family members, and is always ready to help?**  
Support, empathy

The answers to these questions speak to each person's values. Now let's see what a value is.

## Presentation

- › **Define** what a value is.

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Values are "*guides to behaviour*" that are reflected in how we act (Laprée, 2000).
- › Values are "*what you feel is most important: they are what should guide your decisions and actions*" (Dupont, 2018).
- › "*Individuals and groups have different value 'hierarchies' or 'priorities'*" (Schwartz, 2006).

› **Ask the group** what they learned from this exercise.

- **What's your takeaways from this exercise?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Tell** the students that the next exercise will help the group clarify their values in situations related to intimacy, which may trigger different questions and reactions.
- › A situation that makes us feel uncomfortable and whose impact we struggle to fully understand or one that clearly goes against our values and forces you to weigh the possible consequences is more likely to upset us and therefore be something we find unacceptable.
- › On the other hand, some behaviours may seem more acceptable to us than others depending on the context, but also because they they align with your deepest beliefs.



# 2

## Activity 2



**SHEETS 4.1, 4.2 AND 4.3**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**60 MIN.**



**INDIVIDUAL  
ACTIVITY**



**TEAM  
ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

### Individual Activity

- › **Mention** to the group that they will have to:
  - As an individual activity, rank the social behaviour of four characters from most acceptable (1) to least acceptable (4).
  - State the reason(s) for giving the characters this rank given the context, the relationship between the characters, the consequences for the character and their peers, etc.
  - Re-rank these four characters while imagining that they are of the opposite gender; the group will also have to justify any changes from their first ranking.
- › **Say** that there are no right or wrong answers to these rankings, only situations that they find more acceptable than others.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Different moral systems generally try to develop black-and-white categories such as right or wrong, good or bad, yes or no. However, real life tends to work more in terms of degrees instead of all-or-nothing principles. In this exercise, the group will have to rank characters in terms of their acceptability. There are therefore no right or wrong answers, only behaviours that they find more acceptable than others (Dallaire, 1979).

For example, if all the characters behaved beyond reproach, the ranking would not be necessary and there would be no reason to examine the students' perceptions and values.



- › **Hand out** the Sheet 4.1: *Clarifying Your Values* to the group.  
**This exercise is inspired by the one created by Dallaire (1979). However, the character descriptions are original.**
- › **Give** the group about ten minutes to fill out the sheet.

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of four or five.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 4.2: *Team Consensus* to each team.
- › **Give** the following instructions:
  - You will have to share your rankings starting with number 1; you must then note down the differences and similarities between your rankings and those of your team members.
  - You will then have to **debate** to reach a consensus (or try to reach one) and assign a final ranking to each character. These discussions must be calm and courteous, and everyone must get a turn to speak.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › Afterwards, **lead** a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - **Did your team reach a consensus?**
    - **Was it easy or difficult to reach a consensus?**
    - **Why do you think everyone has a different ranking of acceptance for different situations?**
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Raking of character's behaviour.

- › Value systems vary from person to person and depend on our education, experiences and beliefs. This is why it isn't always easy to reach a consensus.
- › Each of these characters was in a situation that you may all respond to differently depending on:
  - The context (e.g. being at a party and drinking)
  - The values we prioritize (e.g. respect, honesty, loyalty, dignity)
  - Our analysis of the impact of the characters' behaviour on the people around them or on themselves. (e.g. loss of trust in the other person, losing a friend, break-up with a boyfriend or girlfriend, using someone else's feelings, rumours or false allegations, humiliation and damage to someone's reputation, accusations of sexual assault).

- › **Continue** the discussion using the questions below:
  - **Which character did your team rank as number 1? Why?** (Do the same with characters ranked 2, 3 and 4. Identify similarities and differences in points of view.)
  - **What values are involved in each situation?**
  - **What questions could we ask to better understand the behaviour of the main characters in each situation?**

*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Situations with different values at stake that raise different questions.

#### Simon's situation

- › The values at stake here could be loyalty, trust, respect, commitment, friendship, love, honesty, etc.

This situation could also raise specific questions:

- › *Why does Simon think that "making out" with another girl doesn't count as cheating on his girlfriend? Why did he agree to do it? What is his perception of "faithfulness"?*
- › *Why did Marianne's best friend make out with Marianne's boyfriend?*
- › *Do Simon and Marianne's best friend feel this was acceptable because they did it at a party and it involved different people?*
- › *If Marianne's best friend had consumed enough alcohol to the point of being drunk, would the situation have been more "acceptable"? Would the same be true for Simon?*
- › *What impacts could this behaviour have on the friendship and the romantic relationship?*
- › *Etc.*

#### Itala's situation

- › The values at stake could be self-respect, respect for others, honour, reputation, honesty, power, etc.

This situation could also raise some specific questions:

- › What is the goal of their actions? What would cause students to do this to their teacher?
- › What would Itala and her friends get out of it? Is it to impress others? Is it to test their ability to sexually excite another person and play around with this person's feelings?
- › Or is it to become popular by challenging the teacher, who represents "authority"?
- › What could be the consequences of their actions for Itala and her friends and for the teacher? Etc.

### Ayisha's situation

- › The values at stake could be respect, trust, honesty, power, etc.

This situation could also raise specific questions:

- › *Can you play with a friend's feelings to satisfy your own needs?*
- › *How would she like it if someone played with her feelings in the same way?*
- › *Is Devon okay with this situation with full knowledge of the facts? If so, why?*
- › *What could the possible consequences of this action be on Devon, on Ayisha and on their relationship? Etc.*
- › *Etc.*

### Ulrick's situation

- › The values at stake could be respect, trust, honesty, friendship, power, etc.

This situation could also raise some specific questions:

- › *Do you have the right to take advantage of a friend to satisfy your own needs?*
- › *How can you get consent from someone when they have been drinking?*
- › *Could the people at the party have done something?*
- › *What impacts could this behaviour have on him and on Valerie? Etc.*

- › **Lead** a discussion using the questions below:

- **Did changing the gender of the main character (e.g. Simone rather than Simon) influence your rankings? If yes, which ones and why? If not, why?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Yes, the character's gender may influence how you rank the character's behaviour in different situations. Our judgment can sometimes be unfairly harsher for one gender than for another. For example, boys who have serial conquests are "players," whereas girls are often perceived more negatively (e.g. "sluts").
- › Some situations may seem more or less acceptable to us depending on whether the perpetrator or victim of the behaviour is a girl or boy.
- › Do stereotypes, value judgments or prejudices affect how we perceive these situations?



- › When we look at the facts, does gender really change how acceptable a behaviour is in a given situation? If so, according to what criteria?
- › In reality, any behaviour that is considered “unacceptable” for a girl is also unacceptable for a boy. And behaviour that is considered “acceptable” for a boy is also acceptable for a girl.

- › **Lead** a discussion using the questions below:
  - **In your opinion, what attitudes or behaviours could these be expected from these characters in these situations?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › Before presenting possible endings, **provide** the definition and etymology and ask the questions related to the words “compassion,” “dignity” and “safety” so that the group can identify these concepts in the “new ending” of each situation.
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### COMPASSION:

- › **Definition:** “A feeling of sympathy for people who are suffering” (Compassion, 2022).
- › **Origin of the word:** Middle English, from Anglo-French or Late Latin; Anglo-French, from Late Latin compassion-, compassio, from compati to sympathize, from Latin com- + pati to bear, suffer (Compassion, n.d.).
- › **Question:** “Can we show compassion for what the people in these situations are or could be feeling?”

### DIGNITY:

- › Recognition that human beings possess a special value intrinsic to their humanity and as such are worthy of respect simply because they are human beings (CBHD, n.d.). “Treating other people with dignity means treating them the way we’d like to be treated ourselves (FamilyEducationStaff, 2022).
- › **Origin of the word:** Middle English dignete, from Anglo-French digneté, from Latin dignitat-, dignitas [meaning “merit or consideration”] (Dignity, n.d.).
- › **Question:** “How do the people in this situation treat each other?”

## SAFETY:

- › **Definition:** “The state of being safe from harm or danger” (Safety, 2022).
- › **Origin of the word:** Middle English saufte, from Anglo-French salveté, saufté, from salf safe (Safety, n.d.).
- › **Question:** “Is the (physical or mental) safety of the people in the situation compromised or potentially compromised?”

- › **Read** aloud the examples from Sheet 4.3: *Situational Attitudes and Behaviours: Connections to Compassion, Dignity, Safety* that describe how the characters adopt a respectful and caring attitude or behaviour when faced with the same situations.
- › After providing the “new endings” and giving the definitions above, **ask** the group whether the characters show compassion, dignity or safety (see Sheet 4.3).

- **In these “new endings,” what do we learn about:**

- **The characters’ compassion?**
- **Their respect for the dignity of others (not treating the other person as an object)?**
- **Their concern for everyone’s safety?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Continue** the discussion by asking the following questions:
  - **What did you learn from this exercise to clarify your values?**
  - **Why is it important to know the values that matter most to you?**
  - **How can you assert your beliefs and values in difficult situations?**
  - **Why is it important to adopt respectful and caring behaviours, even when the situation is emotionally charged?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Know the Values That are Important to You

- › Being aware of your own values and identifying the values that are the most important to you makes it easier to act according to them and adopt behaviours that truly reflect who you are.

### Asserting Your Values and Beliefs

- › You can learn to assert your values and beliefs out of respect for yourself and for others.
- › Initially, you can think about how you would like to be treated in similar situations.
  - *Would you like it if someone cheated on you?*
  - *Would you like someone to make you feel uncomfortable in front of others?*
  - *Would you like it if someone weren't honest with you and lied to you about their intentions in a relationship?*
  - If the answer is no, then it is important to act according to your beliefs.
- › **You can...**
  - Share the questions you have about the situation.
  - State what you really think.
  - Make sure the other person feels comfortable and respected.
  - Make sure the other person is safe.
  - Etc.

### Adopt Respectful Behaviours

- › The positive endings that we saw in the situational exercises show the importance of adopting respectful and caring attitudes and behaviours even in an emotionally charged situation.
- › Paying attention to how our words and actions make another person feel lets us adjust, reduce and even avoid negative consequences (e.g. hurting someone else, not respecting consent) or make up for our mistakes if we have to.



## Session Conclusion



5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION



VIDEO

### Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the group about their takeaways from the session.

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**

*Get their opinions.*

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

As a society, we can congratulate ourselves for our openness to diversity and respect for differences. However, it does seem that boundaries have become more blurred when it comes to consent, the trivialization of some sexual activities, and the notion of public versus private, etc.

We are often confronted with sexually charged events and phenomena that may surprise and even confuse us. This raises moral questions that are central to our perception of intimate and romantic relationships. It is important to reflect on your values and assert your beliefs, because living according to your principles gives you a solid footing that is neither moral rigidity nor narrow-mindedness. This is what this session is meant to help the group develop.

Sexuality is a sensitive subject that calls upon our personal values. When we face a dilemma related to sexuality, we need to remember that how we PERCEIVE a situation is unique to each of us and that our values will affect how we REACT to that situation. Consequently, people can PERCEIVE and REACT in different ways to the same situation.

However, even if we perceive a situation differently, it is important to be compassionate, to respect the dignity of the people involved, and to be mindful of their safety (and ours) in the way we react and say what we think.

No matter how old we are, we need to think about what is important to us and assert our beliefs and values. In a situation, we can assert our values by:



- › Identifying which of our values are involved in the situation at hand
- › Asking ourselves which values are involved for the other person
- › Thinking about how we explain what we dislike without offending the other person's values
- › Saying what we actually think and naming the values being undermined in this situation
- › Ensuring that the other person feels comfortable and respected in the way we explain what we dislike

## Video

- › **Present** the following video:

### **Mr. Indifferent (CGI ANIMATION, 2019)**

**Length:** 2 min., 45 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGdfRYf67aw>**



Video



- › **Ask** two or three people to share a comment or a reaction to the video after the group has watched it to conclude on a light note that gets everyone involved.
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**

- › **End** the session with the following key elements.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Sexual behaviour often connects with our values.
- › The character in this animated film realizes the importance of not being “indifferent” to others.
- › Respect, integrity, honesty are not abstract concepts. We experience them daily in our behaviours, and especially in situations that are emotionally charged or force us to confront our values.
- › Sexuality also has to do with values, particularly when it comes to respecting our intimate lives and those of others.
- › Being compassionate, respecting other people’s dignity, and ensuring their safety (and our own) will give you sense of personal pride, and helps fight indifference, ABOVE ALL...IT WILL HELP TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE AND EVEN MOTIVATE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME.



# SHEET

# 4.0

FOR THE GROUP

## Who Here ... ?

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Try to get as many different signatures as possible (one signature per box)!
- › Go around the group to find someone who has done the action in the statement. Once you find someone, ask them to sign the box next to the statement.
- › The same person can't sign your sheet more than once (i.e. you need to find someone who plays a musical instrument. Adam signs this statement since he plays the guitar; however, even though Adam is a fan of two or more YouTubers, he can't sign the sheet for this statement since he already signed once.)

### Who here ... ?

Plays a musical instrument?	Signature	Would like to get a motorcycle one day?	Signature
Didn't get a good night's sleep last night?	Signature	Would like to become a farmer?	Signature
Plays video games more than three nights/week?	Signature	Is a fan of two or more YouTubers?	Signature
Can knit a scarf?	Signature	Has a pet?	Signature
Has a brother or sister OR more than one brother or sister?	Signature	Is passionate about fashion?	Signature



## SHEET

### 4.1

FOR THE GROUP

## Clarifying Your Values

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the four situations below.
- › On your own, rank each of the four characters from most acceptable behaviour (1) to least acceptable behaviour (4) for YOU. Give a different ranking to each character and indicate the ranking in the circle provided. Remember, you can't have two number 1's or two number 4's, for example.

1  
Most acceptable behaviour

4  
Least acceptable behaviour

**SIMON**, 16 years old.



Simon has been going out with Marianne for about six months. Last week, Simon went to a party at their friend's house because Marianne had to work at her job at the grocery store. At the party, Marianne's best friend made out with Simon and two of his friends. When Marianne found out what happened, she told Simon she was upset, and Simon replied, "Come on, I didn't cheat on you, it was just kissing."

**ITALA**, 17 years old.



At the start of the school year, Itala and her friends took on a challenge: "get their handsome French teacher all hot and bothered" by flirting with him as often as possible. On social media, they talk about the things they did that embarrassed their teacher the most, but without mentioning his name.

**AYISHA**, 16 years old.



Ayisha hasn't had a boyfriend in about a year. Her friend Devon is in love with her. She knows she'll never go out with him because she's not interested in him at all. Despite this, she often agrees to have sex with him. "Why not go for it while I'm waiting to find someone?" she wonders.

**ULRICK**, 16 years old.



Ulrick is celebrating his birthday with his friends at his parents' cottage for the weekend. On Saturday evening, the whole group starts playing drinking games; at the end of the night, Ulrick brings Valerie, who is completely drunk, back to his room where he has sex with her.



1  
Most acceptable behaviour

4  
Least acceptable behaviour

➤ Write the name of the character under your assigned ranking.

1) _____	2) _____
3) _____	4) _____

➤ Write your **REASONS** for giving this ranking. For example, you can consider “the context of the situation”, “the relationship between the characters”, “the impact on the character or the people they know”.

(e.g. context, relationship between the characters, impact on the character or the people they know) and the **VALUES** at stake.

1. REASONS: \_\_\_\_\_

VALUES: \_\_\_\_\_

2. REASONS: \_\_\_\_\_

VALUES: \_\_\_\_\_

3. REASONS: \_\_\_\_\_

VALUES: \_\_\_\_\_

4. REASONS: \_\_\_\_\_

VALUES: \_\_\_\_\_

➤ Rank these same four characters again, but this time imagine they are of the opposite gender.

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_

➤ If the rating differs from the first one you assigned, what are the reasons?

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## SHEET

### 4.2

FOR THE GROUP

## Team Consensus

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Get into teams of four or five and take turns stating the ranking you gave to each character. Start with the character you ranked 1 and so on (2, 3 and 4).**
- › **Debate your rankings and try to reach a consensus for the “final” ranking.**
- › **Then write the name of the character under the ranking as a team.**

1  
*most acceptable behaviour*

4  
*least acceptable behaviour*



1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_



## SHEET

### 4.3

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Situational Attitudes and Behaviours: Connections to Compassion, Dignity, Safety



**Simon**, 16 years old.

His girlfriend's best friend tries to kiss him, but he refuses. She says to him: *"Come on, you're not cheating on Marianne, it's just kissing!"*

**Simon tells her that he only kisses his girlfriend. Besides, why does she consider kissing another person "not cheating"? Maybe kissing is no big deal and has no impacts for her, but for him, kissing is only something he does with his girlfriend. Plus, she's best friends with his girlfriend; wouldn't she be disappointed or hurt if she found out they'd kissed? Finally, Simon is concerned about her: people with "bad intentions" could accept her offer and take advantage of her or go around telling everyone, for example, that she is trying to break up relationships by kissing boys who are "already taken" (damage to her reputation).**

**The values that emerge from this behaviour or attitude are:**

*COMPASSION, SAFETY.*

- Simon confirms his commitment to his girlfriend.
- He cares about how Marianne would react if she found out that he and her best friend had kissed.
- He empathizes with Marianne's best friend and worries that others may take advantage of the situation or damage her reputation.



**Itala**, 17 years old.

Itala and her friends say they want to see if they can turn on an older man. But this specific situation isn't a "dance" of attraction between two consenting young people.

**In the end, Itala decides not to join in and points out that what they are doing isn't "turning someone on" but rather manipulation. Plus, this type of "flirting" could make the teacher very uncomfortable and even damage his reputation, e.g. false rumours that the teacher is attracted to or interested in a student or complaint (unfounded in this case) that the teacher has sexually touched a student.**

**The values related to this behaviour or attitude are:**

*COMPASSION, DIGNITY, SAFETY.*

- Itala stands up to her friends and says that they shouldn't do this to their teacher.
- She argues that it would show a lack of respect and could have possible impacts for him (e.g. discomfort, rumours, false accusations).
- She is aware that this situation could get out of hand and do a lot of harm to this teacher. She has no intention of nonchalantly doing something that could cause harm.
- Not to mention that they could also get into trouble with the principal and get punished.



**Ayisha**, 16 years old.

Ayisha is "dating" Devon and is intimate with him. He is in love with her, but she doesn't have the same feelings for him and is uncomfortable in this situation.

**She decides to talk to Devon. She knows full well that he wants their sexual relationship to turn into a romantic one. She prefers being honest with him, even though it isn't easy. She knows that telling him how sorry she is and apologizing won't solve everything; however, Devon deserves for her to be honest with him.**

**In this case, their relationship is not "equal" since they obviously do not have the same expectations of the relationship and she does not want to play with his feelings in this way.**

**The values related to this behaviour or attitude are:**

*COMPASSION, DIGNITY*

- Ayisha realizes the impact that her behaviour could have on Devon.
- She'd rather be honest with him.
- She doesn't want to take advantage of the situation or Devon's feelings. This is very respectful of her.



**Ulrick**, 16 years old.

Ulrick is with his friends at his parents' cottage for the weekend to celebrate his birthday. Ulrick wanted to have sex with Valerie, even though she is drunk.

**But he then realizes that doing this would be taking advantage of her. Valerie isn't in any condition to give consent. He decides to leave the room so that she can fall asleep and he returns to the living room. He tells Valerie's friends so that they know she is alone in the room and so that she won't be bothered.**

**The values related to this behaviour or attitude are:**

*COMPASSION, DIGNITY, SAFETY*

- Ulrick knows that the situation does not lend itself to intimate acts or sexual activity as Valerie is in no condition to consent, and this would represent sexual assault.
- Instead, he tries to protect her. This is very respectful of him.

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## Secondary 4 - Session 2

### Sexual Consent “Making Sure You Get Consent”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual behaviour</b>	<p><b>Understand your position on different issues related to sexual relations in adolescence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Consent</li> <li>› Dealing with social pressures and norms: from peers, etc</li> <li>› Alcohol and drug use</li> </ul>
Possible links to the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022)	
<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

**Subject areas**

- Personal development subject area**
- › *Quebec Citizenship and Culture*

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Justice and the Law and Relationships and Caring

**Disciplinary competencies**

**Studies a cultural reality**

- › Establishes the scope of the object of study
- › Evaluates elements of knowledge
- › Analyzes social relations
- › Demonstrates a more complete understanding

**Reflects on an ethical question**

- › Identifies the ethical dimensions of a situation
- › Examines a variety of points of view
- › Develops a point of view
- › Engages in dialogue

**Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School**

**Understand the main legal frameworks applicable to romantic and sexual life**

- › Consent in the Criminal Code
- › Sexual and domestic violence

**Reflect on the ethical issues that may exist with respect to the norms and values related to the legal frameworks applicable to romantic and sexual life, especially regarding appropriate consequences and legal actions that can be taken against violence**

**Understand the factors that influence sexual relations in adolescence**

- › Context (sexual relations with or without commitment, planned or spontaneous, protected or unprotected sexual relations)
- › Relationship dynamics

**Reflect on the tensions between feelings, differentiated norms related to sexual behaviour and peer pressure related to sexual behaviour**





## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**

75 minutes

**Understand the issues and subtleties of sexual consent and develop skills to express agreement or disagreement with possible sexual activity.**

- 1. Discuss** why it is important to discuss sexual consent with young people their age.
- 2. Analyze** issues in situations related to sexual consent (e.g. age difference, partner pressure, alcohol or drug use, romantic relationships).
- 3. Define** concepts associated with sexual consent (e.g. verbal and non-verbal signs; free, voluntary, informed, and possibly “sexy” consent).
- 4. Discuss** different ways to communicate their agreement or disagreement to possible sexual activity in a respectful way.
- 5. Identify** the basic criteria for getting consent to sexual activity: empathy, assertiveness, safety and attention.



## Sequence



This **75-min.** session has **two activities**.

15 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> Consent</li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> <i>Consent: Parents Explain</i></li> <li>› <b>Presentation</b></li> </ul>
45 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Situational Exercises <i>Sheet 2.1: Learn More About Consent</i> <i>Sheet 2.2a: Marjorie and Émile: Situational Exercise</i> <i>Sheet 2.2b: Kim-Lee and Vincent: Situational Exercise</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Age difference and consent <i>Sheet 2.3a: Answer Sheet: Marjorie and Émile: Situational Exercise</i></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> <i>“Enthusiastic Consent!”</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> The difficulty of asking for consent, including in the context of alcohol use <i>Sheet 2.3b: Answer Sheet: “Kim-Lee and Vincent: Situational Exercise</i></li> <li>› <b>Presentation of a Poster:</b> A sexual assault prevention campaign <i>Sheet 2.4: Sexual Assault Prevention Campaign Poster, Government of Nova Scotia</i></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> <i>Alcohol and Consent</i></li> <li>› <b>Presentation and Discussion</b></li> </ul>
15 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> <i>“Sexy Consent: Asking For it”</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Can consent really be “sexy”?</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Key messages from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

You can lead this session on sexual consent with another professional, for example, with the special education technician (SET), social worker, psychoeducator, psychologist, or sexologist at your school, as applicable.

Otherwise, BEFORE holding this session, it is a good idea to let a counsellor at your school or organization know that you will be discussing sexual consent with a group of young people. This way, if a teenager confides in you about a situation of concern about sexual consent or discloses a situation of sexual assault, you will know that someone is available to offer support. If a young minor is in danger or has been sexually assaulted, the *Youth Protection Directorate* or the police service must be contacted.

You can also refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program for the contact information of assistance and support organizations. Online resources are provided at the end of the slideshow (PPT) accompanying each of the *Be True to You* sessions.





## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



15 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



VIDEO

## Session Introduction

- › **Introduce** the session by reminding participants of the rules from the introduction or the slideshow (e.g. taking turns, respect for others and different points of view, self-respect, discretion about what other youths have to say).
- › **Explain** that today's session is on sexual consent.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **Why do you think it is important to talk about sexual consent with young people?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › The goal of talking about sexual consent is above all to prevent sexual violence. However, this topic is also an opportunity to provide support and resources to anyone who may have experienced sexual violence. **Go over** some of the events of recent years that have demonstrated the need, if not the urgency, for people to become more aware of sexual consent.
  - “In 2006, a social worker named Tarana Burke from New York City launched a campaign to support victims of sexual assault in underprivileged neighbourhoods. To stress empathy and solidarity, she chose a very short name for this initiative: ‘MeToo’.” (Croquet, 2018; Nicolaou and Smith, 2019).
  - In 2017, a wave of people began speaking up over social media about their experiences when the Weinstein affair revived the campaign slogan, which became not only a viral phenomenon but also the global #MeToo social movement (Croquet, 2018). Other movements followed (e.g. #BeenRapedNeverReported; #TimesUp) (Croquet, 2018). In Quebec, #MoiAussi was also a common hashtag (Marin, 2020).
  - This movement helped break the silence surrounding sexual harassment and violence—primarily against women but also against men—in the public and political sphere, in the workplace, at schools, within families and between couples (Croquet, 2018).
  - These public denunciations also highlighted the lack of education and understanding about what sexual consent means.

- At first glance, the concept of sexual consent is fairly simple to understand (e.g. one person agrees to or refuses a proposition and the other person respects that choice). In reality, giving or getting consent during sexual activity (e.g. kissing, fondling, intercourse) involves multiple aspects that relate to emotions (e.g. empathy, comfort, intimacy, boundaries); communication skills (e.g. listening, ability to react clearly and respectfully); and legal aspects (e.g. age, context).



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

The Éducaloi site states that *“In Canada, sexual assault is when one of the partners doesn't consent (doesn't agree to) sexual touching. Sexual touching includes kissing, fondling and having sex. Consent to sexual touching means clearly showing that you agree, through your words or actions, to a sexual activity,”* (Éducloai, 2022c).

The most recent Quebec data that we have on sexual violence was collected from different CEGEP populations. According to this survey conducted by Manon Bergeron, a professor in the Department of Sexology at UQAM and Research Chair on Sexist and Sexual Violence in Higher Education, *“over a third of respondents, including 31.7% of students, reported having experienced at least one type of sexual violence at CEGEP. Nearly 30% of these respondents reported experiencing at least one type of sexual violence in the year preceding the survey”* (Gauvreau, 2020). To consult the full survey (in French), click here: <https://chairevssmes.uqam.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/124/Rapport-ESSIMU-UQAM-2.pdf>

A few years earlier, Bergeron and her colleagues had conducted another study of Quebec university students and found that 36.9% of respondents had experienced a situation of sexual assault committed by another person attending the university (Bergeron and al., 2016).

## Video

- › **Tell** the group that they will be watching a video of parents trying to explain consent to their children. This is not as easy as you might think!
- › **Show** the following video:

### **Consent: Parents Explain (Cut, 2017)**

**Length:** 2 min., 15 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wD7eVzM2PA>



Video



- › **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.
  - **What do you think about this video?**
  - **What aspects about consent do you remember most?**

*Get their opinions.*

# Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Some parents seem to find it easier to discuss consent with their children or are better able than others to come up with examples of consent on the spot. What if you had a discussion about consent with your parents? This could give you the chance to hear what they think about the topic.
- › **What's important to remember about consent:**
  - **Asking** for consent is when you ask someone's permission to do something. The other person is **free** to agree to or refuse what you are asking. The request can't be made under pressure or with coercion, blackmail or threats.
  - **Respecting** consent is when you respect the person's choice about what you are asking.
  - **Respecting** consent also means understanding that a person may initially say yes but then later change their mind. Consent **may be withdrawn at any time**.
  - **Giving informed consent** means that someone is in a state that allows them to give consent (e.g. is not asleep or unconscious) (Éducaloi, 2022a).
  - **Making sure someone consents** means paying attention to the other person's feelings and reactions, even if you are experiencing strong emotions and feelings of pleasure. You have to make sure that the other person is really saying yes because they want to and not because they want to please you or feel forced.
  - The definition of sexual consent is **an agreement that a person expresses clearly, for each sexual activity, through words and actions. Consent must be informed, voluntary and given freely and may be withdrawn at any time** (Éducaloi, 2022a). Note that sexual activity includes touching, kissing or any other type of sexual act (Éducaloi, 2022a).

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

For more information about sexual consent and sexual assault prevention, see Sheet 2.1: *Learn More About Consent*. You don't have to share all of this content with the group, but it may be helpful if they ask more in-depth questions about consent to sexual activity. There is also information on how a teen could respond if a friend confides in them that they have been sexually assaulted.





# 2

## Activity 2



SHEETS 2.1, 2.2A, 2.2B, 2.3A, 2.3B AND 2.4  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



45 MIN.



TEAM ACTIVITY



VIDEO



DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION

### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the group to get into teams of 4.
- › **Give** the following instructions:
  1. Each team will receive one of two Situational exercises (Sheet 2.2a: *Marjorie and Émile: Situational Exercise* or Sheet 2.2b: *Kim-Lee and Vincent: Situational Exercise*).
  2. The teams will have 10 min. to analyze their situation and answer the questions.
  3. Once they are done, each team will select a spokesperson to share their answers with the entire group.
- › **Give** the teams one of the sheets (2.2a or 2.2b). **Give** them 10 min. to read it and answer the questions.

### Discussion about the Situational Exercises

- › **Explain** that they will review each Situational exercise as a group as follows:
  - 1- The first situation is read out loud.
  - 2- The teams that worked on this Situation share their answers.
  - 3- You and the other teams can add to their answers as needed.
  - 4- Show a video.
  - 5- Go through the same steps with the second Situational exercise.

#### *Marjorie and Émile: Situational Exercise*

- › **Read** the situation with Marjorie and Émile (Sheet 2.2a) and **ask** the teams that worked on this exercise to share their answers with the group.
- › **Ask** the other teams if they have anything they would like to add.
- › **Add** to their answers using Sheet 2.3a: *Answer Sheet: Marjorie and Émile: Situational Exercise*.



## Video

› **Show** the following video:

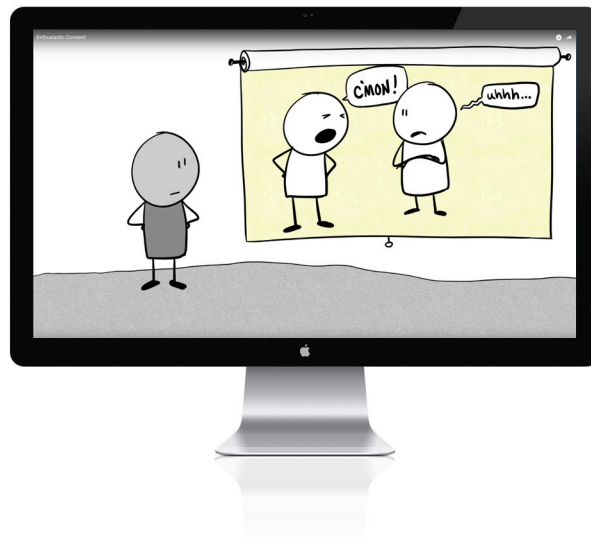
**Enthusiastic Consent! (Blue Seat Studios, 2019)**

**Length:** 2 min., 48 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqBQH1e7XwQ>**



Video



› **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.

- **What are your takeaways from this video?**
- **What connections can you make between this video and what happened between Marjorie and Émile?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Connections Between This Video and Marjorie and Émile situation

- › This video discusses the importance of being enthusiastic about sex and making sure that your partner is just as enthusiastic as you are.
- › The person initiating the sexual activity has a duty to ensure that the other person is comfortable engaging in sexual acts and must not abuse any power they may have over the other person.
- › What Émile does not do in the situation: Marjorie indicates through her words and actions that she thinks things are going too fast, but Émile still pressures Marjorie.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



A Quebec study of over 3,000 people aged 17 to 29 found that most had not experienced a first penetrative sexual encounter by the age of 12 to 14 (Lambert, Mathieu-Chartier, Goggin, Maurais and the PIXEL team, 2017).

- › One in twenty people (6%) of all genders combined had had their first penetrative sexual encounter before the age of 14 (Lambert and al., 2017).
- › Ten out of twenty females (50%) and eight out of twenty males (40%) had experienced their first penetrative sexual encounter before the age of 17 (Lambert et al., 2017).
- › Youths aged 12 to 14 experiment more with sexual activities such as kissing and fondling the body on and below the waist (Médico and Levy, 2008; Williams, Connolly and Cribbie, 2008).

Some specialists (e.g. pediatricians, psychologists, sexologists) consider sex before the age of 14 or 15 to be premature and are concerned about whether these young people have the necessary maturity for a positive experience. Also, people at this age may feel pressure to have sex.

It is therefore important to discuss the meaning of sexual consent and motivations to engage in sexual activity in the early years of high school before young people start becoming sexually active. Young people generally have their first sexual encounter spontaneously without planning it (e.g. at a party) (Lieberman and al., 2017). They must be therefore have the tools to act in a way that truly aligns with their needs, values and limits while respecting those of their partner.

### Kim Lee and Vincent: Situational Exercise

- › **Read through** Kim Lee and Vincent's situation (Sheet 2.2b) and **ask** each team to share their answers.
- › **Add** to their answers using Sheet 2.3b: *Answer Sheet: Kim Lee and Vincent: Situational Exercise*.

## Poster

- › **Present** the poster from a sexual assault prevention campaign in Nova Scotia (Government of Nova Scotia, 2016), which is provided on Sheet 2.4. Explain how excessive alcohol use can impair your ability to consent to sex. This applies to all types of relationships (e.g. romantic relationships, short-term encounters, "friends with benefits," maintaining a sexual relationship with your ex), regardless of your sexual orientation.

## Video

- › **Show** the following video:

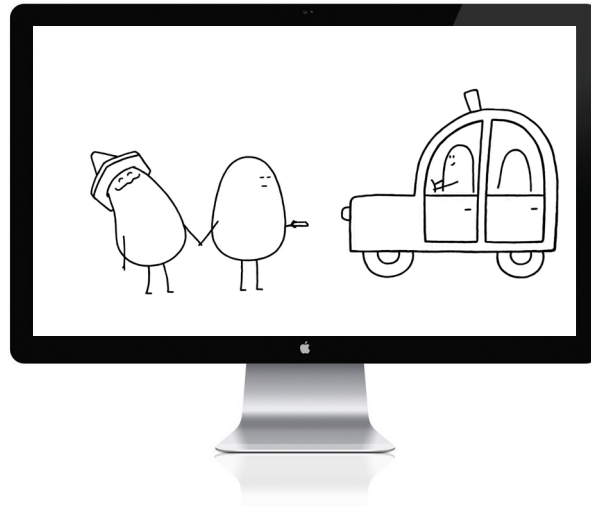
### **Alcohol and Consent (SARSAS Support, 2019)**

**Length:** 47 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPO2s4vWWF0>**



Video



- › **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**
  - **What connections can you make between the video and what happened between Kim Lee and Vincent?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### **Connections Between the Video and Kim Lee and Vincent situation**

- › The video explains that sexual consent is only valid if both people have the capacity to make the choice to engage in the sexual activity.
- › It gives examples of the signs indicating when someone is too drunk to consent to sexual activity:
  - The person has trouble standing
  - The person has trouble holding a conversation
  - The person is speaking incoherently
  - Etc.
- › However, even if the non-verbal signs are not so clear, the person's sexual consent may STILL NOT be valid.
- › For example, when under the influence of alcohol or drugs, you may feel like you are capable of consenting, but in reality you are going beyond your personal limits, or you may have trouble recognizing your partner's lack of interest. The reason is simple: alcohol and drugs affect your faculties and judgment (Tel-jeunes, 2022).
- › As in the situation with Kim Lee and Vincent, it's important to get sexual consent whether you're officially dating or not. Just because the person is your boyfriend or girlfriend doesn't mean you can make them have sex when you want to.



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION



VIDEO

## Video

- › **Explain** to the participants that there are different ways to ask for consent. The following video provides some examples.
- › **Show** the following video:

**Sexy Consent: Asking For it (Fredericton Feminist FilmCollective, 2020)**

**Length:** 52 sec.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tsrom0z\\_zyc&t](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tsrom0z_zyc&t)



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Get** their comments and reactions to the video.
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**
  - **How do you ask for sexual consent in a “sexy” way?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › In this video, the act of sexual consent is shown in a funny way with insects, but the message is still clear: sexual consent is important, and you can ask for it simply and honestly with humour. Sexual consent can even be sexy!
- › **For example, you can ask in a friendly way, without insisting:**
  - “Can I kiss you?” (Conseil du Statut de la Femme, 2020).
  - More direct way, but still in a nice tone and if the context lends itself to it: “Can we make out?”
  - “We don’t have to like the same things or have the same desires at the same time. So don’t hesitate to tell me if you don’t feel like it or if you don’t like something. I don’t want to rush you.”
  - “Do you want to keep going?” (Conseil du Statut de la Femme, 2020).
  - “I’d like to... What about you?”
  - “Do you like what we’re doing right now? You can definitely tell me if you don’t.”
  - “I like holding you (or being held by you), and I feel like going further. Do you feel ready? Do you want to talk about it?”
  - “I really like what we’re doing right now. What about you?”
  - “I want you to feel good, I want you to like it; feel free to tell me if there’s anything I can do better or if there’s anything you don’t like. We’re getting to know each other, together.”
- › **Then the answer can simply be:**
  - “Yes, you can kiss me. I really want to.”
  - “I feel good with you. I want to go further, but I want to be able to change my mind if things don’t go how I expected. The same goes for you.”
  - “I’m saying no because right now I’m afraid I’ll get too caught up in performing and feel stressed out. Let’s wait until we get to know each other a bit better and can laugh at our little mishaps. What do you think?”
  - “Can we take a break?” (Fredericton Feminist FilmCollective, 2020).
  - “Yeah, because I really want to, but let’s not put too much pressure on ourselves, okay? Are you as nervous as I am right now? What stresses you out the most?”
  - “Yes, I want to. I like you so much.”

- › **Ask** the group:

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **End** the session with the suggested **KEY COMPONENTS:**

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › A social problem that concerns us all:
  - Whether you identify as a girl, a boy, or gender-neutral and regardless of your sexual orientation, sexual consent and sexual assault prevention is something that concerns us all.
  - Making sure you have the other person's consent is one of the responsibilities that comes with wanting to be more intimate with someone.
  - Not respecting your partner's consent can be considered a crime and may be punishable by law.

