Preventing and Reducing School Violence and Bullying:

Support Toolkit for School Staff

Camil Sanfaçon

FONDATION
Jasmin
Roy

Preventing and Reducing School Violence and Bullying
Support Toolkit for School Staff

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Notes

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Icon legend :

announcing an **advise**

indicates a **tool**

preface

The desire to help and support schools in their fight against youth bullying, discrimination and violence is what drove me to create the foundation that bears my name. Having been a victim of bullying during high school, my hope now is to make as many tools as possible available to school staff so that they can intervene every time they are made aware of bullying or violence. Since the creation of my foundation, we have received numerous calls from teachers, participants, principals and educators who are lacking the necessary resources. It's always been obvious to me that the problem is not a lack of willingness, but rather an organizational problem.

After Bill 56 came into force, adopted by the Québec National Assembly in June 2012, the Foundation decided to put together a support toolkit to help anyone working in elementary and secondary schools who wished to implement efficient intervention measures to fight bullying and violence issues. This support toolkit is meant to be an indispensable tool to meet the new requirements of Bill 56.

Our society must put an end to the bullying endured by our youth. Its consequences are significant, and they leave deep scars on self-esteem. After a while, a child or teen who is constantly harassed and rejected does not know how to behave with his peers anymore, feels weak and unintelligent, and even starts believing that he deserves the treatment of bullies. Ensuing consequences are school absenteeism and dropping out. This is a sad phenomenon since it is a known fact that 90% of victims are students who were aiming to complete their studies.

There are already many resources and activities created by several organizations, but unfortunately, they are not very well known in schools. The support toolkit by Camil Sanfaçon provides schools with the latest and most relevant information on prevention and intervention related to violence and bullying. The author also addresses other issues such as respect and tolerance.

In publishing this work, the Foundation reaffirms its desires to play a lead and catalytic role in all issues pertaining to school violence and bullying. It intends to play this role in partnership with well-established organizations throughout Québec.

We now have all the resources needed to make our schools healthy and safe. It is time to commit, together, to the fight against bullying and violence.

Jasmin Roy, president
Fondation Jasmin Roy

acknowledgments

This support toolkit was made possible thanks to the collaboration of many individuals. I would first like to thank Jasmin Roy for his initiatives and his willingness to help and support schools in their efforts to prevent and reduce school violence and bullying, as well as his commitment to the pilot project that resulted in this support toolkit. I also want to thank the *Fondation Jasmin Roy* team, for their help and support.

I would like to also thank the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ), especially Luc Allaire, for their commitment from the beginning of the pilot project until the publication of this support toolkit. Thank you for your unfailing support!

A special thank-you goes out to the staff of the four schools that participated in the pilot project. Notably, the ones who spearheaded the projects: Luce Bélanger and Karine Poliquin of the *École primaire aux-Quatre-Vents (Commission scolaire des Affluents)*, Marc Brunelle and Caroline Rouillard of the *École secondaire du Rocher (Commission scolaire de l'Énergie)*, Francine Desrochers, Johane Gough and Geneviève Rouillard of the *École secondaire Polyvalente de L'Ancienne-Lorette (Commission scolaire des Découvreurs)*, as well as Johanne Bissonnette and Olivier Pereira of the *École secondaire l'Odyssée (Commission scolaire de la Capitale)*.

Thank you so much to our collaborators from the Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec (CTREQ), Véronique D'Amours, Linda St-Pierre and Hélène Rioux, for their judicious advice and support throughout the writing of this publication.

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Camil Sanfaçon

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introduction

Every child and teenager who goes to school deserves to do so in peace and to feel safe there, without feeling fearful day after day. He has the right to be treated with sensitivity by his peers and with respect by all, to be considered as an individual regardless of his origins, to express himself freely, to be listened to and to be accepted the way he is.

To ensure that he perseveres and succeeds in school, each student must be provided with a stimulating and secure environment that promotes the development of his full potential.

Violence in school makes hundreds of students literally sick. Every day, violence takes on many forms: harsh words, extortion, rejection, false rumours, threats, homophobia, racism, etc.

Victimized students suffer from various problems that have a significant impact on their social and family life, such as difficulty in school, anxiety, loneliness and depression. Students who victimize their peers feel reinforced by their silence and the silence of witnesses. They also are at risk of developing problems that could jeopardize their success in school, such as drug and alcohol addiction, and issues with aggressiveness.[1] It is therefore crucial to create a school climate that is conducive to promoting learning for all by implementing educational approaches that aim to prevent and reduce school violence and bullying.

To ensure that he perseveres and succeeds in school, each student must be provided with a stimulating and secure environment that promotes the development of his full potential.

Creating an Action Plan

This support toolkit provides a process for creating and implementing an action plan whose goal is to prevent and reduce violence in educational institutions. It takes into account the basic rights of children, which were also one of the main concerns during the production of this support toolkit. Is is also deeply rooted in understanding, respect and justice. Indeed, to put an end to violence, there is no room for threats or intimidation.

This process is meant to be flexible and participatory. Its aim is to offer alternative methods of intervention to any school team wishing to prevent and reduce violence and bullying in all its forms. Each institution is invited to adapt the suggested interventions to its realities and to follow its own implementation pace. This support toolkit presents a flexible and participatory process, combined with practical tools.

A flexible and participatory process, combined with practical tools.

It also provides information on the very nature of violence and bullying, as well as their related myths and stereotypes. In addition, it offers practical tools to help school staff.

A WELL-TESTED PROCESS

This process was designed during a pilot project started in 2011-2012 in four Québec schools, with the support of the Fondation Jasmin Roy, to help school teams implement their action plan.

First, each school team assessed acts of violence and bullying in its environment; then, it implemented intervention methods to make students more aware that they are responsible for their acts. This project also allowed each school to mobilize and to work as a team to intervene with students, whether they were victims, aggressors or witnesses. This experience led to the Fondation Jasmin Roy's proposal to create a support toolkit for schools.

CHAPTER I — STARTING THE PROCESS

To succeed in establishing all the elements of the action plan in partnership agreements with schools, all staff members must be committed to it.

This process is in line with the efforts being made by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) to improve school environments, allowing students to study in healthy and safety. It is a vital part of the agreements established between school and school board, as well as in partnership agreements between school boards and the MELS.[2]

IMPORTANCE OF THE SCHOOL CLIMATE

A student who is the victim of school violence is more at risk of dropping out. Improving his environment, more precisely the school climate, will contribute to the student's success and determination. "School climate refers to the quality of interpersonal relationships in the environment (between adults, between students and between students and adults), as well as to the quality of the physical and organizational environment."[3] Maintaining a healthy climate offers students a stimulating environment that promotes learning and development.

School Life

The action plan must be in line with the school's success plan and management agreement. Thus, a school where there is a high instance of absenteeism among victimized students could integrate methods and indicators to try to help these students and provide them with an environment that is more conducive to learning. This action plan must be approved by the institution's governing board.

School directorates play a crucial role in creating an action plan since they must ensure that ministerial requirements are met by the plan to prevent and intervene when it comes to violence and bullying. The school team, for its part, contributes to respecting these requirements within the school environment, notably in the implementation and application of school rules.

The new rules stemming directly from the action plan must be integrated to existing school rules. These rules apply to students, as well as school staff, to show that everyone is responsible for ensuring a respectful and safe school environment.

The action plan must be known, visible and applied by all school staff.

AN INSPIRING EXAMPLE: THE CHART OF THE POLYVALENTE DE L'ANCIENNE-LORETTE

Posted in all classrooms, the Polyvalente de L'Ancienne-Lorette chart[4] shows how important it is for students to live in a warm environment where everyone is accepted. By following this example, schools could give students the mandate to create a chart of respect showing their commitment to eliminating violence and bullying in their school.

The Law

The province of Québec has adopted a law that aims to prevent and intervene when it comes to school bullying and violence. This law is not just about good will. Indeed, it obliges public and private institutions to adopt and implement an action plan.

Concretely, and as required by the law, the action plan must "include prevention measures to put an end to all forms of bullying and violence; specify the actions to be taken when an act of bullying or violence is observed and the support or supervision measures to be offered; determine the disciplinary sanctions applicable in such cases, and explain how reports and complaints of bullying or violence are to be followed up."[5]

ANCHOR POINTS FOR THE PROCESS

1. In school rules
2. In partnerships between school and school board: success plan and management agreement
3. In agreements between the school board and the MELS: partnership agreement
4. In the Act to prevent and stop bullying and violence in schools

CHAPTER II —
RECOGNIZING VIOLENCE AND ITS PARTICIPANTS

"School bullying is defined as an aggressive and repetitive behaviour between a perpetrator in a control position and an abused student without any physical or relational means to protect himself."

Dan OWLEUS

Depending on the motives that result in various types of aggression, violence can take on many forms: it can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can also take on different names: bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, homophobia, racism, xenophobia, cyber bullying. Bullying is a repetitive act that comes in many forms; it can be very aggressive or quite insidious, but it is almost always in front of witnesses.

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DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE

The Education Act defines violence as "all displays of force, in verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual forms, intentionally directed against a person, and with the result to cause her feelings of distress, to impair, hurt or oppress her by attacking her integrity or her psychological or physical well-being, her rights or her possessions."[6]

TYPES OF VIOLENCE

Physical Violence

Of all the forms of violence, physical violence is the most visible. A student who physically attacks his peers spreads fear; usually, he wants to dominate and control another. His way of acting is often brutal, cruel and tyrannical:

- shoving, hitting, kicking or spitting at the victim;
- confining the victim in a cramped space, blocking him, using physical force to hold him down;
- inflicting bodily injuries;
- hiding, breaking or stealing the victim's belongings.

Physical violence: to dominate and control another person.

Verbal Violence

Verbal violence is the most frequent form of violence. People often think that it is not as serious because it does not cause physical injury, but it is a devastating type of violence. It is used to humiliate, denigrate and control:

- teasing the victim in a mean way, insulting and humiliating the victim;
- giving nicknames that can be mean;
- teasing the victim about his appearance, his handicap, his physical difference or his clothes;
- uttering threats against the victim's parents, siblings or friends;
- laughing at the victim's gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity.

Verbal violence: to humiliate, denigrate and control.

Psychological Violence

Psychological violence is more frequent than one might think. Researchers define it as "the systematic destruction of a person's self-esteem or feeling of security, occurring often within relationships with power and control differences."[7]

This type of abuse is expressed through insidious behaviours, which often makes it more difficult to observe because it is more diffuse. It is mostly associated with girls[8], social abuse can also be found among boys. It includes a wide array of acts that cause the victim to be isolated by:

- embarrassing the victim by verbal provocation;
- harassing the victim;
- ignoring the victim;
- ridiculing the victim;
- spreading rumours about the victim;
- destroying the victim's friendships;
- excluding the victim from a group;
- manipulating the people around the victim so that they reject him.

Psychological violence: to isolate the victim.

FORMS OF VIOLENCE

Bullying

Bullying is not a conflict, a dispute, pushing and shoving, or an exchange of insults between two students of equal strength. It is a particular form of violence characterized by:

- intentional acts (not accidental);
- repetitive acts (harassment);
- power imbalance (the victim feels powerless, incapable of reacting);
- emotional distress.

In a bullying situation, acts committed against the victim are repetitive[9] for several days or even weeks. As time goes by, the intensity of bullying can increase. The victim feels uncomfortable in his own skin, and this bad treatment slowly destroys his self-esteem. The victim feels lonely and excluded from the group because he can't find support in it. Most of the time (80 %)[10], bullying happens while other students watch, encouraging the bully or being passive, inactive or silent.

It is not always easy to properly identify the characteristics that differentiate conflict from bullying. Table 1 (page 15) helps to make the distinction between the two categories. However, one must always keep in mind that it is the repetitive nature of bullying and the asymmetrical relationship between the bully and the victim that make it different from a one-time aggression.

Because the word "bullying" is often improperly used, it is important to ask students to describe their experience to make sure that it truly is a case of bullying. But whether it's bullying or a one-time aggression, the educational intervention of caring adults is necessary.

DAN OLWEUS, THE FIRST TO DESCRIBE BULLYING

In the 1970s, Dan Olweus, a professor of psychology at the Bergen University of Norway, identified a specific type of violence called bullying. He defined it this way: "School bullying is defined as an aggressive and repetitive behaviour between a perpetrator in a position of control and a victim who does not have the physical or relational means to protect himself."[11]

Table 1 — **Differences Between Conflict and Bullying**

	CONFLICT	BULLYING
Characteristics	• A normal situation, not necessarily negative.	• Intentional and repetitive acts.
	• A situation that arises occasionally and under certain circumstances.	• A student endures repetitive acts of aggression without saying anything about the abuse from his peers.
Relationships between students	• In general, the two students are of equal strength/power.	• The bully is in a dominating position and abuses his power over the victim, who does not know who to defend himself.
	• The students know each other and may be friends.	• Students are not necessarily friends, even if they might have been in the past.
Causes and expressions	• Conflict occurs after a disagreement, a difference of opinion or perception.	• Bullying occurs when the bully wants to use his power over the victim.
	• Conflict may be caused by one student or the other.	• It is always the same student who is attacked or insulted, without being able to respond or defend himself.
	• The conflict is not expected.	• Bullying acts are intentional and can be expected. In some cases, the bully threatens and warns that he will continue.
	• Students generally accept help to solve the problem.	• Very often, the bully will accuse the victim, will not admit that he's wrong and will not recognize the severity of his conduct.
	• Students may accept to fix their mistakes.	• In order to fix his mistakes, the bully often has to be forced by an adult.

