

ADULTS AS MODELS OF KINDNESS AT SCHOOL

SUPPORT DOCUMENT 2018-2019

Coordination and content

Éducation préscolaire et enseignement primaire et secondaire
Direction des services éducatifs complémentaires et de l'intervention en milieu défavorisé

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School climate, violence and bullying
Theme for 2018-2019:

Adults as models of kindness at school

Kindness is a vital element in any healthy organization, living environment, school or classroom. It has been shown that kindness has a positive effect on the school climate, student motivation and educational success. In addition, it contributes to the mission of Québec schools: to provide qualifications in a changing world, **to socialize students in a pluralistic world** and to provide instruction in a knowledge-based world. This year's theme is grounded in the fact that we, as adults, have a major influence on children's education.

Context

The Government Strategy Against Bullying and Violence in the Schools was created in 2012 to increase efforts to end bullying and violence in the schools. At the beginning of the school year, pedagogical tools are provided to support schools in carrying out activities. Drawing on research-based practices,¹ the theme chosen for 2018 builds on that of 2017 (Kindness is the key to harmonious interpersonal relationships at school) and is to be integrated into the activities planned for the year. The theme of *Adults as models of kindness at school* highlights the role of teachers and other professional school staff in modelling kindness at school and the impact this can have on students.

This support document offers simple and concrete ideas for implementing this theme throughout the year. These suggestions respect the conditions for effective interventions in school settings. It is intended for all school staff members, students, administrators and parents.

Objectives of this year's theme

- To promote kind behaviour and harmonious interpersonal relationships, modelled by adults in the school
- To enable students to recognize the kind actions of adults in their school community
- To rally the entire school community around kind actions

1. Research shows that the most effective promotion and prevention interventions in school settings are planned, comprehensive and concerted. In addition, they must provide appropriate content, actively involve young people, and be intense, continuous, flexible and feasible. See Québec, Agence de la Santé et des services sociaux de la Montérégie, *Conditions for effective promotion and prevention interventions in a school setting* (Québec, 2011).
<http://extranet.santemonteregie.qc.ca/userfiles/file/sante-publique/promotion-prevention/AES-conditions-efficacite-anglais-VF.pdf>

Definition

Kindness is an attitude that goes beyond respect and tolerance. It encourages a person to be concerned about others and to take care of them. In a school context, this translates into empathetic actions and attitudes that convey consideration for and openness to others. Acting with kindness means making sure the school is a good place to be where people can learn together. In other words, kindness:

- is a desire to strive for the good and happiness of others
- means viewing others in a caring, understanding and non-judgmental manner, wanting them to feel comfortable and being vigilant on their behalf (Gueguen 2015 [Translation])
- is being generous toward others, attentive to their needs, wanting what is good for them, and clearly and consistently demonstrating that we feel this way (Beaumont 2016 [Translation])

Connections with the Policy on Educational Success

- “Educators’ personal and relational skills have an impact on children’s overall development.”²
- Mission *To socialize, to prepare students to live together in harmony*: In a pluralistic society such as ours, adults must act as agents of social cohesion by fostering a feeling of belonging to the community and teaching students how to live together. This means that they must promote the fundamental values of kindness through their own behaviour and prepare young people to become responsible citizens. They must likewise prevent exclusion, which jeopardizes the future of too many young people.³
- Challenge 5, *An inclusive, healthy, safe, stimulating and creative environment*, Orientation 5.1: “Offer a welcoming, safe and caring living environment that fosters discussion, communication and enriching personal and social relationships.”⁴

2. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, *Policy on Educational Success* (Québec, 2017), 17.
http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PSG/politiques_orientations/politique_reussite_educative_10juillet_A_1.pdf

3. Ibid., 25

4. Ibid., 57

2018-2019 Support Document

Adults as models of kindness at school

Because socialization and learning to live together take place through everyday activities, day after day, month after month, an annual theme can be implemented within the regular activities of school boards and private schools. This support document presents a number of ideas to enhance what schools are already doing or to do things a bit differently. With simple gestures and concrete actions, we can inspire and elicit changes in the social behaviours of our children—the adults of tomorrow.