### The 4 basics of sexual consent are:

## Empathy, Assertiveness, Safety and Attention

- › **Empathy:**
  - Kindness, patience, and tenderness are definitely qualities associated with sexual consent. Don't treat the other person as an object or a thing that belongs to you.
- › **Assertiveness (and shared pleasure):**
  - Making sure you have your partner's consent or expressing consent to the other person can be relatively simple; however, the fear of judgment and how the other person will see you makes the process more complex. It's important to learn to speak up for yourself and you can do this gradually, step by step.
  - **Before being able to truly say YES you often have to learn how to truly say NO.** Assertiveness is about speaking up about what you don't and do like.
  - Giving consent can be "sexy." When both partners make sure that the other person feels good and that they are both on the same page, they are both more likely to find the experience pleasurable.
- › **Safety:**
  - Feeling safe with the person you are with is the most important thing.
  - It means that the other person has a respectful attitude toward you (and vice versa). They don't use derogatory or humiliating language; they don't impose their sexual desires and tastes; they don't use emotional blackmail or manipulation. And obviously, they don't use physical or sexual violence. Ideally, this should be the case for all people you meet in your life.
  - Overall, if you like what you are doing (or what you did), **say so**. If you don't like it, **say so** and show it with your actions as well. If you have not been asked for consent and the other person went beyond your limits and you feel bad about it, **tell someone you trust**. If you feel that you have been sexually assaulted, you must **report** it to a professional, the police, etc. As this act is punishable by law.
  - Being intimate with someone means giving them access to a very personal and private part of yourself. This is why it's important not to let anyone make fun of this part or use it for their own pleasure or force you to do something you don't like. Sexual pleasure is learned, and the learning process involves being able to give consent and feel safe!

› **Attention:**

- We all need to be aware of the verbal and non-verbal signs indicating whether or not our partner is comfortable. This means paying attention to yourself first (what you feel) and to the other person as well.

**Don't forget...**

**The 4 basics of sexual consent are:**

**Empathy, Assertiveness, Safety and Attention**



## SHEET

### 2.1

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Learn More About Consent

This sheet provides essential information about sexual consent all in one place. You don't need to share all of this content with the group, but it may help you answer their questions. You will find this same sheet in all sessions on consent in the *Be True to You* program, i.e. those in Secondary 2 and 3. This sheet provides key legal definitions and information but does not replace legal advice.

Also, please note that this sheet was created in 2021; this means that it may not account for any legal changes that occur following the publication of the *Be True to You* program.

Sexual consent is associated with different criteria in the literature on this topic. There is a distinction between sexual behaviour that is neither desirable nor acceptable in society and behaviour that is punishable by law. This sheet provides the legal and social definitions.

### SEXUAL CONSENT:

#### Legal criteria:

**free, voluntary, informed consent that can be withdrawn at any time.**

- › **An agreement that a person expresses clearly** through both their words and actions (Éducaloi, 2022).
- › **Must be free:** This means that consent during sexual activity is not obtained through the use of physical coercion, blackmail or threats (Éducaloi, 2022a). Both people in a relationship must have equal power to decide whether they want a sexual relationship or not. Each person must therefore feel free to accept, refuse, or change their mind without fearing the other person's reaction.
- › **Informed:** The person must be in a state to give consent (Éducaloi, 2022a). The law states that a person who is sleeping or unconscious cannot give consent. When it comes to intoxication with drugs or alcohol, legally a person must be in a very advanced state of intoxication to be unable to consent to sexual contact. For example, a person who has consumed alcohol or drugs can consent to sexual activity, unless their condition makes it impossible for them to remember what they are doing.
- › **Can be withdrawn at any time** (Éducaloi, 2022a): Even if you consent to sexual activity, you have the right to change your mind at any time.
- › **Is not valid if one of the partners is in a position of authority or trust or if there is a situation of dependency or exploitation** (Éducaloi, 2022a): For example, even if a teenager is of the legal age to consent to sexual activity, they cannot consent to sexual activity with a coach or teacher since this person is in a position of authority over them.



- › **Must be given for each individual sexual act:** The person who initiates sexual activity must always check how the other person feels about each sexual act (e.g. kissing, fondling) (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- › **May not be presumed:** This means that you can never assume that the other person is consenting. You cannot decide on your own whether the other person consents without checking with them first. In the case of sexual assault, the offender cannot defend themselves by saying that they thought that the other person had consented.
- › **Failure to obtain sexual consent from your partner can result in sexual assault, which is a criminal offence that can be punished by law** (Éducaloi, 2022a). Whether you're in a relationship with someone, dating them, or they are just someone you know, it's important to make sure the person also wants to have sexual contact.

### Social Criteria: Enthusiastic Consent

- › **Must be expressed in an enthusiastic way:** The act of showing enthusiasm is a criteria that is often described in relation to consent (Duquette, Soubeyrand-Faghel & Paume, 2019; Government of Quebec, 2022). Showing enthusiasm (or not) can help a partner pick up on signs of consent or non-consent. However, this criteria is not included in the sections of the law that relate to consent. It is more of a social criteria. There are certain signs that can indicate a person's enthusiasm: they may respond to the other person's advances, smile, hug them, caress them. Even adults can find it hard to distinguish between signs of enthusiasm and signs of discomfort or shyness in a partner. That's why it's important to be attentive to the other person at all times when you are being intimate and check in to see how they are feeling.

### Ages to remember:

- › **12 years minus one day:** Consent is never valid.
- › **12 years old:** The age at which a youth can be charged with a crime (Éducaloi, 2017).
- › **16 years old:** The age of sexual consent in Canada (Éducaloi, 2022b).
- › **Important to explain:** Although the age of consent is 16, the law does set out exceptions for sexual encounters (e.g. kissing, fondling, sexual relations) between young people of about the same age before they turn 16 (Éducaloi, 2022b).

The following table from Éducaloi (2022b) describes the exceptions for consent between young people under 16 years of age. It gives the age difference that cannot be exceeded in order for consent to be valid.

Age of younger partner	Age difference allowed
Less than 12 years (i.e. 12 years minus one day)	Consent is NEVER valid.
12-13 years old	Less than 2 years
14-15 years old	Less than 5 years

## Definitions that may be useful:

### Behaviour that may lead to legal consequences

- › **Sexual offence:** Refers to all crimes of a sexual nature, including sexual assault (Éducaloi, 2022c).
- › **Sexual assault:** Sexual assault is when one partner does not consent (agree) to sexual touching. Sexual touching can be a kiss, a caress or sexual intercourse (Éducaloi, 2022a).

### Behaviours that do not ALWAYS have legal consequences but that are neither desirable nor acceptable in society

- › **Sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment is not a crime, but it is prohibited in the workplace.

The term “harassment” usually refers to repeated acts. However, there may be cases where the severity or intent could result in the action being considered harassment even if it only occurred once.

### Sexual harassment can take many forms:

- › **Verbal:** Sexist, crude or degrading jokes; remarks about physical appearance; remarks about someone’s private life; use of slang or degrading, homophobic or sexist terms; use of insinuation; repeated invitations of all kinds; explicit sexual propositions; veiled or open promises in exchange for sexual favours.
- › **Non-verbal:** Whistling; looks with sexual connotations; display of degrading or pornographic material; signs with explicit sexual connotations; the harasser is constantly around; messages of a sexual, sexist or homophobic nature.
- › **Physical:** Intentionally brushing past someone; physical fondling or touching such as slapping the buttocks; tickling; pinching; kissing; pushing into a corner, etc. (Duquette, Soubeyrand-Faghel and Paume, 2019).

**Sexual misconduct:** In the media, we have heard the term “sexual misconduct” used a lot in reference to public figures who have made headlines for questionable sexual behaviour. In an everyday context, people usually use the term sexual misconduct to refer to inappropriate or undesirable behaviour in society. This term can also refer to sexist or sexually degrading comments, homophobic comments and profanity. Overall, this is a very vague term used in many ways to describe all sorts of behaviour. While sexual misconduct is not a crime defined in the criminal code, it may technically include behaviours that are punishable by law.

The term “sexual misconduct” is used in professional codes to refer to prohibited behaviours between professionals and the people they help. In these cases, legal proceedings may be initiated against the offending professionals.

### How a teen could respond if a friend confides in them that they have been sexually assaulted:

- › **Listen to your friend without judging them.** Let them speak at their own pace and in their own words; avoid bombarding them with questions or cutting them off. You don't need to know the details about the assault. The important thing is to focus on the person's feelings and what they need (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019).
- › **Believe what the person says** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). Even if the abuser is someone you know and this brings up many emotions for you, it is important not to question what the victim has told you. It takes a lot of courage to tell someone about sexual assault.
- › **Validate their emotions** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). If the person tells you that they feel angry or guilty about the assault, you can tell them that it is normal to have these emotions about a sexual assault and that you understand.
- › **Tell the person that they have no need to feel guilty** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). Often people believe that it is their fault that they have experienced sexual abuse. You can tell them that the assault is not their fault. The abuser was the one who did not ask the person how they felt and whether they really consented. Some abusers simply have bad intentions and do not want to hear a "No" from their victim and simply ignore anything that shows a lack of consent.
- › **Keep what they say confidential.** Do not repeat it to anyone else so that the person feels safe. However, do not keep the secret at all costs. Do not repeat the story to other kids your age or to your family; however, it is important to tell a trusted adult who can help (e.g. teacher, counsellor, Tel-jeunes, Kids Help Phone).
- › **Refer the person to resources** (CALACS Trêve pour Elles, 2019). You can tell the person that there are trusted adults who can help. If the person is afraid, you can offer to go to the resource with them. For example, you can go with them to see a trusted school counsellor. You can also be there when they call an assistance organization for help.



## SHEET

### 2.2a

FOR THE GROUP

## Marjorie and Émile: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.
- › You will have 10 minutes to answer.

### Marjorie and Émile

**Marjorie**, 15, has been dating **Émile**, 19, for two months. Marjorie is madly in love with Émile. She doesn't understand how such a handsome and mature guy could be interested in her. Émile includes her in his group of friends and invites her to all his CEGEP parties. Marjorie is proud to be dating him. However, she feels that Émile is very insistent on being sexually close when they are alone. She likes it when they kiss and cuddle, but she doesn't feel ready to go any further right now. When Marjorie recently refused to have sex with him, he gave her the cold shoulder for a few hours and said he thought it might be better for him to date someone more "experienced." Marjorie is seriously considering having sex with him out of fear he might leave her.

1. What do you think could be problematic in this situation? Name two things.

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2. According to the law and considering their age difference, do you think Émile and Marjorie would be allowed to engage in sexual activity? If so, or if not, why?

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3. Is sexual consent in this case "free," "voluntary" and "informed"? If so, explain why.

Free: \_\_\_\_\_

Voluntary: \_\_\_\_\_

Informed: \_\_\_\_\_



## SHEET

### 2.2b

FOR THE GROUP

## Kim Lee and Vincent: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.
- › You will have 10 minutes to answer.

### Kim Lee and Vincent

**Kim Lee** and **Vincent** are both 16 years old and have been dating for 2 years. They are very much in love and are there for each other every day. Kim Lee and Vincent have experienced several “firsts” together, such as their first “real” kiss (a while ago) and their first sexual encounter (6 months ago). Tonight, Kim Lee’s parents are going out for the evening, and they invite some friends over to hang out with them. Kim Lee has a good time with her friends and has quite a few alcoholic drinks. When everyone has left, Kim Lee, who is having trouble walking, stammers and laughs at nothing, falls into Vincent’s arms and tells him that she wants to make love to him. Vincent wants to, but since she seems really under the influence of alcohol, he hesitates.

1. What do you think could be problematic in this situation? Name two things.

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2. In your opinion, can Kim Lee consent in this situation?

- Yes     No     Hard to say

What are the *verbal signs* (words) and/or *non-verbal signs* (actions) that support your answer?

Verbal signs: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-verbal signs: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What could Vincent do to get Kim Lee’s consent? If Kim Lee were his ex-girlfriend and not his current girlfriend, would the situation be the same?

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## SHEET

### 2.3a

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Marjorie and Émile: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situation and ask each team to share their answers.
- › Add to their answers with the information below.

### Marjorie and Émile

**Marjorie**, 15, has been dating **Émile**, 19, for two months. Marjorie is madly in love with Émile. She doesn't understand how such a handsome and mature guy could be interested in her. Émile includes her in his group of friends and invites her to all his CEGEP parties. Marjorie is proud to be dating him. However, she feels that Émile is very insistent on being sexually close when they are alone. She likes it when they kiss and cuddle, but she doesn't feel ready to go any further right now. When Marjorie recently refused to have sex with him, he gave her the cold shoulder for a few hours and said he thought it might be better for him to date someone more "experienced." Marjorie is seriously considering having sex with him out of fear he might leave her.

### Question 1

### Possible Answers

**What do you think could be problematic in this situation?  
Name two things.**

- › The difference in age, maturity, and experience puts Marjorie at risk of experiencing pressure, manipulation, and control (Tener, 2020).
- › Moreover, Émile is pressuring Marjorie to be more intimate without taking into account that she is 15 and he is 19.
- › Émile is clearly not listening to Marjorie.
- › Émile blackmails her by saying that he could easily go elsewhere if she doesn't want to have sex with him.
- › There are aspects of their relationship that seem unhealthy, especially because Émile has power over Marjorie.

## Question 2

## Possible Answers

**According to the law and considering their age difference, do you think Émile and Marjorie would be allowed to engage in sexual activity? If so, or if not, why?**

- › Émile and Marjorie’s age difference is within the legal exception for 14 and 15 year olds, which sets out that an age difference of less than 5 years is legally acceptable.
- › The age of consent to sexual activity in Canada is 16 years of age; before that age, someone can consent to sex, but the legal age difference must be respected (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- › Remember that sexual activity includes kissing, fondling or any other type of sexual act (Éducaloi, 2022a).
- › The following table from Éducaloi (2022b) describes the “exceptions” for consent between young people under 16 years of age. It gives the age difference that cannot be exceeded in order for sexual consent to be legally valid.

Age of younger partner	Age difference allowed
Under 12 years old	Consent is <b>NEVER</b> valid.
12-13 years old	<b>Less than 2 years</b>
14-15 years old	<b>Less than 5 years</b>

This table on age differences and the law is also provided on Sheet 2.1: *Learn More About Consent*.

- › Let’s take an example: Marie is 13 years, 7 months old. For her consent to sexual activity (e.g. kissing, fondling, intercourse) to be valid in terms of age difference, her partner cannot be 15 years and 7 months or older, i.e., that person must be less than 2 years older than she is. If her partner is 16 years and 2 months old, her sexual consent isn’t valid; sexual activity in this case may be considered assault.
- › Specialists (e.g. psychologists, sexologists, pediatricians) consider sex before the ages of 14 or 15 to be premature and see this is something to be concerned about. A young person who has had sexual activity before this age is not “bad.” However, the concern is whether the person is mature enough to have a positive experience.
- › That said, there are elements other than age that should be considered when it comes to consent to sexual activity: the context, the person’s desire, the condition they are in, the type of relationship (e.g. authoritative or dependent relationship, exploitative).
- › Although the law recognizes that Marjorie (15 years old) can consent to sexual activity with a 19-year-old young adult, there may be differences in maturity and development.
- › Also, why would a 19-year-old young man be interested in a 15-year-old girl?
- › The concern in this case is the pressure he may be putting on her to be sexually active.

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**Added information:**

The goal is not necessarily to prevent a romantic relationship between a 15-year-old and a 19-year-old (which is legal based on the age difference in sexual consent), but rather to question the nature of the relationship. To protect the younger partner (in this case, Marjorie, 15), it is important to ensure that she is in a healthy relationship that is free of pressure, manipulation, control, and violence. It is the responsibility of the older partner (Émile, 19) to ensure that his younger partner is safe with him.

Regardless of gender or sexual orientation, the concerns are similar. If it were a 15-year-old boy dating a 19-year-old man or a 15-year-old girl dating a 19-year-old woman, the concerns would be the same.

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**Question 3**

**Possible Answers**

**Is sexual consent in this case “free,” “voluntary” and “informed”?**

- › Marjorie’s consent is not **free and voluntary** since she is being pressured, blackmailed and manipulated by Émile. He is not respecting Marjorie’s need to wait.
  - › Both people in the relationship must have equal power to decide whether they want to engage in sexual activity or not. Each person must therefore **feel free to accept, refuse, or change their mind** without fearing the other person’s reaction.
  - › Marjorie is able to give **informed consent**, i.e., she is not under the significant influence of alcohol or drugs and she is not asleep or unconscious.
  - › If Émile engages in sexual activity by blackmailing his partner, this means that he does not have true consent and this could constitute assault.
-





## SHEET

### 2.3b

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: Kim Lee and Vincent: Situational Exercise

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Read the situation and ask each team to share their answers.
- › Add to their answers with the information below.

### Kim Lee and Vincent

**Kim Lee** and **Vincent** are both 16 years old and have been dating for 2 years. They are very much in love and are there for each other every day. Kim Lee and Vincent have experienced several “firsts” together, such as their first “real” kiss (a while ago) and their first sexual encounter (6 months ago). Tonight, Kim Lee’s parents are going out for the evening, and they invite some friends over to hang out with them. Kim Lee has a good time with her friends and has quite a few alcoholic drinks. When everyone has left, Kim Lee, who is having trouble walking, stammers and laughs at nothing, falls into Vincent’s arms and tells him that she wants to make love to him. Vincent also wants to, but since she seems really under the influence of alcohol, he hesitates.

### Question 1

**What do you think could be problematic in this situation? Name two things.**

### Possible Answers

- › The first relates to how much Kim Lee has had to drink. Although she makes it clear to Vincent that she wants to have sex with him and she is the one who initiates the idea, she is showing several signs that she is highly intoxicated.
- › Legally, consent is not valid if the person is not aware of what they are doing. In this particular case, since she has difficulty walking and talking, we must seriously question if she is aware of what she’s doing. According to the law, doubting her ability to consent is a legitimate concern.
- › Ethically speaking, Vincent’s hesitation tells us that he realizes that his girlfriend is not thinking clearly at the moment and that her consent is not clear. It would be inappropriate to take advantage of the situation. It is therefore best for him not to agree to Kim Lee’s proposal.

## Question 2

## Possible Answers

**In your opinion, can Kim Lee consent in this situation?**

- Yes
- No
- Hard to say

**What are the verbal signs (words) and/or non-verbal signs (actions) that support your answer?**

- › She does seem to be consenting because she makes it clear to Vincent that she wants to have sex with him.
- › But her advanced state of inebriation casts doubt on her actual consent. In this case, we can't say that she is truly consenting.

**Verbal cues** that say **“YES”** in this case.

- › She makes it clear to her boyfriend that she wants to have sex. Her words indicate explicit consent. However, her non-verbal signs send other messages that are also important to consider.

**Non-verbal signs** that should be interpreted as **“NO.”**

- › She has trouble walking.
- › She laughs for no reason.
- › She is slurring her words.
- › She falls into Vincent's arms.
- › Note that a lack of resistance in someone who is intoxicated does not constitute consent (Éduc'alcool, 2020). She may want to be close to him, but this may only be because her drinking has made her feel less inhibited. Therefore, these signs should not be interpreted as informed consent.

## Question 3

## Possible Answers

**What could Vincent do to get Kim Lee's consent?**

- › From the moment Vincent hesitates, it is a sign that he would be better off waiting to have sex with his girlfriend. This is a sign of respect for Kim Lee.
- › Vincent has assessed the situation and knows that Kim Lee cannot give real consent. So there is no need to insist. He can tell Kim Lee that even though he wants to, he'd rather wait until she's in a better condition to say yes. There is a difference between being “drunk” from heavy drinking and feeling a bit “tipsy” from having a drink or two.

**If Kim Lee were his ex-girlfriend and not his current girlfriend, would the situation be the same?**

- › Whether the person is your current boyfriend or girlfriend, your ex, a “friend with benefits,” or a “one-night stand,” the exact same principle applies.



## SHEET

### 2.4

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Poster: Sexual Assault Prevention Campaign in Nova Scotia

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Explain that heavy alcohol use may impair your ability to consent to sexual activity. This applies to all types of relationships (e.g. romantic relationship, one-night stand, “friends with benefits,” a sexual relationship with your ex), regardless of your sexual orientation.
- › Present the poster: *A drunk yes is a big no* (Government of Nova Scotia, 2016).



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## Secondary 4 - Session 3

### Sexual Behaviour and the Influence of Sexualization in Media “Romance, Eroticism or Pornography?”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Sexual behaviour</b>	<p><b>Understand your position on different issues related to sexual relations in adolescence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› New socio-sexual realities: use of social media to express your sexuality, sexting, sexualization of the public space.</li> <li>› Dealing with social pressures and norms: from a partner, peers and media, including sexually explicit material, and performance anxiety.</li> </ul> <p><b>Become aware of factors important to sustaining emotional intimacy and sexual intimacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Emotional intimacy between partners: sharing your secrets, communicating, trusting the other person, sharing activities and interests, sharing points of view, taking care of yourself and of the other person, ability to be assertive and to negotiate.</li> <li>› Capacity for sexual intimacy: sexual relations considered as a measure of a relationship, ability to learn from past experiences, decisions about how to express your sexuality, comfort with your sexuality, whether or not you are in a couple, whether or not you are sexually active.</li> </ul>

### Possible links to the Québec Education Program

(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<b>Intellectual competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> </ul>	<b>Personal and social competencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <b>Communication-related competency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Personal development subject area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	

### Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level

(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Culture and Symbolic Productions and Relationships and Caring

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<b>Study a cultural reality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Circumscribe</li> <li>› Evaluate knowledge</li> <li>› Analyze social relationships</li> <li>› Exhibit enriched understanding</li> </ul>	<b>To reflect on an ethical question</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identify the ethical dimension of a situation To examine a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develop a point of view</li> <li>› Dialogue</li> </ul>	
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<b>Understand representations of sexuality in a variety of spaces</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Positive and negative representations of sexuality in the public space and the influence of these representations</li> <li>› Norms, values and messages on sexuality from family, peers and the media</li> <li>› Expressions of sexuality in public, intimate and privacy spaces</li> </ul>	<b>Reflect on tensions between the norms and values promoted in the media and by family and peers, and between own values and representations of the self</b>	
	<b>Understand the conditions conducive to positive emotional and sexual experiences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Emotional intimacy between partners</li> <li>› Capacity for sexual intimacy</li> <li>› Free and informed decision-making</li> </ul>		<b>Reflect on tensions between own expectations and motivations and those of a partner when it comes to sexual relations</b>
	<b>Understand the importance of desire and pleasure with regard to sexual behaviour</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Place of desire and romantic and sexual fantasies</li> <li>› Place of psychological and physical pleasure</li> <li>› Phases of sexual response</li> </ul>		<b>Reflects on tensions and ambivalence surrounding desire and sexual pleasure</b>





## Educational Goals



**Session length:**

90 minutes

**Help students see the importance of developing a critical eye to oppose the potential influence of sexualization in media in the public space (particularly pornography) on sexual and emotional intimacy, and help them develop their own ideas about romance and eroticism, with an emphasis on respecting oneself and others.**

- 1. Define** intimacy and its different components (emotional and sexual).
- 2. Describe** how portrayals of intimacy in entertainment media may influence our own perception of intimacy.
- 3. Examine** how the concern to make actors feel safe and respected when shooting intimate scenes may be reflected in real-life intimacy.
- 4.** Based on various questions and criteria, **identify** the differences and similarities between romance, eroticism and pornography.
- 5. Distinguish** the artificial and sensationalistic messages of pornography from the sexual reality of teenagers.
- 6. Illustrate** the variability of the sexual response and the importance of being intimate with someone only if we feel willing and saying we want to stop if we feel otherwise, thus ensuring that the experience remains enjoyable.
- 7. Discuss** the differences between this sexual response model and the performance-based and sometimes violent models associated with pornography.
- 8. Indicate** various expressions used to talk about sexual activity and sexual intercourse and what can be inferred from this language—in particular the links with pornography.
- 9.** Using excerpts from literary and musical works, **discuss** the importance of making sense of sexual behaviour through means other than pornography so that we can develop our own vision of romance and eroticism.



## Sequence



This **90-min.** session has **three activities.**

20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Individual activity:</b> Emotional and sexual intimacy <i>Sheet 3.1: Emotional or sexual intimacy?</i> <i>Sheet 3.2: Answer sheet: Emotional or sexual intimacy?</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> How intimacy is portrayed in entertainment media</li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Intimacy Choreography for Actors (a workshop at York U)”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
25 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Questions on the distinctions between romance, eroticism and pornography <i>Sheet 3.3: Questions on romance, eroticism and pornography</i> <i>Sheet 3.4: Summary table: Distinctions between romance, eroticism and pornography</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> The potential impacts of pornography consumption on a person’s emotional and sex life</li> </ul>
25 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Presentation and Discussion</b></li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Loulan’s sexual response model (1984)</li> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> The difference between Loulan’s model and the performance model in pornography</li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Brainstorming:</b> Common expressions for sex</li> <li>› <b>Discussion:</b> How these expressions relate to romance, eroticism and pornography</li> <li>› <b>Presentation:</b> Excerpts from literature and music that poetically convey desire and eroticism <i>Sheet 3.5: Excerpts from songs and poems on the topic of sexual intimacy</i></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Des mots pour...”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> key messages from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow (PPT)** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “Be True to You” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website **[www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca)** (Volet 3 : Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire : Oser être soi-même) <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

It may seem challenging to approach the sensitive subject of how messages and sexual content in the media can influence intimacy and sexual behaviour. You will cover such topics as intimacy, sexual pleasure, romance, eroticism, pornography and the consequences of pornography consumption on sexual behaviour. These topics will be talked about in clear terms, but no one has to reveal the details of their private lives and no should be asked personal questions. And it goes without saying that no sexually explicit (pornographic) images will be shown; this would in fact be illegal.

You can also let the students know that they don't need to have had a boyfriend or girlfriend or even to have had any sexual experiences to be informed on and talk about this topic.

Everyone has an opinion on the topic and gets bombarded with different messages about it. It's important for the students to be able to talk about these things and get to know what other people their age think about them.

During the discussions, there is sure to be some very direct questions and remarks as well as nervous or outright laughter and even coarse language (these natural reactions should be welcomed and met with openness and respect, so long as things do not get out of hand). The mere fact that the students are expressing themselves on the topic will allow them to question the basis and truth of their beliefs about intimacy, romance, eroticism, pornography and sexual pleasure.

Certain parts will not apply to their experiences. That's normal. Everyone goes at their own pace and has their own personal tastes. What is important is that people make choices that reflect who they are and what they are comfortable with.



## Activity 1



**SHEETS 3.1 AND 3.2**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**20 MINUTES**



**DISCUSSION  
AND  
PRESENTATION**



**INDIVIDUAL  
ACTIVITY**



**VIDEO**

### Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, practising self-respect, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Next, **tell** the students that the topic of the session will be sexual behaviour and sexualization in media, or more specifically how explicit sexual content in entertainment media, including pornography, may influence our understanding of intimacy and sexual behaviours.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the following question:
  - **Why is it important to discuss about sexualized contents in the media and to analyze their possible influence or not on the perception of intimacy and sexual action?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Write** the word “Intimacy” on the blackboard.
- › Then, **ask** the following questions:
  - **What is your understanding of the word “intimacy”?**
  - **What does this word refer to?**
  - **What’s the difference between “emotional intimacy” and “sexual intimacy”?**
- › **Write** the students’ answers on the blackboard.

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### **Intimacy:**

- › Intimacy refers to what is the most personal, the most private ([translation] Durif-Varembont, 2009).
- › It is our innermost feelings and thoughts or our “secret garden”, i.e. feelings or thoughts that we wish to keep to ourselves ([translation] Ooreka, n.d.). This is our “bubble”.
- › The innerself includes, among other things, a person’s values, personal boundaries, wants and needs (Glowacz and Goblet, 2019).
- › Intimacy also concerns the relationship with our own body and sexuality, such as our boundaries, or feeling good and also want to explore.
- › Intimacy provides a sense of security so that you can feel good **IN** and **WITH** our body (Glowacz and Goblet, 2019).

### **Being intimate with someone:**

- › Means getting closer to them and letting them see our deeper self (MEES, 2019).
- › Helps to build greater trust and togetherness, which creates a sense of well-being (MEES, 2019).
- › Can be emotional or sexual in nature (MEES, 2019; Ooreka, n.d.).
- › Requires transparency, reciprocity, communication, empathy and authenticity (Ooreka, n.d.).
- › Also requires patience, as intimacy builds over time and doesn’t just happen (Better Health Channel, 2022).

### **Being emotionally intimate:**

**Being emotionally intimate may involve...** (MESS, 2019)

- › Spending time with someone or including them in social activities (e.g., introducing them to friends or family)
- › Sharing and expressing feelings and emotions (e.g., confiding in them about what we’re feeling, saying “I love you”)
- › Sharing our values, needs and boundaries (e.g., talking about our ideals, our plans for the future, what we like and dislike)
- › Giving tokens of affection (e.g., saying sweet things; giving each other pet names)

### Being sexually intimate:

Being sexually intimate may involve... (MESS, 2019)

- › Communicating desires, preferences and fears related to sexuality
- › Telling someone that we don't want to have sexual experiences yet
- › Getting physically and sexually close to someone (e.g., kissing, touching, undressing, sexual activity)

## Individual Activity

- › **Give** the following instructions:
  - Each student will receive Sheet 3.1: *Emotional or sexual intimacy?*
  - You will have 5 minutes to determine the type of intimacy (emotional or sexual) portrayed in each of the situations.
  - Then, you will have the possibility to share your answers with the class.
- › When the five minutes are up, **get** the students' answers, with a raised hands survey, to indicate which type of intimacy characterizes the different situations presented on Sheet 3.1: *Emotional or sexual intimacy?*
- › Next, **tell** the students that, except one, all of the situations are relate to both emotional and sexual intimacy, though one or the other may be more prominent (see Sheet 3.2: *Answer sheet: Emotional or sexual intimacy?*).
- › And **provide** them with the following additional information:
  - Emotional intimacy is closely related to sexual intimacy, and emotions are almost always present in sexual experiences.
  - In general, being intimate with someone is no small matter. And being sexually intimate is even more significant. Emotions are always involved, since we're revealing a deep part of ourselves. Just being naked makes us more vulnerable.
  - So it's important to be sensitive to the other person's emotions and reactions because we don't know everything about them, even if they're our romantic partner (e.g., their personal history, their sense of privacy, what they like and dislike).

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the following questions:
  - **How is intimacy (emotional and sexual) portrayed in entertainment media (e.g., reality shows, movies, video clips, television series, web series, social media)?**
  - **How might this way of portraying intimacy in entertainment media influence our own understanding of intimacy?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Intimacy in entertainment media

- › In the 1990s, we began to see television shows featuring regular people talking about their private lives and personal experiences (Mehl, 2008). This brought about a shift in what was considered private and public (Mehl, 2008).
- › Today, in many types of entertainment media (e.g., social media, reality shows, dating shows), people reveal a lot about themselves. Talking about emotional and sexual intimacy has almost become commonplace (Mehl, 2008).
- › Entertainment media that targets a teenage audience (e.g., movies, video clips, television and web series) often features passionate kissing, sexual touching and sexual relations (Forgues, 2016).
- › Moreover, some shows for teenagers present an idealized and unrealistic image of emotional intimacy. For example, characters may fall in love at first sight, want the same thing from the relationship (e.g., marriage) or have the same desires OR characters may struggle a lot with emotional intimacy (e.g., lies, avoidance, crises, lack of consent) (Lamb, 2018).

### Potential impacts on our perception of intimacy

- › These ways of portraying intimacy (emotional and sexual) in entertainment media may influence our own idea of intimacy or privacy, downplay the importance of emotional intimacy in physical closeness and sexual activity or make it seem like certain sexual behaviours are commonplace (sexual intimacy) (Lamb, 2018).

- › **Get** the students to think about how the actors performing in these fictional scenes may be feeling by asking the following question:

- **How might actors and actresses feel when acting in these “fictional” of physical closeness and intimacy in television series, web series and movies?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Video

- › **Show** the following video. **Tell** the students that it is a video by York University on “intimacy choreographers,” also known as “intimacy coordinators,” and that these professionals help actors feel safe and respected when performing intimate scenes (e.g., in television and web series and movies).

**Intimacy Choreography for Actors (a workshop at York U)  
(York University, School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design, 2018)**

**Length:** 3 min., 55 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7XkD9d5sYO>**



Video



## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the following question and get the students' answers:
  - **What are your takeaways from the video?**
  - **Why do you think it's important for actors to feel safe and respected when performing intimate scenes?**
  - **How might the concern to make actors feel safe and respected when shooting intimate scenes be reflected in real-life intimacy?**

*Get their opinions.*



- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Importance of ensuring that actors feel safe and respected during intimate scenes

- › During filming (e.g., for a television or web series or a movie), some of the more intimate and explicit scenes may cause actors to feel uncomfortable or may go beyond their personal boundaries (Gladel, 2021).
- › Although these are fictional scenes and the actors are only pretending, they may still feel uneasy about being touched, being partially or fully naked or having to touch someone else's naked body. This is why they appreciate having an outside professional whose job is to make them feel safe and respected.
- › Intimacy coordinators play a key role in ensuring that actors' personal boundaries are respected. They're responsible for creating a safe work environment for scenes involving nudity or simulated sex (ACTRA, 2020). At the same time, they're mindful about preserving the essence of the scene (Gladel 2021).
- › Generally, there is no actual sexual contact during intimate and explicit scenes during filming. There are no "sexual reactions" because the actors are just acting (we're not talking about pornographic movies), and everything is staged.
- › However, the actors are in close physical contact, and this creates a certain intimacy. So the actors are sure to have emotional reactions (e.g., embarrassment, awkwardness, the giggles). It's important to be aware of this.
- › Actors need to ask themselves beforehand if they're comfortable doing scenes with partial or full nudity. An organization that defends the rights of actors (ACTRA, n.d.) suggests that actors ask themselves the following question when determining their comfort level: "If you can't even SAY the word nipple, how are you going to feel when the time comes to actually show yours?" (ACTRA, n.d.).

### How this relates to real-life intimacy

- › Intimacy coordinators ensure that actors feel safe on set, but no one has this job in real life. It is up to us to ensure that our and our partner's needs are heard, and our boundaries are respected.
- › We are, in a way, our own emotional and sexual intimacy coordinator. As such, before engaging in sexual activity or even during, we need to:
  - Be attuned to our emotions (*"Do I feel good?"*)
  - Be aware of our own needs and boundaries (*"Do I want to do this? Is this what I was expecting?"*)
  - Learn how to communicate our needs and boundaries and make ourselves heard (*"How do I tell them?"*)

- Be with someone who cares about our needs and boundaries
  - Stop a sexual encounter if we no longer feel comfortable or aren't being respected (*There's nothing wrong with changing your mind, and you don't need to justify yourself. Just say no!*)
- › These are, of course, shared responsibilities, and both partners need to take them seriously. When our partner understands these responsibilities, it shows us that we can trust them, and it strengthens the relationship.



## Activity 2



SHEETS 3.3 AND 3.4

ENVELOPES

SLIDESHOW (PPT)



25 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



TEAM  
ACTIVITY



VIDEO

### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the students to get into teams of three or four.
- › **Give** each team an envelope containing questions you have cut out beforehand (see Sheet 3.3: *Questions on romance, eroticism and pornography*). Each envelope contains five questions that deal with the topics of romance, eroticism and pornography. The team members will take turns picking a question at random and answering it to the best of their knowledge.
- › **Tell** the teams that they won't have to repeat their answers to the class afterward. The discussions should help them to better distinguish between romance, eroticism and pornography.
  - Note: The information that follows will focus on the differences and similarities between these three concepts, but it does not include possible answers to the questions from this activity. You may choose to take more time to discuss these questions as a class.
- › **Give** the students 15 minutes to complete this task.

### Discussion

- › Once the students have completed the exercise, **ask** them the following questions:
  - **What's your takeaways from this exercise?**
  - **Based on your discussions, how would you distinguish between romance, eroticism and pornography?**
    - **How do they differ?**
    - **Are there also similarities? If so, what are they?**

*Get their opinions.*

# Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Distinctions between romance, eroticism and pornography

- › “Romance,” “eroticism” and “pornography” may be defined differently from one person to another, from one culture to another and from one generation to the next.
- › There is no universal definition that everyone agrees upon for these terms (CDEACF, n.d.; Gauvreau, 2018; Jensen, 2004). People often mix up “eroticism” and “pornography” (Ogien, 2008).

# Discussion and Presentation

- › **Analyze** each of the terms using Sheet 3.4: *Summary table: Distinctions between romance, eroticism and pornography.*

- A summary of this information is included in the session slideshow (PPT).
- If you wish, you can **lead** this presentation by asking the students to analyze each concept based on common criteria using the following questions:

- **Consider the following questions as they relate to romance, eroticism and pornography:**

- How are these terms defined? What do they refer to?
- What are the related stereotypes?
- What types of bodies do they tend to portray?
- How do they handle feelings (the emotional aspect) versus nudity (exposure of genitals)?
- How realistic are the scenarios?
- What is the relationship with intimacy?
- Do they promote risky behaviours (actions leading to sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBI), unplanned pregnancy) and the use of sexual protection (condoms, contraception)?
- How do they handle boundaries?
- Do they involve violence?