Causes and expressions

CONFLICT

- During a disagreement, after discussions and mutual apologies, an agreement is generally reached.

BULLYING

- Since it is not simply a disagreement, one cannot expect the parties to reach an agreement.

Avoid mediation; it is neither efficient nor desired.

- Unless the victim speaks out and gets help, the situation goes on and may get worse.

Bullying in Elementary School

The behaviour of bullies in elementary school is not necessarily the same as the behaviour of high-school students (see table 2 – *Bullying in Elementary and High School,* page 18). The same can be said of victimized students who find it difficult to make the difference between conflict, bickering and bullying. Parents who know how to listen to their children can see the first signs of bullying: loss of appetite, trouble falling asleep, aggressiveness, crying, lack of interest in school, excuses to miss school, such as headaches or bellyaches.

It may happen that the victimized student develops aggressive behaviours against others. In such a case, vigilance is crucial to make the distinction between aggressive behaviour that stems from bullying or from family problems, abuse, sexual assault or psychological difficulties. The victim may also withdraw and isolate himself from others. By displaying his vulnerability, he can become an easy prey for bullies. This is often the case for children with few social skills, with low self-esteem or who have a hard time fitting in a group.

In elementary school, the victimized student can become aggressive towards others. He can also withdraw and isolate himself from others.

The adults in the lives of children with few social skills have the responsibility to pay close attention to all types of negative acts the child may be experiencing, as well as all behavioural changes that could indicate silent suffering.

Bullying in High School

In high school, bullying can last several days, months or years. Instead of confiding in an adult, the teenager will try to solve the problem himself for fear of being judged too young or immature to do so. He will try to stop the bullying by getting away from the bullies, by staying silent or by minimizing the seriousness of the acts he endures daily.

Instead of confiding in an adult, the teenager will try to solve the problem himself for fear of being judged too young or immature to do so.

If these strategies do not work, he may try to defend himself. His behaviour will make adults believe that he is not simply an innocent victim. By acting this way, he makes his suffering worse without getting the help he needs. This is followed by feelings of helplessness and abandonment, which leads him to eventually lose hope of any improvement of his situation. Signs of anxiety are then more frequent and become more intense.

Disturbing facts show the importance of intervening. It is said that one third of victimized students do not believe that their parents, their teachers or any other staff member will be able to protect them.[12] Most of them suffer in silence. They do not dare talk about their troubles. The more they are bullied, the more they feel vulnerable and try to isolate themselves.

These behaviours are not always as easy to notice as aggressive behaviours are. It is important to remember that bullying can be insidious and take on many forms, such as teasing, nicknames or the subtle exclusion of a peer. Its repetitive nature leads the victimized student to believe that the acts will never end.

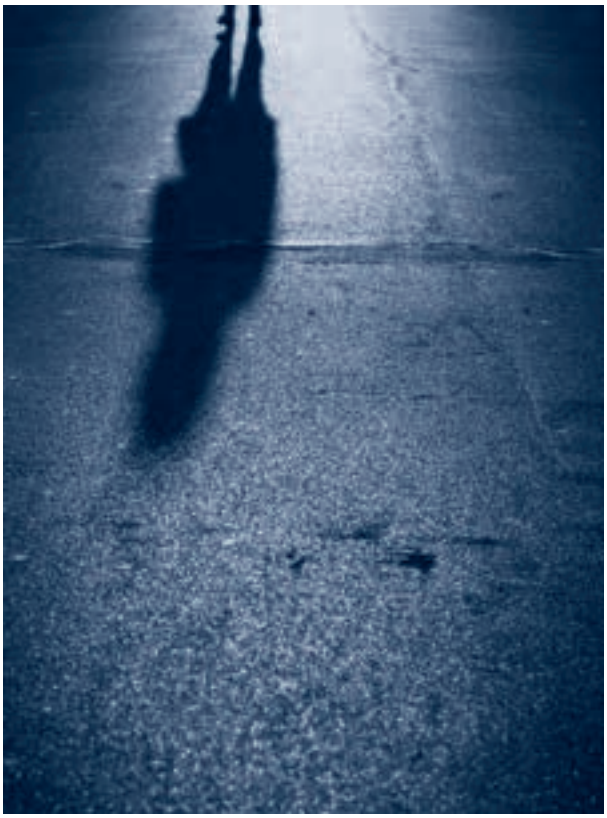
Table 2 — **Bullying In Elementary and High School**

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Victim's characteristics and behaviours	• Few social skills • Low self-esteem • Trouble fitting into a group • Aggressive behaviours • Withdrawal, isolation	• Tries to solve the problem by himself by staying away from bullies, being silent, minimizing the seriousness of the acts • Tries to defend himself
Signs	• Loss of appetite • Trouble falling asleep • Aggressiveness • Crying • Lack of interest in school • Excuses to miss school (e.g. headaches or bellyaches)	• Feels helpless, abandoned, hopeless • Anxiety • May last several days, months or years • Teasing, nicknames, subtle exclusion of a peer

Discrimination

Discrimination is a type of violence that very often starts in elementary school, in harmless ways: teasing about a physical feature (*you're big, you smell, your clothes are ugly*), a first name or family name (*giving funny nicknames*), a learning difficulty (*you suck, you don't know anything*) or a game or sport in physical education (*you're a loser*).

If you witness discrimination, you must take immediate action to make bullies, as well as witnesses, understand the importance of accepting differences and the impact of harmful remarks on students targeted as victims.



Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment and assaults are acts that are unwanted by the targeted individual. Historically, women are more often the victims of this type of aggressive behaviour.

Sexual harassment means that the behaviour is deliberate and repetitive. For example, someone who accidentally brushes against a student's buttocks should not be considered a sexual harasser if his behaviour is not repeated or not combined with other objectionable acts.

Examples of sexual harassment:

- making comments, jokes, gestures or looks with sexual connotations;
- touching or pinching in a sexual way;
- spreading texts, photographs, images or drawings of the victim in delicate situations;
- spreading sexual rumours;
- forcing sexual contacts.

Homophobic Harassment

In 2007, the Conseil permanent de la jeunesse declared that homophobia is "psychological and social aversion to sexual diversity. Homophobic behaviour is directed not only at homosexual persons; it can also target persons whose appearance or behaviour does not conform to traditional gender stereotypes."[13]

Homophobic behaviour is directed not only at homosexual persons; it can also target persons whose appearance or behaviour does not conform to traditional gender stereotypes.

Homophobia goes beyond the fear of homosexuals. It is at the root of all acts that intend to reject or hurt an individual who is targeted because of sexual orientation or non-conformity to gender models.

Homophobic harassment occurs through behaviours that are motivated by a prejudice against a person's real or perceived sexual orientation or identity. It can take many forms, notably avoidance, rejection and aggressiveness.

Examples of homophobic harassment:

- negative remarks about someone's sexual orientation;
- calling someone gay or lesbian, or name-calling, such as "fag/faggot", "queer", "dyke";
- humiliating someone in front of other students because of their sexual orientation;
- laughing at a behaviour that is considered masculine of feminine.

Xenophobic Harassment

Xenophobia "refers to the fear of strangers, i.e. verbally abusing someone of a different nationality."[14]

Xenophobia, as with homophobia, consists of words and acts that intend to exclude a person from a group because he is "different." The victimized student may be subjected to teasing about the colour of his skin, his accent or simply because he comes from elsewhere.

Cyberbullying

A Canadian investigation[15] shows that half of youths who admitted having bullied did so because they had been bullied themselves. In a context of violence and bullying, it is not unusual that both parties believe to be victims.

Cyberbullies often bully "to get revenge or social gains, confident that they will not be found out."[16] They use technology to bully others while hiding behind their computers, through texting, photo or video sharing on social networks such as Facebook, and chatting. Because cyberspace is open to all, and because bullies believes they are anonymous, it can be difficult to out an end to the situation. However, advances in technology now make it possible to track cyberbullies.

Cyberbullying occurs more often outside school, but often starts in school. In both cases, cyberbullying can interfere with the student's social relationships, motivation and academic performance.

> Cyberbullying is often considered harmless by bullies, but the consequences on the victim are often difficult to repair.

Cyberbullying is a destructive weapon that is accessible to all. Students who would never dream of bullying someone in school may be inclined to do so online. The advent of social networks has resulted in situations that often go beyond the intentions of these students. The words that they consider insignificant are shared with a larger audience, and the consequences on victimized students are very often difficult to repair.

Make students aware of responsible use of social networks and about the consequences of their comments, and invite them to adopt safe behaviours online.

Table 3 — **Forms of Violence and their Characteristics**

FORM	CHARACTERISTICS
Bullying	• Intentional and repetitive acts • Imbalance of power • Victimized student feels emotional distress • Destruction of self-esteem • Feelings of solitude and exclusion • Witnesses are often passive, inactive or silent
Discrimination	• Often begins in elementary school • Teasing (physical feature, first or family name, issues of an academic nature, or in a game or sport)
Sexual assault	• Acts are unwanted by the victim • Women are more often victimized • Deliberate and repetitive acts
Homophobia	• Acts with the intent of rejecting or hurting • Prejudice against sexual orientation, real or perceived, or against non-conformity to typical gender models • Avoidance, rejection, aggression
Xenophobia	• Words and actions that intend to exclude a person from a group because he is "different"
Cyberbullying	• Behaviour with the intent of getting revenge or social gains • False impression of anonymity from the bully • Situations often start at school, but unfold outside the school • Words are often considered harmless

PARTICIPANTS IN VIOLENCE AND BULLYING

Most often, the identified participants are the victim, the bully and the witnesses. School staff and parents play an important role too; they are also participants and witnesses, in addition to being in a position of authority and support.

Victimized Students

All children and teenagers can be the victims of violence and bullying. They are excluded and suffer from isolation, rejection and humiliation. Some do not understand why they deserve such treatment. Is it because of the way they look, their accent, their personality or their origins, or for no reason at all?

We tend to believe that the victimized child is often responsible for what happens to him. We trivialize, we find excuses and we sometimes believe that these behaviours are normal: *He was asking for it*. *He was dressed like a girl*. *He should have worn real boy clothes*.

This phenomenon has existed since school was invented. There was a time when we used to say: *Let's not overreact, they're at the age of teasing!* Now, we know that violence and bullying can have insidious, even tragic consequences when the acts are repetitive. The scars left behind have an impact on all areas of the victim's life. In the long term, the victim lives in a climate of tension and confusion. He avoids talking about it and feels powerless. Because he can't find a solution to the problem, he loses confidence in himself. Sometimes, he even justifies his attackers.

The victim lives in a climate of tension and confusion. He avoids talking about it and feels powerless. Because he can't find a solution to the problem, he loses confidence in himself. Sometimes, he even justifies his attackers.

Since the majority of victimized students do not report the issue for fear of retaliation, it too often remains hidden from the school staff. Victimized students do not have the instinct to confide themselves, or simply do not know how. They are shy, do not dare talk about their fears or distress and often think they are responsible for what happens to them. Very often, these youths already have low self-esteem, are introverted or lack the skills to make friends and keep them.

The victimized student is shy, does not dare talk about his fears or distress and often thinks he is responsible for what happens to him.

Do not hesitate to reach out to victimized students to help them share their secret thoughts by showing interest in who they are, by valuing them, by developing their self-confidence, by helping them develop their social skills and by caring about their lives.

Alone and without support, these children and teenagers are at risk of being "victimized" for many years, which may lead to serious developmental problems. If they are supported and encouraged, they will be more confident and will respond better to attacks from their peers. Able to make friends and keep them, they will become less vulnerable targets for potential bullies.

The choice of a victim is not only by chance (see box *Personal Characteristics of a Victimized Student*). Some students have personal characteristics that people like to make fun of. Their reaction can play an important role in their interpersonal relationships.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A VICTIMIZED STUDENT

1. Anxiety
2. Sensitivity
3. Low self-esteem
4. Perception of not being interesting to others
5. Solitary
6. Difficulty in developing friendships
7. Fearful and submissive

A student's apathy, way of walking or posture can be seen as a sign of low self-esteem. Students who display these characteristics become easy preys for bullies since they usually do not attack students who are more popular and more assertive than they are.

The Victim's Reaction

Violence, like any other stressful event, leads to different reactions from victims: they either flee, fight back or isolate themselves. A victimized student who allows the bully to dominate will:

- withdraw or flee;
- be passive and not react to the attack;
- be vulnerable;
- be submissive.