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
During the year	Director general and School principal	1. Kindness on a day-to-day basis 1.1 Value staff members' work. 1.1.1 Be present at events. 1.1.2 Highlight good initiatives, regularly and publicly (e.g. in person, by email, on the school website). 1.1.3 Clearly recognize the value of the work accomplished (thank, encourage, highlight). 1.1.4 Encourage initiative-taking (celebrate successes as well as lessons learned from failures, because they are necessary for learning). 1.1.5 Set up a system for constructive and inspirational feedback: a) Personalized messages (see Appendix) 1.2 Contribute to staff members' well-being. To foster harmonious working relationships and kindness within the school team, it is important to set up favourable conditions that will create or maintain a positive school climate. Various actions or activities can encourage collaboration and harmonious living. Here are a few suggestions: 1.2.1 Participate in, organize or encourage social activities. 1.2.2 Rally staff around a good cause. 1.2.3 Establish a tradition at certain times of year (e.g. potluck, group picnic, happy hour). 1.2.4 Celebrate birthdays. 1.2.5 On a pedagogical day, organize a retreat to foster collaborative practices. 1.2.6 Organize exercise sessions led by instructors in various disciplines (e.g. yoga, meditation, Zumba, cross-training, group walking, volleyball).

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
During the year	Director general and School principal	1.3 Get all school stakeholders to engage in a common project aiming to surpass themselves and to develop a feeling of belonging. 1.3.1 Organize a food drive in December and mobilize different stakeholders in the community. 1.3.2 Enter the school in a challenge where everyone is called on to play a role (e.g. <i>Grand Défi Desjardins, Cubes Énergie, Grand Défi Pierre Lavoie, Défi Santé</i>). 1.4 Pay particular attention to a staff member who is going through a difficult time in their personal or professional life. A simple message of encouragement, whether in person, by email or in writing, can make a big difference. This kind of gesture shows empathy. 1.5 Remember the importance and effect of a warm welcome. It is widely recognized that we have only a short time to make a good impression. How we greet someone is therefore important, because it will affect how a new student, staff member, parent or visitor perceives the school. For this reason, it's important to take the time to prepare a warm welcome. 1.5.1 Set aside some time to greet new students, parents and staff members. 1.5.2 Choose a staff member and responsible students to welcome new teachers when school starts. 1.5.3 Give a personalized card to people who visit the school. 1.6 Allow people to make mistakes. Our society aims for perfection; sometimes we forget that it's normal, human and desirable to make mistakes in order to improve. 1.6.1 Remind all staff members that mistakes are an integral part of learning. 1.6.2 Recognize your own mistakes. 1.6.3 Raise awareness within the school team about alternate ways of viewing mistakes in a learning context. The video "Learning from Mistakes" (10 min 23 s) can be used to initiate discussion. 1.6.4 Remind teachers that mistakes should be used as a tool to regulate learning rather than to penalize students.

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
During the year	Director general and School principal	1.7 Integrate this year's theme into the existing sample letter to parents. a) <i>Sample letter to parents (see Appendix)</i> 1.8 Add the School climate logo to your electronic signature. a) <i>School climate logo (see 2018 Pedagogical Materials)</i> 1.9 Send out two publications intended for parents and school staff at different times of the year. Two topics related to the theme will be explored during the year. The content will be adapted to the target audience (staff and parents). As well, research-based articles written in plain language, short inspirational videos, reading suggestions and educational materials (for teachers) will be offered. These publications will be sent out during the school year.
During the year	Director general and School principal	2. Welcoming pedagogical days 2.1 Help create a climate of kindness by planning a routine. Take advantage of contexts that are conducive to spending quality time with staff or create opportunities to do so, with no other work objective than to foster a harmonious climate. Simple actions can be repeated or varied during the year. Here are a few examples: 2.1.1 Take a few minutes to chat over coffee or juice before the start of a pedagogical day. 2.1.2 Invite staff to participate in a potluck or community lunch. 2.1.3 Be present and available to staff at the beginning of the day. 2.2 Inspire others by sharing successes. 2.2.1 Start general assemblies by highlighting an initiative taken by a staff member and describing its influence on the classroom or school climate, motivation and success. To avoid creating a competitive atmosphere among staff, we suggest including smaller successes as well, actions that are accessible to everyone and that can also have a positive impact on the school climate.