*Get their opinions.*

- › **End** the activity with the following **KEY MESSAGES**:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Romance:** We can learn ways of being romantic from movies and books and by observing the people around us. Although we may wish to remember and imitate some of these romantic behaviours, this isn't always going to charm the other person. It's better to use our imagination and creativity.
  - It's important that our feelings are reflected in our actions and that we respect the other person's space (consent).
- › **Eroticism:** Erotic behaviours can be tried alone before we share them with a partner, such as masturbation (autoerotism). That way we can get to better know our body, its sensations and reactions. It will then be easier for us to talk about such things.
  - We can be imaginative with erotic behaviours. However, it isn't always a good idea to surprise the other person, because consent must always be "informed." In other words, our partner has to know what to expect.
- › Eroticism is not just about sex. It's about creating an intimate connection and sharing and exploring bodily sensations so that both partners can experience pleasure, without any performance pressure.
- › **Pornography:** Pornography gives access to a diversity of sexual practices and generally presents sexual activity in a way that is very stereotypical and intense. It focuses on performance and sometimes includes violence (e.g., insults, humiliation, punishment, sexual and physical aggressions). Some pornography is particularly degrading to women and men and may portray fringe or even illegal sexual practices (e.g., rape, child pornography) (Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, 2017).
- › In Canada, pornography is prohibited for those under the age of 18. This is done to protect them from the potentially negative effects of consuming pornography or being exposed to it (Legalline.ca, 2023; Vallet, 2009).

### To sum up

- › In romance and eroticism, the main focus is the relationship with the other person.
- › In pornography, it's just about sex! The only goal is to cause intense sexual desire. The sexual act is presented in a direct, impulsive way, without dialogue, and without feelings (Smaniotto and Melchiorre, 2018).
- › In real life, attraction, flirting, sexual desire and well-being are more complicated. Our body is not disconnected from our emotions.
- › In general, we want to be appreciated for who we are and not treated as an object. We want to feel connected with the other person.
- › Also, the body is not a "sex machine"—always available and always successful at reaching orgasm.

› Then, **ask** the following questions:

- **In your opinion, can the consumption of pornography have consequences on the body image, on the sentimental life or on the sexual experience of people?**
  - **If so or not, why?**
- **What are the concerns of adults (e.g. parents, caregivers, youth workers) about the fact that you may involuntary have access to pornography or even consume it?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### According to studies and experts

- › It would seem that the more time a person spends viewing pornography, the more likely they are to have negative self-esteem and a negative body image (Sun & al., 2016; Wright & al., 2017) because they're constantly comparing themselves to what they see (Childline, n.d.) and may develop insecurities about their appearance (e.g., breasts, buttocks, penis, vulva) (Centre de santé sexuelle, n.d.). Thus, for some people, Viewing pornographic images repeatedly can create anxiety (Donada, 2012), make us think that we'll never measure up (Smانيotto and Melchiorre, 2018; Sun & al., 2016) and, in the end, lead to a fear of rejection.
- › Another study involving 487 men ages 18 to 29 found that those who consume a lot of pornography report being less satisfied with sexual intercourse, as they try to replicate the sexual acts they see in pornographic videos (Sun & al., 2016).
- › For some youth from the LGBTQ+ community, porn allows them to explore and learn about same-sex sexual experiences (Arrington-Sanders & al., 2015).

### What worries some parents, youth workers and specialists about the use of pornography among young people

- › For one thing, they are concerned because pornography is so easy to access (e.g. via cell phone, pop-up windows, social networks).
- › Even for young children. They are also worried about how pornography or pornographic elements in some entertainment media may influence young people's perception of dating and sexuality, leading to problems (e.g., Not knowing how to deal with the discomfort or strong sensations that may go along with viewing pornography; Comparing yourself to the pornographic actors and experiencing anxiety about your body; Believing that it reflects reality (Smانيotto and Melchiorre, 2018); Feeling that you need to try everything or accept all your partner's requests related to sex; Becoming too focused on technique and performance; Viewing too much sexual violence in certain hardcore porn movies and becoming desensitized to it; Copying what you've heard (e.g., insults) or seen (e.g., harsh or even degrading sexual behaviours).
- › Or that young users may become addicted to pornography (AsapSCIENCE, 2013).

- › Then, **ask** the following question to end this activity:
  - **Can the consumption of pornography become problematic?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Possible issues with pornography consumption

- › A minority of young people, who are often more vulnerable to pornography, are more likely to be influenced (Koituga and Vaillancourt-Morel, 2022) by it and even become addicted (Smaniotto and Melchiorre, 2018). Thus, In a study involving 1,005 teenagers ages 15 to 17, 15% of them said that pornography had had a negative impact on their sexuality (IFOP, 2017). In general, it is seen as problematic when a person can't control their pornography use and when it prevents them from spending time with friends and family (Bourdon, 2020; Childline, n.d., Koituga and Vaillancourt-Morel, 2022), when the person watches it at school or it causes distress (Koituga and Vaillancourt-Morel, 2022). In such cases, it's a good idea to take a step back and get help (Childline, n.d.). In fact, repeating the behavior may reinforce it, and on the contrary, stopping the behavior makes it less and less desirable. So, the less porn one watches, the less likely one is to develop an addiction (AsapSCIENCE, 2013).
- › There are some factors to keep in mind: *A person's age and maturity level* (12 years old, 17 years old? It remains prohibited for anyone under 18); *Context* (e.g., viewing it alone, with one or more friends or with a partner; viewing it on purpose or involuntary; being forced by others to view it); *Motivations* (e.g., curiosity, fun, desire/arousal/masturbation, a desire to be like others); *Types of pornography* (sexually explicit pornography that is neither violent nor degrading; degrading pornography (e.g., submission, humiliation) or openly violent pornography (Jensen, 2004)); *Frequency* (e.g., rarely, once a year, monthly, weekly, daily; a recent or long-standing habit); *Feeling of addiction* (e.g., not being able to go without it); *Influence on a person's sex life* (e.g., distinguish between what is fictional and exaggerated and what matches reality; seeing sex scenes in pornography as examples to follow).
- › That said, some people your age are quite aware that sex scenes in pornography are exaggerated, and different types of violence are sometimes portrayed. It's important to distinguish between "fiction" and "reality" (Centre de santé sexuelle, n.d.; Koituga and Vaillancourt-Morel, 2022; Smaniotto and Melchiorre, 2018).
- › About that, do not forget that pornographic images "are a construction." It is cinema made for adults by adults (Avouac, 2019).

### Being critical:

- › The point is not to "demonize" pornography. However, it should not be trivialized either (Smaniotto and Melchiorre, 2018). Interest in pornography can differ from one person to another and even change over the course of someone's life (Séguin, 2022). Just because someone consumes pornography doesn't mean that they will have problems sexually (Séguin, 2022) or will become "addicted" (Smaniotto and Melchiorre, 2018).

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



The video “*The Science of Pornography Addiction*” (AsapSCIENCE, 2013) explains the potential addiction to pornography and how to fix it if necessary. It may be interesting to consult this video before the session.

- › We are talking about the use of pornography and its effects. Thus, being exposed to certain types of pornographic images repeatedly has effects on our brain and our perceptions, but this can, in some cases, affect our sexual behaviour.
- › We see that the more time we spend watching pornography, the more our brains get used to it and may want to watch it again because of the release of a powerful hormone, dopamine. To try to explain these effects, scientists have drawn parallels between pornography and drug use (Barr, 2019). Some may become addicted (TEDx Talks, 2019).
- › In fact, the repetition of the behaviour may reinforce it, and on the contrary, the cessation of the behaviour makes it less and less desirable. So the less you look at, the less likely you are to develop an addiction.





## Activity 3



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



25 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



PRESENTATION

## Presentation

- › **Introduce** this activity by mentioning that, as discussed in the previous activity, sex in pornography is often performance-based and mechanical. This is why it is important to distinguish between “pornography” and “real life.”
- › Next, **share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Reactions to pornography

- › Sex scenes in pornography can cause sexual arousal and can nurture fantasies, sexual reveries. When we see naked bodies and sexual acts, our bodies may react and feel pleasure. Some people watch pornography to masturbate.
- › However, for some people, these images are too raw, direct and shocking and result in opposite reactions (e.g., discomfort, confused, disgust, fear) and therefore, these people are not interested in viewing pornography either alone or with their partner.

#### Differences between pornography and “real life”

- › Although pornography allows us to observe sexual activities and learn about different sexual acts, it doesn’t teach us to feel, communicate and relate with our partner. The reality of sexual intercourse, of two bodies coming together, is nothing like viewing sexual performances on a screen.
- › Moreover, the older we get (the more it is possible to have had sexual encounters and activities), the more we realize that pornography is not reality (Kotiuga et Vaillancourt-Morel, 2022)
- › In “real life,” when we choose to be sexually intimate with someone, there needs to be a connection and to have been seduced, attracted by someone, and we have to feel available for an emotional encounter. This requires sensitivity and the ability to relate to the other person.

- › Here are some examples of things you don't see in pornography:

**Related to bodies** (Mead, n.d.):

- You don't see bodies with scars, body hair, pimply buttocks, fat rolls, a disability, etc.; you don't see people keeping their socks on during sex, etc. And the size of the genitals, buttocks or breasts is very variable in real life compared to what we see in pornography.



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

### VIDEO “*Les coulisses du porno*”

The host, Margot Fried-Filliozat, a sex therapist and author of books on adolescent sexuality, explains the tricks used in pornographic films during certain sexual practices.

The language is very explicit, but relevant information if you have to answer more specific questions about the universe of pornographic films and develop their critical sense.

Konbini. (2022). “Les coulisses du porno : des éjaculations truquées aux chirurgies du vagin – Interview [video]”. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tklIFiKgGqg>

### English subtitles

This video is in English, but the graphic animation greatly facilitates understanding. Additionally, there are several options for adding subtitles, including a few in French. To choose the subtitle option, do the following:

- › Press the «Parameters» button:
- › Tap on “Subtitles”
- › Choose “English”

**Related to incidents** (Mead, n.d.):

- You don't see people taking a break—for example, to get a drink of water or go to the bathroom; clumsily bumping their head into their partner's head while kissing; struggling to put on a condom; getting a leg cramp, etc.

**Related to emotions and relationships:**

- You don't see attraction, dating and romance (Smaniotto and Melchiorre, 2018); shared affection and loving acts; discussions on consent; nervousness, embarrassment or spontaneous laughter (Mead, n.d.). Plus, nobody ever says that they feel good in the other person's arms, and nobody ever communicates (verbally or non-verbally) that they don't want to do something, etc.

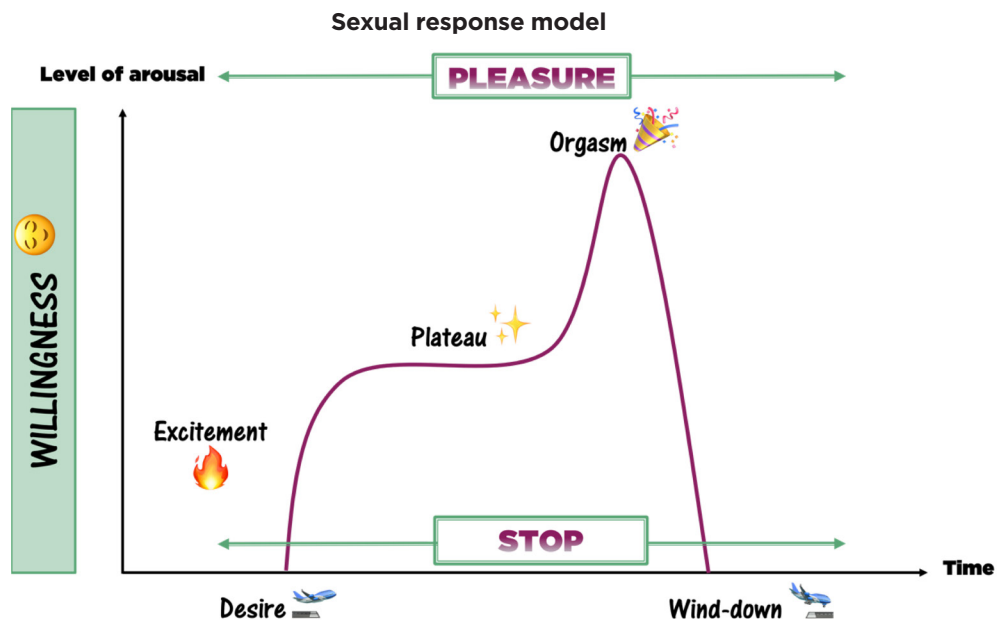
- Pornography also ignores the importance of **Kindness** (*Are we sensitive to what the other person is experiencing and willing to give them our attention?*); **Dignity** (*How are we treating the other person?*) and **Safety** (*Does the other person feel safe?*). It's always important to take kindness, dignity and safety into consideration when we want to be intimate with someone (Duquet, 2018).

### Desire and pleasure

- During sexual intercourse, simple, funny, unexpected and awkward moments may arise, but the experience is still enjoyable. All of this not only contributes to pleasure but also gives us a good memory of the experience.
- Engaging in sexual activity involves sensations and physical reactions (BODY) but also emotions and feelings (HEART) and thoughts and questions (MIND).
- It's important to be familiar with your body's reactions before, during and even after sexual activity. This is referred to as the "sexual response cycle."

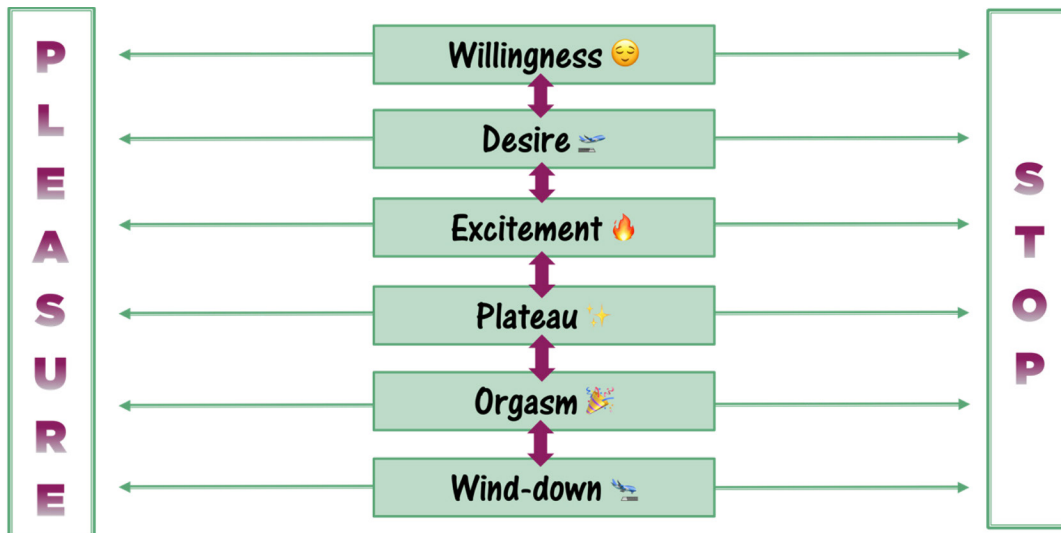
### Sexual response

- Let's take a closer look at how the body reacts to desire and sexual arousal—what is known as the sexual response.



- This model of the sexual response cycle was developed in 1966 by gynecologist William Masters and psychologist Virginia Johnson and was later refined by sex therapist Helen Kaplan (1979), then author JoAnn Loulan (1984).

Loulan's sexual response model (1984)  
(adapted from Bessaïh et La CORPS féministe [2019])



- Loulan's sexual response model (1984) emphasizes two things:
  1. **Willingness:** It is always essential to sexual activity (Loulan, 1984).
  2. **The connections between the stages:** There is no set order to follow, and you can go back and forth between the stages.
  3. **Pleasure and "stop":** We may already begin to feel pleasure (enjoyable experience) at the "willingness" stage. "Willingness" may lead to the stages of "desire" or "excitement"; alternatively, we may choose to "stop" (Loulan, 1984).

› Let's take some time to discuss the sexual response model and define its stages.

### WILLINGNESS:

- This is the stage where we are open to the possibility of sexual activity; we make this choice ourselves (Loulan, 1984; Trudel, 2020). This is an active stage. We decide to engage in sexual activity because we really want to (Body, Mind, Heart) (Loulan, 1984). There are several reasons why we may be "willing." For instance, we may want to get physically closer with the other person or we may appreciate the connection and intimacy we have with them during sexual activity (Loulan, 1984).

### PLEASURE:

- **In general,** pleasure is when you like or enjoy something and it gives you a good feeling (Plaisir, n.d.).
- **Sexual pleasure:** During sex or sexual activities, you may feel psychological pleasure (e.g., well-being) in the form of genuine positive feelings from being very intimate with someone. Physical sexual pleasure can be experienced through fondling, kissing and pleasurable touching, particularly on the sensitive parts of our body (Noovo moi, n.d.).
- Pleasure is one of the goals of sexual activity! (Loulan, 1984). But it doesn't always mean having an orgasm (Trudel, 2020). Every stage can be enjoyable, and we can choose to stop at any point without this being perceived or experienced as a "failure."

### STOP:

- During sex or sexual activities, we can choose to stop what we're doing at any time. We can also make a decision to stop and resume later, when we're actually in the mood or have more time, etc. In short, we always have the option to "stop" (Loulan, 1984).
- This stage of sexual response is just as important as the others. It involves listening to ourselves and our bodies and respecting ourselves.
- Sometimes we stop for an obvious reason (e.g., tiredness, embarrassment, stress, fear of intimacy, etc.) (Loulan, 1984). Other times, the reason isn't as clear to us (e.g., discomfort), but it's still important that we stop (Loulan, 1984). This decision can be made by just one of the partners or can be mutual.

### DESIRE:

- Desire is an internal drive that leads to attraction and/or wanting to engage in sexual activity (Diamond and Savin-Williams, 2009, in MEES, 2020; Kaplan, 1979). Desire can be intellectual (Mind), emotional (Heart) or physical (Body) (Loulan, 1984).

### EXCITEMENT:

- This refers to the physical reactions caused by sexual stimulation, which can be accompanied by emotional reactions (Kaplan, 1979; Loulan, 1984; Masters and Johnson, 1966; MEES, 2020).
- **Physical reactions:** The penis and clitoris becoming erect; The vagina becoming lubricated
- **Emotional reactions:** Strong feelings of closeness, connection and intimacy with the other person

### PLATEAU:

- This is when the level of sexual arousal is maintained for a period of time (Loulan, 1984; Masters and Johnson, 1966; Tel-jeunes, 2022b).

### ORGASM:

- A moment of intense pleasure resulting from a muscular contraction during sexual activity (Kaplan, 1979; Loulan, 1984; Masters and Johnson, 1966; Tel-jeunes, 2022b).

### RESOLUTION:

- This is when the level of sexual arousal decreases and the body returns to a resting state (Loulan, 1984; Masters and Johnson, 1966; Tel-jeunes, 2022b).

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

In the original version of Loulan's sexual response model, the "Plateau" stage is referred to as "Engorgement." The author mentions that during this phase, sexual arousal is at its peak. There is increased blood flow to the genitalia, which changes the size and colour of the penis (glans) and vulva (clitoris, labia minor and labia majora).

Since Loulan (1984) points out that the reactions that occur during the "Engorgement" stage are similar to those observed during the "Plateau" stage of Masters and Johnson's sexual response model (1966), we have chosen to use the latter term in this session.



### Reasons to “STOP”

- › Possibilities (Bessaïh et La CORPS féministe, 2019):
  - We feel tired or stressed.
  - We’re too worried about doing things “right,” which makes it hard for us to be in the moment and “let go.”
  - We feel too much pressure and are unable to feel pleasure or have an orgasm, or we’re trying to have an orgasm at the same time as the other person (which rarely happens).
  - We don’t want to engage in sexual activity with the other person at this time, or there has been a miscommunication, or we’re in conflict.
  - We feel uncomfortable about sex in general or about certain sexual acts, without being able to talk about it, and this prevents us from fully enjoying the moment. Etc.
- › To sum up, engaging in sexual activity doesn’t mean doing pre-determined sexual acts in a set order. For the experience to be enjoyable, we need to ask ourselves if we like what we’re feeling in the present moment. We can then decide whether we want to continue OR stop. *Continuing* means that we feel good and are enjoying the touching and the interactions. Conversely, *stopping* may mean that we no longer want that type of intimacy. Stopping is not a sign of failure, but of maturity.

## Discussion

- › **End** the activity by asking the students the following questions:
  - **What can we learn from the sexual response model (Loulan’s model)?**
  - **What’s the difference between this way of talking about sexual activity and what we find in some “entertainment media” or in pornography?**
  - **Why is it important to discuss this difference between what is shown in pornography and what we actually experience during intimacy?**
  - **Is it worthwhile to talk about these aspects of being a teenager even though most people your age aren’t sexually active?**

*Get their opinions.*



## Session Conclusion



SHEET: 3.5  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MIN.



BRAIN-  
STORMING



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



INDIVIDUAL  
ACTIVITY



VIDEO

- › **Introduce** the next activity, which will involve demystifying the expressions “sex” and “sexual activity” and taking a closer look at various slang or even crude expressions associated with sex. This will lead into a discussion in which the students will connect these words with the concepts of romance, eroticism and pornography.

## Brainstorming

- › **Ask** the students what expressions come to mind when they hear the word “sex” or “sexual activity”?
- › **Write** their answers on the blackboard. The students can say their answers aloud (it is normal to get nervous reactions and laughter), or you **can** ask them to write their answers on a sheet of paper and you can then **read** out some of them.

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

During this activity, some students will know the more formal expressions (e.g., oral sex, cunnilingus, masturbation, vaginal penetration). But you will also hear some cruder words (e.g., giving a blowjob, sucking, fucking, getting laid) or expressions that refer to more fringe sexual practices (e.g., anal sex, threesome) or illegal sexual practices (e.g., zoophilia, sexual assault, necrophilia). You do not need to describe all of these sexual practices; however, when appropriate, you should explain to the students that easy access to pornography on the internet may expose them to fringe or even illegal sexual practices (even though pornography consumption is prohibited for those under the age of 18).

The point of this activity is not just to read aloud the entire list of possible expressions (if you opt to have the students write down the words), but rather to get the students to think about the expressions used to refer to sexual activities and what they mean.

If students have written words that refer to someone directly or indirectly, it is important to depersonalize the message (e.g., make it anonymous if there is a first name). You can then, at an appropriate moment, address the issue of writing such things, which may be not only a “bad joke” but also a form of bullying.



## Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the students:

- **What do you notice about the words or expressions shared by the class?**
- **Are these words or expressions more characteristic of “romance,” “eroticism” or “pornography”?**  
**If so, which ones?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Expressions used to talk about sex

- › We don't often get the chance to talk about sexuality explicitly and freely, and it can be “fun” to use cruder expressions (“fuck,” “screw,” etc.). For some people, using this kind of vocabulary lessens the discomfort they feel at the thought of talking about sexuality.
- › Many of these expressions are part of our everyday language, which makes them seem commonplace. However, some of them are very derogatory. For example, it's disrespectful to say, “I fucked my girlfriend last night.” No one likes being talked about in this way.
  - Did you know that the word “fuck” is believed to come from the Dutch verb meaning “to strike” and “to move back and forth”? This could explain its later usage in connection with sexuality (Sheidlower and Black, 2009).
  - In his dictionary on eroticism (1864), Alfred Delvau uses war metaphors to describe lovemaking. Men are seen as active conquerors, while women are depicted as passive conquests (Caudebec, 2017).

#### Expressions related to romance, eroticism and pornography

- › Several of the expressions we have seen:
  - Make us think of the world of pornography, where people are reduced to sexual objects and are sometimes spoken to in a disrespectful or even violent manner.
  - Don't take into account the emotional and positive aspects of sexual relationships (e.g., cultivating emotional and sexual intimacy, closeness, feelings of love, humour).
- › Few of the expressions relate to romance or eroticism:
  - One exception is “making love,” which has a romantic connotation.
- › The words we choose are important: they shape our perceptions and imagination surrounding sexuality (Caudebec, 2017).
- › Wouldn't it feel different to use more playful, affectionate or sensual expressions?
- › Let's see how artists have used their poems and songs to celebrate acts and feelings related to desire and sexual intimacy.



## Presentation

- › **Tell** the students that for the final activity they will be shown excerpts from poems and songs that deal with desire and sexual intimacy in a romantic or subtly erotic manner.
- › **Read** the excerpts, or let the students read them individually on Sheet 3.5: *Excerpts from songs and poems on the topic of sexual intimacy*.
- › Once the excerpts have been read, lead a class discussion during which the students give their opinions voluntarily.
- › Next, **ask** the following questions:
  - **What do you think of this way of describing romantic feelings, desire, sexual relations, pleasure, etc.?**
  - **How do they compare with some of the expressions mentioned earlier?**
  - **In your opinion, why is it important that over the years we develop our own way of being romantic or our own way of exploring sensuality, without being influenced by the media?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Crude expressions versus poetic expressions

- › Feeling desire and having sexual feelings is completely normal. There's nothing shameful about it. There's no need to talk about such things in a harsh or disparaging way.
- › It's natural and healthy to have questions about sexuality, no matter our age. We can talk about sexuality in a straightforward manner with precise language and even with humour.
- › In everyday conversation, we rarely talk to each other in a "poetic" way. But partners in an intimate relationship may use romantic or poetic language to express the extent of their love or talk about their desire.
- › Certain authors and artists have a gift for playing with words and are able to describe sexual, intimate acts with beauty and creativity. This is one of the purposes of art.

#### The importance of developing a personal vision of romance and eroticism based on our respect for ourselves and others

- › Sexuality is a way to learn about ourself and our relationship with our body. "By talking about sexuality, we learn about the large array of desires, bodies and sexual practices, and we can make smarter choices about what we want to try" [Translation] (Bessaïh et La CORPS féministe, 2019).
- › "It can take time and experience to find out what we want and to know how and when to set boundaries" [Translation] (Bessaïh et La CORPS féministe, 2019, p.21).

- › And for this experience to be enjoyable:
  - We need to establish a bond, a connection with the other person (TEDx Talks, 2020).
  - Being intimate should be a source of joy and pleasure; in other words, we feel good and are having fun (TEDx Talks, 2020).
  - Everybody must be treated with dignity (a person is not an object) and kindness (being sensitive to what we're experiencing and what the other person may be experiencing) (Duquet, 2018).
  - We need to feel safe, both emotionally and physically (Duquet, 2018); both partners need to consent to any sexual act, and manipulation and violence are never okay.
  
- › Because, really, *what is sex*? It's two people with their own histories, sensitivities and vulnerabilities coming together to share an intimate moment. While these individuals may be capable of making good decisions themselves, they expect their partner to treat their body with respect (TEDx Talks, 2020).
  
- › If it wasn't for societal influences (culture, media) telling us about what sex should be, how would people "make love"? How would they express their desire? Without the pressure to "perform," what positions would they choose for their bodies? How would they like to touch or be touched? Would they have more sex or less sex? (TEDx Talks, 2020).
  
- › In a world where consumerism, popularity and media influences can be overwhelming, it's reassuring to know that we can always develop a personal vision of romance and eroticism in our intimate relationships or look to inspiring role models instead of trying to conform to a performance model.
  
- › But no one should feel pressure to engage in sexual activities if they don't want to or aren't ready. And don't think that most people your age are sexually active. It is not the case.

## Video

- › **End** the session with this short video (an advertisement from ICI-ARTV, the only French-language television channel in Canada dedicated to arts and culture). It features the poetry of seven slam poets (Ivy, Queen-Ka, Carl Bessette, Mathieu Lippé, Marie-Marine, Marie-Paule Grimaldi and Khyro) who are calling for more imagination in entertainment media.

### Des mots pour ARTV (ICI ARTV, 2008)

**Length:** 32 sec.



Video



### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

This video is available directly in the session slideshow (PPT). The latter is on our website: [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca)

It is also available on YouTube:

- › Henrad, P. (2008). *Des mots pour ARTV*. ICI ARTV. Radio Canada. [video]. YouTube. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_GMlrXOrak](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_GMlrXOrak)

It's in French (no subtitles possible), but here is the translation of this slam.

Less sex. More culture.

Less blowing. More breathing.

Less pressure. Less speed.

More expressions of tenderness.

Less politics. More poetry.

Less blah blah. Fluff.

More excitement. And more glow.

Less beating. Less crying.

More colours.

Fewer cages. Fewer prisons.

More images. Magic. Imagination.



› **Ask** the students:

- **What are your takeaways from the video?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Discussion

› Then, **ask** the following questions:

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**
- **Was there anything that changed your initial beliefs or perceptions about romance, eroticism or pornography?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **End** the session:

- During this session, we talked about the meaning of emotional and sexual intimacy; the messages associated with romance, eroticism and pornography; sexual relations; pleasure; and the importance of the bond and connection with our partner.
- In our daily lives and in our romantic and sexual lives, it's important to look at the messages in our environment with a critical eye, stand up to pressure and learn to trust ourselves.
- In other words, *Be True to You.* 😊



## SHEET

### 3.1

#### FOR THE GROUP

## Emotional or sexual intimacy?

### INSTRUCTIONS

- As a team, determine the type of intimacy (emotional or sexual) portrayed in each of the situations.

1. Louisa and Ibrahim have been dating for a few months. At the start of their relationship, Louisa was reluctant to let Ibrahim know when something bothered her. She worried that he might take it the wrong way, and she didn't want to hurt his feelings. However, it was important that they each adjust their behaviour to respect the other's needs. For example, Louisa eventually told Ibrahim that she didn't like it when he put his hand on her buttocks in front of her friends.

**Type of intimacy:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. One of my friends told me that he/she has never felt as close to anyone else. That was really nice to hear. I think that he/she really cares for me!

**Type of intimacy:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. Zoey confides in her romantic partner, telling her that she was really happy with their first sexual experience because she felt respected.

**Type of intimacy:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. Samuel is a shy and reserved teenager. He's having a hard time telling his girlfriend that he isn't ready for sex. They've only been dating for a short time.

**Type of intimacy:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. Joachim and Alexis have been dating for a few months. They spend a lot of time together hiking and skateboarding. The other day, Joachim told Alexis that he didn't think he'd ever be able to open up to someone like he has to him, not to mention kiss another person. Joachim feels good with him and is happy that Alexis made the "first move."

**Type of intimacy:** \_\_\_\_\_

6. Beatrice tells you: "I recently had my first sexual experience, and I didn't like it. In fact, I don't think I was ready. Next time I'm going to take my time and wait for the right person—someone I feel comfortable with."

**Type of intimacy:** \_\_\_\_\_

7. Lina is in her room with her two best friends. They're having fun watching videos on social media. Jeanne suggests that they take photos of themselves lifting up their shirts and showing their breasts. "It's empowering," she says.

**Type of intimacy:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Answer sheet: Emotional or sexual intimacy?

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Share the answers with the students; tell them which types of intimacy are portrayed in each situation.

**1. Louisa and Ibrahim.**

*Type of intimacy:* Sexual intimacy... and emotional intimacy

**2. A friend.**

*Type of intimacy:* Emotional intimacy

**3. Zoey.**

*Type of intimacy:* Sexual intimacy... and emotional intimacy

**4. Samuel.**

*Type of intimacy:* Sexual intimacy... and emotional intimacy

**5. Joachim and Alexis.**

*Type of intimacy:* Emotional intimacy... and sexual intimacy

**6. Beatrice.**

*Type of intimacy:* Sexual intimacy... and emotional intimacy

**7. Lina.**

*Type of intimacy:* Sexual intimacy... and emotional intimacy



## SHEET

### 3.3

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Questions on romance, eroticism and pornography

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Cut out the four sets of questions along with the five questions in each set. Then put each set of questions into a separate envelope. These questions relate to romance, eroticism and pornography. You can copy this sheet and give the same set of questions to multiple teams if you have a larger class.**
- › **Divide the class into teams of 3 or 4.**
- › **Tell the class that team members will take turns picking a question at random and answering it to the best of their knowledge. There are no wrong answers. The point is to have a discussion.**
- › **When the teams have finished, have the students join the class again as one group.**

#### Team 1

Is romance old-fashioned?

Why is it important to talk about pornography with people your age?

What is the difference between romance and eroticism?

Do you think it's OK to watch pornography as a teenager?

How might viewing pornography impact how young people look at sexual relations?

Should eroticism be discussed in high school sex education? Explain your answer.



#### Team 2

What's the difference between eroticism and pornography?

Are people your age romantic? If so, in what ways?

Why does our society see pornography as something only adults should be able to access (the law says you must be 18 or over)?

What clichés come to mind when you think of the word "romantic"?

Is it important to talk about eroticism with people your age? Explain your answer.







## Team 3

What is eroticism?

What does a romantic evening look like?

How might viewing pornography affect people your age?

Is erotica only available to adults (people 18 or older)? Explain your answer.

In your opinion, is this image more erotic or romantic? Explain your answer.



## Team 4

Give an example of romance from a movie, book, song, painting or another art form. Why is it romantic?

What is the difference between eroticism and pornography?

Why might people your age be interested in viewing pornography?

Why is it important to talk about what romance means with people your age?

In your opinion, does this advertisement refer more to eroticism or rather to the codes of pornography? Explain your answer.







## SHEET

### 3.4

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Summary table: Distinctions between romance, eroticism and pornography

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › The underlined information in the table is included in the companion slideshow (PPT).
- › The rest is extra information. You can read it and share it with the class if you wish.