Violence can also lead to aggressive reactions in some victimized students who have unpredictable behaviour. They may try to stand up to the bully, to get revenge or to turn their frustration against younger or weaker students, who, like their passive victim-aggressor, are rejected and often have low self-esteem.

No matter what the victimized students' characteristics are, stay alert to the many clues leading you to believe that a student may be a victim of bullying (see box *How to Recognize a Victimized Student*).

Some students will try to communicate their distress through art, by writing strange essays or by drawing puzzling scenes.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A VICTIMIZED STUDENT

1. Isolation
2. Lack of motivation in class
3. Not interested in participating in activities
4. Seems sad, preoccupied
5. Fear of taking the bus, of going to his locker or to the cafeteria
6. Few contacts with adults

With repetition, domination over a victim becomes deeply rooted. After some time, the victimized student feels more and more fearful and desperate[17], which may lead to problems with adaptation, alcohol and drugs. The student may be led down a path of low self-esteem and guilty feelings. Unfortunately, this long-time suffering leaves permanent scars.

Students Who Bully Their Peers

When a student bullies or harasses another student, he does so for many reasons and, generally, because it benefits him in several ways. It may be to win the approval of others by making them laugh, to draw attention, to feel important, to impress, to feel some sense of control or to feel powerful. The student who bullies his peers does not always do so with the intent to hurt, but that is nevertheless what happens.

> The student who bullies does so to win the approval of others, to draw attention, to feel important, to impress, to feel some sense of control or to feel powerful.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BULLYING STUDENT[18]

1. Low parental attachment
2. Aggressive and provocative temperament at a very early age
3. Usually disobedient
4. Refuses to comply with rules
5. Opposition to authority
6. Lack of authority figures
7. Hostile and bossy towards other children
8. Lack of limits

Using violence to achieve one's goals can be the expression of an emotional problem caused by various individual or family factors (see box *Characteristics of the Bullying Student*). Contrary to what some may believe, the bullying student is not necessarily a child with serious behaviour problems. Many become bullies because of peer pressure, of the need to occupy a territory, or to be recognized or admired.

Like the victimized student, the bully may have issues with anxiety, low self-esteem and rejection. The line between the victim and the bully is not always well defined. In fact, some victimized students become bullies because they can't stand being the constant scapegoat. The "mixed" victim (both victim and bully) reacts violently when teased, has trouble understanding the intentions of his peers, and is impulsive. Very often, other students will purposely get him going just for the fun of watching his reaction. However, this

type of victim is the one who gets the least sympathy from both children and adults. Because his behaviour is often excessive, people tend to say that "*he was asking for it*".

Avoid labelling a student a "bully." Instead, determine which behaviours are not acceptable and make him aware of their seriousness.

The bully establishes his power over the victim through his size and physical strength, by targeting his victim's weaknesses, by using his rank in the group or by getting other students to collaborate with him[19] (see the box *Behaviours of the Bullying Student*).

Sometimes, the bullying student may consider his behaviour as a game and not realize its full impacts. More often, though, he is aware that he is good at influencing and manipulating others. Often, he sees provocation where there is none. He feels reinforced by the fact that he gets what he wants when he uses force and trickery, which encourages him to keep bullying his victims or to find new ones. He instils fear not only in his victims, but also in other students, which he may consider as authority or as a sign of respect for him.

BEHAVIOURS OF THE BULLYING STUDENT

1. Positive attitude towards the use of violence
2. Tendency to attack, exploit, humiliate, ridicule or denigrate others
3. Impulsiveness
4. Need to dominate others
5. Lack of sympathy towards his victim
6. Difficulty in managing conflicts, in expressing himself and in communicating
7. Tendency to believe that others have hostile intentions

Witnesses of Scenes of Violence or Bullying

The vast majority of acts of violence and bullying take place when adults are away. Therefore, witnesses play a decisive role in these situations. Their conduct has a critical impact, positive or negative, on the relationship between the bully and his victim and on the outcome of bullying situations.

Witnessing students will hesitate between reporting bullying behaviours, helping the victim or staying silent. If they talk, it is possible that the bully will retaliate and that they will become his new victim. If they do not talk, they risk being perceived as accomplices. Consequently, most witnesses laugh, stay silent, ignore the situation, flee, rally behind the bully and, most especially, avoid being seen with the victim.

The witnessing student does not know what to do: report the bully's behaviour, help the victim or remain silent?

Why should they get into trouble? If they remain passive witnesses, they can make fun of the situation or avoid being noticed. Eventually, the passive witness may come to believe that the victim wished this misfortune on himself. Then, one day, some witnesses start bullying too. They pick a student who is afraid to fight back, then feel the power they have over him; it is much better to be a bully than to be a victim! With time, they become insensitive to the suffering they cause others and make light of their behaviour.

Going from witness to bully is a real risk.

When a witness chooses to break the silence, he acts as a catalyst to end violence and bullying. His intervening protects potential victims and can encourage the victim and the bully to seek help. By reporting the harmful acts he witnessed, he uses his ability to be a responsible citizen.

The witness is part of both the problem and the solution. Whether he wants it or not, he will be affected by the violence and bullying he has witnessed.

Victims, bullies and witnesses are closely linked to one another.[20] Therefore, school staff should address the problem as a whole. Instead of identifying those who are guilty and those who are victims and labeling them forever, everyone — students and staff members — must commit to finding a solution to the problem. Above all, what must be established is a balance of power where no school member can be excluded.

School Staff and Parents

At home and school, adults play a lead role in preventing or reducing the consequences of violence and bullying. They must gain the trust of children and teenagers, encourage them to report all acts of violence and use all of the necessary means to help victims and their bullies. Needless to say, they must also be role models, i.e. they must also show respect towards their peers.

Students generally prefer solving their problems themselves to avoid bothering their parents or the school's staff. We wrongly believe that they can do so. Students need help; they must be guided to solve conflicts and to learn appropriate social behaviours. This is part of the learning process. Violence is an imbalance of power that is almost impossible to solve alone, without any help from school staff or parents.

Violence is an imbalance of power that is almost impossible to solve alone, without any help from school staff or parents.

As soon as a behavioural change is noticed in a child or teenager, it is essential to ask about the situation and to commit your co-operation in solving the problem. It is vital to take any confidence seriously, whether it is from a victimized student or a witness of violence, since it is often as a last resort that they report bullying. Whatever the child's age, you must let him know that you intend on helping him and explain how you will do so.

CHAPITER III —
TAKING ACTION TO PREVENT AND INTERVENE

Beyond statistics, violence is a phenomenon that has an impact on the balance of many youths, whether they are victims, witnesses or bullies. It does not always leave visible marks, but its damages are insidious.

The true challenge of the *Committee against school bullying and violence* lies in the efficiency of the means used to protect, help and support students. This chapter describes the steps to follow for schools to produce an efficient action plan. It also contains various concrete acts that can serve as inspiration when taking preventative measures. However, it is important to remember that not everything can be fixed with a short-term solution. Schools must identify their priorities and adapt solutions to their needs. There is no magical or unique solution to violence and bullying, but there must be a real desire to help students solve their problems as they happen. To get there, everybody must make a contribution and a commitment, and work in collaboration with the other members of the school team.

All members of the school team must have a real desire to help students solve their problems as they happen.

FORMING A COMMITTEE

Forming a committee is a prerequisite to any action. The *Committee against school bullying and violence* must implement educational and disciplinary measures to prevent violence and bullying, and to intervene when situations arise. The committee must develop various strategies to foster the changes desired. The committee must consist of members of the school team, one student representative and one parent representative. Community representatives may also join (see the box *Example of a Committee*). Even though the committee is responsible for developing the plan, all staff must participate actively to this task.

The phenomenon of violence and bullying does not only concern one designated person, but all school staff as well.

In elementary school, student representatives are selected from grade 5 and grade 6 students. In high school, students of all levels can be on the committee. It is a great opportunity for students to play an active role in looking for solutions; often, they are only given participatory roles in activities. In truth, they are the first ones to be affected by violence and bullying, and they often have very well-defined ideas about what could help them. With proper guidance, they will be able to share ideas and to participate with adults from the school in the decision-making process. "When they feel that they contributed to a project, students feel responsible for its implementation and respect, and they develop a feeling of belonging and pride."[21]

By contributing to the action plan, students feel responsible for its implementation and respect.

EXAMPLE OF A COMMITTEE

1. One member of the directorate
2. One teacher representative
3. One professional or administrative staff member
4. One parent representative
5. One student representative
6. One community representative
7. One police educator

ANALYZING THE SITUATION

School is a place of interactions that generates intense emotions. Mutual influences, relationship networks, group dynamics, climate and promiscuity result in situations and perceptions that can sometimes be contradictory.

The committee must analyze the situation in order to stop violence in school, to understand where and when it happens, who is affected and what its impact is on students and staff. A simple way to proceed is to provide students, parents and school-team members with questionnaires.

Once the responses to the questionnaires have been collected, the committee analyzes and interprets the results that will be presented to the school's governing board, to the teachers committee, to school staff, to parents and to students. Among other things, this helps identify the objectives of the action plan.

Tool nº 1 — First Staff Questionnaire — Nature and Scope of Violence and Bullying Acts in Our School (page 51)

Tool nº 2 — Second Staff Questionnaire — Nature and Scope of Violence and Bullying Acts in Our School (page 54)

Tool nº 3 — Questionnaire for Preschool and First-Cycle Elementary Students (page 55)

Tool nº 4 — Questionnaire for Elementary-School Students (page 56)

Tool nº 5 — Questionnaire for High-School Students (page 60)

Tool nº 6 — Questionnaire for Parents (page 64)

ESTABLISHING AN ACTION PLAN

The school's action plan must comply with the *Act to prevent and stop bullying and violence in schools*[22] (see box). It must be adopted by the school's governing board. The Act also indicates the students' obligations, including to "conduct themselves in a civil and respectful manner towards their peers and school board personnel."[23]

ACT TO PREVENT AND STOP BULLYING AND VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

According to the *Act to prevent and stop bullying and violence in schools* (Bill 56)[24], the action plan must include:

- prevention measures;
- measures to promote the collaboration of parents;
- ways to facilitate reporting and to ensure confidentiality;
- measures to take when violence or bullying is noticed;
- support measures for victims, bullies and witnesses;
- disciplinary sanctions;
- follow-up measures after an intervention.

Indicators that Facilitate Results Analysis

When developing an action plan, it is important to add indicators that will facilitate results analysis at the end of the year, and that will determine which adjustments need to be made to next year's plan. For example:

- the number of victimized students and the severity of violent acts;
- the number of violence and bullying cases reported;
- staff's evaluation of training programs on violence and bullying;
- clarity and implementation of rules;
- monitoring in locker areas and hallways (increase, decrease);
- school climate;
- information for parents (speed, frequency, etc.);
- parents' participation in the committee to prevent violence and bullying.

Disseminating the Action Plan

It is important to disseminate the actions your school will take to ensure the safety of its students. To do so, the school can organize various activities to highlight how the action plan will be implemented. For example:

- presenting the action plan to staff and parents;
- preparing an awareness-raising video for students;
- organizing conferences to which local newspapers, among others, will be invited;
- proposing articles to local media with student participation;
- broadcasting messages in classrooms.

Students must be aware that they can seek help from all the adults in the school. Staff members must be given the necessary training to respond immediately when they witness an act of violence or bullying. All staff members must also participate in the various activities related to violence and bullying in school. By setting an example, the adults will get the students to imitate them.

CREATING A CLIMATE OF HARMONY

1. Facilitating the integration of new staff members, substitute teachers and new students
2. Giving everybody the opportunity to express their opinion
3. Creating a climate of mutual trust by promoting team spirit and collegiality
4. Fostering a feeling of belonging where everyone can count on the support of others

PREVENTING

Maintaining a Climate of Harmony

The school must establish a balance between, on one hand, a clear and consistent code of conduct, and on the other hand, positive and warm relationships with students and staff members. All staff members must contribute to maintaining a climate of harmony in school (see box *Creating a Climate of Harmony*).

A student who confides in you and tells you he is the victim of violence or bullying is showing a lot of courage in overcoming his fear of being judged. He is showing that he trusts you completely. Praise him for his courage and determine how you can help him by referring to the intervention protocol and all the appropriate tools you have.

Securing High-Risk Areas

Analyzing the responses to the questionnaires makes it possible to identify where students are more at risk of violence (schoolyard, hallways, cafeteria, lockers, daycare areas, classrooms, etc.) The school must take measures to keep these areas clean and well lit, and ensure vigilant monitoring so that students can circulate safely.

Some schools use electronic devices such as cameras, sensors or alarms to increase the efficiency of monitoring. There are many reasons why such measures may be needed: student and staff security, areas that are hard to monitor because of the size of the school, lack of staff for monitoring, expected dissuasive effects. However, research has not proven the efficiency of these measures and, like suspension and exclusion, they only contribute to creating a temporary feeling of security without generating social behavioural changes that would be better suited to the school.[25]

Electronic monitoring systems are not considered efficient. They create a temporary feeling of security without changing behaviours.

Tool nº 7 — Inspiring School Activities and Projects (page 67)

Tool nº 8 — School Violence and Bullying Incident Data Sheet (page 69)

The Role of the Directorate

The directorate gives its school a flavour. If it is committed to preventing and reducing violence and bullying in cooperation with its staff, it will be easier for the team to put together an action plan and find efficient means to reach its goals.

Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Violence and Bullying[26]

- Promote an open-door policy for victims.
- Contact parents as soon as possible and keep them informed when incidents occur.
- Encourage an approach where sanctions are consistent and educational for bullies.
- Clarify with staff how much flexibility they have to respond to violence and bullying incidents.
- Follow up with everyone concerned.
- If a decision is made as an exception to the rule, explain it clearly to all staff in order to avoid misunderstanding and loss of commitment.
- Make decisions in cooperation with other resources in the school.

Screening for Risk in Elementary School

In elementary school, it is recommended to screen students as soon as possible for aggressive behaviours. Indeed, because of their young age, these students' behaviour can be improved more easily. Their reputation with their peers has yet to be established; since their school journey is only beginning, their history shows few difficulties.

If a child in elementary school shows signs of violence or bullying, make sure you meet the parents, set up an action plan with them immediately and, above all, keep them informed of the actions that will be taken.

In the Classroom

Children and teenagers tend to become more aggressive when they lack attention, when they do not succeed or when they do not feel they belong to a group. Using their skills, teachers can establish a warm and understanding climate in class by advocating harmony between students, and by reinforcing their relationships.

Strategies to Reduce Antisocial Behaviour

- Deter students from using any type of violence and bullying.
- Disapprove verbally of the lack of respect in language.
- Set limits for misbehaving students.
- Reinforce proper behaviour.
- Establish clear rules on violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination that are similar to school rules.
- Use cooperative approaches and involve students in class and school life (ex: school board, team work, non-competitive approaches).
- Practice inclusive educational methods where each student feels accepted, no matter how different he is or what his special needs are.

Tool nº 9 — Classroom Violence and Bullying Incident Data Sheet (page 71)

SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Hold discussions by suggesting concrete scenarios
2. Show videos on violence and bullying to discuss and promote reflection
3. With your group, develop strategies to take action with victimized students:
   - *What could you say to a victimized student?*
   - *What advice could you give him?*
   - *How can you support him in reporting violence and bullying?*
4. Teach students how to comfort a victimized student by showing him that you disagree with the bully's behaviour

Look out for students who withdraws from others, who seem depressed, who are not motivated, sad, preoccupied or afraid, who do not talk or talk very little, who are having trouble taking part in classroom activities or who write strange texts. These are warning signs that could help you determine if a student is being victimized.

ESTABLISHING A PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS[27]

"When parents participate in the academic follow-up, children and teenagers have better results, a lower absence rate, fewer behavioural difficulties and a more positive perception of the classroom and of the school climate."[28]

Rolande Deslandes and Richard Bertrand

In pursuing established goals, the committee adopts means aiming at fostering the precious cooperation of parents. It is essential that they be partners in developing the action plan.

To facilitate parents' commitment on the committee, it is important to:

- inform them that the committee has been created;
- invite them to join by suggesting a specific role based on their availability (ex: responsible for the parents' questionnaire, participating in a sub-committee, being the parents' spokesperson, running a section for parents on the school's website, etc.);
- be flexible, especially when scheduling meetings to get them involved;
- ensure meetings are efficient to limit their frequency;
- establish common and realistic objectives, likely to be of interest to parents.

The committee also ensures that all parents are well informed on violence and bullying:

- announcements, messages on the school's website, newspaper, explanatory guide sent home through students;
- documents given to parents during school meetings;
- information sessions, exchange meetings, conferences held at school in the evening.

"Collaboration is like a permanent research laboratory on the best ways to help students. It can become an essential pillar. The help of parents leads to establishing coherence between what is said at school and what will be done at home. It is a demanding challenge, but so efficient!"[29]

Tool nº 10 — Information to Send Parents (page 72)

PROMOTING REPORTING

The committee advises students, staff and parents on actions to be taken to complain of[30] or to report a bullying or violent act against a student (see the box *To Report or Complain?*). It establishes a plan of intervention to ensure confidentiality, as well as support and supervision for victimized students, witnesses and bullies.

Tool nº 11 — Reporting Form for Students (page 73)

Tool nº 12 — School Website Reporting Form (page 74)

TO REPORT OR COMPLAIN?

A student who reports an incident is not a snitch. He is simply warning an adult that a student is being victimized, without any gain or intent to hurt, in order to help this student and to stand up to injustice.

Complaining is to report to authorities one's own experience as a victim of bullying or violence. A minor who wishes to complain must be accompanied by his parents.

School staff and parents are more and more conscious of violence and bullying. Nevertheless, it is still difficult for them to detect these acts because students do not report them for fear of retaliation. To reduce all forms of violence and to protect students so that they can feel safe, they must be provided with various options to encourage them to act and report (see the box *Reporting Procedure*).

REPORTING PROCEDURE

1. In the school, post the names of all members of the *Committee against school bullying and violence*
2. Identify supportive peers; it is often easier for a student to trust another student of the same age
3. Provide a reporting box that is accessible for students to drop off a complaint or a report
4. Provide an email address for students to send a report of what they have seen or experienced. Make sure that someone is following up on these emails every day
5. Encourage students to meet with an adult they trust (teacher, educator, monitor, psychoeducator, psychologist, principal, parent)

As soon as an act of violence or bullying is reported, take action immediately, no matter how the student decided to report the bullying or violence incident. Do not wait for the situation to get worse. It is essential for the directorate to advise parents in order to reassure them that all measures will be taken to protect their child and to put a stop to violence and bullying.

Supportive Peers

Student leaders chosen by the *Committee against school bullying and violence* receive training on bullying and are asked to report any act they may witness. They can be mandated to spot students who are likely to be bullied, to encourage victims to complain to an adult in the school and even to accompany a student during school activities.

Intervening with Victimized Students

When a student reports an act of bullying, meet with him, listen to him and take him seriously. It is essential to develop a strong sense of trust with this student. He must be allowed to speak freely and feel that you will give him all the help he needs. This approach requires time. Choose the right moment to offer him all of your attention. If you cannot meet with him right away, reassure him, set an appointment together and refer him to a specialized educator or a designated person so that he does not stay alone.

Many schools work in close collaboration with police educators. In these cases, the directorate is invited to seek advice from the educator to determine how he can support the student and his parents, as well as guide them if they want to complain.

Tool nº 13 — Interviewing a Victimized Student (page 75)

Tool nº 14 — How is the Family? (page 77)

Intervening with Students who Bully

Strategies to intervene with bullying students depend on the seriousness of various criteria and require a balance between disciplinary and educational measures.

When establishing disciplinary measures, make sure they correspond with the school's action plan.

CRITERIA TO CONSIDER

1. Gravity of the violation
2. Safety of others
3. Nature of the violation
4. Circumstances
5. Intentions
6. Age
7. Recurring offence
8. Parental cooperation

When a victim files a formal complaint against the attacker, judiciary procedures may also be in order, along with disciplinary and educational measures by the school. Depending on the case, there may be a need to support the parents of the bullying student; this should be done in a specific way, by facilitating access to services offered by the school, the CLSC or other community organizations.

Tool nº 14 — How is the Family? (page 77)

Tool nº 15 — Intervention Protocol for the Bullying Student (page 78)

Tool nº 16 — How to Help Staff Evaluate the Seriousness of Violence and Bullying (page 82)

Tool nº 17 — Intervention Procedures for School Staff (page 84)

Tool nº 18 — Interviewing a Bullying Student (page 85)

Tool nº 19 — Commitment Contract for the Bullying Student (page 87)

Intervening with Witnesses

Acts of violence usually happen (in 88% of cases) in front of witnesses. Two thirds of the time, the acts stop within 10 seconds when witnesses intervene.[31] However, not everyone can stand up to a bully and ask him to stop bullying (see the box *Why Witnesses Do Not Intervene*). If a witness remains passive and simply an onlooker, he becomes part of the problem. But if the witness intervenes, he contributes to stopping the bully.

Tool nº 20 — Meeting with Witnesses of Violence and Bullying (page 88)

If a witness remains passive and simply an onlooker, he becomes part of the problem. But if the witness intervenes, he contributes to stopping the bully.

WHY WITNESSES DO NOT INTERVENE

1. The witness does not feel safe
2. The witness has had a bad experience after reporting a bullying incident
3. The witness is afraid to be called a snitch

Reporting violent behaviour is denouncing an injustice. Raise your students' awareness of the importance of intervening by advising them to ask for help and to tell, anonymously or not, the directorate or a staff member each time they witness violence or bullying.

Intervening with Parents

Parents of both victimized students and bullying students have the fundamental right to be informed and to get the opportunity to collaborate with school staff. The directorate must get in touch with parents immediately after having been informed of violence or bullying. A meeting should be planned to explain the steps taken to help the child, to listen to the parents' concerns and to answer their questions.

Whether they are parents of a victimize student or of a bullying student, they are invited to work in collaboration with the school (see box *Collaboration and Support*). It is important to remember that partnerships do not only require goodwill, but a will to commit.

The directorate must remind parents of their right to speak to the school board, to the student ombudsman and to the police to make a complaint if their child's safety is in jeopardy.

Share the minutes of meetings with parents and follow up with them to let them know how the situation is evolving.

Tools nº 21 — Proposed Steps for the Principal's Meeting with Parents (page 89)

COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT

1. Involve parents in the search for solutions
2. Provide parents with strategies and resources by speaking to, for example, an educator, a psycho-educator or a psychologist to give the family extra support
3. Guide parents towards external resources: social worker, CLSC (family services)

For parents, learning that their child or teenager is a victim of violence or bullying, or that their child is bullying others, can be a shock. Help them understand the situation. Reassure them that their child is safe. Inform them of the interventions being planned to end the violence.

OFFER TRAINING TO STAFF

In collaboration with the teachers committee or any committee responsible for training programs, the school directorate is responsible for organizing a training plan on bullying and violence. This type of training must be intended for any adult dealing with students (directorate, teachers, educators, secretaries, monitors, professionals, bus drivers) and must foster the acquisition of intervention skills. To be efficient, the training plan must take into account specific criteria (see box *An Efficient Training Plan*).

Do not hesitate to question your own practices and skills.

AN EFFICIENT TRAINING PLAN

1. Take into account the workload of staff members by making it easier to attend training sessions, while releasing them from their usual tasks

2. Establish a link between training activities and daily practices by using the participants' knowledge as a starting point

3. Teach skills that can be used immediately, such as strategies to put an end to violent behaviour by avoiding an escalating verbal altercation with the student

4. Plan to review training contents with participants after training activities.

5. Give everyone the chance to share their intervention methods and to discuss strategies that were put in use

6. Plan activities throughout the school year to allow reinvestment of learning in daily practices

Each school team is responsible[32] for properly evaluating the needs of staff members in order to give them the right tools and to increase the efficiency of interventions. The box *Training Themes* suggests a list of themes for training programs.

TRAINING THEMES

1. Characteristics of troubled youth and how to help them
2. Group dynamics
3. Efficient classroom intervention techniques
4. Approaching and collaborating with parents
5. Behavioural and mental-health issues
6. Social-skills development
7. Conflict resolution and helping relationship
8. Crisis intervention
9. Intervening with students who display oppositional behaviours
10. Student motivation and the desire to succeed
11. Cooperative teaching practices
12. Student cooperation and commitment to school life
13. Implementing a code of conduct
14. Etc.

ADAPTING SCHOOL RULES

In collaboration with school staff, the teachers committee and the governing board, the *Committee against school bullying and violence* ensures that school rules are reviewed and in compliance with the objectives of the action plan.[33]

The committee may suggest disciplinary measures for acts of bullying and violence depending on their seriousness, frequency and context. Disciplinary measures are used to make the student accountable for his actions and to set limits. They also serve as deterrents. They must not be applied as coercive measures or threats. Each situation requires a fair, quick and equitable response. Interveners should always show judgement.

Disciplinary measures must take into account the seriousness, frequency and context of the behaviour.

All schools have rules. This text is simply a reminder, which can be used as a starting point for updating your code of conduct.

What is a Code of Conduct?

A code of conduct is the sum of all the rules and consequences that apply to the expected conduct of students, as well as the management of inappropriate behaviours. It is a collective contract binding the school's directorate, staff, students and parents. The purpose of school or class rules is to help students develop skills related to self-respect, respect of others and respect of the environment, as well as to make it possible for them to learn in a positive climate and to live in harmony with the others. These rules are also implemented for everyone to understand that with rights also come obligations towards respect, safety and well-being.