#### Criteria: Definition of romance, eroticism and pornography

#### What do these terms refer to?

Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p>Romance is about <u>expressing our feelings through actions, listening, thoughtful gestures, etc.</u> <u>We develop a closeness with the other person by showing them that we're interested in them and that we care about their well-being.</u></p> <p>In romance, there's a desire to get to know the other person gradually, without rushing to be intimate (Gauvreau, 2018).</p> <p>It's the desire to seduce and be seduced, to charm the other person, to enchant them. This dance of seduction is a medley of imagination, trust, sense pleasures and desire (Valiquette, 2000, in Duquet, Gagnon and Faucher, 2010).</p>	<p>Eroticism is about deriving <u>pleasure from emotional and physical intimacy in a climate of respect, equality and affection.</u> <u>There is no eroticism without reciprocity (Jensen, 2004).</u></p> <p>The focus is on the senses <u>and on exploring and discovering sensations and pleasures (e.g., long kissing).</u></p> <p>"Eroticism is more about increasing desire than satisfying it, or not satisfying it too quickly" [Translation] (Dorais, 2010).</p>	<p>Pornography is sexually explicit material (Jensen, 2004) that depicts sexual acts meant to cause sexual arousal (Fil Santé Jeunes, 2020). The focus is on sexual performance (O'Connor, 2013). Can be found in various media (e.g.: paid sites, social networks (OnlyFans), Internet, pop-ups, etc.).</p> <p>A lucrative commercial product (TEDx Talks, 2020; Jensen, 2004). Lack of aestheticism and creativity (Smaniotto and Melchiorre, 2018).</p> <p>Some pornographic films are also a form of "sexploitation." These are films that are mainly focused on the exploitation of sexuality for commercial gain (Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, 2017). This is very different from the sexual activity featured in films for artistic, historical or scientific purposes (Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, 2017).</p>

Criteria: Stereotypes		
What are the related stereotypes?		
Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p><u>Clichés and stereotypes are sometimes present.</u></p> <p>There are numerous gender stereotypes associated with romance, especially in a heterosexual context (e.g., the man must give the woman gifts and pay for dates).</p> <p>Our way of flirting or being romantic depends on our gender and how we see masculinity and femininity (Clark, Oswald and Pedersen, 2021).</p> <p>It's important to be creative and genuine (Valiquette, 2000, in Duquet, Gagnon and Faucher, 2010).</p>	<p><u>Stereotypes and familiar scenarios are sometimes present.</u></p> <p>There are many stereotypes associated with eroticism, pertaining both to adults and youth. Some erotic practices seem widespread, which puts a lot of pressure on young people to be like their peers (Krahé, Bieneck and Scheinberger-Olwig, 2007). Sometimes, people may feel pressured to engage in some of these activities (e.g., massage; sexual play that excites the senses) without really wanting to.</p> <p>It's important to respect our boundaries and our partner's boundaries when engaging in sensual and erotic practices.</p>	<p><u>Pornography features stereotypes related to gender (O'Connor, 2013), race, sexual orientation and certain sexual practices.</u></p> <p>Examples of stereotypes in heterosexual pornography: the man is active, aggressive, dominant and can have sex for hours; the woman is passive and an object of desire for the man (O'Connor, 2013).</p> <p>Examples of stereotypes in male homosexual pornography: penetration is the main focus, even though this is not a universal (Owen &amp; al., 2015).</p>

Criteria: Body representation		
What types of bodies are portrayed?		
Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p><u>The body plays second fiddle to emotional attraction, even though physical attraction may still be involved. We may be charmed by someone's sense of humour, sensitivity, intelligence or uniqueness and fall in love with them.</u></p> <p>Generally, romance does not involve just one specific body type, but in entertainment media such as romantic comedies we often find the stereotype of romantic leads having young, beautiful and slim bodies (Scharaga, 2017).</p> <p>However, romance is not just for people with "perfect" bodies!</p>	<p><u>The body is central to eroticism, as it is the source of physical sensations and pleasure. But the body is also part of a whole that takes the other person into account: their needs, desires, boundaries (CDEACF, n.d.).</u></p> <p>Eroticism does not involve <u>just one specific body type</u>. Everyone can be represented, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, physical condition and sexual orientation (CDEACF, n.d.).</p> <p>Sensuality is available to everyone.</p>	<p><u>The body is a tool and an object of fantasy; it's seen as separate from the actual person (CDEACF, n.d.; Davis, 2015).</u></p> <p><u>Many types of bodies are seen in pornography, but they are often very stereotypical and standardized, based on the industry's beauty standards (e.g., large breasts).</u></p> <p>In general, the bodies in pornography reflect North American beauty standards: young, slim, muscular, no "imperfections" (e.g., wrinkles, cellulite, body hair). And the penis size and breast size of the actors is well above average.</p> <p>Different types of bodies are shown, sometimes in order to counter stigma or for the purposes of sensationalism or fetishization (e.g., trans bodies, overweight people, mature women, etc.) (Anzani &amp; al., 2021; Klumbyte and Smiet, 2015).</p>

### Criteria: Feelings versus nudity

#### How do they handle feelings (the emotional aspect) versus nudity (exposure of genitals)?

Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p><u>In romance, feelings are expressed through actions and attitudes (Valiquette, 2000, in Duquet, Gagnon and Faucher, 2010). Romance is not centered on sexual behaviour or the genitals.</u></p> <p>We can engage in romantic and intimate behaviours with someone without necessarily wanting sexual closeness.</p>	<p><u>Eroticism is characterized by feelings of sensuality (David, 2015). Although it's often narrowly associated with sexual behaviour, eroticism involves using the whole body and all the senses (e.g., attraction, scent, music, touching) to share non-genital erotic experiences.</u></p> <p>It is not just about the genitals, and sexual activity is not seen as the ultimate goal (Dorais, 2010).</p> <p>Eroticism goes beyond reproduction and the genitals and is concerned with flirting, emotional relationships and the reciprocity of desire and pleasure (Gauvreau, 2018).</p>	<p><u>In pornography, sexuality is reduced to genital expressions, with an emphasis on penetration (Tel-Jeunes, 2022a; CDEACF, n.d.). Some of the more realistic sexual practices are hardly ever portrayed (Tel-jeunes, 2022a).</u></p> <p><u>Feelings are generally secondary and unimportant, or excluded altogether.</u></p> <p>There is no interest in the partner's personal history, desires and emotions (e.g., embarrassment, sense of privacy) or in aspects of the relationship.</p>

### Criteria: Realistic quality of the scenario

#### How realistic are the scenarios?

Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p><u>Romantic scenarios are attractive and realistic but sometimes overly romanticized and stereotypical.</u></p> <p>Romance in some entertainment media can reinforce clichés (e.g., giving chocolate on Valentine's Day; luxurious and idealized living environments). In reality, "everyone is unique, and there are as many ways to be romantic as there are feelings" [Translation] (Valiquette, 2000, in Duquet, Gagnon and Faucher, 2010).</p>	<p><u>Erotic scenarios are realistic, but they can also contribute to clichés.</u></p> <p>Eroticism can be a more physical manifestation of our feelings. In eroticism, the body is more involved in the emotional connection, as compared with romance. This connection feels real when we present ourselves as we are, without artifice.</p> <p>Eroticism is sometimes presented as a series of sensual "tips" that, if followed, are guaranteed to please anyone and promise the perfect recipe for a mind-blowing sensual experience. In reality, things are a lot more complicated. For example, while a certain kind of touching may make one person feel good, it may make another person feel uncomfortable.</p>	<p><u>Pornographic scenarios are usually unrealistic.</u></p> <p><u>Pornography doesn't reflect the sexual reality of most people. Pornographic scenes are often over the top (e.g., instant and intense desire and sexual arousal, unrealistically long-lasting sex, many sexual partners, sex without boundaries, intense orgasms every time, loud screams, etc.).</u></p> <p>Pornography is more about exaggeration, intensity, artifice and strong sensations. There may be "stories" and settings, but these serve the fantasy of the "product."</p> <p>This does not reflect the reality of teenagers (CDÉACF, n.d.; Tel-jeunes, 2021), which is characterized by the unfamiliarity, embarrassment and awkwardness of the first stages of an active sex life.</p>

**Criteria: Relationship to emotional and sexual intimacy**

**What is the relationship to emotional and sexual intimacy?**

Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p><u>Emotional intimacy is central to romance. Sexual intimacy may be hinted at, but it's secondary.</u></p> <p>Romance is an expression of our feelings and interest. The goal is not to move toward getting naked or having sex, but rather to gradually get to know one another, nurture a trusting relationship, share closeness, etc.</p>	<p><u>In eroticism, establishing emotional and sexual intimacy allows partners to gradually reveal their sexual selves, and it fuels their imagination and desires. Both types are essential.</u></p> <p>The emphasis is not on sex and the genitals, but rather on sharing, intimacy, trust and respect. There is no pressure to act, but rather an invitation to feel (sensuality).</p>	<p><u>Both emotional and sexual intimacy are absent from pornography.</u></p> <p><u>Intimacy requires a relationship based on trust, respect and the sharing of yourself with another person. Sexuality is not portrayed as something precious and intimate in pornography.</u></p>

**Criteria: Risky behaviours (actions leads to STBBIs, unplanned pregnancy)**

**Do they promote risky behaviours?**

Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p><u>Romance doesn't involve any risk of STBBIs or unplanned pregnancies, as it is more about flirting and being charming.</u></p> <p>However, the romantic context can cause desire and eventually lead to sexual activity.</p>	<p><u>Eroticism may involve a risk of STBBIs and unplanned pregnancy.</u></p> <p>Before deciding to have sex, it is important to discuss contraception and protection against STBBIs (e.g., condoms).</p> <p>This is a shared responsibility, regardless of the type of relationship (e.g., dating, one-night stand).</p>	<p><u>Pornography involves high-risk sexual behaviours, and the actors frequently do not use protection to prevent STBBIs (Kluger, 2014; Rioux Soucy, 2005, in Gagnon, 2007).</u></p> <p><u>However, condoms are used in some pornographic films (Kraus and Rosenberg, 2016).</u></p> <p>On many gay pornography websites, condoms are rarely used. Those who view pornography featuring unprotected sex are themselves less likely to wear condoms during sex (Rosser &amp; al., 2013)</p>

**Criteria: Boundaries**

**How are boundaries handled?**

Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p><u>Respecting your and your partner's sense of privacy and boundaries is an important part of romance.</u></p>	<p><u>Respecting your and your partner's sense of privacy and boundaries is an important part of eroticism.</u></p>	<p><u>Embarrassment, awkwardness, frustration and other emotions commonly experienced in sexual relations are not shown in pornography, and normal practices such as setting personal boundaries and discussing one's desires are absent (Bouchard, 2019; Mead, n.d.).</u></p> <p>Pornography presents a false reality in which everyone is willing to participate in any sexual act at any time, but we don't really know what happens behind the scenes (Chahuneau, 2018).</p>

**Criteria: Violence**

**Is consent considered? Is there violence?**

Romance	Eroticism	Pornography
<p>No violence is present in romance.</p> <p><u>Everything must be based on consent, even outside a sexual context. If a person persists in making "romantic" advances with someone who has made clear that they aren't interested, this could constitute a form of harassment.</u></p> <p>Some people may think that it's OK to be insistent, as sometimes shown in the movies. Certain movies, especially ones from the 90s, show men insisting on gaining a woman's affection (following her home, going to her place of work, etc.). While insisting on sex is clearly unacceptable, so is insisting on texting someone who isn't interested or insisting on talking to them, giving them gifts, asking them out, etc. We have to learn to take no for an answer.</p>	<p>No violence is present in eroticism.</p> <p><u>Eroticism is a shared experience where communication and listening help ensure that both partners feel good.</u></p> <p><u>All sexual activity requires consent.</u></p> <p>Failing to obtain consent is a form of sexual violence.</p>	<p><u>Violence (in various forms) is sometimes present in pornography.</u></p> <p><u>Some pornography features scenes of humiliation and violence (TEDx Talks, 2020).</u></p> <p><u>Some types of pornography combine sexuality with violence (Davis, 2015; Vogels and O'Sullivan, 2019).</u></p> <p><u>Very often, there is no equality, no power balance and there's no mention of consent. The sexual partner is made into an object whose only job is to give pleasure (Smaniotta and Melchiorre, 2018).</u></p> <p><u>Consent is always required, but this is not usually shown in the pornography itself (Mead, n.d.).</u></p> <p>Violence is portrayed as fantasy, but actors and actresses may actually experience violence in some cases (Brennan, 2017).</p> <p>When pornography includes violent scenes, this serves to normalize, trivialize or eroticize violence, without regard to those who experience violence or who will go on to experience it (Jensen, 2021).</p> <p>Moreover, some violent sexual practices seem to be widespread (e.g., erotic asphyxiation, gang bang, etc.), but these are fringe, violent activities that carry real risks (TEDx Talks, 2019).</p>





## SHEET

### 3.5

FOR THE GROUP

## Excerpts from songs and poems on the topic of sexual intimacy

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Individually read the six excerpts on the topics of desire, sexual intimacy and pleasure.

#### Excerpt. 1

##### Song: "Crazy Love"

(Van Morrison, 1970)

**Van Morrison:**

Irish singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist

**Themes:**

Longing, desire, pleasure, lovemaking, etc.

*I can hear her heartbeat from a thousand miles  
Hear the heavens open every time she smiles  
And when I come to her that's where I belong  
Yet, I'm run into to her like a river strong*

[...]

*And when I'm returning from so far away  
She gives me sweet sweet lovin', brighten up my day  
It make me righteous and it makes me whole  
Makes me mellow, down into my soul*

*She, she gives me love, love, love, love, crazy love*

#### Excerpt no. 2

##### Song: "Belle"

(Plamondon, 2001)

**Luc Plamondon:**

Québec lyricist and music executive

**Themes:**

Forbidden or repressed desire, sensuality, lust, etc.

*Oh, Lucifer!  
Let me, just once,  
Run my fingers through Esmeralda's locks.*

*O, Virgin Mary!  
Let me, just once,  
Open the door to Esmeralda's secret garden.*



<b>Excerpt no. 3</b> <b>Song: “The Power of Love”</b> (Frankie Goes to Hollywood, 1984)		<b>Excerpt no. 4</b> <b>Poem: “Love and Sleep”</b> (Swinburne, 1866)	
<b>Frankie Goes to Hollywood:</b> English pop band from the 1980s	<b>Themes:</b> Feelings of love, desire, lovemaking, etc.	<b>Algernon Charles Swinburne:</b> English poet and critic (1837-1909)	<b>Themes:</b> Desire, lust, lovemaking.
<i>I'll protect you from the hooded claw          Keep the vampires from your door          When the chips are down I'll be around          With my undying, death-defying love for you          Envy will hurt itself          Let yourself be beautiful          Sparkling love, flowers          And pearls and pretty girls          Love is like an energy          Rushin' an' rushin' inside of me, eh</i>		<i>And all her face was honey          to my mouth,          And all her body pasture          to mine eyes;          The long lithe arms and hotter hands than fire,          The quivering flanks, hair smelling of the south,          The bright light feet, the splendid supple thighs          And glittering eyelids of my soul's desire.</i>	
<b>Excerpt no. 5</b> <b>Poem: “At the Touch of You”</b> (Bynner, 1917)		<b>Excerpt no. 6</b> <b>Poem: “Bonjour tendresse”</b> (Salomé, 1992)	
<b>Witter Bynner:</b> American poet (1881-1968)	<b>Themes:</b> Surrender, lust, sexual activity.	<b>Jacques Salomé:</b> French writer and psychologist	<b>Themes:</b> Self-surrender and sexual arousal.
<i>At the touch of you,          As if you were an archer with your swift hand at the bow,          The arrows of delight shot through my body.</i>		<i>There is no sun without the glow of your skin,          there is no night without the longing of your arms</i>	

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# SECONDARY 5

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## Secondary 5 - Session 1

### Sexual Diversity and Gender Pluralism “Define Yourself On Your Own Terms!”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Comprehensive View of Sexuality</b>	<p><b>Become aware of the different facets of yourself so you can embrace your sexuality all your life.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Be able to make decisions, assert yourself, articulate your needs and wishes</li> <li>› Be able to examine the ways you express your sexuality.</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional and romantic life</b>	<p><b>Become aware of what supports the establishment and maintenance of meaningful interpersonal and romantic relationships.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Capacity for emotional intimacy: maintenance of your identity and a self-image consistent with your values and personality, openness about yourself and acceptance of the other person.</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MESS, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good lifestyle habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Citizenship and Community Life:</b> To ensure that students take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop a spirit of openness to the world and respect for diversity.</p>	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Search for Meaning and World Views

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Study a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Circumscribe</li> <li>› Evaluate knowledge</li> <li>› Analyze social relationships</li> <li>› Exhibit enriched understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>To reflect on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identify the ethical dimension of a situation</li> </ul> <p><b>To examine a variety of points of view</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Develop a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Study the different factors that allow people to embrace their sexuality throughout life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Ability to make decisions and assert self</li> <li>› Ability to be introspective about the expression of own sexuality</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on the tensions between the norms related to expressing own sexuality, own personal experience and self-perception</b></p>



## Educational Goals

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**Session length:**  
105 minutes

**Help the students gain a better understanding of sexual diversity and gender pluralism (vocabulary, issues, realities, etc.) and reflect on the role of allies in supporting, accepting and including LGBTQ+ people.**

- 1. Discuss** how they understand and define the concept of diversity.
- 2. Distinguish** between various concepts related to sexual diversity and gender pluralism (SDGP).
- 3. Respond** to myths and prejudices related to sexual diversity and gender pluralism.
- 4. Discuss** the impact and consequences of certain sexual norms on the way we and others form, express and accept our sexual identity.
- 5. Propose** respectful and kind ways of responding to challenges faced by people who identify as LGBTQ+ or don't identify as such.
- 6. Define** the concept of ally.
- 7. Discuss** daily actions that can be taken to show openness and support for LGBTQ+ people.



## Sequence



This **105-min.** session has **four activities**.

5 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Brainstorming:</b> What is diversity?</li> <li>› <b>Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Teens talk about diversity”</li> </ul>
40 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activities:</b> Key terms related to sexual diversity and gender pluralism</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 1.1: LGBTQ+...?</i></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Sexual Orientation, Behavior and Identity”</li> </ul>
30 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Situational exercises <i>Sheet 1.2: Situational Exercise: Lennox</i> <i>Sheet 1.3: Situational Exercise: Nora</i> <i>Sheet 1.4: Situational Exercise: Madison</i> <i>Sheet 1.5: Answer sheet: Situational Exercises: Lennox, Nora and Madison</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Group activity:</b> Myth or fact?</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
10 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Key messages from the session</li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** (PPT) throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

This session will focus on sexual diversity and gender pluralism. This can be a delicate subject because it has to do with personal identity. These topics will be discussed in clear terms, but students will not have to talk about the details of their private lives or answer personal questions.

Students may tell you about difficult personal situations (e.g., uncertainty over their sexual orientation or gender identity, discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity—homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, etc.—microaggressions, incidents of verbal, psychological, physical and/or sexual violence, etc.). It’s important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the Resources section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.



## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



5 MIN.



BRAINSTORMING



PRESENTATION



VIDEO

### Session introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Next, **tell** the students that the topic of the session is diversity—specifically, sexual diversity and gender pluralism (SDGP). The session will cover the vocabulary of SDGP, the realities and challenges associated with identifying as LGBTQIA2S+ and inclusive attitudes and practices the students can adopt.

### Brainstorm

- › To begin the session, **write** the word “Diversity” on the blackboard.
- › Next, **ask** the students the following question:
  - **In your opinion, what does the word “diversity” mean?**
- › **Write** their answers on the blackboard.

### Presentation

- › Next, **add** to the students’ answers using the information below:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

##### Diversity is...

- › “The quality of a heterogenous set of people who, in a given environment, differ from one another in their traits—specifically those traits which are social, cultural, physical or mental in nature” [Translation] (OQLF, 2019a).
- › In other words, diversity refers to everything that makes someone different from others; it’s what makes them unique.



- › Diversity takes many forms. Here are some of the dimensions of diversity (OQLF, 2019a):
  - Age
  - Sex
  - Ethnicity, culture and religion
  - Beliefs and values
  - Language
  - Gender identity and sexual orientation
  - Abilities
  - Disability (intellectual, physical, sensory, etc.)
  - Socio-economic status
- › Physical traits (weight, height, colour and texture of hair and skin, etc.)
  - Etc.

## Video

- › **End** the activity by presenting a video that depicts young people discussing what diversity means to them.

### Teens talk about diversity (USA TODAY, 2014)

**Length:** 5 min., 42 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFNuRJm4LMs>**



.....→  
Video



- › After the video, **ask** the following question:
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**

- › Tell the students that the next activities will focus mainly on “sexual diversity and gender pluralism.” These are concepts that relate to sexual and gender minorities—in other words, “individuals and groups who are considered minorities due to their body or body appearance, sexual behaviours, sexual orientation, gender identity or a family background that is not aligned with cultural norms surrounding sexuality and gender [...]” [Translation] (Laforest and al., 2018).



# 2

## Activity 2



SLIDESHOW (PPT)  
SHEET 1.1



40 MIN.



TEAM  
ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION



VIDEO

- › This second activity of the session will focus on different concepts drawn from the vocabulary of sexual diversity and gender pluralism.

### Team activity

- › First, **ask** the students to get into teams of two.
- › Next, **give** the following instructions:
  - In this speed activity, we'll look at various words and concepts related to sexual diversity and gender pluralism.
  - Taking turns, give your partner a short definition or explanation of each word/concept displayed on the slideshow (PPT).
  - You'll be given about 30 seconds per concept.
  - Once all the concepts have been presented, we'll discuss and clarify the definitions as a class.

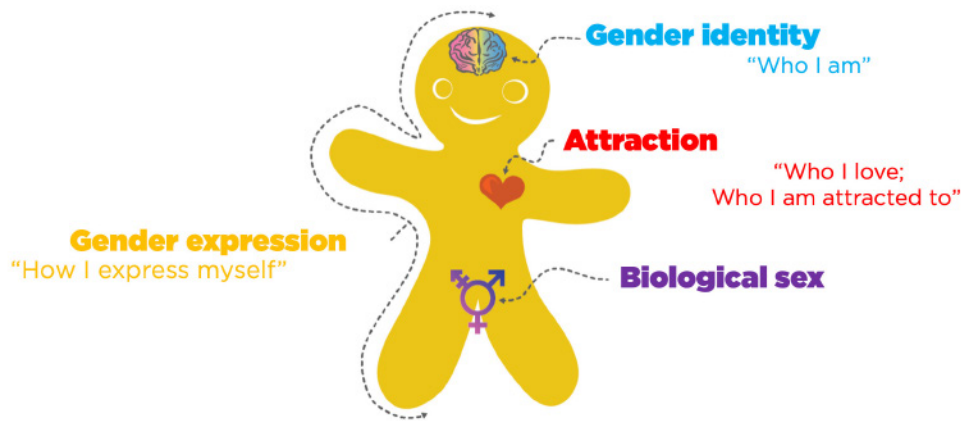
### Discussion and Presentation

- › As a class, **define** each of the concepts from the previous speed activity using the information on Sheet 1.1: *LGBTQ+...?*

#### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

After presenting the definitions related to gender identity and sexual orientation (ending with the definition for "Asexual"), show the students *The Genderbread Person* (The Genderbread Person, 2017), which summarizes the different components of a person's identity.





› Next, **ask** the students the following questions:

- **What are your takeaways from this activity?**

*Get their opinions.*

› Next, **share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The vocabulary of sexual diversity and gender pluralism is constantly evolving and varies based on a society's culture, history and language. Many different words, concepts and acronyms could be used to define various identities and sexual orientations, and no one term is better than another.
- › It's normal to feel a little confused when you're exposed to these words for the first time, as they may seem new or unfamiliar. Keep in mind that these words allow us to understand a broader array of identities and freely identify with them, or not. These are personal choices that we make for ourselves.
- › How we identify and what makes sense to us can change over time; our sexual preferences, romantic feelings and sexual orientation can evolve over the course of our lives. But this doesn't happen overnight. We may have experiences and encounters that cause us to reconsider who we're attracted to and how we define ourselves (our identity).

## Video

- › **Present** a funny video that uses the analogy of ice cream flavours to illustrate the diversity of gender identities and sexual orientations.

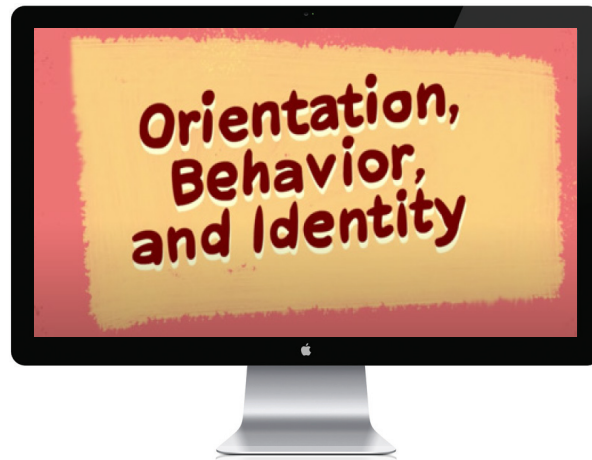
### **Sexual Orientation, Behavior and Identity (AMAZE Org, 2021)**

**Length:** 2 min., 39 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvJETydN8Vc>



Video



## Discussion

- › Next, **lead** a discussion using the following questions:

- **What are your takeaways from this video?**
- **What are your takeaways from this activity?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **End** the activity by sharing the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Some expressions are very precise and describe a specific reality with regard to sexual diversity and gender pluralism. But there are also “umbrella terms” that are used to group together these various realities (CCGQ, 2014; Veltman and Chaimowitz, 2014):
  - **LGBTQ+:** Umbrella term that encompasses all sexual and gender minorities.
  - **QUEER:** Umbrella term that encompasses anyone who identifies as non-cisgender.
  - **GENDER MINORITY:** Umbrella term that encompasses non-binary people, trans people, two-spirit people, queer people and those questioning their sexuality.
- › Key points:
  - Educating yourself is a process. It takes time to understand these words and concepts and integrate them into your vocabulary. By doing so, you allow LGBTQ+ people to feel like their realities and experiences are being heard, acknowledged, understood and respected.



## Activity 3



**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**  
**SHEETS 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 AND 1.5**



**30 MIN.**



**TEAM  
ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION**

### Team activity

- › For the next activity, **tell** the students to remain with their partner from the previous activity.
- › **Hand out** one of the three situational exercises for this activity (Sheet 1.2: *Situational exercise: Lennox*; Sheet 1.3: *Situational Exercise: Nora*; and Sheet 1.4: *Situational exercise: Madison*).
- › **Tell** the students that they have 10 minutes to respond to each situation. Specifically, they will give their opinion on the situation and discuss possible reactions. Each team will need to choose a spokesperson to share the answers with the group. You can read over the instructions on Sheet 1.2 with them.
- › When the 10 minutes are up, before reviewing each of the situations, **ask** the group the following question:
  - **For people your age, what’s the impact of being different or being seen as different by your peers, teammates, classmates, family, etc.?**
  - **What are the risks and advantages of being different or being seen as different?**
- › Next, **share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Socially, certain qualities tend to be “expected” and others “prohibited” when it comes to sex and gender. What are the risks of having “prohibited” qualities as part of your gender identity?
  - Being made fun of, marginalized, rejected, feeling at war with yourself, being vulnerable, etc.
- › There are also advantages to not having “expected” qualities as part of your gender identity.
  - You may gain a new perspective on yourself, evolve, shed a self-image that doesn’t suit you, discover new paths, inspire respect and admiration, etc.

- › Next, **tell** the students that you're going to discuss how each of the characters in the situations is impacted by the fact that they're different. **Ask** the spokespeople for the teams that had Situational exercise 1.2 (Lennox) to share their answers for each of the questions. **Do** the same for Situational exercise 1.3 (Nora) and Situational exercise 1.4 (Madison).
- › **Add** to their answers with the suggested content for each situational exercise (see Sheet 1.5 – *Answer Sheet: Lennox, Nora and Madison: Situational Exercises*, which consolidates the information and examples for each situation).

## Discussion and Presentation

- › Next, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and **get** the students' answers:
  - **In your opinion, why is it important to be kind and respectful toward people who identify as LGBTQ+?**
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Like environmentalism, equity and social justice—all causes for which youth are agents of change—the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people begins with the understanding that we all, as citizens, have a role to play in creating a welcoming, kind and respectful environment for people who identify as LGBTQ+.
- › Being an agent of change doesn't mean understanding and accepting everything without having questions or being critical. It's about being open toward people who are different from us and accepting them as they are, instead of being judgemental (MEES, 2019). If we feel safe and comfortable doing so, we can also stand up for someone being treated unfairly and speak out against such actions, whether in conversations with those around us or on social media (MEES, 2019).
- › In short, being kind and respectful toward LGBTQ+ people means being sensitive to how they feel or may feel in a given situation by choosing to respect who they are.
- › A society that becomes a “safe space” (a place where people from a minority group or community can express themselves freely, without fear of judgement, discrimination or retaliation) [Translation] (OQLF, 2019b) for people who identify as LGBTQ+ takes concrete actions to ensure that they don't experience humiliation, bullying and violence. This allows LGBTQ+ people to enjoy their lives, thrive and have dreams for the future.



## Activity 4



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MIN.



GROUP  
ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION  
AND PRESENTATION

### Group activity and Presentation

- › **Tell** the students that you will be doing a “myth or fact” survey about sexual diversity and gender pluralism. The students will raise their hands to say whether they think each statement is a myth or a fact.
- › As a group, **read** the first statement. Then, **ask** them: “*Do you think it’s a myth or a fact?*”
- › **Let** them take a position and **add** to the information below.
- › **Repeat** the same steps for the following statements.

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Statement 1: A gay or lesbian person who doesn’t “come out” must be dealing with internalized homophobia.**
  - **MYTH:** Just because someone isn’t open about being gay or lesbian doesn’t mean that they’re ashamed of their sexuality. “Some people are comfortable with keeping their emotional and romantic life “in the dark” or private, while others want to show it proudly. Sometimes people are more comfortable with hiding that part of their life or delaying their coming out. They do this to protect themselves from judgement and discrimination. While these strategies for coming out and these motivations are different, one is not more right than another” (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022).
  - There are also cases where people don’t feel safe coming out. “LGBTQ+ youth often have fears associated with revealing their sexual orientation or gender identity. They are particularly afraid that their loved ones will be disappointed, will oppose what they are saying, won’t take them seriously or will reject them” [Translation] (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022). In some families, parents’ values and beliefs and the things they teach their children do not always send positive messages about sexual diversity and gender pluralism. As a result, some young people may be unsure whether they can count on their parents to support them if they were to come out—for example, in families where homosexuality is seen as a bad thing or as unacceptable (Coalition des familles LGBT, n.d.). Conversely, in some families, when a young person comes out, they’re treated with respect and there’s no “drama.”



- Sexual orientation is a personal matter. Everyone gets to decide for themselves when they're comfortable talking about it and with whom.
- If you're experiencing a lot of uncertainty, discomfort or even distress about your sexual orientation or sexual identity, you can always consult a support worker or organizations that support the LGBTQ+ community.

› **Statement 2: It's harder for bisexual people to be in a committed long-term relationship.**

- **MYTH:** A person's sexual orientation tells you nothing about their level of commitment and faithfulness in a romantic relationship. This is something that varies from person to person, depending on their past dating experiences, the models they had for romantic relationships as children or teens, the way they feel about the relationship with the other person, their perceptions and expectations of a romantic relationship, their personal values and beliefs, etc.
- Since bisexual people may appear to have a larger pool of potential romantic partners, their partners may feel threatened, and they may be extra vigilant. In such cases, it's important to explore the reasons for this insecurity (e.g., anxiety, control, jealousy), and this can be done through healthy communication.
- A person's sexual orientation does not influence whether or not they will be faithful. Regardless of sexual orientation, when a person decides to make a commitment, it's because they value the relationship they share with the other person and feel safe and happy with them.

› **Statement 3: Being trans isn't a new phenomenon** (Interligne, 2021).

- **FACT:** While it may seem like more and more people have started identifying as trans, in fact, "this phenomenon has always been present in cultures around the world, but hasn't left much trace in history" [Translation] (Interligne, 2021). "Other cultures recognize a third gender. Examples are two-spirit people in Indigenous communities in North America as well as Hijra—communities of non-binary people with traditional roles—in South Asia" [Translation] (Blakemore, 2022). The fact is that, in the past, people didn't speak openly about these matters and didn't have the vocabulary to describe these identities" [Translation] (Parr, 2021).
- Today, as we have a better understanding of the realities of trans people and the challenges they face, and as trans people have greater visibility and inclusion in society, they may feel more secure and comfortable and may have less fear and concern over freely expressing their gender. This leads more trans people to live openly and show their true selves (Parr, 2021).

› **Statement 4: In a homosexual relationship, one person plays the masculine role and the other plays the feminine role** (Interligne, 2021).

- **MYTH:** This way of looking at romantic relationships comes from the heterosexual relationship model. Under this model, each partner's role within a couple is based on their gender, and the masculine and feminine gender are viewed as distinct and complementary (Interligne, 2021). Under this heterosexual model, behaviours, interests, preferences and attitudes are attributed to people based on their gender identity (Dorais, 2019). But things have changed a lot over time. Modern societies have been questioning and updating certain roles that were considered stereotypical. Over the past fifty years, the spectrum of roles associated with each gender has greatly expanded.
- "In all relationships, whether the partners are the same gender or not, gender roles will vary based on the individuals and their personalities and what feels most comfortable for each person" [Translation] (Interligne, 2021).

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Lead** a discussion using the following question and **get** the students' answers:
  - **“What are your takeaways from this activity?”**
  - **Why do you think it's important to question the meaning and relevance of certain social norms associated with sexuality (e.g., sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression)?**
- › Next, **share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Right from childhood, the people around us (e.g., family, friends, classmates), the media (e.g., ads, movies, social media) and societal structures (e.g., school, community, the legal system) present us with specific social, cultural, physical, psychological and sexual norms, and these are seen as the status quo—in other words, as being “normal,” “acceptable,” “natural” and expected. The repeated exposure to these messages influences the way we see and construct the world. It also influences how we perceive and interact with others and how we perceive ourselves.
- › What's more, having this “single mould” imposed on us, and feeling that we need to conform to gain social acceptance and recognition, can make it hard for us to get to know ourselves and learn who we truly are. Whether we like it or not, these external influences impact our attitudes, behaviours, preferences and so on, as they become invisible to us over time. As a result, it can become difficult to recognize and analyze some of these norms.
- › Given this, diversity is often associated with traits that make us different from the majority of people. This way of looking at diversity can lead to negative attitudes (e.g., fear, shame, contempt) and problematic behaviours (e.g., discrimination, bullying, violence) toward people who don't correspond or identify with the norm: such people may be perceived as “troublesome,” “atypical” or even “abnormal.”
- › Based on a study on homophobia, biphobia and transphobia that surveyed over 4,000 secondary students in Canada, 62% of LGBTQ+ students don't feel safe at school, compared with 11% of cisgender, heterosexual students, and this is because they experience various forms of harassment and bullying (Peter and al., 2021).
- › Questioning certain norms is justified when done to ensure that nobody is at risk of humiliation or violence just because they differ from the norm.

- › **Present** the students with the following questionnaire, which focuses on how heterosexuality tends to be seen as the norm with regard to sexual orientation, and **get** the opinions after.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Questionnaire on heterosexuality (Cormier, 1995)

To be read only by people who “suffer” from heterosexuality

- › What is the cause of your heterosexuality?
- › Have you already told your parents and friends that you’re heterosexual?
- › Do you think your heterosexuality may just be a phase?
- › Did you decide to become heterosexual because of a failed romance with someone of the same gender or simply because you’ve been rejected by people of the same gender?
- › Do you think a positive homosexual experience could fix your “problem”?
- › When and how did you first realize you were heterosexual?
- › What do you do in bed?
- › How can you say you aren’t homosexual if you’ve never tried it?

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Created in 1995 by the *Association of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Students of Université de Montréal, HEC, Polytechnique* (Cormier, 1995), this questionnaire, which is still relevant 30 years later, gets respondents to put themselves in another’s shoes. This type of exercise shines light on the norm in question. “The objective is to reframe certain remarks that are commonly made, as a way to get people to think about the norm and what we take for granted.” [Translation] (Richard, 2018, p. 7)



## Presentation

- › After getting the students' opinions, **end** the activity by sharing the information below, which presents the perspectives of the LGB university students who created the questionnaire in 1995:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Why is heterosexuality never questioned in this way? Why do we never ask ourselves these questions?
- › “Was that questionnaire kind of dumb? It does feel pretty strange to answer those questions. And yet these are the same sorts of questions that gay, lesbian and bisexual people get asked because of their sexuality. Even if these questions aren't intended to deliberately hurt or make fun of the other person, they still have a negative connotation and convey disapproval” [Translation] (Cormier, 1995).
- › “Fundamentally, there is little difference between heterosexual and homosexual people. We're all human beings with the same basic needs, including the need for love and affection. We can't control our sexual impulses. We need to accept them as they are. Homosexuality isn't a disease. But refusing to accept homosexuality can be become one” [Translation] (Cormier, 1995).



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



10 MIN.



DISCUSSION



PRESENTATION

- › **Ask** the group about their takeaways from this session.
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**
  - **Have you ever thought about whether you're in a kind environment, surrounded by people who respect and embrace difference—including the things that make you and your friends different?**
    - **In your opinion, what are good criteria for determining that an environment is open to difference?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › Then, **lead** a discussion using the following questions and **get** their answers:
  - **In your opinion, why is it important to educate people your age about sexual diversity and gender pluralism?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › Next, **share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### The importance of education on sexual diversity and gender pluralism

- › Learning about sexual diversity and gender pluralism, no matter our age, exposes us to the realities and challenges of under-represented groups. Understanding the challenges and experiences of LGBTQ+ people represents a big step toward living in a society that values inclusion and diversity.
- › Everyone, including young people your age, has an active role to play in making our society more CARING, RESPECTFUL and INCLUSIVE when it comes to sexual diversity and gender pluralism.

#### Being an ally

- › And this role may be that of an ally. An ally is a “person outside a community who is recognized by the members of that community as someone who advocates for their rights (e.g., a heterosexual person who feels affected by or concerned about the realities of LGBTQ+ communities and stands up for their causes)” [Translation] (Lafortune, n.d.). Being an ally is mainly about educating yourself, listening to others and supporting LGBTQ+ people.

› Allies who support diversity can show their openness and provide support in various ways (Tel-jeunes, 2021; 2022):

- **Recognize and respond:**

- The first step is to recognize that we all have prejudices, and then to correct them.
- Express your distaste for discriminatory acts or remarks made toward others.
- Avoid assuming another person's gender identity or who they're attracted to. You can ask them how they identify. You can also find out what pronouns they use (she, he, they, etc.).
- Etc.

- **Educate yourself and others:**

- Learn about the current challenges of marginalized groups.
- Meet people who are different from you.
- Talk with those around you (family members, friends) about the importance of diversity.
- Etc.

- **Support and encourage:**

- Give marginalized people the chance to speak.
- Get involved in activities that promote inclusion.
- Refer people to other resources. (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, n.d.)
- Etc.

› Being an ally means you “believe that all humans, regardless of their age, sex, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, should be treated with dignity and respect” (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, n.d.).

› **Add** to what they say with these **KEY MESSAGES**:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Diversity, in all its forms, makes the world richer.
- › All of us, whether or not we identify as LGBTQ+, have unique qualities and should feel free to affirm and display who we really are, without feeling guilty or ashamed or afraid to be true to ourselves!
- › Just because someone is gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, etc., doesn't automatically mean that they feel discriminated against and distressed. But it's still important for them to be surrounded by positive role models who inspire them and allies who support them.
- › By joining forces and working together, we can create a future that is more respectful, kind and inclusive with regard to diversity. And the future starts with you!



## LGBTQ+?

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a class, define the words/concepts from the activity using the information below.

## KEY TERMS

### Sexual diversity and gender pluralism

**Biological sex:** Refers to certain sexual characteristics we are born with or develop later, including genitalia, body shape, tone of voice, body hair, hormones, chromosomes, etc. There are several synonyms for this term: “sex,” “anatomical sex,” “sex assigned at birth,” etc.

**Intersex:** Someone with physical sexual characteristics that do not reflect the typical social and medical norms for “female” and “male” bodies. These characteristics may relate to physical appearance, genitalia, hormones or chromosomes. In the past, the term “hermaphrodite” was used to refer to a person born with a combination of typically male and female sexual characteristics. However, this term is now considered outdated and inaccurate.

**Gender:** A person’s status in society as a man, woman or non-binary person. Gender can be influenced by psychological, behavioural, social and cultural factors. A person’s gender

is not determined by the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Gender expression:** The way we present our gender to others through our actions, clothing and attitude, and the way these codes are interpreted based on a society’s gender norms.

**Gender identity:** A term that refers to the gender a person identifies with, regardless of the sex they were assigned at birth and their gender expression. Gender identity is an intimate and personal experience and may change as you go through life. You’re the only one who can affirm your gender identity (self-identification).

**Gender binary:** The idea that gender is divided into two fixed and separate categories (man and woman), instead of broken down into various identities and expressions.

*(Blais, 2017; Dubuc, 2017; Government of Canada, 2019; Interligne, 2021; The Genderbread Person, 2017)*



# KEY TERMS

## Sexual diversity and gender pluralism

**Non-binary:** Refers to gender identities that fall outside of the exclusive man/woman binary. Non-binary people can feel like they are neither male nor female, or they may feel that they are both or any combination of the two.

**Gender-fluid:** Refers to someone whose gender and/or gender expression shifts from time to time.

**Trans:** An umbrella term that encompasses a variety of identities held by people whose gender identity doesn't match the sex or gender they were assigned at birth. This category includes non-binary people. A trans person can be heterosexual, gay, bisexual, queer or any other sexual orientation. "TRANS-" comes from Latin and means "beyond," "through" or "across." It conveys the notion of passage, change or being outside of a category.

**Transsexual:** A term considered outdated due its medical connotation and which was used to refer to people who, in their transition process, had undergone or planned to undergo certain medical treatments such as hormone therapy or surgical procedures.

**Trans woman:** A person who identifies as female but was assigned the male sex at birth.

**Trans man:** A person who identifies as male but was assigned the female sex at birth.

**Transition:** A process in which a trans person undergoes changes that reflect their felt gender. Transitioning is a complex, multi-phase process that may stretch out over several years. A person can transition socially (e.g., coming out, changing their first name, pronouns, style of dress, etc.), legally (e.g., having their name or sex designation changed on official documents) or medically (e.g., hormone therapy and surgery). These different areas of transition are independent of one another. Keep in mind that every transition is unique, and transitioning is not a mandatory step to identifying as a transgender person.

**Misgendering:** The act (intentional or non-intentional) of referring to a person using a name, pronoun or greeting that does not reflect their gender identity. Trans and non-binary people are especially affected by misgendering, and it can invalidate their experiences and identity.