Establishing a Code of Conduct

Setting school rules requires team work, so it is essential that all staff members participate. First, select the values that you want to convey in your school. Everyone should express their expectations, priorities and frustrations. Then, adopt rules that correspond the most to the consensus.

Rules should be stated in a clear, precise and simple manner. They are intended for students and must be known and understood by all. They must be easy to manage, coherent, easy to follow, reasonable and applied regularly by all staff. Tool no°22 (page 91) suggests a way of demonstrating a code of conduct that makes it easy to understand.

Tips for Establishing Rules

- First, state the rule.
- Then, explain the reasons that justify the rule.
- State the consequences of the behaviour (sanctions and encouragement).
- Describe the means used to establish a helping relationship.

To promote correct behaviour and prevent undesirable behaviour, it is important to have an appreciation system that recognizes the students' efforts and that motivates them to persevere despite their difficulties.

Sanctions teach students which limits not to cross. They must be fair and take into account mitigating or aggravating circumstances, as well as particular circumstances, like the justice system does for citizens.

Success Factors

The code of conduct can become more efficient if it meets the following success factors:

- decisions are made in a spirit of collegiality and approved by the governing board;
- the code is presented to students for consultation and discussion;
- the code is applied in a coherent manner by all staff members;
- the school maintains a positive school climate where the staff's efforts in interventions is recognized and supported;
- the directorate informs the staff of interventions in exceptional situations.

Throughout the year, staff members must highlight the expectations stated in the code of conduct. If you notice inconsistencies or difficulties in applying the code, it is important to make the necessary changes immediately.

Tool no 22 — Code of Conduct: Strategy and Example (page 91)

EVALUATING RESULTS

Evaluating Progress Throughout the Year

Throughout the year, the committee must plan a series of meetings to analyze the progress made through the implementation of the action plan. It is necessary to go over the principles that guided interventions. Around the month of May, the committee should once again give questionnaires to the students, school team and parents, in order to see the progress and improve the action plan.

Year-End Assessment and Planning for Next Year

The end of the school year is the time to assess and to start planning for the next year. Project analysis is done with the input of all concerned parties. It is based on the various planning steps and allows us to identify and examine the factors that contributed to the success of the action plan. This assessment highlights positive accomplishments and identifies negative aspects to be improved or potential challenges. It also makes it possible to draw conclusions and to anticipate possible adjustments.

Results are sent to the institution's governing board, to the teachers committee, to school staff and to parents.

TYPICAL ASSESSMENT QUESTION

1. How were staff members, students and parents made more aware?
2. What is the impact of the action plan on the school?
3. Based on the answers to the questionnaires given at the beginning and end of the year, what conclusions can you draw?
4. Which elements helped the plan succeed?
5. Which difficulties did you encounter?
6. Have you met your objectives?
7. What was the experience of school staff and students with the plan?
8. Do you consider that some factors were forgotten and should be considered with more importance?
9. What are the objectives you would like to work on for next year?

ANNEX

Index of Tools

In this section, various tools are provided to help you develop an action plan and to support the actions to be undertaken. These tools are meant for the staff, students and parents of elementary and high schools, and are presented as examples.

These tools are intended for schools, not to collect provincial scientific statistics or other similar data.

You can use these tools as they are, or use them as inspiration and modify them to better suit the needs of your school.

List of Tools

Tool nº 1 — First Staff Questionnaire Nature and Scope of Violence and Bullying Acts in Our School[34]

1. For each of the following statements, indicate your level of agreement of disagreement.

	Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Mostly agree	Totally agree
a) Violence is a serious problem in our school.				
b) Racial discrimination is a serious problem in our school.				
c) Sexual harassment is a serious problem in our school.				
d) Time and resources allocated to reduce violence in our school are sufficient.				

2. In this list, indicate to which extent types of violence are reported:
Answer all questions.

	Never	Rarely	Often	Very often
a) Physical violence (hitting, pushing and shoving, etc.)				
b) Verbal violence (screaming, insulting, etc.)				
c) Material violence (theft, damage to a student's personal belongings)				
d) Psychological violence (threats, bullying, denigration, social rejection, rumours, etc.)				
e) Cyber violence (hurtful comments in text messages, emails, social networks, etc.)				

3. In these areas, identify where violence and bullying acts happen most often:
Answer all questions.

	Never	Rarely	Often	Very often
a) Classroom				
b) Hallways and stairs				
c) Library				
d) Computer room				
e) Gym				
f) Changing rooms and lockers				
g) Washroom				
h) School bus				
i) On the way to school				
j) Cafeteria				

k) Daycare

l) Around school

4. When are students most vulnerable to violence and bullying?

	Never	Rarely	Often	Very often
a) Before school hours				
b) During class				
c) During breaks and lunch				
d) Daycare				
e) After school hours				

5. Are the following measures implemented in your school? Check all measures existing in your school.

	YES	NO
a) Committee against school violence and bullying		
b) Efficient monitoring outside classrooms		
c) Defined policies and rules on school violence and bullying		
d) Staff training on violence and bullying		
e) Physical space reorganization to reduce potential violence		
f) Regular discussions in class on violence and bullying		
g) Using educational material to end violence and bullying (videos, books, etc.)		
h) Creating and posting classroom rules		
i) Intervention measures by peers (mediators, helping peers, friends)		
j) Student participation in the committee against violence and bullying		
k) Activities ran by students (presentations, conferences, etc.)		
l) Help for students victimized by violence and bullying		
m) Help for perpetrators of acts of violence or bullying		
n) Activities for students or groups of students to acquire social skills		
o) Information given to parents (newsletter, literature on violence)		
p) Invitations to parents to attend presentations and conferences on violence		
q) Invitations to parents to participate in programs against violence		
r) Invitations to community groups and leaders to participate in the school's action plan against violence and bullying.		

Do you have suggestions to help us understand the nature and scope of violence in our school?

Tool nº 2 — Second Staff Questionnaire
Nature and Scope of Violence and Bullying Acts in Our School

Since the first survey:

		Many more	A few more	Fewer	Much fewer
1.	More activities to fight violence have been implemented in our school.				
2.	School staff members share strategies to put an end to violence.				
3.	Students are more informed and report violent acts more easily.				
4.	The problem of violence is more understood by staff members.				
5.	The problem of violence in our school is more understood by outside participants (parents, community members).				
6.	More outside participants (parents, community members) are getting involved in solving the problem of violence in our school.				
7.	The number of victimized or bullying students has decreased.				
8.	In general, the school climate if more positive and peaceful.				

Other comments:

Tool nº 3 — Questionnaire for Preschool and First-Cycle Elementary Students

This survey must be read and given by teachers.

I would like to know how you feel about school by asking you a few questions.

	Put a smiley face when you feel the happiest at school.	
1.	In the schoolyard	
2.	When I go to the washroom	
3.	In the classroom	
4.	At daycare	
5.	On the school bus	
6.	In the library	
7.	When I play in the gym	
8.	When I'm in the locker room	

I would now like to know if you experience situations in school that are unpleasant.

		Yes	No
1.	A student pushed me.		
2.	A student intentionally hit me.		
3.	A student threatened and scared me.		
4.	A student gave me a nickname.		
5.	A student laughed at me in front of the others.		
6.	A student stole or broke my things.		
7.	One or more students did not want me to be part of their group.		
8.	I was alone at recess.		
9.	Have you ever hit or scared another student?		

Tool nº 4 —
Questionnaire for Elementary-School Students[35]

School: _____

Date: _____ Classroom: _____

Thank you for answering this questionnaire. It is designed to better understand what you experience at school and what happens with violence and bullying in our school. With your help, we will be able to improve the climate in our school. If you do not understand a question, you can ask your teacher to explain it.

When you answer a question, say what you think. We want to know if you feel safe at school.

This survey is confidential.

"Bullying is when one of these situations keeps on happening and the student cannot defend himself."

Claire BEAUMONT

Violence at school can take on many forms:

a. physical violence (hitting, pushing and shoving, etc.);
b. verbal violence (screaming, nicknames, etc.);
c. material violence (stealing, damaging personal belongings);
d. psychological violence (threats, bullying, smearing, social rejection, rumours, etc.);
e. cyber violence (hurtful comments in text messages, emails, social networks, etc.).

1. Answer the following questions by checking the right box.

	Never	1 or 2 times	Often	Very often
a) At school, I was pushed, shoved or hit.				
b) One or more students threatened me.				
c) One or more students broke or stole my things.				
d) One or more students insulted me, gave me nicknames or screamed at me.				
e) One or more students spread rumours about me.				
f) One or more students excluded me from a group, encouraged others to reject me.				

	Never	1 or 2 times	Often	Very often
g) One or more students sent emails, messages, pictures or wrote comments about me on social networks.				
h) I have wanted to stay home from school for fear of violence.				
i) I have told an adult that I have been targeted by violence or bullies.				
j) I have told an adult that I have witnessed violence or bullying.				
k) I have verbally harassed other students.				
l) I have physically harassed other students.				
m) I have cyber harassed other students.				
n) I have threatened or scared other students.				

For the following questions, you can check one or more boxes.

2. Where do you witness acts of violence or bullying most often?

- ☐ School bus
- ☐ On the way to school
- ☐ School yard
- ☐ Classroom
- ☐ Stairs
- ☐ Washrooms
- ☐ At home
- ☐ School entrances and exits
- ☐ Changing rooms and lockers
- ☐ Hallways
- ☐ Physical-education class
- ☐ Daycare
- ☐ Library
- ☐ In my neighbourhood

3. When do these acts happen?

- ☐ In the morning before school
- ☐ During class hours
- ☐ At recess
- ☐ During outings
- ☐ In daycare
- ☐ At lunch time
- ☐ While travelling to and from school
- ☐ After school
- ☐ When there are substitute teachers
- ☐ On the Internet

4. If someone commits an act of violence against you, who will you tell?

- ☐ No one, I'll keep it to myself
- ☐ To a teacher at school
- ☐ To the school educator
- ☐ To my parents
- ☐ To my best friend
- ☐ To a daycare educator
- ☐ To the school principal
- ☐ To the psychologist or psycho-educator

5. Have you ever been targeted by violence outside school (in your neighbourhood, during your personal activities, at home?)
Check only one answer.

a) Never ☐
b) 1 or 2 times ☐
c) Often ☐
d) Every day ☐

6. How do you feel when you see a student subjected to an act of violence?

a) I have not witnessed any acts of violence. ☐
b) It does not really bother me. ☐
c) I feel sad. ☐
d) I get scared. ☐

7. Have you ever tried to help a student who was the victim of violence at school? YES ☐ NO ☐

If you did, what did you do?

a) I talked to an adult. ☐
b) I comforted the victim. ☐
c) I told the bullies to stop. ☐
d) I invited the victimized student to join my group of friends. ☐
e) Other (please specify): _____

8. If you were the victim of violence or bullying at school and asked adults to help, did they help you?
Check only one answer.

a) They always helped me. ☐
b) They sometimes helped me. ☐
c) They never helped me. ☐

9. In your school, do adults clearly explain to everyone the school's rules and responsibilities regarding violence and bullying? YES ☐ NO ☐

At school and daycare, the staff is there to listen to you.
If you have a problem, you must talk about it. This is important.

If you are being victimized or if you are bullying, talk to your parents about it.

You can also go to the Kids Help Phone
[http://org.kidshelpphone.ca/en] or call **1 800 668-6868**.

You can also call ***Tel-Jeunes*** **(1 800 263-2266)** to talk confidentially, at no cost, to someone who will listen to you.

Tool nº 5 —
Questionnaire for High-School Students[36]

School: _____

Date: _____ Classroom: _____

Thank you for answering these questions.

We would like to know what your school experience is like. Your answers will help us better understand what happens regarding violence and bullying in our school. With your cooperation, we will be able to improve the climate in our school.

There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you really think.

Violence at school can take many forms:

a. physical violence (hitting, pushing and shoving, etc.);
b. verbal violence (screaming, nicknames, etc.);
c. material violence (stealing, damaging personal belongings);
d. psychological violence (threats, bullying, denigration, social rejection, rumours, etc.);
e. cyber violence (hurtful comments in text messages, emails, social networks, etc.).

"Bullying is when one of these situations keeps on happening and the student cannot defend himself."

Claire BEAUMONT

1. How often have you seen these situations at school since the beginning of the year?
Answer all questions.

	Never	Rarely	Often	Very often
a) A student saying negative things about someone.				
b) A student hitting, shoving or pushing someone.				
c) A student calling someone a name or nickname on a regular basis.				
d) A student threatening someone.				
e) A student sending messages, pictures or comments about someone through social networks or emails.				
f) A student calling someone "fag", "queer", "lesbian", "dyke".				

	Never	Rarely	Often	Very often
g) A student laughing at someone who is being victimized or bullied.				
h) A student forced to give money, personal belongings or his/her lunch.				
i) A student breaking or damaging something, or drawing graffiti in school.				
j) A student being rejected, excluded by others.				
k) A student humiliating, laughing at, spreading rumours or belittling someone in front of others.				

2. Answer these questions by checking the appropriate column.

	Never	Rarely	Often	Very often
a) I sometimes experience a situation listed in the first question.				
b) Sometimes, I consider not coming to school for fear of violence.				
c) My siblings or friends are being threatened.				
d) Sometimes, I laugh at other students in school, hit them or spread rumours about them.				

e) When I witnessed violence, I reported it to an adult.

The problem was solved ☐ Nothing happened ☐ The problem got worse ☐

f) I have sometimes asked for help from a monitor or a teacher.

The problem was solved ☐ Nothing happened ☐ The problem got worse ☐

3. Did you see adults intervene when a student was being victimized or bullied?

YES ☐ NO ☐

4. Check the box that best indicates your opinion. Acts of violence and bullying happen mostly:

a) Between boys ☐

b) Between girls ☐

c) Between both boys and girls ☐

d) Between a girl and a boy ☐

5. Where do acts of violence and bullying mostly happen? Check the boxes that best indicate your opinion.

School bus	☐	Lockers	☐
On the way to school	☐	Cafeteria	☐
School yard	☐	Hallways	☐
Classroom	☐	Physical-education class	☐
Stairs	☐	Internet	☐
Washrooms	☐	Library	☐

Others (please specify): _____

6. If you see a student being victimized or bullied, what do you usually do? Check the box that best indicates your opinion.

a) I don't do anything because it's none of my business. ☐
b) I want to do something, but I don't because I don't want it to backfire against me. ☐
c) I tell an adult. ☐
d) I comfort the victim or offer him/her support afterwards. ☐
e) I stand up against the bully right away. ☐

7. Why do you think some students attack others? Check the boxes that best indicate what you think.

a) They are not aware of what they do to others. ☐
b) They want to impress their friends. ☐
c) They have no friends. ☐
d) They need to prove that they are the strongest. ☐
e) They see a lot of violence around them. ☐
f) They're trying to get revenge for something. ☐
g) They want to have fun and find it funny. ☐
h) Other reasons (please specify): _____

8. To what degree are you bothered when you see a student being victimized or bullied?
Check the box that best indicates what you think.

a) I'm not really bothered. ☐
b) I'm a little bothered. ☐
c) I'm sometimes bothered. ☐
d) It bothers me a lot. ☐

9. In your environment, your family, your relationships with your parents, your brothers or your sisters, is there sometimes violence?

a) Rarely ☐
b) Sometimes ☐
c) Often ☐
d) Very often ☐

10. Check the box that best indicates what you think.
Do you think violence at school is:

a) A serious problem ☐
b) An important problem ☐
c) Sometimes a problem ☐
d) Rarely a problem ☐
e) Not a problem in my school ☐

Thanks for answering this questionnaire.

At school, everybody is here to listen to you.
If you have a problem, you must say so. It's important.

If you are a victim of violence or bullying, talk to your parents about it.

You can also go the Kids Help Phone Website **[http://org.kidshelpphone.ca/en]** or call them at **1 800 668-6868**.

You can also call ***Tel-Jeunes* (1 800 263-2266)** to talk confidentially, at no cost, to someone who will listen to you.

Tool nº 6 — Questionnaire for Parents[37]

School name:_____ Date: _____

My child is: a boy ☐ a girl ☐ Level (school year):_____

We suggest that you answer this questionnaire on your own before discussing it with your child.

"Bullying is when one of these situations keeps on happening and the student cannot defend himself."

Claire BEAUMONT

Violence at school can take on many forms:

a. physical violence (hitting, pushing and shoving, etc.);
b. verbal violence (screaming, nicknames, etc.);
c. material violence (stealing, damaging personal belongings);
d. psychological violence (threats, bullying, denigration, social rejection, rumours, etc.);
e. cyber violence (hurtful comments in text messages, emails, social networks, etc.).

Changes in your child's behaviour may indicate that he/she is a victim of violence or bullying. Look out for warning signs.

Here are some signs that could indicate that your child is being victimized or is bullying:

- coming back from school with wounds or injuries, torn clothes;
- not wanting to talk to you about school;
- taking detours between home and school;
- inventing stories to stay away from school;
- often asking for money or having been caught stealing by you;
- having few or no friends, or having lost them;
- complaining about bellyaches, headaches or about being sick without any reason, and not wanting to go to school;
- mood changes: sad, pensive, withdrawn, looking to stay away from others, getting angry more often;
- losing his clothes or personal belongings;
- appetite or sleep problems;
- decrease in school results.

1. Since the beginning of the school year, your child has been isolated or victimized because of his or her:

	Never	Sometimes	Many times	I do not know
a) cultural origins;				
b) physical or mental handicap;				
c) good academic results;				
d) poor academic results;				
e) weight, height;				
f) clothing;				
g) physical weakness;				
h) sexual orientation;				
i) lack of skills in defending him/herself.				

2. Since the beginning of the school year, your child has taken part in:

	Never	Sometimes	Many times	I do not know
a) physical harassment against other students;				
b) verbal harassment;				
c) psychological harassment;				
d) cyberbullying.				

3. Your child stayed away from school once or more because he was afraid of being victimized.

YES ☐ NO ☐

4. Your child was insulted because:

	Never	Sometimes	Many times	I do not know
a) his/her behaviour was considered not masculine or feminine enough;				
b) he/she was called "fag", "queer", "lesbian", "dyke";				
c) he/she was uncomfortable because of a gesture with sexual connotation;				
d) he/she was subjected to racist remarks.				

5. Does your child avoid some areas in the school because he/she does not feel safe?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If so, which ones? _____

6. Where is your child most vulnerable to violence or bullying?

- Before school ☐
- During class ☐
- Between classes ☐
- During breaks (lunch or recess) ☐
- After school ☐
- On weekends ☐
- Never ☐
- On the Internet ☐

7. I am satisfied with the actions taken by the school to protect my child. YES ☐ NO ☐

8. At school, has your child been involved in activities that help him/her deal with violence and bullying? YES ☐ NO ☐

If so, which ones? _____

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If your child has told you he/she was having problems with other children at school, please do not hesitate to contact us.

School's phone number: _____

Tool nº 7 —
Inspiring School Activities and Projects

Here are some inspiring activities and projects that were undertaken by school staff and students mobilized by pilot projects subsidized by the *Fondation Jasmin Roy*.

Similar projects are being carried out in many schools throughout Québec. They are undertaken by committed individuals who believe that great things can happen when we work together to reach a common goal.

École secondaire du Rocher, Commission scolaire de l'Énergie

"Brigade des grands frères et des grandes sœurs" (school patrol)

Secondary 3, 4 and 5 students were recruited and received training on how to intervene with victims of violence and bullying. School patrollers circulate in hallways and locker rooms before and after class, and during breaks. They are easily identified thanks to their yellow t-shirts displaying the patrol's logo. They make sure that each student in the school feels safe.

School patrollers:
- make sure that new students are well integrated;
- occasionally sponsor other students who need help.

École secondaire L'Odyssée, Comission scolaire de la Capitale

Videos, songs and flag

The school undertook many activities, in cooperation with the committee, staff and students, in line with its intervention goals:

- secondary 1, 2 and 3 students created videos on violence and bullying and showed them to other students in the school;
- awareness workshops based on the program "Différents, mais pas indifférents" of the Institut pacifique were offered to students;
- three songs on violence and bullying were composed and recorded by students in music class;
- in French class, some teachers used the theme of violence and bullying to ask students to write explanatory essays from the points of view of the bully, the victim and the witness;
- a flag that was designed on the theme of violence and bullying is displayed in front of the school and reminds everyone of their commitment.

École secondaire Polyvalente de L'Ancienne-Lorette, Commission scolaire des Découvreurs

Where it's not easy being a bully

The school developed many activities in line with its action plan:

- production of a chart of respect posted in all school premises;
- vox pop during lunch hour where everyone can express their opinions on violence and bullying;
- helping peers, a project by a group of students helping others;
- school radio program where students discuss and read texts to condemn violence and bullying;
- workshops on violence and bullying during theatre class;
- posters created by graphic-arts students to promote respect and non-violence displayed at the school's entrance and in classrooms.

École primaire aux-Quatre-Vents, Commission scolaire des Affluents

Exchanging and cooperating

This school broadened the scope of its interventions within the community:

- bridges were built with early-childhood centres and the École secondaire de l'Amitié to foster harmonious transitions from one environment to the other;
- a committee on violence and bullying (named "Multi-regard") was implemented, consisting of city councillors, one educator, the school's directorate, the police and students.

I right the wrong, an initiative of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, features other examples of best practices from different communities throughout the province: http://irightthewrong.com/find-out-what-you-can-do-about-it/

Tool nº 8 — School Violence and Bullying Incident Data Sheet

Name of victimized student: _____ Date : _____

Name of bullying student: _____

Name of witnessing students: _____

_____

Name of witnessing adults: _____

_____

Describe what happened: _____

_____

_____

Type of incident:

Student was pushed or shoved	☐	Material damages	☐
Fight between students	☐	Rude or disrespectful remark	☐
Other physical contact	☐	Defiance or opposition	☐
Sexual harassment	☐	Insult	☐
Racial harassment	☐	Swearing	☐
Thrown objects	☐	Threats	☐
Refusal to obey instructions	☐	Email bullying	☐
Cyberbullying	☐		

Other : _____

Location of incident:

School bus	☐	School entrances and exits	☐
On the way to school	☐	Changing rooms or lockers	☐
School yard	☐	Hallways	☐
Classroom	☐	Physical-education class	☐
Stairs	☐	Daycare	☐
Washrooms	☐	Library	☐

Other: _____

Intervention of adult(s) present during the incident:

[redacted]

- Stopped behaviours ☐
- Spoke to student (intentions, reminder of rules, other) ☐
- Referred to principal ☐
- Referred to educator ☐
- "Timeout" in designated room ☐
- Communication to parents ☐

Decisions made regarding the incident: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature of intervening adult: _____

Signature of students concerned: _____

_____

_____

Signature of parents: _____

_____

Signature of other witnessing adults: _____

_____

_____

Tool nº 9 — Classroom Violence and Bullying Incident Data Sheet

For School Staff

Print this form in pads.

A student was victimized. Here is what happened:

Physical Violence	Verbal Violence	Psychological Violence	Improper Gestures or Comments	Cyber Violence
He/she was: shoved ☐ hit ☐ robbed ☐ taxed ☐	He/she was: insulted ☐ provoked ☐ threatened ☐ insulted ☐ because of his/her cultural origins	He/she was: excluded ☐ ridiculed ☐ the subject ☐ of rumours	He/she was a victim of: gestures or ☐ comments with sexual connotation	He/she was a victim of: rumours ☐ threats ☐ pictures ☐ broadcast without his/her consent attacks against ☐ his/her reputation hate messages ☐

I witnessed: ☐ Theft ☐ Damages to material ☐ Damages to school property

What I did: _____

_____

_____

Date : _____

Name of intervening staff: _____

Name of victimized student: _____

Name of bully: _____

Level: _____ Group: _____

Give this copy to the school secretary or in the designated area.

Tool nº 10 —
Information to Send Parents

How to help your child if he/she talks to you about violence and bullying

1. Gather as much information as possible on what he/she is telling you. Ask your child:
    a. To describe what is happening;
    b. If it happens often or rarely;
    c. What he/she tried to do to stop it.

2. Avoid impulsive reactions. Take the time to listen to your child.

3. Tell your child that he/she did the right thing by talking to you about what happened, that you support him/her and that you will help him/her:
    a. Reassure your child;
    b. Tell him/her what you will do about it.

4. Get in touch with the school principal:
    a. Request a meeting as quickly as possible;
    b. Work in collaboration with school staff.

5. Make sure you know the interventions taken by the school:
    a. Ask to be informed about decisions that will be made to put an end to all forms of violence and bullying.

6. If you believe that your child's safety is in jeopardy:
    a. Ask the principal to take the necessary measures to protect the child;
    b. Depending on the seriousness of the act, file a complaint with the police;
    c. If you are not satisfied and consider that the school has not met your expectations in protecting your child, you can file a complaint with the school board.

7. In all cases, you must try to cooperate with the school team because it is in the best position to help your child.

Tool nº 11 — Reporting Form for Students

I want to report an act of violence and bullying.

Describe what you have seen, heard or considered unfair. Your message is confidential. Only the person responsible for this site will read it and contact you.