*(Dubuc, 2017; Government of Canada, 2019; Interligne, 2021; Médico, 2019; Office québécois de la langue française, 2021; The Genderbread Person, 2017)*



# KEY TERMS

## Sexual diversity and gender pluralism

**Cisgender:** “CIS” is a latin prefix that means “on this side.” As opposed to “trans,” “cisgender” is used to refer to people who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. A simple way of thinking about it is that if a person is not transgender, they’re cisgender.

**Sexual orientation:** A combination of several types of attraction (physical, sexual, emotional, romantic and intellectual) that a person may feel toward a group or multiple groups of people. Homosexuality, heterosexuality and bisexuality are generally recognized sexual orientations.

**Lesbian:** A woman who feels sexually, emotionally and romantically attracted to women. A non-binary person may also identify as a lesbian.

**Gay:** A man who feels sexually, emotionally and romantically attracted to men. A non-binary person may identify as gay. Some homosexual women identify as gay women.

**Bisexual:** Someone who is sexually, emotionally and romantically attracted to

people of their own gender as well as the other genders.

**LGBT:** The term “gay community” was replaced by “LGBT” to encompass lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans identities.

**LGBTQ+:** Today, the preferred term is LGBTQ+, which encompasses more identities, including queer, intersex, asexual, agender (someone who doesn’t identify with a gender) and pansexual (someone who is attracted to all genders).

**Queer:** The Anglo-Saxon term “queer,” which originally meant “bizarre” or “strange” and was used to refer to women with masculine traits or men with feminine traits, was reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community and became a symbol of self-determination and liberation rather than an insult. It refers to any idea, practice, person or identity that differs from the binary view of gender.

*(Blais, 2017; Dubuc, 2017; Government of Canada, 2019; Interligne, 2021; The Genderbread Person, 2017)*

# KEY TERMS

## Sexual diversity and gender pluralism

**Pansexual:** Someone who is sexually, emotionally and romantically attracted to people of any and all genders.

**Two-spirit:** A North American Indigenous person who has both a feminine and masculine spirit. This term reflects the complex understanding that Indigenous people have of gender and sexuality. A person who is not of Indigenous descent should not use this term to self-identify.

**Aromantic:** Someone who feels no or very little romantic attraction but who may feel sexual attraction. This category could include people who feel romantic attraction only after being sexually intimate with someone (demiromantic).

**Asexual:** Someone who feels no or very little attraction or sexual desire but may feel romantic or emotional attraction. This category may include people who feel desire only after having created a strong emotional bond (demisexual).

**Heteronormativity:** The belief that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is preferable and superior to all other sexual orientations.

**Homophobia:** Any negative attitude that can lead to discrimination (harassment, rejection, violence, etc.) toward a person or a group of people on the basis of their sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation. Homophobia encompasses lesbophobia, gayphobia and biphobia. Homophobia can affect anyone whose appearance or behaviour does not conform to gender stereotypes. The suffix “phobia” is “used to form words indicating fear, aversion, hate, rejection or discrimination toward something or someone” [Translation] (Wiktionnaire, 2022).

**Transphobia:** Any negative attitude that can lead to discrimination (harassment, rejection, violence, etc.) toward a trans person or people who do not conform to stereotypes of masculinity or femininity.

**Internalized homophobia:** Feelings of guilt, shame or self-hatred in response to one’s sexual orientation, identity or behaviours, which do not conform to the heteronormative model.

*(Dubuc, 2017; Fondation Émergence, 2022; Government of Canada, 2019; Interligne, 2021; Richard, 2019; The Genderbread Person, 2017)*



## SHEET

### 1.2

#### FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Lennox

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read “Part 1” of the situation and answer the questions provided. Do the same thing for “Part 2.”
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

#### Part 1 – Lennox

For several weeks, a group of students have been saying that Lennox is a “pansy” and looks like a “fag” with his skinny jeans, nail polish and earrings.

- › What do you think of this situation?
- › How do you think Lennox will be impacted by his peer group’s view that he’s different?

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#### Part 2 – Lennox

Lennox has been your best friend since elementary school, and you know him well enough to see that something is wrong. He tells you he doesn’t want to go to basketball practice because of what people are saying to him at school. Also, his mom has sent you a few texts saying that she’s worried about Lennox because she often sees him alone and crying.

- › What do you think of this situation?
- › As Lennox’s best friend, how might you react to his situation?

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## SHEET

### 1.3

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Nora

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read “Part 1” of the situation and answer the questions provided. Do the same thing for “Part 2.”
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

#### Part 1 – Nora

Nora has been doing a lot of thinking lately. She tells you that she feels like she isn't like the other girls. You ask her why she feels this way. Is it because of how she dresses? Her attitude? Her interests? You also reassure her it's OK to be different from others. Nora is quick to respond, “No, it's more than that.”

- › What do you think of this situation?
- › What do you think it's like for Nora to feel that she's different from her peer group?

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#### Part 2 – Nora (Robin)

Nora has been your best friend since elementary school, and you're very close. They tell you that they would like to be called Robin now and to use the boy's bathroom at school. They say that this would make them feel more comfortable. However, they're afraid that others would make fun of them and harass them. They also mention that they haven't spoken to their parents about all of this.

- › What do you think of this situation?
- › As a best friend, how might you react to them situation?

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## SHEET

### 1.4

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Madison

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read “Part 1” of the situation and answer the questions provided. Do the same thing for “Part 2.”
- › Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the whole group.

#### Part 1 – Madison

Madison, one of your teammates in your school improv league, has updated the bio on her Instagram<sup>®</sup> account to say that she’s questioning her sexual orientation.

- › What do you think of this situation?
- › What do you think it will be like for Madison to be seen as different from her peers, now that she has publicly revealed that she’s questioning her sexual orientation?

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#### Part 2 – Madison

As you don’t know exactly what’s going on, you talk to Madison. She says that she still isn’t sure who she’s attracted to and that she wants to try every option before she makes a decision. She adds that her cousin who’s in university told her that it’s normal to want to have sexual experiences with a girl and that this would help her make the right decision.

- › What do you think of this situation?
- › How might you react to Madison’s situation?

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**SHEET**

**1.5**

**FOR SESSION  
LEADERS**

## Answer Sheet: Situational exercises: Lennox, Nora and Madison

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Hand out one of the three situational exercises (Lennox, Nora or Madison) to each of the teams.**
- › **Tell the students that, as a team, they will read the situation assigned to them, then respond the questions provided. A spokesperson will share their answers.**
- › **Get the information provided by the teams.**
- › **Next, add to the students' answers using the information below.**

#### › **Impact of being different or being perceived as different by one's peer group**

##### **1. Lennox**

- The group of students making homophobic remarks about Lennox assume that he's gay because of his look, which doesn't conform to their image of masculinity. However, they don't actually know Lennox's sexual orientation.
- "LGBTQ+ people come in all shapes, styles and personalities, just like cisgender and heterosexual people. Not all people in the LGBTQ+ community fit the stereotype society has of them. So you cannot assume their sexual orientation or identity based on these stereotypes" [Translation] (Interligne, 2021).
- The only way to know if someone is LGBTQ+ is when they identify as such (self-identification).
- And keep in mind this "label" for their sexual orientation only tells you who they're romantically and sexually attracted to—nothing more. There are so many other facets to their personality, including their relationship with their family, their plans for the future (studies, work), their sense of humour, their perspective on friendship and romantic relationships, their values, their past experiences (positive or negative), their favourite sports and hobbies and their talents.
- While a person's sexual orientation, whatever it is, may be important, it's only one part of who they are and what they experience and doesn't wholly define their personality. For example, an endearing, funny, spirited son remains an endearing, funny, spirited young man after he tells his parents that he's gay. And bright, generous, talented young woman remains a bright, generous, talented young woman after she tells her friends that she's bisexual.
- It must be acknowledged, however, that young people who know that they're heterosexual don't experience this stress and pressure of "coming out" to their family or friends.

## 2. Nora (Robin)

- First of all, it's totally normal to question your identity (e.g., your values, personality traits, interests, preferences, sexual orientation, etc.), especially when you're a teen, as this is a key time for identity formation.
- The process of forming your gender identity is strongly influenced by the culture, society and environment we live in. The traits that are presented as stereotypically masculine and feminine in advertising and the media (e.g., movies, TV shows, video games, social media) are continually adopted by the people around us, consciously or unconsciously (Dorais, 2019). We learn that, to be accepted and valued as an individual, it's best to adopt the behaviours, attitudes and roles that correspond to the gender we were assigned at birth (Dorais, 2019). But for some people, this doesn't feel right.
- Regardless of your gender, you don't have to conform to the stereotypical criteria of femininity and masculinity.
- Nora senses that she doesn't have the qualities that are "expected" of her gender, and this is why she feels unsure about herself.

### Challenges a young trans person may experience

- Some trans people know right from childhood (between the ages of 5 and 8) who they truly are (Médico and Pullen Sansfaçon, 2019).
- However, for some trans people, it isn't until puberty hits and their body starts changing that they realize they're "different" from other people of the same gender or start to feel that they don't belong to the gender they were assigned at birth by health professionals. This can lead to them experiencing gender dysphoria (Médico and Pullen Sansfaçon, 2019). "The concept of gender dysphoria relates to the feelings and emotions (e.g., anger, disgust) that individuals may have toward themselves about their gender identity or body" (Interlignè, 2021).
- In this situation, we can see that Robin (Nora) personally affirms their gender identity, but that they would like to reveal and display it more freely with those around them. For example, they would like to change their name and use the boy's bathroom at school. However, as Robin understands that their gender identity isn't "conventionally" feminine or masculine, they worry about the possible repercussions (e.g., rejection, exclusion, violence, etc.) from peers and even their parents.
- Trans youth are at greater risk of experiencing verbal, physical and sexual violence compared to their peers (Médico and Pullen Sansfaçon, 2019). As a result, they feel unsafe at school and therefore miss more classes (Médico and Pullen Sansfaçon, 2019; Peter and al., 2021).
- Trans people all go through a unique transition journey. (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, 2017). Some will choose to affirm their gender identity by making changes in every area (legal, social and medical), while others will choose, for example, only to change their legal documents (e.g., health insurance card and driver's licence) (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, 2017).
- It's important to listen to and respect the needs of the trans person and not to rush them. They will transition at their own pace, and they alone will choose the moment when they come out as trans to friends and family, if they wish to do.



### 3. Madison

- As a teen, it's completely natural to question your identity or sexual orientation, like Madison is doing (Who am I? What am I interested in? What am I passionate about? Who do I love? Whom am I attracted to?). That said, while experimenting and trying new things can help us learn more about ourselves (our values, interests, needs, boundaries, preferences, etc.), this doesn't mean that we should be ready to try anything and everything.
- Certain trends that are popular on social media (e.g., TikTok®, Instagram®, YouTube®) or among our peers can influence and guide our actions, but may not reflect who we really are or what we really like or want. Some people may experiment as a way to be like others, be different, be original or be popular (for instance on social media).
- While there's nothing inherently wrong with posting about yourself on social media, such posts can make you the target of unwanted, unpleasant or even insulting comments. Plus, some of Madison's followers may react with unhealthy curiosity when they see what she has shared on her Instagram® account. This could put Madison in an uncomfortable position, should she receive intrusive comments or questions about her personal life.

#### › Possible reactions to the situation involving...

##### 1. Lennox

###### **Lukewarm reactions:**

- Feeling uncomfortable and awkward, not knowing what to do about the situation.
- Worrying about how your classmates will react and being afraid of getting labelled as gay and getting bullied.
  - Feeling uncomfortable at the thought that, if your friend comes out as gay, he may be attracted to you (if you're the same gender). It's important not to mistake someone opening up to you with them "declaring their love" for you. That said, if both these things do happen, and you're heterosexual, you can just explain to the other person that you aren't interested, just as you would with someone of the opposite sex.

###### **Supportive reactions:**

- Listening to Lennox: hear his concerns, feelings and needs and give him the support he requires, if he wants you to.
- Suggesting that Lennox speak with trusted adults about what's happening (e.g., parents, school administrators, support worker, the coach of his sports team). Schools have procedures for taking immediate action to stop bullying.
- Searching the internet for resources that could be helpful for Lennox.
- Standing up for Lennox by telling the group of students who are bullying him that their words are hurtful, and that their bullying is severely impacting the life of your best friend.
- Etc.



## 2. Nora (Robin)

### **Lukewarm reactions:**

- Feeling awkward or uncomfortable, not knowing how to handle your best friend's situation.
- Worrying that you don't know enough to be as supportive as you can of your best friend.
- Fearing that your best friend will be made fun of.
- Etc.

### **Supportive reactions:**

- Thanking your best friend for trusting you. It must have been challenging to be so open with you.
- Being attentive to their concerns, feelings and needs, while them with the support they needs, if this is what they wants.
- Suggesting that Robin speak with their parents about the situation so that they can help them navigate the steps they take at school.
- Searching the internet for resources that could be helpful for them.
- Using the name and pronouns your best friend has chosen.
  - Chosen name and pronouns : There's more and more talk about non-binary pronouns and gender neutral pronouns such as iels, ael, ille, ielle, etc. in French (Beha, 2022) and they, them, their (CBCKids, 2022) in English. Using someone's chosen name and pronouns is a way to validate their experience and identity (Beha, 2022). To find out a person's preferred pronouns, you can just ask. Some people add them to their signature.
- Etc.

## 3. Madison

### **Lukewarm reactions:**

- Feeling awkward and uncomfortable, not knowing how to handle Madison's situation.
- Being judgemental toward Madison, telling her that she has to know who she's attracted to.
- Worrying that you don't know enough to be helpful to Madison
- Fearing that she will be made fun of.

### **Supportive reactions:**

- Trying to understand how Madison may be feeling.
- Reassuring Madison by telling her that it's normal to be unsure about who we like and who we're attracted to. But there's no hurry.
- Encouraging Madison to think about her true motivations for wanting to "discover" her sexual orientation by trying every option.
- Helping Madison understand that just because her cousin "in university" said she should experiment, it doesn't necessarily mean that this is what's right for her.
- Etc.

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## Secondary 5 - Session 2

### Romantic Relationships “Let’s Talk About Love”

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

#### Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)

#### Emotional and Romantic Life

##### **Become aware of what supports the establishment and maintenance of meaningful interpersonal and romantic relationships.**

- › Balance between the dimensions of dependence and autonomy and of the importance attributed to interpersonal and romantic relationships.
- › Capacity for emotional intimacy: maintenance of your identity and a self-image consistent with your values and personality, openness about yourself and acceptance of the other person, reciprocal feelings, self-care and care for the other person, commitment, expression of your needs, trust.

##### **Understand how experience acquired in previous interpersonal and romantic relationships can enrich your current relationships.**

- › What you learned about interpersonal relationships.
- › What you learned about romantic relationships.
- › Applying your past experience to your present relationships.

**Possible links to the Quebec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good lifestyle habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.</p> <p><b>Citizenship and Community Life:</b> To ensure that students take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop a spirit of openness to the world and respect for diversity.</p>		
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p><b>Intellectual competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>Personal and social competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Realizes his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal and social competencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Realizes his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
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<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>		

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Search for Meaning and World Views

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Study a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Circumscribe</li> <li>› Evaluate knowledge</li> <li>› Analyze social relationships</li> <li>› Exhibit enriched understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>To reflect on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identify the ethical dimension of a situation To examine a variety of points of view</li> <li>› Develop a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Understand the elements that foster meaningful interpersonal and romantic relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Balance between dependence and autonomy</li> <li>› Balance with regard to the importance attributed to interpersonal and romantic relationships</li> <li>› Capacity for emotional intimacy</li> <li>› What is learned from previous interpersonal and romantic relationships</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on tensions in the search for balance between autonomy and dependence as well as on the issues inherent to emotional intimacy</b></p>



## Educational Goals



**Session length:**

110 minutes

**Develop students' ability to communicate what they expect from an intimate relationship given the challenges that arise in the different relationship types, including the difficulties of dating in the digital age.**

- 1. Identify** the pros and cons related to the use of technology on dating, romantic relationships and emotional intimacy.
- 2. Define** the different relationship types among young people and the terms associated with them.
- 3. Discuss** the levels of commitment and intimacy in the different relationship types, particularly in romantic relationships.
- 4. Describe** different avoidant behaviours people may use in relationships, specifically “ghosting,” “icing,” and “simmering.” Discuss how these behaviours impact the person on the receiving end and the relationship.
- 5. Discuss** the importance of ending a relationship in an honest, considerate manner (“power parting”).
- 6. Set out** the basic rules of kind, honest communication.
- 7. Let** students practise their ability to express what they want and expect from an intimate relationship using kind, honest communication.



## Sequence



This **110-min.** session has **three activities.**

20 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>Histoire 2 Couples</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
40 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>Couples Together 30+ Years Give Us Love Advice</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Team Activity</b></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 2.1: Level of commitment and intimacy</i></p>
45 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Team activity</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 2.2: What is “ghosting,” “icing,” and “simmering”?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “<i>States of Affairs: Modern Love Vocabulary</i>”</li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Team activity:</b> Situational exercises</li> </ul> <p><i>Sheet 2.3a: Situational exercise: Janelle and Isaac</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 2.3b: Situational exercise: Marco, Andrew’s best friend</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 2.4a: Answer sheet: Situational exercise: Janelle and Isaac</i></p> <p><i>Sheet 2.4b: Answer sheet: Situational exercise: Marco, Andrew’s best friend</i></p>
5 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation:</b> Key messages from the session</li> </ul>



It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “*Be True to You*” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website [www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca) (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: *Oser être soi-même*. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Young people may tell you about difficult personal situations (e.g., romantic breakup, romantic rejection, questions about sexual orientation). It’s important to protect their confidentiality and provide the assistance and support that they need.

BEFORE leading this session, it is a good idea to let someone in your school or organization know that you will be discussing sex education with the group. This way, if a teen confides in you or if a situation is reported outside of the context of the session, you will know whether a support worker is available to offer assistance.

Refer to the *Resources* section in the introduction to this program to provide the necessary support to teens who need it. A number of online resources are also given at the end of the slideshow for each session.





## Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



20 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

## Session Introduction

- › **Start** the session by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › **Tell** the group that you're going to talk about romantic relationships in the digital age.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the students the following questions and **add** the following information:
  - **In your opinion, what are the PROS and CONS of using information and communication technologies (ICT) (e.g., internet, social media, texting, video calling, etc.) when dating or in a romantic relationship?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Pros of using technology when dating or in a relationship:

- › You can use technology to take the first steps with someone you're interested in (Tordo, 2015).
- › It may be less awkward to reach out to someone online rather than in person.
- › Text messaging is simple. It's a quick, instant way to talk with someone (Metton-Gayon, 2009; Neyrand, 2017).
- › According to a Quebec study that surveyed 1,620 secondary 4 students, 26.2% were in a relationship, and 18.8% of the students in a relationship met their boyfriend, girlfriend, or person they're casually seeing online (Paquette and al., 2020).
- › In long-distance relationships, using technology may help *strengthen the romantic relationship and improve communication* (Tordo, 2015).

### Cons of using technology when dating or in a relationship:

- › Technology use can lead to “hyperconnectivity.” Being hyperconnected means using technology (smartphone, social media, etc.) frequently and even impulsively (Neyrand, 2017; OQLF, 2012).
- › When couples overuse technology, this can put up a barrier between them and make it harder for them to talk to each other (Demonceaux, 2014).
- › When someone constantly uses technology, they may begin to feel less interested in their partner and less engaged in the relationship. This can lead to poorer communication between the couple and a sense of isolation (Demonceaux, 2014).
- › Technology can take up a lot of time, and these are moments a couple could be spending together (Demonceaux, 2014; Neyrand, 2017).
- › Technology lets people make a lot of new connections online, which can lead to second-guessing their feelings for their partner or a sense that there are better options out there (Neyrand, 2017).
- › Some teens use technology in ways that are unhealthy. For example, someone may use technology to keep tabs on their partner, read their private conversations, stalk them, know their location at all times, or harass them (SOS violence conjugale, 2021). For example, someone may send their partner so many messages that their partner begins to feel afraid and unsafe (SOS violence conjugale, 2021).

### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Depending on the size and dynamics of the group, you can ask the following question and get the student’s thoughts: **How would you use technology in a romantic relationship?**

**Information** (Paquette and al., 2020).

- › According to a Quebec study that surveyed 1,620 secondary 4 students, 26.2% of them were in a relationship. 99% of students in a relationship used social media or texting to communicate with their partner.
- › 11.2% of students in a couple participated in activities with their partner over Facetime and Messenger over the course of an average month.



## Video

- › **Show** the following video by saying that it depicts the daily life of a young couple in the digital age. While the cartoon doesn't have any dialogue, it does present the difficulties of dating in the digital age in a compelling way.
- › **Instructions:** Ask students to pay attention to how technology impacts the couple's relationship.

### Histoire 2 Couples (TjeCGBros, 2016)

**Length:** 3 min., 58 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-t8aSjSS7E>



Video



- › Next, **ask** the following questions:
  - **What do you think of the video?**
  - **Why do you think it's important to be critical of the use of technology in dating and relationships?**
  - **We can see that this young couple isn't very close. Can you give some examples that show this?**
    - **The young woman is always on her cell phone. How do you think this was affecting the relationship?**
  - **Why do you think it's important to develop intimacy in a relationship?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Examples of the lack of closeness in the young couple's relationship

- In a relationship, you need to care for yourself as much as you care for the other person (MEES, 2019).
    - In the video, the young man cares about his girlfriend much more than she cares about him.
  - In a relationship, it's important to be yourself and not change who you are just to please the other person (MEES, 2019).
    - In the video, the young man does all he can to please his girlfriend. You can't help but admire his energy and generosity, but the relationship causes him to lose touch with himself.
  - In a relationship, it's important to be committed and involved (MEES, 2019).
    - In the video, the young man cares a lot about commitment (going so far as to propose), but the young woman doesn't pay any attention to this and isn't invested in their relationship.
  - In a relationship, it's important to express your feelings and communicate your needs and boundaries (Gagnon and Thériault, 2006; Rondeau and al., 2018).
    - In the video, instead of telling his girlfriend that he'd like her to be more present, the young man tries to get her attention with a bunch of romantic gestures: he organizes various activities (e.g., dining out, walks, movies), tries to amuse her, and even goes so far as to propose to her. He doesn't seem capable of communicating his needs and boundaries.
  - In a relationship, it's important to listen to your partner without judging them (Gagnon and Thériault, 2006).
    - In the video, the young woman isn't listening to her partner. There is no interaction nor communication (verbal or non-verbal) within the couple.
- › By communicating effectively, a couple develops a close bond that helps them open up to one another (MEES, 2019). Sharing experiences and feelings is what intimacy is all about.

#### Behaviours that can hurt the relationship

- Despite the young man's attempts to attract his girlfriend's attention, the young woman maintains a distant, indifferent attitude, which puts up a wall between her and her boyfriend.
  - In the video, the young woman is always on her cell phone and is barely involved in the relationship. The young man, on the other hand, is very invested in the relationship and is in love.
- When someone is constantly on their cell phone, they may begin to lose interest in their partner, communicate less, and become disengaged (Démonceaux, 2014).
  - In the video, it's clear that the young woman is not very interested in the young man.
- When someone is on their cell phone all the time, their partner may begin to feel frustrated and disappointed (Neyrand, 2017).
  - In the video, the young man is brushed aside and ignored by his partner, who is obsessed with her cell phone. As a result, he begins to have doubts about their relationship, seeing it as unequal and disappointing.

### **The importance of developing intimacy in a relationship**

- It's important for a couple to develop intimacy because it helps them communicate better and feel secure and respected. Intimacy also allows the couple to establish a closer bond, cooperate, share experiences, and begin a journey of self-discovery (MEES, 2019).
  - In the video, the young woman takes a lot of time for herself, while the young man is busy trying to please his girlfriend. So there's no balance in the relationship.
- Couples should aim for balance in their relationship, as this brings a sense of satisfaction. It's important to take time for yourself, but also devote time to your partner (e.g., taking the time to appreciate and acknowledge the nice things your partner does for you, and being thoughtful to your partner in return).
  - In the video, the young man's new relationship is very different from the last one. It's clear that both partners are equally invested in the relationship and enjoy being together.



# 2

## Activity 2



**SHEET 2.1**  
**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**



**40 MIN.**



**VIDEO**



**TEAM  
ACTIVITY**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the group:
  - **In your opinion, what does commitment mean?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information about commitment:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › When two people decide to be in a committed relationship, it's because they feel so close and comfortable with one another that they see their relationship continuing well into the future. They begin to make plans and participate in activities together (MEES, 2019).
- › A couple can commit to being in an exclusive relationship (sexually and emotionally exclusive), living together, or even getting married or having a child together (Piazzesi, Blais, Lavigne, Lavoie-Mongrain and Renière, 2018; MEES, 2019).
- › In short, commitment takes many forms, but it always involves valuing your partner and the relationship and making an effort to grow as a couple (MEES, 2019).

## Video

- › **Show** the following video by explaining that it presents couples of different ages talking about how their relationship has changed over time.
- › **Ask** the students to pay attention to the differences in couples' relationships based on the era (before and after digital age).

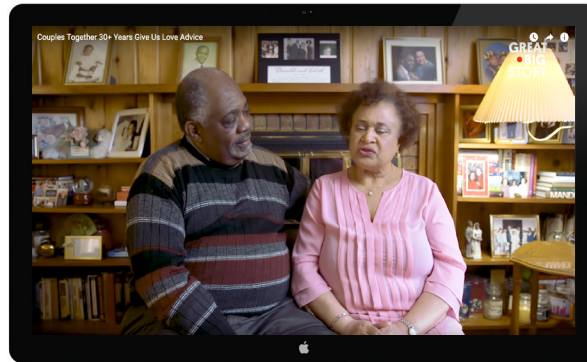
## Couples Together 30+ - Years Give Us Love Advice (Great Big Story, 2021)

**Length:** 12 min., 12 sec.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tpEPc-bdoE>



Video



› **Ask** the students the following questions:

- **What do you think of the video?**
- **What's your reaction to hearing the couples' different perspectives on what it means to be in a relationship?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Explain** to the students that our understanding of what a couple is has changed a lot over the years and that there are now many types of relationships—in other words, many different ways to have intimate, meaningful, enriching experiences (Rodrigue, 2014). Not all of these would necessarily be called romantic relationships.
- › **Ask** them the following question:
- **What are some examples of the different types of relationships?**



- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### Relationship types:

- › **Friend zone:** When someone is in love with another person but their feelings aren't reciprocated; instead, they're treated like a friend (Le Ngoc, 2015).
- › **One-night stand:** When two people have a one-time sexual encounter (Klipfel, Claxton and Dulmen, 2014).
- › **Friends with benefits:** When two friends have sex regularly without developing romantic feelings (Klipfel, Claxton and Dulmen, 2014).
- › **Sex buddy:** When two people have an ongoing relationship based almost exclusively on sex (Sullivan and Reynolds, 2003).
- › **Ex (ex boyfriend or ex girlfriend):** When two people were previously a couple, but they have broken. Sometimes two persons who were together continue occasionally to have sex even they're not together anymore (Rodrigue, 2014).
- › **Dating:** When two people are getting to know each other, with the possibility of becoming a couple (Wentland and Reissing, 2011).
- › **Casual relationship:** When two people have an emotional or loving bond but don't commit to being a couple. They regularly spend time together and/or have sex (Gonsalves, 2021).
- › **Girlfriend or boyfriend:** When two people care for each other and spend time together socially and/or romantically ("Blonde/Chum, Larousse, n.d. [Translation]).
- › **Partner:** Either member of a married couple or an established unmarried couple. A person with whom one has sexual relations (Partner, 1998)
- › **Fiancé:** When two people make a solemn promise to marry each other or simply have a firm intention to get married (Fiancé/fiancée, Larousse, n.d. [Translation]).

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Depending on the students' level of maturity and the dynamic in the class, the students may mention other types of relationships. Here are four other relationship types with their definitions. However, note that these are less prevalent in or relevant to the lives of teenagers.

- › **Marriage:** The solemn act of a man and women (or in some countries, two people of the same sex) forming a union together. The conditions and consequences of marriage (and divorce) are governed by the Civil Code (civil marriage) or religious law (religious marriage). (Mariage, n.d.)
- › **Open relationship:** A non-exclusive relationship in which each partner is free to have sex with other people (Rodrigue, 2014).
- › **Polyamory:** Being in romantic relationships with several people at the same time, with everyone's consent (Lévesque, 2019).
- › **Toyfriend:** A toyfriend is someone that a person has sex with and also shares an affection and intimate bond with. However, both individuals are free to see other people and discuss the situation openly with each other (Urban Dictionnaire, 2009). The "toyfriend" may already be in a relationship, which may rule out labels like "girlfriend" and "boyfriend" (Slangdefine, 2021).

## Discussion

- › **Ask** the group the following questions:
  - **What terms do you use to refer to your partner based on the relationship type?**
  - **What's the difference between introducing someone as your "girlfriend/boyfriend," "wifey/hubby," "bae," "boo," "fling," or "friend with benefits"?**
    - **Do you use these terms? In what context?**
- › **Share** the following information:
- › Using one term or another may reflect the strength of your feelings and/or the relationship.
- › Also, the terms you use to refer to the other person may influence how others see the relationship (e.g., "boyfriend/girlfriend" versus "friend with benefits").

- › **Tell** the students that you're now going to talk about the levels of intimacy and commitment associated with the different relationship types.

## Presentation

- › **Tell** the students that levels of intimacy and commitment may vary a lot among the relationship types discussed earlier. **Go over** the definition of intimacy and commitment presented previously in the session.
  - **Emotional intimacy:** Emotional intimacy develops when partners share their experiences and feelings. Communicating with each other allows the partners to become closer and open up to each other (MEES, 2019).
  - **Sexual intimacy:** Sexual intimacy is cultivated through shared experiences involving physical closeness and/or sex (Gagnon and Thériault, 2006).
  - **Commitment:** When two people decide to be in a committed relationship, it's because they feel so close and comfortable with one another that they see their relationship continuing well into the future. They begin to make plans and participate in activities together (MEES, 2019). For many people, commitment is associated with emotional and/or sexual exclusivity (Piazzesi and al., 2018).
- › In the next activity, the students will apply these concepts to the different relationship types.

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the students to get into teams of three.
- › **Give** the following instructions:
  - On Sheet 2.1: *Level of intimacy and commitment*, the teams identify on a scale from 1 to 3 the level of commitment and level of intimacy associated with each of the relationship types discussed earlier. The teams will have 10 minutes to fill out Sheet 2.1.
  - Next, the teams will be asked to answer questions about the ways that technology impacts the two relationship types assigned to them by the session leader. Refer to the list of relationship types in Sheet 2.1: *Level of intimacy and commitment* to assign two relationship types to each team.
  - Next, as a class, the teams can share their answers and thoughts.
- › **Ask** the group:
  - **What level of intimacy and level of commitment did you select for the different relationship types? Explain your answers.**
  - **For the relationship types you were assigned...**
    - **How might the use of technology weaken these types of relationships?**
    - **How might the use of technology strengthen these types of relationships?**
- › **Explain** that this is not a test (with right or wrong answers). What's important is their thought process. However, you can **add** to the discussion by sharing the information below.

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Share** the following information as needed:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

Relationship types	Commitment	Intimacy (emotional and sexual)
<b>Friendzone</b>	<b>Desire for commitment:</b> The commitment is currently limited to friendship. Unsatisfying for one of the two people.	<b>Emotional intimacy:</b> The intimacy that exists between friends. Unsatisfying for one of the two people.
<b>One-night stand</b>	<b>No commitment:</b> One-time encounter	<b>Emotional intimacy:</b> Fairly little, as the two people don't know each other and likely won't have the opportunity to share experiences and feelings. <b>Sexual intimacy:</b> This depends on the degree of connection.
<b>Friends with benefits</b>	<b>Little commitment:</b> There often aren't any expectations in this relationship.	<b>Emotional intimacy:</b> The intimacy that exists between friends. <b>Sexual intimacy:</b> This depends on the degree of connection.
<b>Sex buddy</b>	<b>Little commitment:</b> There often aren't any expectations in this relationship.	<b>Emotional or sexual intimacy:</b> This depends on how strongly the two people connect.
<b>Ex-girlfriend or ex-boyfriend</b>	<b>Memory of commitment:</b> The two people still feel attached to each other, but it isn't necessarily an exclusive relationship.	<b>Emotional intimacy:</b> Memory of intimacy. <b>Sexual intimacy:</b> This depends on the degree of connection.
<b>Dating</b>	<b>Commitment is often being developed:</b> We get to know the other person gradually and see if we want to go out with them.	<b>Emotional and sexual intimacy:</b> We get to know the other person and begin to confide in them and open up to them. Intimacy is often being developed.
<b>Casual relationship</b>	<b>Usually little commitment:</b> At this stage, we enjoy ourselves with the other person without having any expectations.	<b>Emotional and sexual intimacy:</b> This depends on the degree of connection.
<b>Boyfriend, girlfriend,</b>	<b>Genuine commitment:</b> We see ourselves being with the other person in the short-, medium-, or long-term.	<b>Emotional and sexual intimacy:</b> This depends on the degree of connection.
<b>Partner</b>	<b>Genuine commitment:</b> We want to be in a relationship with the other person in the medium- or long-term.	<b>Emotional and sexual intimacy:</b> Deep intimacy. Since the partners are committed, they feel that their love is reciprocated and enjoy being intimate. But being in love doesn't automatically mean that a couple will develop greater intimacy.
<b>Fiancé</b>	<b>Strong commitment:</b> We want to be in a long-term relationship with the other person.	<b>Emotional sexual intimacy:</b> Deep intimacy. Since the partners are committed, they feel that their love is reciprocated and enjoy being intimate. But being in love or engaged doesn't automatically mean that a couple will develop greater intimacy.

### Different degrees of commitment and intimacy

- › As a teenager, you want to have positive dating experiences. This means feeling comfortable, respected, and free to choose, at your own pace, when you want to have sex or if you want to have sex. It's also normal for teenagers to not wish to date just yet.
  - Some teens are looking for a committed relationship, while others don't want to rush into anything and may be more interested in exploring their options.
  - Some people find commitment intimidating or don't know what it involves. As a result, they're less comfortable with being in a relationship. Others prefer being in a committed relationship and are less comfortable with having sex without a strong emotional bond (Lévesque, 2019; Rodrigue, 2014).
- › Indicators of a high level of intimacy in a relationship (MEES, 2019):
  - Caring about yourself and your partner
  - Staying true to who you are
  - Not changing to please your partner
  - Expressing your feelings and communicating your needs and boundaries
  - Being committed to the relationship and listening to your partner without judging them
- › Intimacy is also associated with a desire for:
  - Closeness
  - Self-discovery
  - Physical intimacy (Connolly and McIsaac, 2009)
- › There is usually a greater degree of trust, closeness, and consideration in reciprocal relationships than in one-night stands.
- › This doesn't mean that being in a relationship makes things perfect. For example, you may find that your partner doesn't listen when you share something personal, or you may try to get close to your partner physically, but then feel unwanted.
- › Whether you wish to be in a committed relationship, meet different people, or even have a one-night stand, it's important to respect and be attentive to the other person's boundaries as well as your own (Lévesque, 2019; Rodrigue, 2014).

- › **Add** that when someone starts to lose interest in a relationship (whether at the beginning or at a later stage), they may text less often, constantly give excuses for why they can't see you or stop talking to you overnight with no explanation. In the next activity, we'll look at how technology can influence these avoidant behaviours.



## Activity 3



SHEETS 2.2, 2.3A, 2.3B, 2.4A AND 2.4B  
SLIDESHOW (PPT)



45 MIN.



VIDEO



TEAM  
ACTIVITY



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION

- › **Present** the next activity, in which various avoidant behaviours will be explained—namely “ghosting,” “icing,” and “simmering.”

### Team Activity

- › **Ask** the students to get into teams of three. Each team will need to choose a spokesperson.
- › **Explain** that each team will receive a sheet of paper with an avoidant behaviour written on it (ghosting, icing, or simmering).
  - Each team will need to explain, to best of their knowledge, what the avoidant behaviour on their sheet of paper means and the potential consequences of this behaviour (for the person on the receiving end, the person acting in this way, and the relationship as a whole).
  - The teams will have five to eight minutes to complete the exercise.
  - Get the students back into one group and have the teams share their answers.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › **Ask** the students the following questions:
  - **What exactly is “ghosting” in a relationship?**
  - **What exactly is “icing” in a relationship?**
  - **What exactly is “simmering” in a relationship?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › **Ghosting:** When someone suddenly stops communicating with the person they were seeing, without explanation, and ignoring the other person's attempts to communicate (LeFebvre and al., 2019; Lifehacker, 2017).
  - Example: Not sending or replying to any text messages. "Crickets."
- › **Icing:** When someone invents a reason to pause the relationship for a period of time (Lifehacker, 2017), while creating the illusion that the bond is being maintained.
  - Text message example: "It's not a good time for me to be in a relationship. But we could probably get together in a month or two."
- › **Simmering:** When someone begins spending less time and communicating less with the person they're seeing (Lifehacker, 2017). They have nothing to offer this person but don't want them out of their life entirely. So the person is kept "simmering" at a comfortable distance (Lifehacker, 2017).
  - Text message example: "I have a lot of schoolwork right now and need to stay focused. We can get together when I have some free time. I'm not sure when. I'll get back to you."
- › These avoidant behaviours are used to keep someone around and maintain a kind of relationship. At the same time, the person acting in this way doesn't give up their own freedom and isn't held accountable for the way their behaviour impacts the other person (Lifehacker, 2017).

## Video and Presentation

- › **Tell** the students that they will be watching a video (presented by Esther Perel) that explains ghosting, icing, and simmering and the consequences of these behaviours.
  - **Instructions:** Ask the students to pay attention to the consequences of these avoidant behaviours.

### **States Affairs: Modern Love Vocabulary (Lifehacker, 2017)**

**Length:** 3 min., 47 sec.

**<https://youtu.be/VDF75MM9Y1M>**



Video



- › After the video, **get** the group’s comments and reactions, using the following questions:
  - **What do you think of the video?**
  - **How might these avoidant behaviours impact...**
    - **the person on the receiving end?**
    - **the person engaging in them?**
    - **the relationship?**
  - **What do you think is meant by “Power parting”?**
- › **Share** the following information about the impacts of “ghosting,” “icing,” “simmering,” and “power parting” (Lifehacker, 2017).