A student has been victimized. Here is what happened:

Physical Violence	Verbal Violence	Psychological Violence	Improper Gestures or Comments	Cyber Violence
He/she was: shoved ☐ hit ☐ robbed ☐ taxed ☐	He/she was: insulted ☐ provoked ☐ threatened ☐ insulted ☐ because of his/her cultural origins	He/she was: excluded ☐ ridiculed ☐ the subject ☐ of rumours	He/she was a victim of: gestures or ☐ comments with sexual connotation	He/she was a victim of: rumours ☐ threats ☐ pictures ☐ broadcast without his/her consent attacks against ☐ his/her reputation hate messages ☐

These are the places where I saw violent or bullying behaviours:

[redacted]

School bus	☐	School entrances and exits	☐
On the way to school	☐	Changing rooms or lockers	☐
School yard	☐	Hallways	☐
Classroom	☐	Physical-education class	☐
Stairs	☐	Daycare	☐
Washrooms	☐	Library	☐

Other: _____

When did it happen? _____

Your name: _____

Victim's name: _____

Bully's name: _____ Date of report: _____

Give this copy to the school secretary or in the designated area.

Thank you for your trust in us. We will get back to you within 24 hours.
We will set an appointment with you to talk about it.

Tool nº 12 — School Website Reporting Form

Have you been victimized by violence or bullying?
Have you witnessed an act of violence or bullying?
Report it!

It is not easy to report this kind of situation, but you have made the right decision.
Your message is confidential.
Only the person responsible for this site will read it and contact you.

My family name: _____ My first name: _____

I am a victim of violence _____ I have witnessed violence _____

1. Describe what you saw or experienced.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. When did the situation start? _____

3. How many times did it happen? _____

4. Where did it happen? _____

_____

5. Have you ever talked about it? _____ If so, with whom? _____

Thank you for your trust in us. We will get back to you within 24 hours.
We will set an appointment with you to talk about it.

Tool nº 13 —
Interviewing a Victimized Student[38]

Interviewing a victimized student is of paramount importance. This meeting must be held as quickly as possible; it allows the victim to revisit what happened, to review the sequence of events and to reassure him/her.

By my attitude, I will demonstrate that I am truly listening. I will make sure that we are not disturbed during the interview.

Keep a written summary of all meetings.

1. I approach the student in a warm manner and show him/her that I have empathy for what he/she is experiencing:
    a. *It's not easy to carry the weight of what you've experienced.*

2. My choice of words shows that I understand the situation:
    a. *I am sorry for what happened to you.*
    You were right to come and talk to me. We will help you.

3. I invite the student to describe the incidents that happened.
I ask open-ended questions:
    a. *Can you tell me what happened?*
    b. *How do you feel?*
    c. *How long have you been in this situation?*
    d. *To whom did you talk about it?*
    e. *Had you been bothered by this student before?*
    f. *How did you react?*

4. I show the student that I understand his/her feelings and emotions:
    a. *Do you feel angry?*
    b. *Have you lost confidence in yourself and others?*
    c. *Are you afraid to come to school?*

5. I let the student know what we will do to help and protect him/her, and I ask what he/she thinks about it:
    a. if the student agrees, and in his/her presence, I will call his/her parents to explain what happened;
    b. match the student with a helping peer, if this option is available in the school;
    c. invite the student to join a support group;
    d. refer the student to the specialized educator, psycho-educator or psychologist.

6. I explain to the student what steps will be taken with the bullying student:
    a. meeting with the principal;
    b. calling his/her parents;
    c. being forbidden to contact him/her;
    d. applying sanctions stated by the code of conduct;
    e. helping the student stop his/her violent behaviour.

7. The student and I discuss ways to react if the situation happens again:
    a. you must walk away and warn an adult;
    b. do not stay alone, walk in school with a friend;
    c. if you feel capable of doing so, be assertive by telling the bully that you do not like what he/she is doing and that you want him/her to leave you alone.

8. I inform the student, depending on the case, of his/her right to file a complaint with the police and I explain how to proceed.

9. I plan a meeting with the school's police educator, if the student agrees.

10. I finish by:
    a. making sure the student understands what I have said;
    b. giving the student an opportunity to ask questions or make comments;
    c. reminding the student that he/she can always count on our help and that he/she can ask to meet with an adult any time. He/she can also meet with the principal, if needed;
    d. giving the student a second appointment to evaluate the situation, to ensure that he/she is safe and that there has been no retaliation from the bully;
    e. preparing his return to class, if necessary;
    f. thanking the student for his/her collaboration during our meeting.

Tool nº 14 —
How is the Family?

These questions may be asked during the interview with both victimized and bullying students. This information is confidential and can sometimes provide insights to understand a student's behavior, but not to justify it.

This questionnaire is not to be given to groups of students.

		YES	NO
1.	We regularly eat together.		
2.	We display affection.		
3.	We talk about what happens during the day, our ups and our downs.		
4.	We enjoy activities together.		
5.	We find it is necessary to help each other.		
6.	We find it is important to celebrate special events.		
7.	We like to invite friends to our home.		
8.	We congratulate and encourage each other.		
9.	We laugh and we have a sense of humour.		
10.	We speak respectfully and avoid using hurting remarks.		
11.	We avoid reacting with anger.		
12.	We communicate regularly with our grandparents.		

Tool nº 15 — Intervention Protocol for the Bullying Student

Violence and bullying are anti-social acts.
Students must know and understand the negative effects of these behaviours.

The intervention protocol promotes incentives and deterrents. It sends a clear message that violent behaviour must be stopped and that victimized students must be protected.

All school-staff members have the duty to react on the frontline when they hear or see acts of violent behaviour.

Who Carries Out these Interventions?

Depending on the seriousness of the acts of violence and bullying, the intervention process can be carried out by someone who has been designated by the principal. This individual will follow the levels of intervention stated in the protocol.

The elements of the protocol must be applied with judgement and justice. The levels of intervention can be repeated depending on the seriousness of the acts of violence or bullying, and depending on the age of the bullying student.

First Level of Intervention (depending on gravity of situation)		
Resource Persons	Suggested Interventions	Educational and Help Measures
Home-room teacher (elementary) High-school teacher Educator or psycho-educator Monitor Daycare staff Grade supervisor Professional Principal Parents	Put a stop to violent behaviour in front of witnesses. Report acts of violence, review school values and rules. Ensure that there is no more contact between the victim and the bully. Meet with all concerned students. Write down the details of what happened. Phone parents to let them know about the situation (follow school procedure: who? when? how?) Encourage the bullying student to commit to changing his/her behaviour through a commitment contract signed by his/her parents. Apply disciplinary measures as stated in the school's code of conduct. Stay in touch with the victimized student to make sure there is no retaliation.	Raising the bullying student's awareness of the seriousness of his acts. Planning follow-up meetings with concerned students and parents. Suggesting a gesture of goodwill. Writing an apology letter to be signed by the bullying student's parents. Joining a support group to learn social skills. Taking part in a development program. Developing an intervention plan. Referring the bullying student to the school's or school board's resource persons.

Second Level of Intervention (depending on gravity of situation)		
Resource Persons	Suggested Interventions	Educational and Help Measures
Home-room teacher (elementary) High-school teacher Educator or psycho-educator Monitor Daycare staff Grade supervisor Professional Principal Parents	Put a stop to violent behaviour in front of witnesses. Report acts of violence, review school values and rules. Call parents. Renew commitment contract. Remove student from classroom, if necessary, for a specific period of time. Suspend privileges (ex: during breaks and lunch, the student is forbidden to contact others). Student can go back to class-room progressively, with conditions. The victimized student and his/her parents can file a complaint with police.	Meeting daily with the teacher or educator in charge and having them sign the follow-up sheet. Asking the student to write down his/her thoughts. Asking the student to make a significant gesture of goodwill. Making it mandatory for the student to participate in a support group to learn about conflict resolution and respect. Preparing the student's return to class so that it is a positive experience for everyone. Meeting with the police officer assigned to the school.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sending the student home

Sending a student home temporarily is a sanction that must be used with judgment. At home, students are not able to get the help provided by school. We must remember that suspension and expulsion are known to be inefficient measures to reduce violent behaviour in youths since they do not learn new, appropriate behaviours.[39]

Removing the student from class or school

Removal from classroom or school is necessary in specific situations, but remains exceptional. It is used, for example, when the act perpetrated is serious, when a student puts others in danger, when he/she refuses to make amends, when he/she does not recognize the problem, when he/she deliberately hurts someone or gets revenge, or when he/she needs extra time to think about more appropriate solutions.

Support and reintegration measures

Support and reintegration measures must help the student to improve.

Third Level of Intervention (depending on gravity of situation)		
Resource Persons	Suggested Interventions	Educational and Help Measures
Home-room teacher (Elementary) High-school teacher Educator or psycho-educator Monitor Daycare staff Grade supervisor Professional Principal Parents	Put a stop to violent behaviour in front of witnesses. Report acts of violence, review school values and rules. Call parents. Remove student from classroom, if necessary, for a specific period of time. Expel the student from the school or school board.	Meeting with parents. Asking for a personalized follow-up with the educator, psycho-educator or psychologist. Helping parents find new resources. Referring parents and the student to external resources (CLSC, DYP). Referring the student to a class that specialized in behavioural issues.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Exceptional measures

Some third-level measures are extreme. They are used in exceptional circumstances: when disciplinary and educational measures do not give the expected results or when the student needs more specialized services to help improve his/her behaviour. These measures are selected in cooperation with the school principal, the school board and the parents.

Adapting sanctions

At any time within this protocol, the school's directorate can adapt sanctions to the gravity of the perpetrated act.

Tool nº 16 — How to Help Staff Evaluate the Seriousness of Violence and Bullying

Acts of violence are attacks against an individual's physical and moral integrity.[40] They can range from minor to severe. Some types of bullying and violence are considered violations of the law (criminal or civil code) and of the school's code of conduct.

The following questions do not provide excuses to the bullying student's behaviour, but they provide insights to help staff evaluate the seriousness of the situation and the risk of subsequent offences[41], understand the student's intentions and make informed decisions on what will help him/her best.

> We must remember that the difference between bullying and isolated acts of violence is the repetitiveness of the acts (harassment), the inequality of forces facing each other and the isolation of the victimized student.

1. What is the frequency of the perpetrated act (how many times), the duration (how long) and the seriousness? _____

   _____

2. What motivates the bullying student to act this way?
   a. Is he/she afraid?
   b. Is he/she being forced into it?
   c. Does he/she want to impress his friends?
   d. Does he/she enjoy dominating others?
   e. Does he/she enjoy making others suffer?
   f. Does he/she like to be the centre of attention?
   g. Is he/she seeking revenge?

3. What is the scope and social impact of his/her acts?
   a. Where do violence and bullying happen?
   b. How many people are affected by these acts?

4. Does the student feel empathy for the victim's inability to defend himself/herself?

5. What is the student's reaction to his/her acts?
    a. Does he/she keep on attacking in spite of the victim's uneasiness, fear and protests?
    b. Does he/she appear incapable to feel remorse, sadness or shame?
    c. Is the intervening adult sure that the bullying student understands the impact of his/her actions?
    d. Is the student open to learning new ways of acting?

6. Has the student ever been a victim of violence or bullying?

7. Does the student have a negative perception of himself/herself?

8. Does the bullying student adopt one of these strategies?:
    a. denial (refusal to recognize what he/she is doing): *It wasn't me. Why is it always my fault?;*
    b. trivialization: *It was only a joke. It was nothing, we were just having fun;*
    c. provocation: *He was asking for it. She deserved it;*
    d. defensiveness: *I only did it to defend myself. SHE started it.*

Tool nº 17 — Intervention Procedures for School Staff

1. Identify, in the action plan, the individuals who will play a supporting role:
    a. Choose key players who are at school regularly and who have the necessary skills to establish helping relationships (teacher, educator, psycho-educator, psychologist);
    b. Their role is to offer support to the person who first intervened when the situation was reported, so that this person can continue to work with the victimized student, the bullying student and the witnesses.

2. Act immediately if you are a witness of bullying:
    a. Demand that the violent behaviours stop;
    b. Use words that are clear and firm;
    c. Remind everyone of the school's rules;
    d. Condemn the bully's domination and identify witnessing students, if possible.

3. Remove the bullying student from the classroom until decisions are made about a possible temporary or permanent removal, if necessary.

4. Meet with the students who were part of the incident (the victimized student, the bullying student and the witnessing students):
    a. Have individual meetings;
    b. Ask the bullying student what his/her intentions were.

5. Analyze facts based on information:
    a. You can then judge the seriousness of the bullying student's behaviour.

6. Make decisions according to your role and responsibilities, by taking into account the intervention protocol found in the action plan.

7. After having analyzed the facts:
    a. Ensure that parents are informed about their child's behaviour (this is usually the principal's task);
    b. If circumstances are serious, meet with the interveners to allow them to discuss the incident;
    c. Keep other concerned interveners (teachers, specialists, lunch monitors, daycare staff, bus drivers) aware of the decisions made to ensure that all interventions are coherent and to avoid rumours and interpretations that could make the situation worse.

Tool nº 18 —
Interviewing a Bullying Student

Interviewing the bullying student is a crucial step in the intervention process. It is when the bullying student can reflect on his/her actions and be critical of himself/herself. The student must be given the opportunity to repair the harm he/she caused and to prevent subsequent offences.