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### The impacts of avoidant behaviours such as “ghosting,” “icing,” and “simmering”

- › Impact on the person who is on the receiving end: The feeling of waiting endlessly, emotional roller coaster, confusion, incomprehension, doubting, disappointment, sadness, decreased self-esteem and confidence, etc. (Lifehacker, 2017; Perel, 2021).
- › On the person acting in this way: Lack of empathy and understanding, fear of facing reality and the other person’s reactions (Lifehacker, 2017; Perel, 2021).
- › On the relationship: Breaking up, ending the relationship on a note of confusion, pointlessly getting the other person’s hopes up, etc.



### Power parting

- › When you decide to break up with someone because the relationship isn't working, it's important to be respectful and to use direct, clear language that can't be misinterpreted (Lifehacker, 2017; Perel, 2021). It's also important to show empathy and kindness. This is what's known as "power parting."

## Discussion and Presentation

- › **Continue** the discussion:
  - **Why do you think it's important to be honest and considerate when ending a relationship?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › **Share** the following information about power parting and the importance of being honest and considerate when ending a relationship.

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### The importance of being honest and considerate when ending a relationship

- › When a relationship is no longer working or isn't meeting your expectations, it's important to be honest and considerate when ending it (Perel, 2021).
  - When you communicate virtually (via text or online), this can lead to inaction, i.e., not staying in touch with the other person or giving a long list of reasons for why you haven't been available. This can confuse the other person or cause them to second-guess the relationship (Perel, 2021).
  - When you end a relationship properly, the other person isn't kept waiting, in a passive role, due to false hope.
  - At the end of the day, people are able to accept that a relationship wasn't meant to be, but that doesn't mean you can be insensitive and ignore their feelings when breaking up with them (Lifehacker, 2017).
  - It can be difficult to be transparent and honest when ending a relationship. But it's important to try your best. However, this doesn't mean you should be brutally honest and say hurtful things.
  - There are benefits to being honest:
    - You avoid or minimize confusion, ambiguity, disappointment, and insecurity (Perel, 2021).
    - You're able to learn from past experiences, enrich current relationships, and find out more about yourself (e.g., your ability to communicate well, listen, express your feelings/needs/boundaries) (MEES, 2019).
    - You learn more about the strategies used for resolving conflicts (MEES, 2019).

- › To end a relationship properly, you need to be kind and honest when communicating with the other person. In other words, you need to take their feelings into consideration.
  - Example: “This relationship is no longer working for me. I really enjoyed our conversations and all the time we spent together. I’ll always have fond memories of our relationship.” (Adapted from Perel, 2021)

- › Continue by **sharing** information about kind, honest communication.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

### What is kind, honest communication?

- › Use “I” statements to speak clearly about your emotions and feelings (Robert, 2002, cited in Gascon, 2011).
  - Examples: *“I feel confused and ignored because every time we’re supposed to meet up, you reschedule.”*  
*“I’d like us to spend more time together, but I also want to see my friends and want you to see yours.”* (L’Institut Pacifique, 2020)
- › Avoid “you” statements. Otherwise, it seems like you’re accusing the other person, and it makes them the focus of the conversation (Gascon, 2011).
- › Don’t generalize with words like “always” or “never,” as this can lead to conflict (Gascon, 2011).
- › Avoid saying things that are demanding, judgemental, or demeaning. That’s the opposite of kind, positive communication (Robert, 2002).
- › Choose the right time for the conversation, when the other person is available to listen (Gascon, 2011).
  - Example: In a neutral, quiet place and at a time when both people are available and willing to talk. This may be after school, in the evening, on the weekend, etc.
- › Express yourself calmly and respectfully to avoid hurting the other person (Gascon, 2011; L’Institut Pacifique, 2020).

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the students to get into teams of two. The following activity will allow them to put kind communication into practice.
- › **Give** the following instructions:
  - Each team will be given a situation to analyze (Sheet 2.3a: *Situational exercise: Janelle and Isaac*, Sheet 2.3b: *Situational exercise: Marco, Andrew's best friend*). Their task will be to suggest how communication could be improved in the relationship.
  - Length: 10 minutes
  - Next, as a class, get the students to share their answers.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › When the students are all together again, **ask** them the following questions for each of the situations:

### **Situational exercise: Janelle and Isaac** (Sheet 2.3a)

- **How can Isaac COMMUNICATE his confusion and expectations to Janelle?**
- **What could Janelle have SAID to Isaac rather than ghosting him?**

*Get their opinions.*

### **Situational exercise: Marco, Andrew's best friend** (Sheet 2.3b)

- **What do you think of the way Marco ACTED?**
- **What could Marco have SAID to his girlfriend to let her know that the relationship wasn't working for him, instead of forcing her to break up with him?**

*Get their opinions.*

- › **Add** to what the students say using the answer sheets for Sheets 2.4a and 2.4b: *Situational exercise: Janelle and Isaac* and *Situational exercise: Marco, Andrew's best friend*.



## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)



5 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

## Discussion and Presentation

› **Ask** the students about their takeaways from this session.

- **What are your takeaways from this session?**

*Get their opinions.*

› **Share** the following key points:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Technology and dating

- › Technology (e.g., internet, social media, texting, video calling, etc.) can be used to flirt, meet new people and strengthen an existing relationship. However, technology shouldn't be used in ways that jeopardize the relationship by discouraging intimacy or commitment.
- › Balance is important.
- › There's a difference between feeling connected to someone AND simply being connected online.

#### Your choice

- › Before being in a relationship with someone, it's important to think about what you hope to experience.
  - What type of relationship do you see yourself in?
- › You may see yourself in a romantic relationship (in a couple).
- › You may feel more comfortable being in a casual relationship.
- › You may not want to be in a relationship at the moment, or you may enjoy being single.
- › You may hope to eventually get engaged and marry the other person.
- › No matter what type of relationship you're seeking, the most important thing is to feel comfortable and respected.

### Your expectations

- › What do you expect from a romantic relationship?
- › If you're in a relationship right now (casual or serious), does this relationship meet your expectations?
  - What do you expect from the other person in a romantic relationship?
  - What does the other person expect from you?
  - Respect and honesty? To be listened to and supported? Affection and intimacy? Trust and understanding? Generosity? Spending quality time and doing activities together?

› **End** the session by presenting the following statements shared by kids about love:

- **Love is a powerful feeling that gives us wings. Everyone has their own understanding of love and experiences love differently.**
- **Here's how some kids ages four to eight answered the question "What is love?"** (Ekrem\_1129450, 2002; Sois un ami, 2016):
  - "When someone loves us, they say our name differently than everyone else. We know that our name is safe." (Léopold, 4)
  - "Love is when you go out to eat and give someone a lot of your fries without asking for some of theirs." (Jeanne, 6)
  - "You shouldn't say 'I love you' if it isn't true. But if it is true, you should say it a lot. People forget." (Jessica, 8)
  - "Love is when people give each other kisses and hugs that touch the heart." (Zoé, 4)
  - "It's kissing and making out. It's being nice and doing your best to be pleasant." (James, 7)
  - "Love is when the girl puts on perfume and the boy puts on aftershave so that they can smell each other." (Martin, 5)
- **What are these kids telling us?**
  - To love someone is to...
    - Care about them
    - Be attentive to them
    - Be treated the same way in return
  - This makes us feel good, secure, and safe.



## SHEET

### 2.1

FOR THE GROUP

## Levels of intimacy and commitment

### INSTRUCTION

- As a team, decide what level of intimacy and commitment corresponds to each relationship type. Answer by drawing an **X** on the lines. **1** is a low level of intimacy or commitment and **3** is a high level.

Relationship types	Level of intimacy	Level of commitment
Friend zone	← →	← →
Partner	← →	← →
Boyfriend or girlfriend	← →	← →
Ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend	← →	← →
Friends with benefits	← →	← →
Sex buddy	← →	← →
One-night stand	← →	← →
Casual relationship	← →	← →
Dating	← →	← →
Fiancé	← →	← →

## INSTRUCTION

- › As a team, answer the following questions for the two relationship types assigned to you.

Technology

E.g., internet, social media, texting,  
video calling, etc.

- › How might the use of technology **WEAKEN** the relationship?

Relationship type #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship type #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How might the use of technology **STRENGTHEN** the relationship?

Relationship type #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship type #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_







## SHEET

## 2.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

# What is ghosting, icing and simmering?

## INSTRUCTIONS

- › Before the activity, you will need to cut out the cards on this page. Each card contains an avoidant behaviour and questions for the students.
- › Be sure to cut out enough cards (one per team).
- › Hand out one card to each team.

### Ghosting

What exactly is **ghosting** in a relationship?

What are the potential consequences of this avoidant behaviour?

▪ Impact on the **person who is on the receiving** end this behaviour:

▪ Impact on the **person acting** this way:

▪ Impact on the **relationship**:

### Icing

What exactly is **icing** in a relationship?

What are the potential consequences of this avoidant behaviour?

▪ Impact on the **person who is on the receiving** end this behaviour:

▪ Impact on the **person acting** this way:

▪ Impact on the **relationship**:

### Simmering

What exactly is **simmering** in a relationship?

What are the potential consequences of this avoidant behaviour?

▪ Impact on the **person who is on the receiving** end this behaviour:

▪ Impact on the **person acting** this way:

▪ Impact on the **relationship**:



## SHEET

### 2.3a

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Janelle and Isaac

### INSTRUCTION

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.

#### Key elements of considerate communication

Use “I” statements.  
Avoid “you” statements.

Be calm and respectful.

Don't generalize and avoid saying things that are demanding, judgemental, or demeaning.

### Janelle and Isaac

**Isaac** met **Janelle** one month ago through Instagram. They sent each other a few messages and afterward met in person five times. They had a nice time together and even kissed. Isaac was planning to ask Janelle if she wanted to go out with him “officially.”

However, for a few days now, Janelle hasn't been answering Isaac's messages. He's very confused and doesn't understand why he hasn't heard from her. Previously, they were writing to each other every day. Isaac is wondering whether he did or said something to hurt her.

His best friend tells him that she “ghosted” him. This friend encourages Isaac to badmouth Janelle on social media to get back at her. Isaac doesn't want to do that. Instead, he's hoping he can discuss the situation with Janelle. But first he needs for there to be two-way communication. The problem is they don't go to the same school and don't live in the same area.

- › How can Isaac **COMMUNICATE** his confusion and expectations to Janelle?

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- › What could Janelle have **SAID** to Isaac rather than ghosting him?

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## SHEET

### 2.3b

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational exercise: Marco, Andrew's best friend

### INSTRUCTION

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.

#### Key elements of considerate communication

Use "I" statements.  
Avoid "You" statements.

Be calm and respectful.

Don't generalize and avoid saying things that are demanding, judgemental, or demeaning.

### Marco, Andrew's best friend

**Andrew** tells you that his best friend, **Marco**, and his girlfriend recently broke up. They had been going out for almost a year. Andrew explains that Marco's girlfriend was the one who "officially" ended it, but that the relationship hadn't been working for Marco either. As Andrew listened to what happened, he realized that Marco was the one who caused the break-up, but that he hadn't been straightforward with his girlfriend.

Marco did all he could to get his girlfriend to break up with him. For example, he was distant and sometimes very rude with her. After the break-up, he played the role of the victim and blamed his ex. His friends felt sorry for him, and other girls became interested in him.

Andrew is shocked by his friend's lack of maturity and doesn't understand why he acted this way. To add insult to injury, Marco posts lots of pictures of his new girlfriend on social media when everyone knows that his ex is still trying to cope with their recent break-up.

- › **What do you think of the way Marco ACTED?**

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- › **What could Marco have SAID to his girlfriend to let her know that the relationship wasn't working for him, instead of forcing her to break up with him?**

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## Answer sheet: Situational exercise: Janelle and Isaac

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### How can Isaac COMMUNICATE his confusion and expectations to Janelle?

**Although he doesn't know whether Janelle will answer his message or even read it, Isaac could tell her why he's confused in a calm and respectful manner, using "I" statements.**

- In the message, he can tell her what he's thinking, namely, that he doesn't understand why she stopped talking to him overnight.
- He can also share how he felt when he realized she had ghosted him: surprised, confused, disappointed, sad, etc.
- He can send her a text message, call her, or suggest that they meet in a neutral location.
- He can ask Janelle for an explanation and state his expectations: honesty, respect, etc.
- **Note:** Isaac deserves credit for not taking his friend's advice to get back at Janelle by badmouthing her on social media and hurting her reputation.

### What could Janelle have SAID to Isaac instead of ghosting him?

**Janelle could have told Isaac that she wants to break up in a calm and respectful manner, using "I" statements.**

- She could have been honest with Isaac and told him that the relationship wasn't right for her or was no longer working for her. She could have shared her reasons.
- She could have told him that while she enjoyed their time together and appreciated his kindness, sense of humour, and other qualities, she doesn't want to give him false hope.
- **Note:** Ending a relationship in an honest way, without being abrupt or using avoidant behaviours, is known as "power parting."



## Answer sheet: Situational exercise: Marco, Andrew's best friend

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### What do you think of the way Marco ACTED?

- Marco acted inappropriately. Instead of telling his girlfriend that the relationship was no longer right for him, he forced her to break up with him.
- He wasn't honest with his girlfriend and may have felt incapable of being honest. Maybe Marco was afraid of hurting his girlfriend.
- Although his girlfriend eventually broke up with him, she was likely hurt and upset by the way Marco acted and didn't know that, for him, it was all a plan to end their relationship.
- Marco seems to have taken advantage of the situation and acted like the victim to gain sympathy from his friends.

### What could Marco have SAID to his girlfriend to let her know that the relationship wasn't working for him, instead of forcing her to break up with him?

**Marco could have explained why the relationship wasn't working for him and told her he wanted to break up in a calm and respectful manner, using "I" statements.**

- He could have told her what he's looking for: independence, more time for himself, etc.
- He could have told his girlfriend that he needs time to think about their relationship.
- He could have told her that the relationship is no longer right for him or is no longer working for him.
- He could have apologized for his avoidant behaviour and explained that he didn't know how to tell her that he's unsure about how he feels about her and their relationship.
- He could have told her that he enjoyed spending time with her and appreciated many things about her but thought it was time for them part ways.

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## Secondary 5 - Session 3

### Desire and pleasure: “The key components of desire and pleasure” Parts A and B

This sexuality education session was created for both schools and youth community settings (for more details, see the sections in the introduction on the session structure and context for using the *Be True to You* program).

For schools, these sessions are consistent with the “Compulsory content in sexuality education” of the ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (2018). The tables below also provide links to the subject areas and broad areas of learning of the Québec Education Program (MEES, 2022) as well as to the “educational intentions in sexuality education” of the “provisional” Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) program at the secondary level of the ministère de l’Éducation du Québec (2022).

Links to “Compulsory content in sexuality education” (MEES, 2018)	
<b>Comprehensive view of sexuality</b>	<p><b>Become aware of the different facets of yourself so you can embrace your sexuality all your life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Be able to make decisions, assert yourself, articulate your needs and wishes</li> <li>› Be able to examine the ways you express your sexuality, including your sexual behaviours</li> </ul>
<b>STBBIs and pregnancy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Have a positive body image from a sexual point of view (consider yourself attractive)</li> <li>› Be able to obtain sexual pleasure alone and with a partner</li> </ul> <p><b>Identify the risks of STBBIs and pregnancy associated with different contexts of a sexually active lifestyle</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Context of sexual relations: nature of the relationship with the partner, choice and number of partners, frequency of sexual relations, meeting places, risk level of sexual behaviours, consumption of alcohol and other drugs</li> </ul>

**Possible links to the Québec Education Program**  
(MEES, 2022)

<b>Broad areas of learning</b>	<p><b>Health and Well-Being:</b> Ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality</p> <p><b>Citizenship and Community Life:</b> Ensure that students take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity</p>	
<b>Cross-curricular competencies</b>	<p><b>Intellectual competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Uses information</li> <li>› Exercises critical judgment</li> <li>› Solves problems</li> <li>› Uses creativity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal and social competencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Achieves his/her potential</li> <li>› Cooperates with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication-related competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Communicates appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Subject areas</b>	<p><b>Personal development subject area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Quebec Citizenship and Culture</i></li> </ul>	

**Possible links with the educational intentions in sexuality education of the Culture and Citizenship in Québec (CCQ) program at the secondary level**  
(MEQ, 2022)

Theme: Search for Meaning and World Views

<b>Disciplinary competencies</b>	<p><b>Study a cultural reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Circumscribe</li> <li>› Evaluate knowledge</li> <li>› Analyze social relationships</li> <li>› Exhibit enriched understanding</li> </ul>	<p><b>To reflect on an ethical question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Identify the ethical dimension of a situation</li> </ul> <p><b>To examine a variety of points of view</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Develop a point of view</li> <li>› Engages in dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aims of Sexuality Education in Secondary School</b>	<p><b>Study the different factors that allow people to embrace their sexuality throughout life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Ability to make decisions and assert self</li> <li>› Ability to be introspective about the expression of own sexuality</li> <li>› Positive body image from a sexual point of view</li> <li>› Ability to feel sexual pleasure alone and with a partner</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the elements that foster meaningful interpersonal and romantic relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Capacity for emotional intimacy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reflect on the tensions between the norms related to expressing own sexuality, own personal experience and self-perception</b></p> <p><b>Reflect on tensions in the search for balance between autonomy and dependence as well as on the issues inherent to emotional intimacy</b></p>



## Educational Goals



### Session length:

150 minutes

Part A: 75 minutes

Part B: 75 minutes

**Help young people reflect on the role that sexual desire and pleasure play in sexual activity, develop critical thinking with regard to specific depictions of desire, pleasure and performance, and consider the basic rules of sexual communication.**

- 1. Define** sexual desire and pleasure.
- 2. Locate** desire, sexual excitement, fantasies, orgasm and sexual pleasure in the sexual response cycle.
- Using anatomical charts, **identify** female and male sex organs, including similar sensitivities and functions.
- 4. Identify** events and feelings that can influence each person's sexual response cycle, given that it does not represent an absolute standard.
- 5. Discuss** the advantages and disadvantages of sexual desire and pleasure with regard to a "sex buddy" relationship focused almost exclusively on sexual behaviour.
- 6. Discuss** the pitfalls of sexual performance with regard to sexual desire and pleasure.
- 7. Identify** specific myths related to sexual activity and sexual desire and pleasure.
- 8. Discuss** the importance and advantages of sexual communication with your partner.



## Sequence



This **150-min.** session will be divided into **two 75-min. parts (Part A and Part B).**

75 min.	<b>PART A ACTIVITY 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> Sexual response quiz: What am I? <i>Sheet 3.1: What am I?</i> <i>Sheet 3.2: Answer sheet: What am I?</i> <i>Sheet 3.2a: Sexual anatomy</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b> <i>Sheet 3.3: Sexual response is like a roller coaster</i> <i>Sheet 3.4: The role of the five senses in desire and pleasure</i></li> </ul>
25 min.	<b>PART B ACTIVITY 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> <li>› <b>Team Activity:</b> Situational Exercises <i>Sheet 3.5a: Situational Exercise: Jennifer and David</i> <i>Sheet 3.5b: Situational Exercise: Bianca and Collin</i> <i>Sheet 3.6a: Answer sheet: Situational Exercise: Jennifer and David</i> <i>Sheet 3.6b: Answer sheet: Situational Exercise: Bianca and Collin</i> <i>Sheet 3.7: Specialized resources in STBBI and unplanned pregnancy prevention, and safe sexual behaviour promotion</i></li> </ul>
30 min.	<b>ACTIVITY 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Individual Activity</b> <i>Sheet 3.8: Myth or fact?</i> <i>Sheet 3.9: Answer sheet: Myth or fact?</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>
20 min.	<b>Session CONCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <b>Video:</b> “Rosey Project – Talking to Your Partner about Sex”</li> <li>› <b>Role play or Presentation:</b> Sexual communication <i>Sheet 3.10: Examples of sexual communication (Before-During-After)</i></li> <li>› <b>Discussion and Presentation</b></li> </ul>

It is recommended that you use the **companion slideshow (PPT)** throughout the session activities.

Just like the entire “Be True to You” program, this slideshow can be downloaded for free from our website **[www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca](http://www.hypersexualisation.uqam.ca)** (Volet 3: Outils pédagogiques en éducation à la sexualité - Programme pour les deux cycles du secondaire: Oser être soi-même. <https://hypersexualisation.uqam.ca/volet-3-outils-pedagogiques-education-a-sexualite/programme-secondaire-oser-etre-soi-meme/>)

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

The topics of sexual desire and pleasure covered in this session may seem more delicate, since they are very intimate. They will be discussed in clear terms, but participants will not have to talk about the details of their private lives. Moreover, the students will be told that it is not necessary to have had a boyfriend or girlfriend or to have had sexual experiences to be informed on and talk about sexual desire and pleasure. Everyone has an opinion on them and gets bombarded with different messages about them. That’s why it is important to debunk myths and determine what they really mean.

The topic of sexual practices will also be covered. Tell the students that some parts will not apply to their experiences, which is normal, since everyone goes at their own pace and has their own personal tastes. What’s important is that people make choices that reflect who they are and what they’re comfortable with.



## Part A



### Activity 1



SLIDESHOW (PPT)

SHEETS 3.1, 3.2, 3.2A, 3.3 AND 3.4



75 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



TEAM  
ACTIVITY

## Session Introduction

- › **Begin** by reminding the group about the rules presented in the introduction or the session slideshow (e.g., taking turns, respecting different points of view, keeping what others say to yourself).
- › Next, **explain** what will be discussed during the session: sexual desire and pleasure, the sexual response cycle and the importance of communication.

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information and explain that you will be looking at the meanings of “desire” and “pleasure” in both a general context and a sexual context.

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Desire and pleasure in a GENERAL CONTEXT. Desire and pleasure in a SEXUAL CONTEXT

- › **Desire in a general context**
  - Desire in a general context is a feeling of wanting to have something. It’s something you want, hope for or wish for (Désir, n.d.).
- › **Desire in a sexual context**
  - Sexual desire can start with attraction to a particular person. It is based on mystery and the unexpected (Hénil, 2022 in de Brébisson, 2022). It can develop through actions, words, looks and attentions (Télé-Québec, 2019). Feeling desire can mean wanting to be close to another person, wanting to date them or kiss them, and/or feeling sexually excited by them.
- › **Pleasure in a general context**
  - In general, pleasure is when you like or enjoy something, and it gives you a good feeling (Plaisir, n.d.).

› **Pleasure in a sexual context**

- During sex or sexual activities, you may feel psychological pleasure (i.e., well-being) in the form of genuine positive feelings from being very intimate with someone. Physical sexual pleasure can be experienced through fondling, kissing and pleasurable touching, in particular of sensitive parts of the body (Noovo moi, 2021).

## Discussion

› **Continue** the presentation by asking the following question:

- **Why do you think it is sometimes so difficult to talk about the positive aspects of sexuality, in particular sexual desire and pleasure?**

## Presentation

› **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Embarrassment or boundaries around talking about desire and pleasure

For some people, talking about sexuality is tantamount to “talking about sex,” and that can be embarrassing, cause discomfort and provoke nervous laughter, etc. Talking about sexual desire and pleasure in particular can be embarrassing because it refers to intimacy.

- › You can hesitate to talk about it because of *boundaries*.
  - People rarely discuss the topic of sexual desire and pleasure directly, simply and explicitly.
- › You may also feel *more vulnerable*.
  - You may worry about showing your ignorance or inexperience, being compared with others, or being judged or ridiculed, etc. (Télé-Québec, 2019).

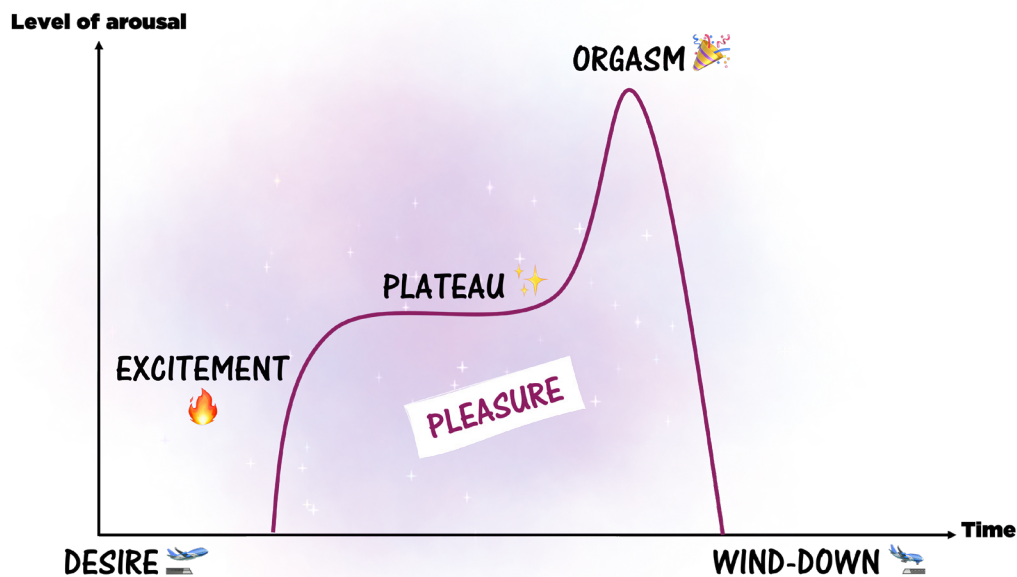
Engaging in sexual activity involves sensations and different physical reactions of the body, as well as emotions and feelings (heart) and thoughts and questions (mind).

#### Sexual response cycle

- › It's important to be familiar with your body's possible reactions before, during and even after sexual activity. This is referred to as the “sexual response.”
- › We will use the sexual response cycle to illustrate sexual desire and pleasure.

- › The sexual response cycle is generally described as having five phases: desire, excitement, plateau, orgasm and resolution (Kaplan, 1979; Masters and Johnson, 1996; MEES, 2020; Teljeunes, 2022b) (see the diagram below).
- › This model of the sexual response cycle was first developed in 1966 by gynecologist William Masters and his research assistant Virginia Johnson. The model was then modified by Kaplan (1979). Let's start by seeing what it entails.

### Illustration of the sexual response cycle



1. **Sexual desire:** An internal drive that leads to attraction and/or wanting to engage in sexual activity (Diamond and Savin-Williams, 2009, in MEES, 2020; Kaplan, 1979); you can desire someone in particular; you can also feel desirable.
2. **Sexual arousal:** The physical changes related to a sexual stimulus (e.g., erection: a hardening/stiffening of the penis that occurs when the tissues inside the penis fill with blood; lubrication of the vaginal tissues, erection of the clitoris also because of engorgement with blood, etc.) (Kaplan, 1979; Masters and Johnson, 1966; MEES, 2020; Planète Santé, 2017). The duration of the arousal phase ranges from a few seconds to a few minutes depending on the intensity and effectiveness of the fondling (Acteur de ma santé, 2022). Sexual excitement does not necessarily lead to sexual activity.
  - **Sexual fantasy:** A sexual fantasy is an image or an imaginary scenario that reflects more or less conscious desires and whose content can lead to sexual excitement (Bourahla, 2022; Lessard, 1997). From an etymological standpoint, the term “fantasy” comes from the Greek word “phantasma,” meaning “to make visible” (Bourahla, 2022). It can appear, disappear and reappear in our thoughts.
  - A sexual fantasy can be brief and vague (Crépault, 1981) or be carefully structured and take the form of a detailed scenario with a context, action, characters, roles and locations (Loonis, 1999; Tapernoux, 2019). Although sexual fantasies can increase excitement, they cannot necessarily be played out in real life. When fulfilled, some can be enjoyable, while others can be disappointing (Bourahla, 2022).



You cannot necessarily expect your partner to fulfill your sexual fantasies. You can use your imagination to fill in the gaps.

- According to a Quebec survey of 1,584 young people aged 14 to 18, 87% of those interviewed said that they had “sexual fantasies” (Kotiuga, Yampolsky and Martin, 2022). Some people rarely or never have sexual fantasies, but this does not hamper their ability to feel sexual pleasure.

**3. Plateau:** The level of sexual excitement is maintained over a certain period of time (Masters and Johnson, 1966; Tel-jeunes, 2022b).

**4. Orgasm:** The result of muscle contraction; a moment of intense pleasure during sexual activity (Kaplan, 1979; Masters and Johnson, 1966; Tel-jeunes, 2022b). Orgasm may be accompanied by heavy breathing, sighing and loud sounds, but it can also be very discreet (Brune and Ferroul, 2010a).

- **Sexual fantasy:** Sexual fantasy can appear at various times. It’s very volatile.

**5. Sexual pleasure:** Sexual pleasure is not necessarily related to orgasm, but it can be. It can be satisfied through affection and shared intimacy, sensuality (the five senses) or sexual activity per se. Pleasure can therefore occur at every stage of the sexual response cycle.

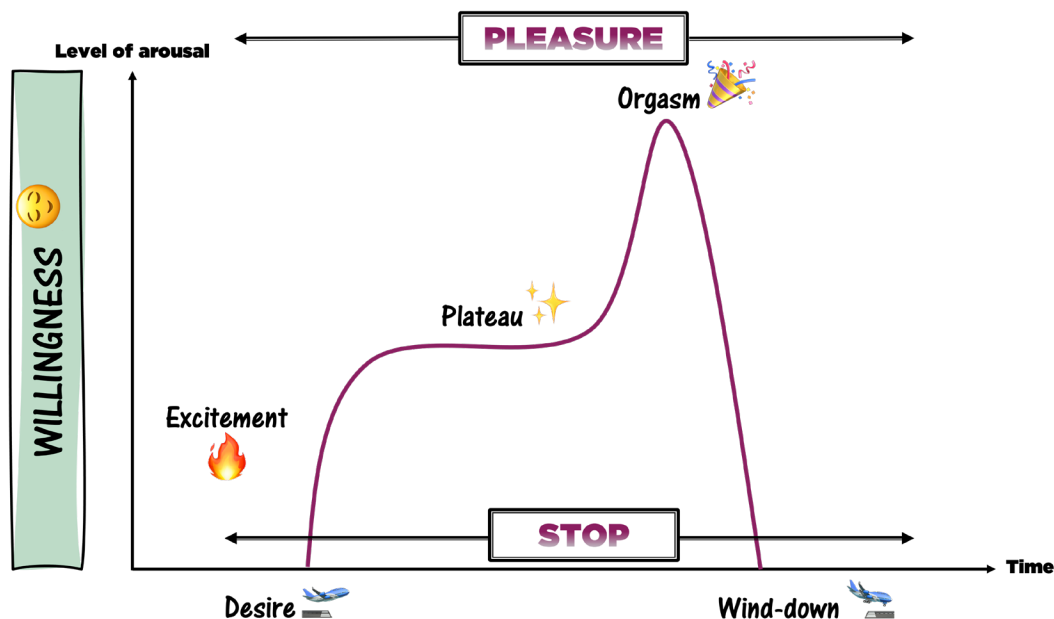
**6. Resolution:** During this phase, the level of sexual arousal decreases, and the body returns to a resting state (Masters and Johnson, 1966; Robert, 2002 in MEES, 2020; Tel-jeunes, 2022b).

- › Then, **tell** the participants that it is important to keep in mind that at each stage of the sexual response, it is possible to feel sexual pleasure; if you feel willing when having a sexual activity or relationship.
- › **Introduce** them, using the following content elements, to the definition and application of the notion of “willingness” in a sexual context.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › This is the stage where we are open to the possibility of sexual activity; we make this choice ourselves (Loulan, 1984; Trudel, 2020).
- › This is an active stage. We decide to engage in sexual activity because we really want to (Body, Mind, Heart) (Loulan, 1984).
- › There are several reasons why we may be “willing.” For instance, we may want to get physically closer with the other person or we may appreciate the connection and intimacy we have with them during sexual activity (Loulan, 1984).
- › We may already begin to feel pleasure (enjoyable experience) at the “willingness” stage. “Willingness” may lead to the stages of “desire” or “excitement”; alternatively, we may choose to “stop” (Loulan, 1984).

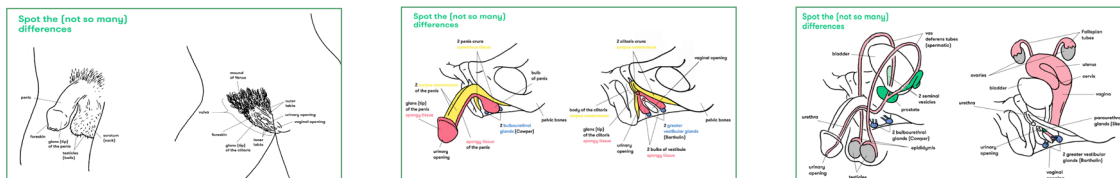
- **PLEASURE** : One of the goals of sexual activity! (Loulan, 1984)
  - But it doesn't always mean having an orgasm (Trudel, 2020).
  - Every stage can be enjoyable, and we can choose to stop at any point without this being perceived or experienced as a "failure."
- **STOP** : During sex or sexual activities, we can choose to stop what we're doing at any time. We can also make a decision to stop and resume later, when we're actually in the mood or have more time, etc. In short, we always have the option to "stop" (Loulan, 1984).
  - This stage of sexual response is just as important as the others. It involves listening to ourselves and our bodies and respecting ourselves.
  - Sometimes we stop for an obvious reason (e.g., tiredness, embarrassment, stress, fear of intimacy, physical discomfort or pain) (Loulan, 1984). Other times, the reason isn't as clear to us (e.g., discomfort), but it's still important that we stop (Loulan, 1984). This decision can be made by just one of the partners or can be mutual.



## Team Activity

- › **Ask** the students to get into teams of two.
- › **Hand out** Sheet 3.1: "What am I?" to each team. **Explain** that each team must identify whether the proposed statement refers to one of the following concepts: sexual desire, sexual excitement, sexual fantasy, sexual pleasure or orgasm. **Give** them approximately 10 minutes to complete this task.
- › **Tell** students that this activity is not a race to find the right answer, and that they are there to learn while having fun.
- › **Review** the activity by **reading** each statement and ask the teams to read their answers (sexual desire, sexual excitement, sexual fantasy, sexual pleasure or orgasm) on a volunteer basis. **Verify** or **correct** each team's answer as needed, using Sheet 3.2: "Answer Sheet: What am I?"

- › For additional information on specific aspects of sexual anatomy, **show** anatomical charts of male and female sex organs (internal and external views) that illustrate the similarities between the penis and the clitoris in terms of sensitivity and function (Brockmann and Chytil, 2018). See *Sheet 3.2a: Sexual anatomy*.



- › **Continue** by explaining the information on Sheet 3.3: *Sexual response cycle*, which covers the sexual response cycle and various situations that can negatively or positively affect it. The sheet features subtle differences compared with the initial proposal by Masters and Johnson (1966), which presented the sexual response cycle as an “absolute standard.”
  - You can discuss the content of the sheet directly or ask the group questions beforehand to see whether they are able to identify events that can change, interrupt or enhance the sexual response cycle. It’s up to you to decide whether the group dynamic lends itself to this type of discussion without degenerating into sex-related jokes or overly personal details.
- › In order to illustrate how a given event (e.g., a tender look, discomfort, performance anxiety) can affect each person’s sexual response cycle differently, **show** the students a fictional illustration of a sexual relationship between two people (Person A and Person B). See the animation in the companion slideshow.

## Discussion

- › To complete the activity on the sexual response cycle, **propose** an exercise on the role that the five senses play in sensory ability and their relationship to pleasure. Participants will have to list pleasant aspects related to the five senses, but in a NON-sexual context at first. Then, **complete** the information for a sexual context. See Sheet 3.4: *The role of the five senses in desire and pleasure*, which deals with identifying specific aspects for each of the five senses that can elicit pleasure in a “NON-sexual context” at first, and then in a “sexual context.”
- › To begin with, using the following question, **have** the students raise their hand to indicate the role that the five senses play, but in a non-sexual context at first:
  - **Can you identify one element for each of the five senses (smell, sound, taste, touch, sight) that can elicit a pleasant sensation, but in a NON-SEXUAL context?**

*Get their answers.*

## Presentation

- › **Add** to their answers as needed using Sheet 3.4: *The role of the five senses in desire and pleasure (NON-sexual context)*.
- › Then, **specify** how the five senses can enhance desire or elicit pleasure, this time in a sexual context. Depending on the group dynamic, you may decide not to have the students identify aspects related to sexual pleasure and the five senses to avoid situations where some might give too many unnecessary details. It’s up to you.
  - Our five senses provide access to a range of pleasant sensations on a daily basis (NON-sexual context), but that’s also the case when sharing sexual intimacy. See the information on Sheet 3.4: *The role of the five senses in desire and pleasure*.

- › Lastly, **add** the following to the shared content:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › The five senses play an important role in the way we experience pleasure, in both a NON-sexual and sexual context.
- › However, different circumstances can influence how we perceive a situation and our sensations.
  - **Example: NON-sexual context**  
Let's say that you're planning to eat your favourite meal (pasta) and dessert (chocolate cake) tonight. You think about it off and on throughout the day and you're really looking forward to it. You get home, however, only to find that your parents are bickering, your little brother has broken your video game console and your little sister is pouting for no apparent reason. So much for a pleasant atmosphere. You still appreciate your favourite meal and dessert, but the context makes it less enjoyable.
  - **Example: Sexual context**  
Similarly, before sharing sexual intimacy, several things may help make the experience more desirable and pleasurable: feeling secure and safe; feeling comfortable enough to express your needs and boundaries; using humour to create a relaxed atmosphere; being attentive; gazing into each other's eyes, etc. But other things can have the opposite effect: being in a relationship where there is a great deal of conflict and misunderstanding; feeling disrespected; having the other person compare you to their ex or make a disparaging remark or bad joke about your body, etc. Our body is not disconnected from our feelings and emotions.
  - **The five senses and sensuality**  
What can help arouse desire and pleasure is also connected to the world of sensuality, which refers to the body's sensory ability to experience desire and/or pleasure through one or more of the five senses (Bérard, 2008). The entire body (e.g., scalp, lips, neck, breasts, hands, lower back, buttocks, lower abdomen, penis, vulva, clitoris, legs, inner thighs, ankles) can be a source of pleasant sensations, and some of the body's erogenous zones (e.g., hands, lips, genital areas) can be especially sensitive (Xavier, 2020).  
  