I will avoid being moralizing. I will make it possible for the student to recount the incidents by describing it.

Keep a written summary of all meetings.

1. I meet with the student in a respectful way and explain the purpose of our meeting:
    a. I make sure that the student is open to discussion.

2. Based on precise facts, I start the interview:
    a. *Here are the complaints against you. Now, what is your version?*

3. I let the student talk by asking precise questions:
    a. *When did this happen? Where? What happened?*
    b. I encourage the student to use the word "I".

4. I ask the student if he/she considers that his/her behaviour respected school rules:
    a. I ask him/her to tell me what the rules are;
    b. If this exercise fails, I remind the student that the rules are clear: *Here, in our school, we treat everyone with dignity and respect. Everyone deserves to be safe.*

5. I discuss the impact of this kind of behaviour:
    a. *What type of violence did you use?*
    b. *What kinds of problems were caused by your behaviour?*
    c. *How did the student feel because of your behaviour?*
    d. *Have you ever experienced violence?*
    e. *How did you feel then?*
    f. *What did you really expect to happen from this behaviour? Revenge? Power over the other? Fun? Other reasons?*

You can suggest answers, but only when the student can't come up with any.

6. I take notes, I ask questions, I explain how I am understanding the situation.

7. I show that I am listening carefully by avoiding to interpret what the student is saying:
    a. *If I were to ask other students, how would they describe the behaviour you chose against the victimized student?*

8. I explore ways to change his/her behaviour:
    a. *How could you have behaved differently to get what you wanted?*
    b. *Next time, try to find other ways to behave.*

I can give the student advice for choosing new ways.

    c. *How would you feel if you were victimized?*

9. I help the student become aware of the seriousness of his/her actions by asking if he/she knows what sanctions apply in this case. If he/she does not, I refer to the school's code of conduct and action plan, and remind him/her that:
    a. decisions and sanctions that will be taken following his/her behaviour;
    b. helping measures will be accessible to him/her.

10. At the end of the meeting:
    a. I make a second appointment with the student to follow up and to get information about the evolution of the situation;
    b. I prepare his/her return to the classroom;
    c. I thank the student for his/her cooperation and involvement during the interview.

11. I contact the student's parents to let them know about the interview.

Tool nº 19 — Commitment Contract for the Bullying Student

Commitment

Following discussions with my parents, my teacher, the principal and the educator, I (name of student) _____ am committed to stop all acts of violence, such as threats, physical attacks or any other types of violence against (name of the victimized student) _____ and all other students.

I recognize that my behaviour goes against the law and the school's rules on violence and bullying, and I am aware of the consequences if I do not respect them.

I (name of student) _____ will not encourage any other student to bully or use violence.

Measures

I (name of student) _____ will meet the designated educator every day to evaluate my behaviour and I will give him/her my sheet signed by my teachers.

By respecting this contract, I will be congratulated and will be proud of myself. The commitment contract will end on the specified date.

If I do not respect this contract, the school's principal will take other disciplinary measures.

I (name of student) _____ am committed to do the best that I can to stop the acts for which I am being faulted, and to accept the consequences.

Duration

This contract will be effective from _____ to _____

Signatures

Student: _____

Parents: _____ _____

Designated educator: _____

Principal: _____ Others: _____

Tool nº 20 — Meeting with Witnesses of Violence and Bullying

Witnessing an act of violence or bullying incident is a disturbing experience for students. Everyone can have his/her own interpretation. Such acts of violence can sometimes generate fear, anxiety, ambiguity or indifference.

Encourage students to express their feelings instead of repressing them.

Keep a written summary of all meetings.

1. Examples of questions for students who have witnessed acts of violence:

   a. Can you describe what happened?
   b. What did you do while it was happening?
   c. Why did you stay and watch?
   d. What were you thinking then?
   e. What were you feeling then?
   f. How did your presence influence the bully's behaviour?
   g. What do you think the victimized student must have been feeling?

2. In conclusion:

   a. Ask the student how he/she can help the victim.
   b. Thank the student for his/her cooperation.

Tool nº 21 — Proposed Steps for the Principal's Meeting with Parents

For the principal, meeting with parents of victimized or bullying students is crucial to solving the problem. In addition to suggesting steps to follow during the interview, this tool also identifies the conditions for successful communication.

Keep a written summary of all meetings.

1. Gather all the information from interveners and prepare your meeting.

2. Set up, personally, an appointment with the parents and explain the reason for the meeting:
    a. Meet with them as soon as possible;
    b. Remain calm and make sure you have set a favourable climate.

3. Be aware of the language you use:
    a. Instead of saying that the bullying student "*is aggressive*", discuss the behaviour: *He hit someone*. *She ridiculed another student*. *He threatened a peer*.;
    b. Avoid the words "*always*" and "*never*"; try to quantify how many times the bullying behaviour happened.

4. Describe the acts of violence or bullying to the victimized student's parents. Tell them what has been done about it so far:
    a. If actions were taken against the bullying student, let the parents know; they have the right to know.

5. Listen to the parents' comments without interrupting them:
    a. Respect their opinion;
    b. They will be emotional and will need to feel they are being listened to.

6. Show empathy for the parents:
    a. I understand that it is not easy, but together, it will be easier for us to help him/her;
    b. Tell them that everyone wants to reach the same goal (goal should be made clear at the beginning of the meeting).

7. Look for solutions with the parents:
    a. Review the school's code of conduct and all related elements of the action plan for bullying or victimized students;
    b. Indicate clearly what you expect from the parents;
    c. Ask what their expectations are from the school;
    d. Ask for their cooperation;
    e. Make sure they have understood the information.

8. Offer them help, depending on the school's resources:
    a. *Here is what we suggest you do; what do you think?;*
    b. This help is also available to victimized and bullying students.

9. If disciplinary measures must be taken, they must be clear to the student's parents and they must consider the seriousness of his/her behaviour.

10. Prepare to follow up with them:
    a. Tell the parents how and when you will let them know how the situation is evolving (telephone call, second meeting).

11. In conclusion:
    a. Ask the parents what their level of satisfaction is regarding the meeting;
    b. Assure them of your complete cooperation and that of the school staff;
    c. Invite them to contact you if new elements arise that might contribute to solving the situation.

Tool nº 22 — Code of Conduct: Strategy and Example

RULES	STATED GOALS	CONSEQUENCES		
		POTENTIAL SANCTIONS	POTENTIAL INCENTIVES	HELPING RELATIONSHIP
Example or rules: 1. Here, at school, I act respectfully with people, in my words and my gestures. 2. Here, at school… 3. Here, at school… 4. Here, at school… 5. Here, at school… 6. Here, at school…	Example of goals: • To feel safe • To live in a harmonious climate	• Reflection • Detention • Verbal or written apology • Behaviour score-card • Extra homework • Temporarily returning home • Loss of privileges • Indeterminate suspension from school • Expulsion from school • Complaint and police action	• Verbal or written incentives • Note in the agenda • Privilege • Roll of honour • Personal motivation system • Call to parents to state progress • Rewarding activity • Honourable mention • Rewarding efforts • Awards gala	• Call to parents • Suggesting that the student meet with educator, principal, psychologist or psycho-educator • Commitment contract • Gesture of goodwill • Mediation and conflict resolution • Teaching social skills • Contingency plan • Follow-up in the agenda • Reference to external measures • Meeting with a police officer

I have read the Code of Conduct. I promise to accept the consequences of my behaviour.

Student signature:_____

Parents signature: _____

Date : _____

Tool nº 23 — Directory of Resources

Resources with an asterisk (*) are offered only in French.

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

- **Portal providing access to resources and best practices**
- **http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/index-eng.php**

**Centre de prévention du suicide*

- **Organization offering services to suicidal individuals**
- **www.cpsquebec.ca**

**Coffre aux trésors* – Récit service national en adaptation scolaire – Violence et intimidation

- **Ideas for elementary-school activities**
- **recitadaptscol.qc.ca/coffre/spip.php?article173**

**Contes sur moi*, du CECOM de l'Hôpital Rivière-des-Prairies

- **Québec program promoting prevention skills for children aged 5 to 9**
- **http://hrdp.qc.ca/fr/cecom/nav/catalogue.html?page=showItem.jsp&idItem=102779**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN)

- **http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx**

**Fluppy*, du Centre de psychoéducation

- **Social-skills program for preschool and elementary-school students**
- **www.santeestrie.qc.ca/sante_publique/promotion_prevention/fluppy.php**

KidsHelpPhone

- **Free, anonymous and confidential phone and online professional counselling service for youths under 20;**
- **1 800 668-6868 and http://org.kidshelpphone.ca//en/**

La Fondation Jasmin Roy

- **Foundation whose mission is to fight discrimination, bullying and violence against students in elementary schools and high schools**
- **http://www.fondationjasminroy.com/**

*L'intimidation à notre école, Marguerite-Bourgeoys School Board

- **Bullying prevention program**
- **Designed and illustrated by Lise Desbiens and Naomi Lemay**
- **http://www.csmb.qc.ca/fr-CA/csmb/~/media/Files/PDF/CSMB/publications/2012-2013/bon-commande-intimidation-2012-11-15.ashx**

I right the wrongs: bullying, it's over by the Government of Québec

- **http://irightthewrong.com**

Observatoire canadien pour la prévention de la violence à l'école

- **Portal to access research summaries on various themes about violence**
- **http://www.violence-ecole.ulaval.ca/**

2learn.ca by Educational Society 2learn.ca

- **Website for teachers**
- **http://2learn.ca**

Réseau d'information sur la réussite éducative (RIRE)

- **Online monitoring service**
- **Over 200 references on bullying**
- **http://rire.ctreq.qc.ca**

Tel Jeunes

- **Professional, confidential, bilingual and free service for youths**
- **Telephone: 1 800 263-2266. http://en.teljeunes.com/home**

Tribes Learning Community

- **North-American program**
- **Aimed at creating a new culture and to restructure school as a learning community**
- **www.tribes.com/about**

*Centre de liaison sur l'intervention et la prévention psychosociale (CLIPP)

- **Awareness kit for children aged 10 to 13**
- **www.clipp.ca/produits-et-services/thematiques/adolescence/trousse-sensibilisation-a-l-agression-indirecte.html**

* *Vers le pacifique*, Institut pacifique

- **Conflict resolution program for 1st, 2nd and 3rd elementary cycles.**
- **www.institutpacifique.com/programmes-et-services-en-resolution-de-conflits/programmes-vers-le-pacifique-et-differents-mas-pas-indifferents/materiel-pedagogique/programme-vers-le-pacifique-au-primaire**

Violence and Abuse by KidsHelpPhone

- **Information for youths**
- **http://kidshelpphone.ca/Kids/InfoBooth/Violence-and-Abuse.aspx?lang=en-ca**

a word from the author

I hope that the information contained in this toolkit will help you create and implement an action plan on violence and bullying in your school. It was designed by school staff members to help you understand the issues around violence and bullying and to plan coherent, educational interventions. It was based on best practices that are considered efficient in the areas of preventing and managing violence in schools.

All actions taken to help students and parents who are experiencing violence and bullying contribute to making the school an environment where people can live in peace and safety.

When children and teenagers grow up in an environment where they feel safe and cared for, they have a better chance at succeeding in their studies, in addition of being less at risk of becoming victims or bullies. "When adults allow children and teenagers to develop interpersonal relationships based on threats, fear or denigrating others to reach their goals, they miss a great opportunity to participate in the education of a new generation. We must remember that everyone involved in acts of violence, whether they are a victim, a witness or a bully, is at risk of suffering from significant consequences in the future."[42]

This is why each of your actions will have a major impact on students. In addition, school staff must receive the necessary help to act efficiently. Learning how to intervene and adopting attitudes that promote the establishment of meaningful relationships are truly essential!

Rules and expectations that are well known, accepted and applied by all; straightforward cooperation with parents; support and leadership from the school's directorate; solidarity within the school team, and decisions that are made together are necessary to develop an efficient action plan. It is important to act early. Staff members must demonstrate that they are available and willing to support victimized students as soon as a situation is brought forward.

This toolkit is not a set of prescribed steps. It should primarily be considered as a reflection tool. We must take care of children and teenagers by trying to create and maintain a bond of trust with them. We must value a culture of respect while avoiding getting tangled in coercive measures, but we must also take steps to stop violence and protect children and teenagers. We must continuously repeat a message of non-violence.

When "students attacking their peers have no audience, when abusing others is not encouraged by peers, when values of non-violence have been sufficiently propagated and when attacks are no longer tolerated by students and adults in school, then will we be able to say that the

interventions worked… even if they must be repeated year after year.''[43]

''Violence, as we know, can be considered minimal (verbal) or serious (physical) and will continue to be a part of interpersonal relationships, but schools can contribute to reducing its frequency and consequences.''[44]

Many children and teenagers, despite great suffering, do experience moments of happiness at school because the climate is pleasant, they feel safe there and they meet passionate people to help them.

Camil Sanfaçon

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