Sensuality involves intimate touch and gestures, as well as closeness. It is the ability to enjoy sensory pleasures and be receptive to different physical sensations (Sensualité, n.d.). There is no predefined model of sensuality, since each body is unique (Éducation sensuelle, 2010a). Touch and actions that are pleasurable for one person may not be for another (Éducation sensuelle, 2010b; Xavier, 2020). You learn about and develop an understanding of what is sensual with your partner (Éducation sensuelle, 2010a).
- › To sum up, sexual desire and pleasure can be fragile if you aren't sufficiently sensitive to small signs of discomfort or unease.

## Part B



### Activity 2



SLIDESHOW (PPT)

SHEETS 3.5A, 3.5B, 3.6A, 3.6B AND 3.7



25 MIN.



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



TEAM  
ACTIVITY

## Discussion

- › **Start** the activity by asking the group the following question and **get** their answers:
  - **Why do you think it's important to clearly understand the body's different responses to sexual desire and pleasure?**

## Presentation

- › **Add** to their answers with the information below:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Importance of understanding the body's different responses to sexual desire and pleasure

- › Even though the body's responses to sexual desire and pleasure are essentially the same for everyone, each person's perception of and experience with desire, excitement, fantasy, sexual pleasure (physical and psychological) and orgasm can vary considerably, according to their:
  - Environment (cultural and social influence)
  - Education (values)
  - Interests
  - Motivations (attraction, curiosity)
  - Personal experiences (positive and negative)
  - Attitudes
  - Sensitivity
  - Boundaries
  - Etc.
- › In other words, almost everyone is able to experience desire and pleasure, but not in the same way, at the same age, in the same context, etc.

- › Being attentive to the body's various sensations that can be aroused by the five senses (smell, sound, taste, touch, sight) and the thoughts that are on your mind when you're having sex help you learn about yourself and your partner, and respect your boundaries and those of your partner. It also helps you discover what you and your partner find enjoyable so that you can give in to the pleasure and "let yourself go" under the right circumstances. There's a lot to learn and it takes time.
- › Masturbation (the stimulation of one's own genitals) can be a good way of discovering your own body first and privately exploring what gives you pleasure. Knowing how your body responds and what you find satisfying increases your chances of experiencing pleasure with a partner (Daguzan Bernier, 2019).
- › Although masturbating helps you learn more about yourself, there's absolutely no need to do it if you don't feel like it. Some people don't feel the need, and that's OK. Masturbation is natural and healthy, but it's important to know that it can become a problem if it takes up too much time in your everyday life (Daguzan Bernier, 2019; Tel-jeunes, 2022d).

## Team Activity

- › **Ask** participants to get into teams of four.
- › **Give** the following instructions:
  1. Each team will receive one of two situations to analyze (Sheet 3.5a: *Situational Exercise: Jennifer and David* or Sheet 3.5b: *Situational Exercise: Bianca and Collin*).
  2. The teams will have 10 minutes to analyze the situation and answer the corresponding questions.
  3. Once they are done, each team will select a spokesperson to share their answers with the entire group.
- › **Hand out** one of the two Situational exercises (Sheet 3.5a or 3.5b) to each team.

## Discussion and Presentation

- › Once the time is up, **ask** the teams with Sheet 3.5a: *Situational Exercise: Jennifer and David* to share their answers for each of the questions. Complete the same step for Sheet 3.5b: *Situational Exercise: Bianca and Collin*.
- › **Add to** participants' answers with the suggested content for each situational exercise (see Sheet 3.6a: *Answer sheet: Situational Exercise: Jennifer and David* and Sheet 3.6b: *Answer sheet: Situational Exercise: Bianca and Collin*).

- › **Add** that, like Collin, many young people feel pressure when it comes to sexual performance, and **share** the following information:

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Placing too much importance on sexual performance can become an obstacle to developing intimacy (emotional and/or sexual) with your partner (Bessaïh and La CORPS féministe, 2019; Marsan, 2013) and giving in to and experiencing pleasure.
- › Focusing on sexual performance can also lead you to want to impress your partner and therefore adopt risky sexual behaviour (e.g., failing to use sexual protection during sex) or adopt sexual behaviour that you are not entirely comfortable with.
- › Add to that the misunderstandings, prejudices and myths surrounding what a pleasurable or memorable sexual activity or sex should be like.

- › **Add** that, in the next activity, you will be analyzing a few myths surrounding sexual activity, and sexual desire and pleasure.



## Activity 3



**SLIDESHOW (PPT)**  
**SHEETS 3.8 AND 3.9**



**30 MIN.**



**DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION**



**INDIVIDUAL  
ACTIVITY**

### Individual Activity

- › **Introduce** the next activity, explaining to the students that there are myths and false beliefs surrounding various sexual practices, and the question of sexual desire and pleasure.
- › Each student will receive Sheet 3.8: *Myth or fact?*, and will have five minutes to answer the questions individually. They will have to identify whether they think the statements are myths or facts.

### Discussion and Presentation

- › As a class, students will share their answers on a volunteer basis.
- › **Read** each statement out loud, one at a time, with the group. Then, **ask** the students to identify whether they think it is a myth or a fact. They can explain their answers on a volunteer basis.
  - When dealing with topics that focus on sexual intimacy, it is preferable to avoid pressuring the students to explain their answers if nobody spontaneously volunteers.
- › **Continue** by discussing the answers and their explanations for the activity on myths or facts, using Sheet 3.9: *Answer sheet: Myth or fact?*
- › **End** the activity with the following information:

#### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Nobody has to be sexually active if they don't want to.
- › Similarly, nobody has to become a "sex machine" to have fun. Learning to manage desire and pleasure means learning how to feel things, being attuned to what's happening for you and your partner and being attentive to non-verbal cues. It's also about asking yourself whether a given sexual practice works for you. It's not all about "getting off and having a good time."
- › It's important to learn how to express what you like, as well as your fears and apprehensions, because it takes two to build a sexual relationship. However, that's easier said than done. The following are a few tips.





## Session Conclusion



SLIDESHOW (PPT)  
SHEET 3.10



20 MIN.



VIDEO



DISCUSSION AND  
PRESENTATION



ROLE PLAY

## Video and Discussion

- › **Show** the following video:

**Talking to Your Partner about Sex (Rosey Project, 2020)**

**Length:** 1 min., 13 sec.

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9Rif1vJj0c>**



Video



### NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Although this video is 1 minute, 46 seconds, long, we suggest you stop it after 1 minute, 13 seconds. The final seconds feature referrals to organizations that offer support to victims of sexual violence in Scotland.

Several of the characters' comments also appear in the form of text.

- › **Get** the students' comments and reactions to the video.
  - **What are your takeaways from this video?**
  - **Why is it important to tell your partner how you feel when it comes to your sexual desires and boundaries? And how do you go about it?**

*Get their opinions.*

## Presentation

- › **Share** the following information:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

#### Importance of communicating how you feel about sexual activity

- › Sexual communication is defined as the ability to express and talk about your desires, boundaries, needs and sexual preferences with your partner (Vincelli, 2013).
- › It has several benefits, including:
  - Feeling close to the other person, building trust, getting to know your partner better (Télé-Québec, 2019)
  - Developing satisfying romantic intimacy with the other person (Larivière, 2012)
  - Promoting the more regular use of contraceptive methods, and therefore decreasing concerns about unplanned pregnancies (Manning, Longmore and Giordano, 2005; Widman & al., 2006)
- › In particular, this communication helps develop intimacy with the other person by:
  - **Allowing you to open up and trust the other person:** This allows you to express your feelings, your reasons for wanting to have sex, your needs and your boundaries (e.g., being ready or not to adopt certain sexual behaviours). Self-confidence and trusting the other person are keys to getting there (Gagnon and Thériault, 2006; MEES, 2019).
  - **Showing concern for the other person and self-care:** Showing concern for the other person, considering how they feel and placing importance on their well-being and safety is central to the concept of emotional intimacy. However, it's important to find a balance between showing concern for the other person and self-care (MEES, 2019; Thériault, 1995).
  - **Being able to assert yourself and negotiate:** Being able to assert yourself and discuss your needs and boundaries makes it possible to find common ground when conflicts arise between partners. You shouldn't worry about saying what you think or feel out of fear of displeasing the other person or out of embarrassment. Otherwise, your needs and boundaries aren't expressed and aren't taken into account (MEES, 2019).
- › It's not necessarily a matter of saying everything that's on your mind.
  - You can, however, write all the points that you want to bring up on a piece of paper to make sure you don't forget anything.
  - You can practise saying them to yourself; it will help you find the right words and the right tone (Tel-jeunes, 2022a).
  - Some people choose to communicate through texting (SMS) (Télé-Québec, 2019).
- › The most important thing is to keep it simple and discuss the items that are important to you and that will help enrich the relationship.

## Role Play or Presentation

- › **Give** three compelling examples of “positive and clear” sexual communication. One **BEFORE** sexual activity, another **DURING** and a last one **AFTER** (Sheet 3.10: *Examples of sexual communication (Before-During-After)*).
- › If you’d like and if there’s enough time, ask two participants to read the dialogues (in particular example no. 1). Since the first names of the characters aren’t gender specific, the characters can be a boy and a girl, two girls or two boys. The same goes for example no. 3. You (or the students) can decide on the sex of the characters. Example no. 2, however, deals with the sexual anatomy of one of the characters.

## Discussion

- › **Ask** the students for their reactions and comments regarding these ways of communicating.
  - **What do you think of these ways of communicating and asserting yourself?**  
*Get their opinions.*
- › Then, **explain** the following:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › Like with these young people, it’s not always easy to be completely honest about how you feel.
  - It requires stopping and thinking about your own feelings: “*How do I feel?*”
  - And about the other person’s: “*How do you feel?*”
- › You can learn how to talk about your expectations and what pleases and displeases you, and how to take an interest in what the other person is going through.
- › Since there are few role models around, it’s rather rare in some popular media (e.g., movies, TV shows) to see people talking about how they feel about their sex life. As for the depiction of sexual behaviour in pornography, the imposed “standard” is often to be pro-sex, willing, intense, insatiable, dominant (or a victim), etc. All that without saying a word, without any real discussion.
- › In “real life,” there can be intensity, but also fits of laughter, shyness, silence, joy, embarrassment, fear, pleasure, doubt, emotions, feelings, questions, lack of enthusiasm, action, etc.
- › Communicating with your partner becomes a concrete way of “doing things differently” and reacting against the porn “standard,” where you’re limited to “behaving sexually” and where feelings are secondary.
- › We are built to connect with others. Sharing our sexual intimacy inevitably connects us to our emotions and feelings, and to those of the other person.

- › Lastly, **ask** the students about their takeaways from the session.
  - **What are your takeaways from this session?**  
*Get their opinions.*

## Presentation

- › **End** the session with the following **KEY MESSAGES**:

### CONTENT OVERVIEW

- › In short, it's important to remember that sexual activity is more than just a "sex position"; that it's essential to have a consenting partner, regardless of the sexual practice; that these highly intimate acts have to be managed to ensure a desirable and pleasurable experience; and that it's not a "to-do list" to be completed like an automaton.
- › It always involves a person you like, someone you find desirable (or not); affection and possibly love (or not); a context that is favourable (or not); an act that you're interested in (or not).
- › At the beginning of your sex life, you have to deal with several things before you can make clear decisions, be assertive about what you really find pleasurable and possibly explore various erotic games.
- › It's all a matter of maturity, awareness and feelings. Basically, there's no need to put pressure on yourself. Give yourself time and keep things simple and natural.



## SHEET

### 3.1

#### FOR THE GROUP

## “What am I?”

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Determine whether each of the following statements refers to sexual desire, sexual excitement, sexual fantasy, sexual pleasure or orgasm.

### “What am I?”

1. Sexual desire	2. Sexual excitement	3. Sexual fantasy	4. Sexual pleasure	5. Orgasm
1.	_____ is an internal drive that leads to attraction and/or wanting to engage in sexual activity with another person (Diamond and Savin-Williams, 2009, cited in MEES, 2020).			
2.	Signs of _____ include erection (i.e., swelling of the penis, which fills with blood); the penis hardens and gets longer.			
3.	_____ is not necessarily associated with orgasm, but it can be.			
4.	_____ is characterized by a series of rhythmic muscle contractions, during which blood pressure, heart rate and respiration reach their peak. It is a response involving multiple physical, emotional, social and hormonal factors. The brain excites the nerve centres in the spinal cord and their reflexes trigger it.			
5.	_____ is experienced inside your body. You can feel it in several ways, including shivers, tension inside the body and increased respiratory rate.			
6.	_____ can be compared to a movie. It’s a scenario that your imagination creates when you’re awake to get excited. It can help you get to know yourself, namely figure out what you like and what you’re less interested in exploring sexually (MEES, 2020), and allow you to explore your desires.			
7.	_____ can be emotional, intellectual, spiritual, physical or genital.			

8. \_\_\_\_\_ is a feeling of intense pleasure, of sexual satisfaction that is felt in the body and the mind (feeling of letting go and of deep relaxation) that can vary in intensity from one time to the next and from person to person (Crooks and Baur, 2003).

9. Signs of \_\_\_\_\_ include enlargement of the clitoris (erection) and lubrication (the vaginal membrane becomes moister, more lubricated); the vagina become longer and somewhat wider.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ is also related to sensuality. All the senses (sound, sight, smell, taste, touch) are involved.

11. \_\_\_\_\_ can be romantic (e.g., imagining going out with someone that you're in love with) or sexual (e.g., imagining engaging in sexual activity with that same person) in nature (MEES, 2020).

12. You can feel \_\_\_\_\_ for someone (e.g., your body can react when you see someone that you find desirable, exciting) without having feelings of love or even affection for that person. You can also feel it by looking at an image or thinking about a fantasy (daydreaming).

13. \_\_\_\_\_ is characterized by waiting, putting things off, and not getting everything all at once.

14. \_\_\_\_\_ can be satisfied through sexual contact alone (e.g., masturbation) or with a partner (e.g., kissing and touching).

15. \_\_\_\_\_ can be satisfied through shared affection and intimacy, sensuality (the five senses) or sexual behaviour per se.

1. There are all types of \_\_\_\_\_. Some are realistic and accessible (MEES, 2020) (e.g., kissing and touching your girlfriend or boyfriend under the stars in a park, out of other people's sight. Some are less so or not at all (MEES, 2020) (e.g., spending a hot night with your favourite actor in a villa in California). That said, you don't have to share or indulge in them; it's up to you. Some people indulge a little, and others, not at all.

2. The erogenous zones (e.g., neck, earlobes, breasts, buttocks, inner thighs, genitals) are the most sensitive parts of your body and can lead to \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Although not necessarily associated with love, affection and feelings of love add to \_\_\_\_\_. (Hajcak and Garwood, 1989)

4. \_\_\_\_\_ can be triggered by stimulating the clitoris.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ is related to attraction, the ability to charm your partner or arouse their interest.



## SHEET

### 3.2

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer Sheet: “What am I?”

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › **Review the activity by reading each of the statements and asking the teams to give their answers (sexual desire, sexual excitement, sexual fantasy, sexual pleasure or orgasm) on a volunteer basis.**
- › **Verify or correct the answers as needed according to the information presented below (Duquet, Gagnon and Faucher, 2010).**

### “What am I?”

1. *Sexual desire*

2. *Sexual excitement*

3. *Sexual fantasy*

4. *Sexual pleasure*

5. *Orgasm*

- 1. Sexual desire** is an internal drive that leads to attraction and/or wanting to engage in sexual activity with another person (Diamond and Savin-Williams, 2009, cited in MEES, 2020).
  - 2. Signs of sexual excitement** include erection (i.e., swelling of the penis, which fills with blood); the penis hardens and gets longer.
  - 3. Sexual pleasure** is not necessarily associated with orgasm, but it can be.
  - 4. Orgasm** is characterized by a series of rhythmic muscle contractions, during which blood pressure, heart rate and respiration reach their peak. It is a response involving multiple physical, emotional, social and hormonal factors. The brain excites the nerve centres in the spinal cord and their reflexes trigger it.
  - 5. Sexual excitement** is experienced inside your body. You can feel it in several ways, including chills, tension inside the body and increased respiratory rate.
- 1. Sexual fantasy** can be compared to a movie. It’s a scenario that your imagination creates when you’re awake to get excited. It can help you get to know yourself, namely figure out what you like and what you’re less interested in exploring sexually (MEES, 2020), and allow you to explore your desires.

2. **Sexual pleasure** can be emotional, intellectual, spiritual, physical or genital.

3. **Orgasm** is a feeling of intense pleasure, of sexual satisfaction that is felt in the body and the mind (feeling of letting go and of deep relaxation) that can vary in intensity from one time to the next and from person to person (Crooks and Baur, 2003).

4. Signs of **sexual excitement** include enlargement of the clitoris (erection) and lubrication (the vaginal membrane becomes moister, more lubricated); the vagina become longer and somewhat wider.

5. **Sexual desire** is also related to sensuality. All the senses (sound, sight, smell, taste, touch) are involved.

1. **Sexual fantasy** can be romantic (e.g., imagining going out with someone that you're in love with) or sexual (e.g., imagining engaging in sexual activity with that same person) in nature (MEES, 2020).

2. You can feel **sexual excitement** for someone (e.g., your body can react when you see someone that you find desirable, exciting) without having feelings of love or even affection for that person. You can also feel it by looking at an image or thinking about a fantasy (daydreaming).

3. **Sexual desire** is characterized by waiting, putting things off, and not getting everything all at once.

4. **Sexual excitement** can be satisfied through sexual contact alone (e.g., masturbation) or with a partner (e.g., kissing and touching).

5. **Sexual pleasure** can be satisfied through shared affection and intimacy, sensuality (the five senses) or sexual behaviour per se.

1. There are all types of **sexual fantasy**. Some is realistic and accessible (MEES, 2020) (e.g., kissing and touching your girlfriend or boyfriend under the stars in a park, out of other people's sight). Some is less so or not at all (MEES, 2020) (e.g., spending a hot night with your favourite actor in a villa in California). That said, you don't have to share or indulge in it; it's up to you. Some people indulge a little, and others, not at all.

2. The erogenous zones (e.g., neck, earlobes, breasts, buttocks, inner thighs, genitals) are the most sensitive parts of your body and can lead to **sexual excitement**.

3. Although not necessarily associated with love, affection and feelings of love add to **sexual desire and pleasure** (Hajcak and Garwood, 1989).

4. **Orgasm** can be triggered by stimulating the clitoris.

5. **Sexual desire** is related to attraction, the ability to charm your partner or arouse their interest.





## SHEET

### 3.2a

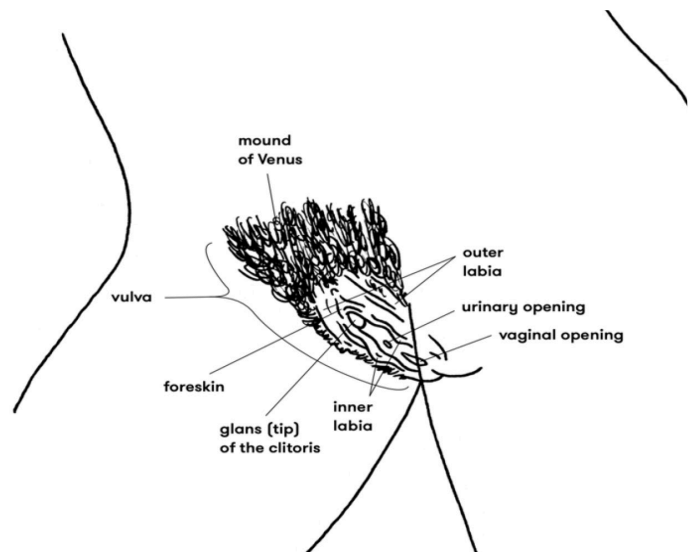
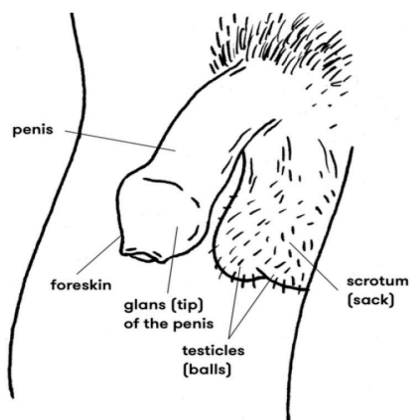
FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Sexual anatomy

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Show the three anatomical charts of male and female sex organs (external and internal views) entitled “*Game of (few) differences*” (Brockmann and Chytil, 2018), which illustrate in particular the similarities between the penis and the clitoris in terms of sensitivity and function.

### Spot the (not so many) differences



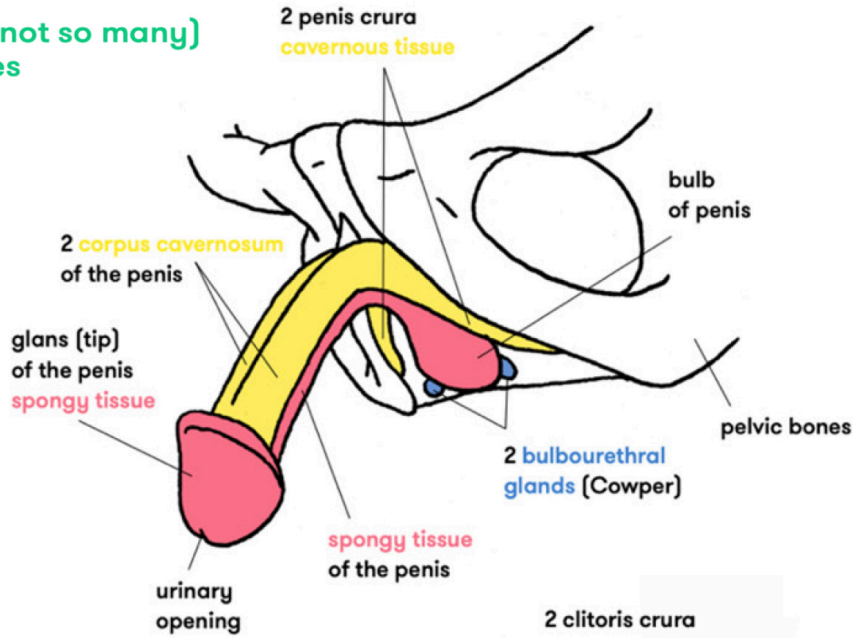
### As seen from the outside. What we see with the naked eye!

Even though we easily recognize female and male genitals, there are as many variations as there are humans on Earth!

**Just like the nose or ears, the vulva, penis and scrotum vary in shape, size, color, etc.** For example, the inner labia can be larger than the outer labia or not, or be asymmetrical.

Note: The drawing on the left represents an uncircumcised penis, the foreskin therefore covers the tip of the penis. The inner and outer labia of the vulva naturally cover the urinal and vaginal opening; on the right-side drawing, they have been spread apart so they are visible.

**Spot the (not so many) differences**



**As seen on the inside  
We're all geared up for pleasure!**

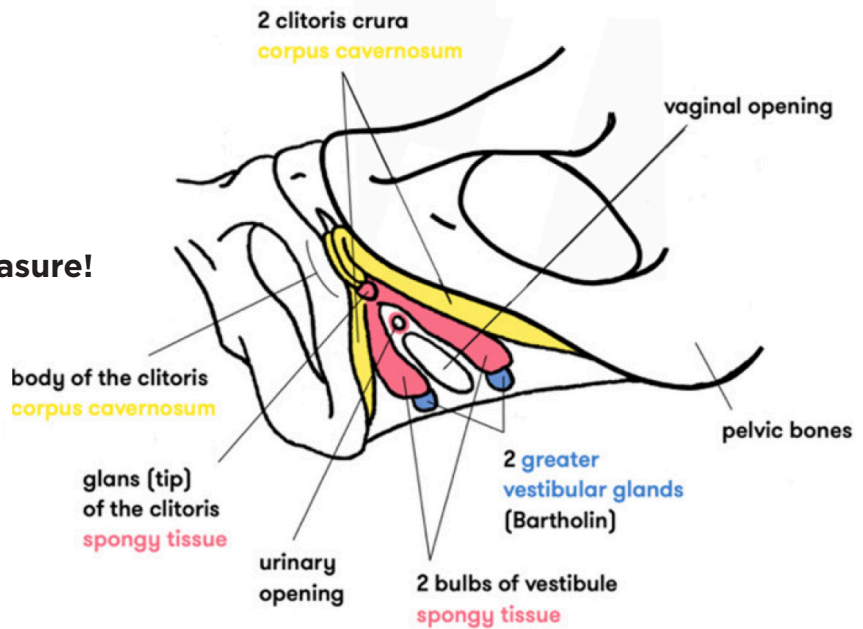
The penis and the clitoris have a common embryonic origin, which is why they have so much in common, especially when we talk about their role in sexual arousal and pleasure.

- › The tips of the penis and clitoris have the same receptors for sexual pleasure.
- › These two organs are shaped in very similar ways (glans, body, crura, bulbs).
- › The crura of the clitoris and penis are attached to the pelvic bones.
- › Both the clitoris and the penis are made of cavernous and spongy tissues; these are erectile tissues which, during sexual arousal, fill with blood, swell and become hard.

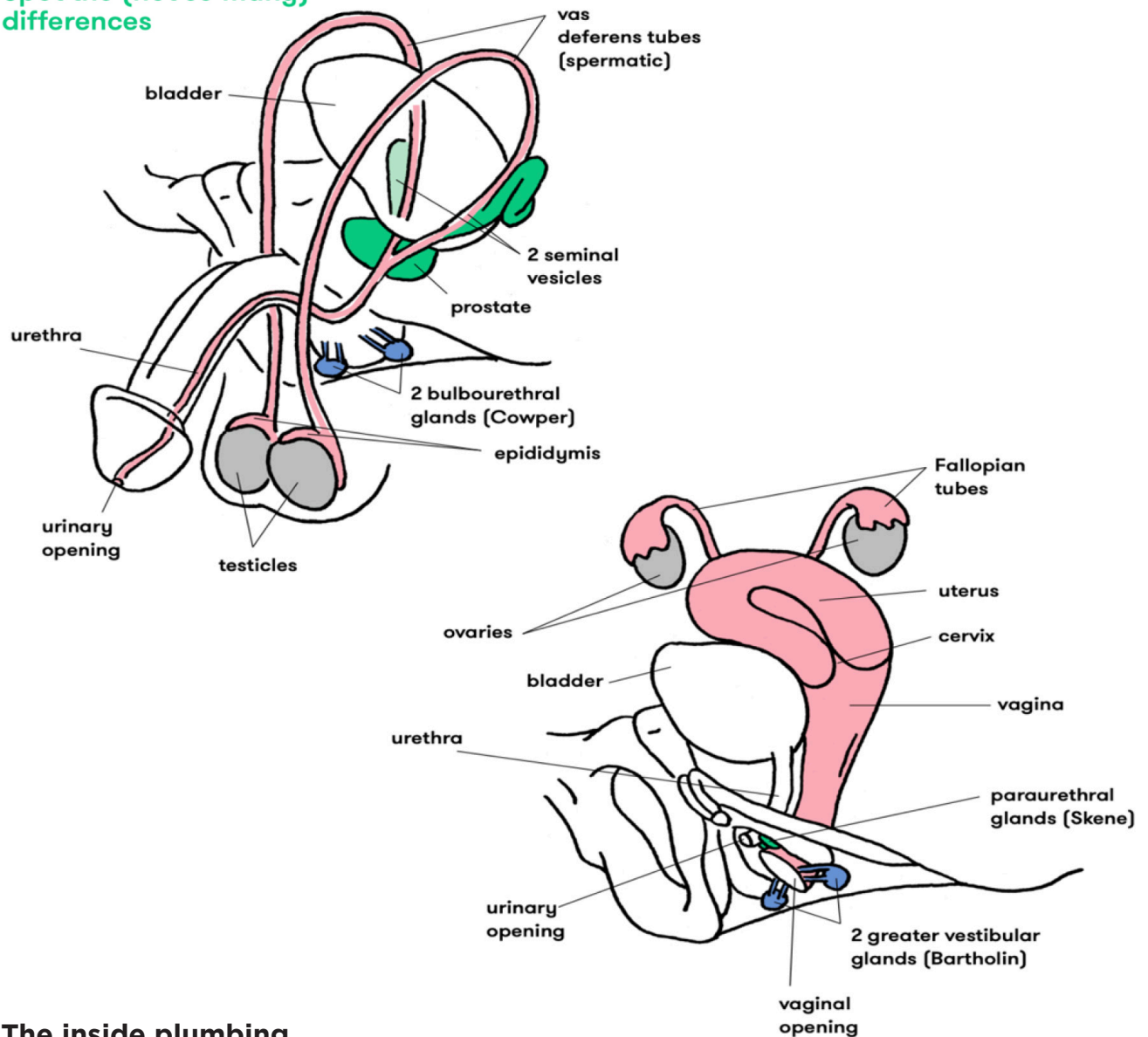
The clitoris' erection is less visible than the penis', because it is smaller and for the most part hidden.

- › Sexual arousal also produces lubricating fluids through the vaginal walls and the greater vestibular glands for the female, and through the bulbourethral glands for men.

It is important to note that sexual desire and pleasure, genital or not, depends on multiple factors which are unique to each individual, but which always involve the nervous system.



Spot the (not so many) differences



**The inside plumbing  
The reproductive system**

- Reproducing is possible for humans thanks to **reproductive tubes** which allow transport and delivery of gametes from their production site, the ovaries and testicles, to their meeting point: the Fallopian tubes! The **accessory glands** contribute to ejaculation for both males and females.

If fertilization occurs, the embryo will set up camp in the uterus, which will remain its growing place for the following 9 months. The vagina is very elastic and, if everything goes well, it is the exit for the baby

*Brockmann, C. and Chytil, T. (2018). Sexess: Mon corps sous la loupe. Bioscope de l'Université de Genève et RTS Découverte. [https://www.unige.ch/ssi/files/5616/5364/0740/Booklet\\_Sexess\\_EN\\_OK.pdf](https://www.unige.ch/ssi/files/5616/5364/0740/Booklet_Sexess_EN_OK.pdf)*

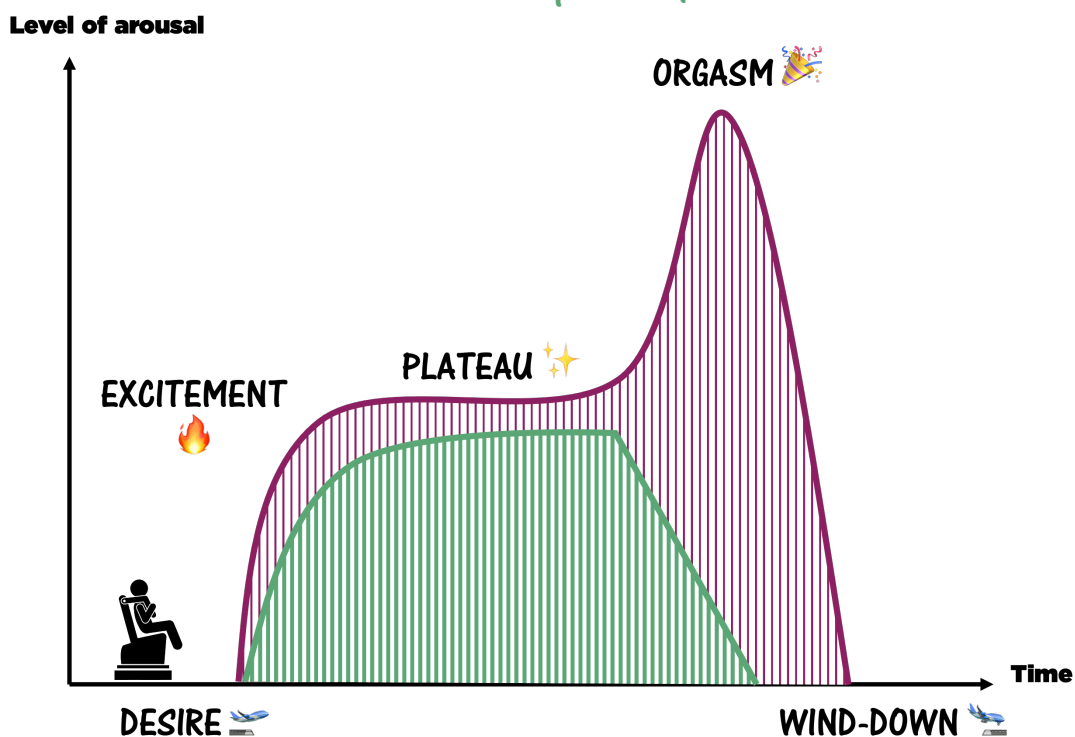


## Sexual response cycle

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Following the “What am I?” activity, share the information on the “sexual response cycle” below.
- › All these signals and changes in the body that occur when you engage in sexual activity (alone or with another person) are part of the sexual response cycle (see the diagram below). However, there is no single model or absolute standard for everyone (Médico, 2005-2007), as authors Masters and Johnson (1966) claimed. There are, in fact, several possible reactions, and these stages differ depending on a person’s gender, age and state of physical and/or mental health, as well as the situational context, among other things.
- › The sexual response cycle can be compared to a roller coaster, where each person will have a very different experience.

### Sexual response cycle



- › The first thing you do before you get on a roller coaster is make sure it's safe. The same is true when you decide to have sex. It's important to:
  - Use effective contraceptive methods (e.g., birth control pill, vaginal ring, contraceptive patch, IUD) and sexual protection (e.g., condom or dental dam). Condoms should be used systematically and correctly for all sexual activity outside of a monogamous relationship with a non-infected partner (Clinique rue McGill, 2015).



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Note that secretly removing a condom during sex without a partner's consent or pretending to put on a condom during consensual sex without actually doing so (known as "stealthing") has been considered a form of sexual assault since 2014 (Robert, 2022) and, according to Sylvie Lévesque, professor at UQAM's Department of Sexology, and Sheilah L. Martin, Supreme Court judge, is a phenomenon that occurs more often than we think (Pineda, Provost and Vallet, 2022).

In July 2022, the Supreme Court of Canada further clarified the concept of consent surrounding this practice to determine whether it constituted a violation of consent. Previously, according to lawyer Suzanne Zaccour, it had to be shown that consent had been wrongfully obtained not only to prove the partner's dishonesty, but also to show that the person had been exposed to risk of injury, including pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (Pineda, Provost and Vallet, 2022). There is no longer a need to ask whether the partner was dishonest. The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that anyone who adopts this practice violates consent and is therefore guilty of sexual assault.

- Be with a partner that you feel comfortable with (e.g., someone who doesn't judge you, someone you can discuss your concerns with, someone you can laugh with about the little things that happen along the way)
- Be somewhere where you feel comfortable
- › Also, you can experience a variety of emotions and feelings (before, during and/or after) a ride on a roller coaster, much like when you have sex. You can feel:
  - Excited, happy, worried, unprepared; you can have chills, hot flashes, regrets, a fast-beating heart, butterflies in your stomach, etc.
- › At any time, like on a roller coaster ride, your sexual response cycle can take a different turn than the one you imagined. A number of factors can affect sexual excitement and whether or not it is sustained, and cause feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The body has its reasons for reacting or not reacting a certain way.

**Dissatisfaction:**

- Discomfort, embarrassment or unease
- Severe fatigue
- Performance anxiety
- Fear of being judged and/or disappointing the other person
- Inappropriate comment by the other person that affects your desire (e.g., talking about their ex)
- Poor sexual hygiene
- A high level of alcohol and/or drug use can interfere with excitement (e.g., erection, lubrication).
  - **Note:** The use of alcohol and drugs (e.g., MDMA or Ecstasy, marijuana, GHB, antidepressants) can have a direct impact on sexual response (i.e., loss of sexual desire; difficulty with regard to vaginal lubrication, getting or maintaining a penile erection, reaching orgasm (Larivière, 2021)). The use of MDMA is illegal and, aside from generating feelings of euphoria and a desire to touch, this product can have adverse effects on health (Gouvernement du Québec, 2017). It weakens the immune system's ability to fight infections (Savoie, 2004) and alters sensory perception (Gouvernement du Québec, 2017).
  - Consequently, some boys and girls might accept sexual fondling that they would otherwise refuse. A malicious person could take advantage of the situation.
  - Excessive use of alcohol or drugs can be problematic and a sign of personal difficulties. Instead of choosing a chemical alternative to a relational or sexual difficulty, one solution could be to simply stop and think about what you're experiencing at the time (e.g., lack of desire for that person; unsuitable context for letting go and feeling desire and pleasure; worries; fear of disappointing; performance anxiety; feeling of disappointment or sadness). If you're dealing with difficulties involving alcohol or drug use, addiction or a matter of a sexual nature, or if you have any questions, consulting a professional is always an excellent option.
- More or less pleasant touching and/or feelings of pain; going too far
- Distractions, unexpected and/or stressful situations (e.g., quickly glancing at your cell phone when it rings or, worse, answering it; being in an intimate place where someone arrives unexpectedly; lack or misuse of sexual protection (e.g., condom, birth control pill)
  - Note: When used correctly, condoms have a break rate of approximately 1%. Leaks are even rarer. However, condoms can slip or break if the wrong size is used (Government of Canada, 2022).
- Etc.

If you are having an unpleasant experience, you can postpone sexual activity until both partners are better prepared to share that type of intimacy. It's important to respond to what you're feeling. Even though it may not have gone exactly as you hoped, you can still laugh about the little things that happen along the way and enjoy your time together.

**Satisfaction:**

- Several factors can help make shared sexual intimacy a time to enjoy:
  - A compliment or thoughtful gesture from the other person
  - Pleasant mutual touching
  - A break where both partners embrace
  - A relaxing massage
  - A tender look
  - Shared laughter
  - Etc.

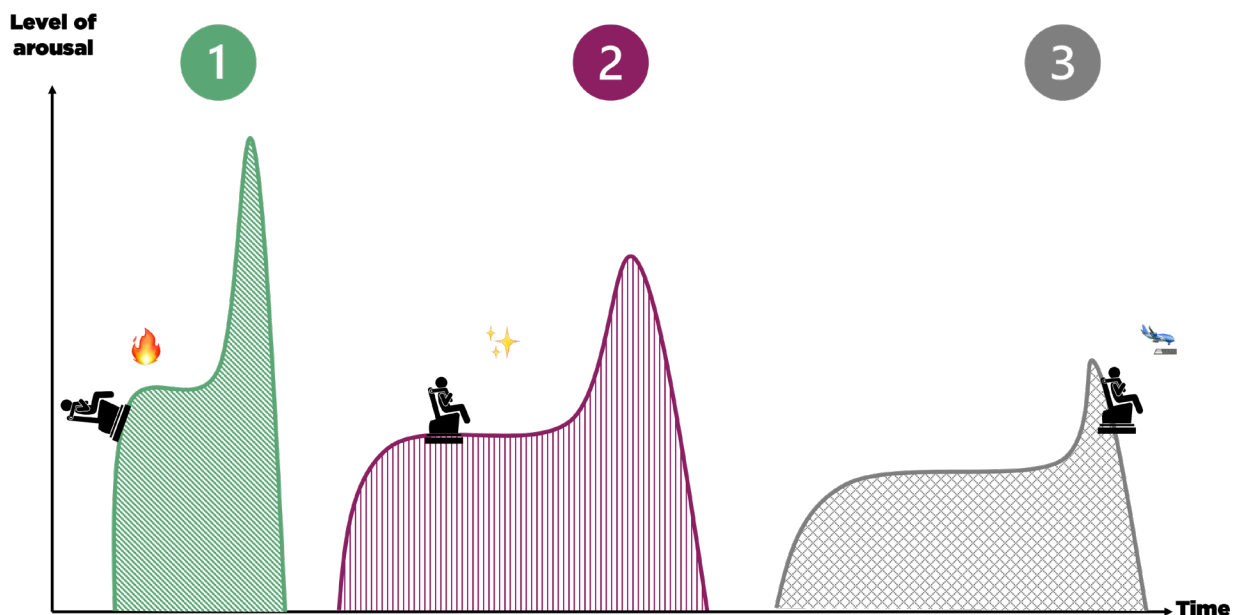


## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER

Here, show the students the fictitious illustration of the initial stages of a sexual relationship between two people (Person A and Person B), (see the animated slideshow (PPT)), where they can see that a given situation can result in various possible feelings and reactions, and consequently affect the sexual response cycle, namely the body's reactions, as well as a person's mood.

A tender look, compliments and/or a caress are all examples of affectionate or sexual behaviors that can be exchanged between partners; for one, these can be pleasant, while for the other, they can generate discomfort or anxiety.

- A roller coaster ride can be very different for different people. Similarly, during a sexual activity or sex, both partners may not reach the same stage at the same time and may not achieve the same level of satisfaction.
- Consequently, some people will reach orgasm, while others will not. And, just because you reach orgasm once doesn't mean you'll necessarily reach it every time you have sex or masturbate. Having sex is not a race to orgasm, which could lead you to completely miss out on feelings associated with being fully in the moment.



- A fulfilling sex life is not measured by the number and intensity of orgasms. It is about finding a personal balance between satisfying your physical and psychological needs (Acteur de ma santé, 2022).



## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Details regarding the previous notes:

### 1. Dental dam

Although they are included among types of sexual protection, dental dams are currently difficult to obtain because of a lack of availability in pharmacies, CLSCs, etc. However, in order to offer protection against sexually transmitted blood borne infections (STBBIs) during oral sex, it is possible to make a dental dam using a condom (to learn how, see the document produced by the Direction de la santé publique de l'Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal (n.d.) [https://santemontreal.qc.ca/fileadmin/fichiers/population/sante-a-z/shigellose/shigellose\\_digue\\_dentaire.pdf](https://santemontreal.qc.ca/fileadmin/fichiers/population/sante-a-z/shigellose/shigellose_digue_dentaire.pdf)).

However, since making a dental dam requires time and a pair of disinfected scissors, it is not a very realistic option, in particular for adolescents.

### 2. Viagra

Although taking Viagra is reserved for men aged 18 or over, some adolescents and young men choose to take Viagra, an oral treatment for erectile dysfunction (Le Figaro santé, n.d.), and combine it with other drugs to make it easier to get an erection and/or increase sexual performance. The reasons given for its use include being under too much pressure, stress, embarrassment and fear of not getting an erection (Lachance, 2021). However, combining the use of other drugs with Viagra, for example, can have major health impacts (e.g., heart problems, painful erections), possibly resulting in death (Observatoire du sida et des sexualités, 2022). The use of Ecstasy, even in young people, increases the risk of cardiovascular events because it causes the blood vessels to contract. Conversely, Viagra causes the blood vessels to dilate. Someone who comes to a hospital emergency room because they're having a stroke will immediately be given medication to dilate their blood vessels and get more oxygen to their heart. However, if they've taken Viagra, the prescribed treatment could lead to death because their blood vessels are already dilated (Observatoire du sida et des sexualités, 2022). The effect is additive. Taking Viagra or Cialis is not the solution to loss of erection from drug or alcohol use. Moreover, according to experts, using Viagra or Cialis makes some users unable to get an erection without it (Lachance, 2021).





## SHEET

### 3.4

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## The role of the five senses in desire and pleasure

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Share the following information with the students:

#### The five senses

What can provide pleasure (a pleasant feeling) in a <b>NON-SEXUAL</b> context	What can enhance desire or provide pleasure in a <b>SEXUAL</b> context Some items inspired by Xavier (2020)
<b>Smell</b> Smelling the aroma of flowers, essential oils, bread baking, your favourite meal, etc.	<b>Smell</b> Smelling the aroma of your partner's skin or perfume, etc.
<b>Sound</b> Listening to music you enjoy, the voice of someone you like, laughter, a brook, the ocean, etc.	<b>Sound</b> Listening to ambient music, lyrics whispered by your partner, your partner's breathing or heartbeat, etc.
<b>Taste</b> Savouring fresh-squeezed juice or a good cup of coffee; tasting a new spice, etc.	<b>Taste</b> Enjoying kissing your partner, etc.
<b>Touch</b> Enjoying receiving or giving a hug; wrapping yourself up in a soft, cozy blanket; walking barefoot through the grass; petting an animal, etc.	<b>Touch</b> Enjoying kissing or touching your partner. Snuggling or cuddling with one another, etc.
<b>Sight</b> Gazing at a beautiful landscape; watching a movie; seeing someone you like; looking at family photos; reading a book, etc.	<b>Sight</b> Seeing a partially or completely naked body; gazing at your partner: enjoying your partner's plunging neckline, torso or curvy hips. Finding your partner desirable. etc.



## SHEET

### 3.5a

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational Exercise: Jennifer and David

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.

### Jennifer and David

**Jennifer** and **David** met on a camping weekend with a group of friends two months ago. They quickly got along, spent an evening together and decided to share a tent for the night. They continue to see each other occasionally and have sex together. For David, Jennifer is his sex buddy.

Jennifer enjoys the time she spends with David. She told her best friend that she thinks she's in love with him and that she wishes they were a couple. However, she knows that there's no way that her relationship with David will develop in that way. David clearly told her that he doesn't see any advantage to having them "officially go out together," since what they share suits him just fine.

Jennifer's best friend asked her why she doesn't end the relationship since she knows what to expect from David. "*Won't you always feel disappointed because he's not in love with you?*" Jennifer replied: "*At least he's in my bed. That's something!*"

- › **What do you think of this situation?**
- › **Do you think there are advantages to having a sex buddy relationship? If so, what are they?**

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- › **Are there disadvantages to this type of relationship in the short or medium term, including with regard to intimacy and sexual experience (desire and pleasure)? If so, what are they?**

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## SHEET

### 3.5b

FOR THE GROUP

## Situational Exercise: Bianca and Collin

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › As a team, read the situation and answer the questions.

#### Bianca and Collin

**Bianca** and **Collin** have been going out for four months. They spend a lot of time talking about everything and laughing together. They are really in love. Since first having sex a few weeks ago, Collin has had a number of questions on his mind because things didn't go exactly the way he had hoped:

- › “Did it show that I was nervous?”
- › “Was I good enough in bed?”
- › “Did Bianca really enjoy it?”

In short, he's worried that Bianca was disappointed with his sexual performance because he felt clumsy. “Pleasure during sex seems more complicated for girls,” he thinks.

- › **What do you think of this situation?**
- › **Do you think it's common for young people your age to worry about sexual performance? If so, how does that play out (type of worry)?**

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- › **What do you think Collin means by “Pleasure during sex seems more complicated for girls”?**

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## Answer sheet: Situational Exercise: Jennifer and David

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### Advantages and disadvantages of a sex buddy relationship

#### Advantages:

- A sex buddy relationship can allow you to:
  - Share sexual intimacy with someone that you like, who is a friend, without being in love. The relationship is easy and honest; there's no drama (Bay-Cheng & al., 2009).
  - Share sexual intimacy without any ambiguity. The goal is clear and both people see each other when they want to (Doctissimo, 2022), without having to flirt and try to attract the other person each time.
  - Have non-exclusive sexual experiences. This type of relationship can be suitable for people who don't want to commit to a romantic relationship. It's important, however, that each person clarify their expectations from the outset (Doctissimo, 2022).
  - See yourself as desirable to the other person. Feeling attractive to the other person allows you to give in to your desire and pleasure (the same applies when you're in love).

#### Short-term disadvantages:

- In a sex buddy relationship, it can be difficult, or even impossible to:
  - Talk about that relationship with friends and family, for fear of being judged or misunderstood. This type of relationship can be somewhat secretive in nature.
  - Share a great deal of emotional intimacy, express your feelings or even be completely trusting, since it may be someone that you don't know that well (if that's the case) or that you see only occasionally.
  - Give yourself time to enhance your desire because, in this type of relationship, there isn't necessarily enough time set aside to charm the other person. Usually, desire builds through words, attentions and personalized ways of attracting that can be occasional or extend over a period of time.
  - Express your desires and boundaries. Some people have trouble letting go physically if the relationship isn't romantic from the outset. Sharing sexual intimacy with someone that you're in a romantic relationship with is a completely different emotional experience that can have a positive impact on sexual desire and pleasure.
- For some people, sexual desire and pleasure can be the same whether they're in a sex buddy or romantic relationship.

### Medium-term disadvantages:

- In a sex buddy relationship, it's possible that:
  - One or both people have some concerns about performance. Since the relationship is non-exclusive, in the long run, there can be some pressure to always be desirable and satisfy the other person sexually.
  - One of the two people falls in love and wants to make the relationship official and exclusive, which makes it more complicated and possibly unsatisfactory. Consequently, since both people no longer have the same expectations, this type of relationship may no longer work for that person.
  - One of the two people may feel that they are being used simply to satisfy the other person's sexual needs.

### To sum up:

- Whether in the case of a romantic relationship or a relationship without any real emotional commitment, namely a strictly sexual relationship, it's important to ensure that respect, mutual desire and consent are taken into account.
- When sharing intimacy, nobody wants the other person to be indifferent. Humans are social beings.
- According to neuropsychiatrist Boris Cyrulnik, it's healthy to have desires. It means that you're alive and that you enjoy life, and that's a good thing, but you can't express that just any old way. If you do, then the other person pays the price (Cyrulnik, 2022). In other words, you shouldn't treat the other person like an object.
- Being treated like a sexual object means being used by the other person for sexual purposes; it can also involve failing to obtain the person's consent or consider their emotions (Gaudet-Lebrun, 2021). Laws exist to condemn behaviour in which the other person's consent was not taken into account and boundaries were crossed.
- During sexual activity, if you don't feel completely comfortable and you suddenly have the impression that your safety may be compromised, stop immediately and find an excuse to leave (or to have the other person leave). If you feel threatened, don't hesitate to call 911.
- To make sure that you're not being treated like a sexual object, it's important to choose the right partner (Gaudet-Lebrun, 2021). Being with a sensitive and respectful person who makes you feel important (whether in a romantic context or not), with whom it's easy to open up and share your expectations and desires, but also set your boundaries, allows you to feel considered and enjoy shared sexual intimacy (Gaudet-Lebrun, 2021).
- However, you have to be able to clearly identify what you like and don't like and communicate that.



**SHEET**

**3.6b**

**FOR SESSION  
LEADERS**

## Answer sheet: Situational Exercise: Bianca and Collin

### Concerns and issues regarding sexual performance for young people

- It's normal to hope for enjoyable sexual activity, without anything unexpected. However, some people want to feel that they're always in control and able to perform.
- Sexual performance anxiety involves putting a great deal of pressure on yourself to experience pleasure at all costs or achieve a specific sexual feat, and consequently being anxious about the prospect of failure. Some people believe that it's important to:
  - Always be available and ready for sex, and have sex frequently
  - Adopt a variety of sexual positions and preferably simultaneously orgasm (using stereotypical scenes in porn movies as a reference). Orgasm often becomes the goal, which adds pressure when it comes to sexual performance (Bessaïh and La CORPS féministe, 2019; Forrest, 2000).
  - Make sex last as long as possible (e.g., concern about maintaining an erection or staying lubricated; concern about premature ejaculation).
  - Etc.

(Duquet, 2005; Duquet and Quéniart, 2009; Forrest, 2000; Lavoie, Joyal-Lacerte and Hartog, 2014; Marsan, 2013)
- Why is there such an obsession with sexual performance? Doesn't it take away from spontaneity and simple pleasure?

### Is pleasure during sex more complicated for girls?

- Collin obviously feels pressure and worries about sexual performance, but he also wants to please Bianca.
- He has the impression that pleasure during sex is more complicated for girls. Although there are similarities regarding sexual desire and pleasure for boys and girls (e.g., concerns, the body's responses, sensitivity), Collin is preoccupied, and some of his concerns are related to his lack of knowledge about female sexual anatomy, his lack of awareness of the different ways of arousing desire, his inexperience with regard to touching, etc.

- In terms of vaginal penetration, there is the concern that the first time will be painful. It's important to know that the first vaginal penetration is not necessarily painful. If there is pain, it may be because of poor vaginal lubrication, stress, fear of the unknown or slight bleeding of the hymen (a thin membrane at the vaginal opening) (Larivière, 2013). It's important to take it slowly, one step at a time, without rushing things, while checking to see how the other person is feeling, if everything's OK and if it's enjoyable.
- For some women, penetration can produce pleasant sensations without ever leading to orgasm (Bessaïh and La CORPS féministe, 2019).
- According to a "Sex in Canada" survey of 119 women and 76 men aged 19 to 66, 87% of men revealed having had an orgasm during their last heterosexual encounter, while that was the case for only 63% of women (Andrejek and Fetner, 2019). This discrepancy can be explained by the negative vision that society has of satisfying sex for women (Brune and Ferroul, 2010), in which, for example, it is thought that sex for women should involve exclusively vaginal penetration (Andrejek and Fetner, 2019).
- Satisfying sex is not limited to penetration (Éducation sensuelle, 2010c) and ejaculation is not a sign that sex is over. There are other sexual practices that generate pleasure and that can lead to orgasm (e.g., manual or oral stimulation of the clitoris). The clitoris is a very sensitive organ with approximately 8,000 nerve endings (Palais de la Découverte, 2022) and its primary function is sexual pleasure (Malépart-Traversy, 2016; Palais de la Découverte, 2022). However, it's not a magic button.
- You have to take your time, use a delicate approach, look for sensitive areas, vary the types of touch (Éducation sensuelle, 2010c), and touch gently or according to your partner's wishes, whether you're in a heterosexual or homosexual relationship.
- The clitoris, an erogenous zone, is not the only body part that produces pleasure when stimulated. Stimulating the breasts, neck or feet can also arouse extreme pleasure (Palais de la découverte, 2022).  
**That said, just because the other person doesn't reach orgasm doesn't mean there's a problem** (Bessaïh and La CORPS féministe, 2019).
- To sum up, Collin should have a conversation with Bianca and share his concerns, which will decrease his performance anxiety, the pressure that he's putting on himself. Bianca may be feeling the same type of pressure. Both would benefit from just being in the moment, taking their time, laughing about the little things that happen along the way, using sexual protection, etc. These are all ways of lowering stress and savouring the moment.



## SHEET

### 3.7

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Specialized resources in STBBIs and unplanned pregnancies and safe sexual behaviour promotion

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Share the following resources with the students, as needed. They specialize in safe sexual behaviour promotion, STBBI prevention and everything related to unplanned pregnancies.

- › **When you think about it** (Santé et Services sociaux du Québec and Tel-jeunes, n.d.): A website that provides information on STBBI prevention, and the promotion and use of methods of protection and/or birth control, and STBBI screening  
[https://www.itss.gouv.qc.ca/accueil\\_en.html](https://www.itss.gouv.qc.ca/accueil_en.html)
- › **Info-Santé** (Gouvernement du Québec, 2022): A free telephone consultation service that offers referrals for STBBI screening services  
Telephone: 811  
<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/finding-a-resource/info-sante-811>
- › **Government of Canada** (2020): A website that provides information on STBBI prevention and screening, and the effects and symptoms of STBBIs  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/booklet-sexually-transmitted-infections.html>
- › **L'Anonyme** (2022): An organization whose goal is to promote safe behaviour and prevention with regard to STBBI transmission  
<https://www.anonyme.ca/en/>
- › **The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada** (2022): A professional healthcare organization in the field of sexual and reproductive health that also offers the general public a website with information on such topics as STBBIs, contraception and pregnancy  
<https://www.sexandu.ca/stis/>



- › **Saskatchewan Prevention Institute** (n.d.): A website that provides information on STBBI prevention and screening, as well as the promotion and use of methods of protection and/or birth control  
<https://skprevention.ca/sexual-health/sexually-transmitted-infections-stis/#top>
- › **Tel-jeunes** (2022e): An organization that provides young people aged 20 or under with support and offers the general public a website that provides information on a range of topics including STBBIs and adolescent pregnancy  
<https://www.teljeunes.com/Tel-jeunes-en/All-topics/sex/bbstis>



## SHEET

### 3.8

FOR THE GROUP

## Myth or fact?

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Individually identify whether the statements below are **MYTH** or **FACT**, by placing an **X** in the appropriate column.

Statements	Myth	Fact
1. You have to have a perfect body to arouse desire.		
2. It's possible not to find your partner sexually desirable.		
3. Ensuring your partner's sexual pleasure is more important than respecting your personal boundaries. It's a sign of love.		
4. Masturbation is for people who don't have sex.		
5. Porn movies can lead to feelings of inadequacy (e.g., high-performance body, multiple orgasms). Comparing can cause you to feel that you're not desirable enough.		
6. If your partner doesn't reach orgasm during sex, it's a sign that they didn't feel sexual pleasure.		
7. By the time they reach adulthood, most people have had oral, vaginal and anal sex.		



## SHEET

### 3.9

FOR SESSION  
LEADERS

## Answer sheet: Myth or fact?

### INSTRUCTIONS

- › Share the answers and explanations for the **MYTH** or **FACT** activity with the students.

Statements	Myth	Fact
<p><b>1. You have to have a perfect body to arouse desire.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- When it comes to desire, a great deal of importance seems to be placed on appearance, in particular in the media. It's true that a beautiful body is attractive and can be pleasing.</li><li>- But most people don't look for "perfection" as a criterion for finding someone attractive or sexy, and feeling sexual desire or even falling in love.</li><li>- Appearance is not the only thing that determines sexual desire.</li></ul>	X	
<p><b>2. It's possible not to find your partner sexually desirable.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It's important to distinguish between "occasionally not finding your partner sexually desirable" and being "asexual," which is rarer. Let's look at both situations.</li><li>- In a relationship, desire is not always mutual. Just because one partner feels desire doesn't mean that the other will at the same time. Then there's always context and a person's mood, which increase or decrease desire. Being charmed by the other person, and kissing and touching can help arouse desire that wasn't there initially. Communicating how you feel is essential, especially since it can change quickly. And, if the other person indicates that they're not in the mood, either verbally or through non-verbal signs (e.g., looking away, avoiding touching), it's important to respect their choice and not insist.</li><li>- Asexual: Some people (approximately 1% of the population) have no sexual desire or sexual attraction to others and have no need for sex. They are known as asexual. Asexuality is a sexual orientation, like heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality (Bouchard, 2018; Tel-jeunes, 2022c). However, this does not mean that they cannot develop a romantic attraction to or intimacy with their partner (Tel-jeunes, 2022c).</li></ul>		X

Statements	Myth	Fact
<p><b>3. Ensuring your partner's sexual pleasure is more important than respecting your personal boundaries. It's a sign of love.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Although it's perfectly reasonable to want to please your partner, you're not obliged to do anything sexually that crosses your personal boundaries and that displeases you or even turns you off. Agreeing would not be a sign of love, but a failure to consider your own needs.</li> <li>- Similarly, you should not insist or force (= assault) someone to overstep their personal boundaries in order to satisfy your own desires.</li> <li>- Boundaries are based on an individual's personal history (e.g., a sexual act can evoke painful memories or simply disinterest for some people). There are all kinds of reasons why someone might enjoy a specific sexual act and not another.</li> <li>- To please their partner, some people agree not to use a condom, putting their own health at risk. Conversely, for others, having sex without a condom is out of the question. Some partners may have difficulty with such a requirement, claiming that the use of a condom decreases their sense of pleasure. However, using a condom is a sign of respect, for both your own sexual health ("I'm worth protecting") and that of your partner ("It's cool to suggest using a condom").</li> </ul>	X	
<p><b>4. Masturbation is for people who don't have sex.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is entirely possible to have an active sex life with your partner and to masturbate from time to time. You can choose to satisfy your own needs, since desire in a couple is not always mutual.</li> <li>- That doesn't necessarily mean that the relationship isn't going well or that your desire for the other person is waning or absent. The other person should not feel in any way threatened.</li> <li>- Masturbation (alone) helps you learn more about your own body, and discover your sexual preferences and how you like to be touched. It's completely normal to masturbate (and it's perfectly OK not to), whether you're going out with someone or not. In a Quebec study of 1,584 young people aged 14 to 18, 81% reported masturbating (alone), more boys than girls (Kotiuga, Yampolsky and Martin, 2022).</li> <li>- The pleasure you experience through masturbation can differ from pleasure from sex. During sex, simply being in contact with the other person's body and enjoying their touch can be extremely exciting and enjoyable, even incomparable. However, for others, autoerotic pleasure (alone) may be more easily achievable.</li> <li>- There are times and contexts that favour pleasure through masturbation alone and others that favour pleasure from sex.</li> </ul>	X	

Statements	Myth	Fact
<p><b>5. Porn movies can lead to feelings of inadequacy (e.g., high-performance body, multiple orgasms). Comparing can cause you to feel that you're not desirable enough.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pornography features high-performance bodies in different sexual positions. These sex scenes are designed specifically to sexually excite viewers (Crooks and Baur, 2003). The focus is on appearance and sexual performance rather than feelings and sensuality.</li> <li>- The sex is often crude, with people portrayed as veritable “sex machines.”</li> <li>- Comparing yourself to porn actors can lead to feelings of inadequacy, given the intensity or disproportionate nature of certain aspects: size and shape of sex organs (Forrest, 2000), continuous sexual excitement, length of sexual encounters, number of sexual partners, orgasms and screams of pleasure, domination, etc.). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Example: porn movies place a great deal of emphasis on penis size, which is allegedly the key to sexual pleasure (Bourgault, 2021). However, it's wrong to think that sexual pleasure (and the quality of a “good lover”) is based solely on penis size. The genital organs (penis and vulva) come in all shapes and sizes, and this in no way affects a person's ability to give or receive pleasure.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Similarly, comparing your partner to porn stars can create unrealistic expectations. In real life, your partner may not be as willing and sexually expressive as the men and women in porn movies. Consequently, your partner may fake an orgasm out of fear of being judged if they don't have one.</li> <li>- Keep in mind that pornography is a commercial industry and that it's important to be critical when it comes to the unrealistic and even spectacular models that they try to sell us. This can range from a lack of sexual protection to the normalization of violence. In fact, porn stars rarely use condoms, and they don't seem especially concerned with obtaining their partners' consent. In some cases, the other person is treated like an object that you can do whatever you want with (e.g., humiliation, violence).</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>6. If your partner doesn't reach orgasm during sex, it's a sign that they didn't feel sexual pleasure.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orgasm is an intense feeling of pleasure. However, as we saw previously, some intimate touching or sexual activity can provide sexual pleasure without orgasm.</li> <li>- Similarly, when sharing this type of intimacy, just cuddling up to your partner or kissing, embracing, touching or being touched, enjoying the gentleness of words or gestures, being in a stress-free situation or laughing together can be pleasurable.</li> <li>- Given that sensitive erogenous zones are not the same for everyone (INPES &amp; al., 2007), touching can be perceived differently from one person to the next. In addition, since the sex organs (e.g., head of the penis, penis, clitoris) are very sensitive body parts, rough touching can be unpleasant or even painful. Conversely, sexual touching at a pace that suits someone can facilitate orgasm. But, once again, there's no magic formula.</li> <li>- Lastly, pleasure goes hand in hand with the use of sexual protection (e.g., a condom) and/or a form of birth control (in a heterosexual relationship). It allows you to let go more easily, without having to worry about those things.</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>

## 7. By the time they reach adulthood, most people have had oral, vaginal and anal sex.

X

- References to sexual practices are very present in some media (e.g., social media, videos, movies), which creates the impression that you have to do everything or try anything when it comes to sexual practices. In fact, that's simply not true.
- There's nothing wrong with doing various sexual activities or exploring different sexual positions, but believing that you absolutely have to try them all can become a problem.
- It has to be a personal choice. Feeling obliged to try everything may lead to sexual behaviour that you're not really interested in, resulting in disappointment, as well as discomfort or disgust, in some cases.
- All sexual practices require the engagement and consent of both partners, trust and communication (Savoie, 2004).
- Keep in mind that there are risks of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted blood borne infections (STBBIs) associated with sexual practices. It's important to use sexual protection if you're sexually active. In the case of a heterosexual relationship, the combined use of a condom and birth control pill remains the most effective way of preventing STBBIs and unplanned pregnancy. In the case of homosexual relationships, the use of a condom is also recommended. Abstinence, namely the choice not to have sex, is also a means of protection.

Here are a few details regarding vaginal penetration, oral sex and anal sex.

- **What is vaginal penetration?** Penetration of an erect penis into the vagina.
  - During sexual excitement, the vagina gets wider and slightly longer, and becomes moister. This natural lubrication is a sign of sexual excitement and is an important step prior to penetration. In the same way that a boy wouldn't attempt vaginal penetration without having an erection (lack of sexual excitement), there is no reason to attempt penetration if the vagina is not sufficiently lubricated (Saint-Jean, 1993).
  - Even though the vagina can become a bit wider and lubricated to facilitate penetration of the erect penis, it is not a "gaping hole." Consequently, gradual and gentle movements will make penetration easier at the start. Similarly, the maintenance of an erect penis also has its time limitations.
  - There may be some pressure around vaginal penetration, as though it were not only proof that you're now sexually active, but also the "confirmation" of your heterosexual orientation.
  - The association with virginity is also very strong. Losing your virginity means having sexual intercourse for the first time, but can more broadly mean having your first sexual experience. Other sex acts (e.g., oral sex) that do not pose a risk of unplanned pregnancy (but that pose a risk of STBBIs) nevertheless constitute "sexual experiences." Do you really lose your "virginity" only through vaginal penetration?
  - In a Quebec study of 1,584 young people aged 14 to 18, 33% reported having already had "vaginal intercourse" (Kotiuga, Yampolsky and Martin, 2022).
  - Nobody has to have sex if they don't want to. Some choose to engage in touching or petting, without going all the way to penetration. There are no musts. Some young adults in their twenties claim their right to be "virgins," in particular some young women, who see it as a sign of autonomy and independence: "I'm the boss of my own body and myself" (Knibiehler, 2012).

- **What is oral sex?** Using the mouth to stimulate the genitals. Types of oral sex include fellatio (contact with the penis) and cunnilingus (contact with the vulva).
  - The person that you're with, the context in which it takes place and the desire felt at the time contribute to making the experience pleasant. The experience can also be perceived differently depending on whether you're the person giving or receiving, regardless of your sex or sexual orientation.
  - For some people, oral sex doesn't generate desire or excitement, and there's no reason to worry about it or force the issue (Blanc, 2009). They simply may not be interested in that type of physical intimacy. Others may be uncomfortable with intimate hygiene (theirs or the other person's). Still others may associate it with an unpleasant or stressful past experience. Whatever the reasons, it's important to respect your partner's choice.
  - In a Quebec study of 1,584 young people aged 14 to 18, 33% reported having had oral-genital contact (Kotiuga, Yampolsky and Martin, 2022).
  - To sum up, like any intimate act, oral sex can be an enjoyable experience, provided you're ready for it. Once again, there are no musts.
- **Anal sex** involves penetration of an erect penis into the anus. It's important to know, however, that the anus is not a membrane that lubricates naturally and that can become wider, like the vagina. Anal sex is a practice that requires the use of a lubricant. Movements that are too abrupt can irritate or damage the membrane.
  - Although often associated with male homosexuality, the practice remains taboo, especially in heterosexual relationships (Hensel, Fortenberry and Orr, 2009). Moreover, there is still a great deal of resistance when it comes to talking about it with young people (Hensel, Fortenberry and Orr, 2009). It's true that the practice is not usually part of adolescents' first sexual experiences, regardless of their sex or sexual orientation. In the previously cited study of 1,584 young people aged 14 to 18, 7% reported having had anal sex (Kotiuga, Yampolsky and Martin, 2022).
  - In addition, the silence surrounding this practice can make some young people feel insecure.
  - **Example 1:** Sometimes, although more exceptionally, young people practise only anal sex in order to "preserve the girl's virginity" (no vaginal penetration). This raises important questions: Is it a matter of "satisfying the boy" at the expense of the girl's genuine desire and pleasure (and consent)? Is this practice used as a means of birth control since it poses no risk of pregnancy? Or is it the pretext put forward for "preserving the girl's virginity" and therefore giving the impression that certain cultural and religious values are being respected? Neither takes into account what this practice really represents in terms of the sensations or pain that can be associated with it and the risk of STBBI transmission or complications. Etc.
  - **Example 2:** Sometimes, young gay men are under the impression that all gay men necessarily practise and enjoy anal sex. It's important to distinguish between sexual orientation and sexual preferences. The latter can differ greatly from one individual to the next.

Once again, if you're not comfortable with this sexual practice, there's no reason to force the issue. In fact, anal sex is not particularly recommended for young people who are just starting to be sexually active, for the following reasons: not being fully aware of your sexual anatomy or that of the other person; uncertainty about the other person's desire to have anal sex; failure to understand what this sexual practice involves; difficulty suddenly considering the anus as a pleasure zone; worrying about being clumsy or lacking finesse; having difficulty asserting yourself and discussing the topic, and even recognizing your own boundaries, etc.

## NOTE TO THE SESSION LEADER



Young people often ask what percentage of people engage in which sexual practices. However, it can be difficult to quote statistics out of fear of “normalizing” or, on the contrary, “stigmatizing” some sexual practices. Students were given some numbers in the previous paragraphs.

The idea here is to have a statistical portrait that can help you answer students’ questions, if necessary. According to the Enquête québécoise sur la santé des jeunes du secondaire (EQSJS) (2016-2017) of 62,277 young people, approximately 33% of secondary-school students aged 14 or over have already had consensual sex (oral, vaginal and/or anal) at least once in their lives (Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ), 2016-2017). More specifically, approximately 30% of students aged 14 and over have had oral sex at least once, 27% have had vaginal sex at least once and 6% have had anal sex at least once (ISQ, 2016-2017). As part of a study involving nine secondary schools in the Quebec City region (71 classes) and 1,584 young people aged 14 to 18, 33% of respondents reported having had vaginal sex, 33% had oral-genital contact and 7% had anal sex (Kotiuga, Yampolsky and Martin, 2022). The results show that almost all participants are sexually active: 98.42% indulged in autoerotic practices and 74.70% had a partner. Engagement in sexual practices followed a linear progression, with autoerotic practices, and kissing and touching involving partners reported more frequently than genital contact (Kotiuga, Yampolsky and Martin, 2022).

With regard to the age of the first consensual sexual experience, EQSJS (2016-2017) results show that approximately 7% of students aged 14 or over had their first consensual sexual experience before age 14. The percentage of students aged 15 or over who had their first consensual sexual experience before age 15 is 17% (ISQ, 2016-2017). Among those aged 16 or over, 32% had their first consensual sexual experience before age 16, and nearly half the young people aged 17 or over had sex for the first time before age 17 (ISQ, 2016-2017).

Beyond statistics, it’s important to debunk various sexual practices and identify what such a choice implies for adolescents and adults. The idea is to provide correct information without trivializing it.

Once they are cognizant adults, adolescents will ultimately decide what interests them, what drives them, what they hope to experience, and the consequences and implications of their choices (e.g., life as a couple, celibacy, family life, occasional sexual partners). This idea of choices goes hand in hand with an analysis of the situation and honest self-reflection (which, admittedly, is neither simple nor obvious).

This idea of choice is not the same during adolescence. There are definitely some criteria that young people are asked to consider, but their vulnerability and appetite for risk and transgression at a time when they’re building their identity makes us want to “protect” them



even more when they're making choices that pose a greater risk to their development. It's important to teach them to make well-informed choices and equip them to use this skill as effectively as possible so that their choices don't launch them into a sexual universe that is inappropriate for their age or level of development, or that they find disturbing or that puts them at risk. There can be a few snags, some disappointments (that they will learn from), but there's no need to put themselves in emotionally charged situations in order to ultimately learn how to make choices that they find suitable and enjoyable.

While sexuality can be a path to growth, it's not limited to an "active sex life." Similarly, sexual behaviour is part of the adolescent journey, but should not be a challenge to create the illusion of being an adult. One thing is certain: talking about sexual desire and pleasure is a perfect opportunity to debunk what may be associated with sexual performance, but also address the positive aspects of sexuality.



## Examples of sexual communication (Before - During - After)

- › **Show students three examples of sexual communication (Before-During-After).**
- › **If you'd like and if there's enough time, ask two participants to role-play and read the dialogue (in particular example no. 1).**
- › **Since the first names of the characters aren't gender specific, the characters can be a boy and a girl, two girls or two boys. The same goes for example no. 3. You (or the students) can decide on the sex of the characters. Example no. 2, however, deals with the sexual anatomy of one of the characters.**

### Example 1: Jessie and Alex Sexual communication - BEFORE

Jessie and Alex have been going out for a while. They're at a party at Jessie's house. Jessie's parents are away for the weekend. It's late and there are only a few people left. Jessie promised to take Alex home after the party and is already way behind schedule. But Jessie wants to encourage Alex to spend the night and take advantage of the parents' absence. Jessie says that this would be fun. Alex loves Jessie, but doesn't want to have sex under these circumstances, at the end of an evening, way past curfew and where it was never agreed that they would be spending the night together. Here's their conversation.

Jessie: Hey, c'mon. Let's go to my room where we can be alone.

Alex: Jessie, you said you'd drive me home.

Jessie: I want to be with you and cuddle. We couldn't be alone together all evening.

Alex: I'd like to be alone with you, too, but if I get home really late again, my parents are really going to let me have it and all that.

Jessie: Don't worry about your parents. I waited all evening for us to finally be alone together.

Alex: Jessie, you said you'd drive me home. I really have to get home!

Jessie: Don't you want to be with me? We could spend the night together.

Alex: I love you. I really love you, but it's late. We can be alone together the next time we see each other. Besides, we never talked about me staying over.

Jessie: I get the feeling you're not interested.

Alex: I'd just like you to stop insisting and putting pressure on me all the time. Look, I'm going home. Are you driving me, or should I find another way back?

Jessie: (They hug and Jessie kisses Alex on the neck).

OK. OK, I'll happily be your driver, but I'd like us to plan some time where we're alone together, just the two of us. I get that you feel pressured tonight and that my offer comes at a bad time. I don't want to be the one who's always insisting and makes all the moves. I'd also like it if it came from you sometimes and if we made some time to be alone somewhere that we both enjoy. But for now, I'll be nice and drive you home.

Alex: (With a smile)

Thanks, Jessie.

In fact, if YOU insisted less about having sex (when I say that I'm not in the mood) and if I took more initiative when I feel like it, without worrying about being judged (and that you really feel like it, and aren't going along just to be the person who's always ready to please), it should work out.

But right now, I "insist" that you get your car keys.

*(Adapted from Brown, 1993)*

### Example 2: Sexual communication - DURING/AFTER

"I'd just started going out with a really great guy. We were alone in his parents' living room. While we were kissing, he kept putting my hand on his crotch. I'd take my hand away because I didn't want to go any further, but he'd put my hand back. I finally said: "Look, I know where your penis is, and if I wanted to touch it, I would" (Conrad and Milburn, 2002).

He kindly replied: "OK. I deserved that. Sorry." When we saw each other the next time, we laughed about it. We talked about consent and agreed that it could be communicated through non-verbal language. We both felt that we had reached a new level of trust. That meaningful incident and the discussion that followed brought us closer together and took us to the next step in our relationship."

### Example 3: Sexual communication - AFTER

"With my head on Casey's shoulder soon after making love, I was thinking how simple, gentle, funny and really exciting it was. We did what we felt like doing. We even stopped at some point (I think we sort of fell asleep) and then we continued touching, without any pressure. The desire was there. It was really wonderful and easy. Nothing like when we started out and were really embarrassed. I get the feeling that we were forcing things too much the first times. We desperately wanted it to be intense right from the start. I should really tell Casey how I feel. I'll do that later. For now, I just want to be in the moment, nestled in Casey's arms."

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*Sex Education Program  
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