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
During the year	Director general and School principal School principal Complementary services School committee	2.2.2 Invite staff members to participate in this sharing of successes. Having team members draw attention to each other's initiatives will have a significant impact, enhance staff members' feeling of personal efficacy and become contagious. 2.3 Plan educational capsules for the start of general assemblies on a regular basis. Here are some examples of educational capsules on the theme of kindness: 2.3.1 Capsule 1: The school climate a) Suggested activity: Building a positive classroom climate (see Appendix) b) Video on the importance of a positive school climate (2 min 11 s), Sheet 16 c) Complementary fact sheet with research findings, Sheet 16 2.3.2 Capsule 2: The teacher-student relationship a) Video on the importance of a good student-teacher relationship (2 min 12 s), Sheet 12 b) Reference sheet to support the activity c) Complementary fact sheet and research findings, Sheet 12 2.3.4 Capsule 3: Making room for error a) Description and video (see 1.6.3: "Learning from Mistakes") An activity could be designed by the school's complementary services or teachers to serve as a starting point for reflection by the school team. 2.4 Offer staff members an opportunity for professional development on the theme. Training sessions can be led by a school staff member. The content is based on the <i>Grandes Rencontres</i> meetings that have been held in several regions since the fall of 2016. If there is a resource person from the regional support and advisory services or a regional support officer assigned to your school or school board, that person can guide you in the process. Below are some suggestions.

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
During the year	School principal Complementary services School committee	2.4.1 Social and emotional competencies The goal of this training session is to present teachers with winning strategies and to give them an opportunity to develop their social and emotional competencies. Teachers must exercise these competencies on a regular basis, in particular to manage their emotions and stress. In the heat of the moment, they often find themselves in vulnerable situations. Because social and emotional competencies have a major influence on student-teacher relationships, class management and effective teaching, it is important to take some time as a team to think about and draw on best practices. 2.4.2 Social architecture The goal of this workshop is to explain the social architecture of a group and to encourage relational rather than punitive class management. Social dynamics can sway classroom interactions, sending them in either a good or a bad direction. To counteract natural peer behaviours, adults must pay special attention to the quality of interactions among students and intervene if needed. If the teacher closely examines the relationships taking shape among the students, he or she can make sure that everyone is included and that the group becomes a fertile ground for the development of respectful and empathetic behaviours. As much as possible, educators must structure peer groups in a way that fosters constructive exchanges and curbs harmful interactions. This practice is called social architecture. 2.4.3 Constructive education: Educational rather than punitive codes of conduct This training session aims to equip staff with the tools to adopt an educational rather than coercive approach in their interventions. Getting all staff members on board in this direction will foster a change in culture and a more collaborative work environment. During this session, several recommended avenues for action will be presented, such as how to monitor and supervise students in various situations, as well as the appropriate vocabulary to adopt. These tools will help staff focus on the <i>socialization</i> aspect of the mission of Québec schools. Here are some resources: a) Support for school teams developing an educational code of conduct (see 2018 Pedagogical Materials)

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
During the year	School principal Complementary services School committee	b) Tool for establishing a portrait (see 2018 Pedagogical Materials) c) Reference Framework and Guide for Schools 2.4.4 The adult witness This training session aims to equip all adults in the school to intervene to ensure everyone's safety, should they be witness to an event. The goal is to mobilize all school staff so that they can intervene effectively according to a recognized, structured and concerted procedure. The workshop helps participants recognize violence and bullying (and distinguish them from conflicts or behaviours related to insubordination, rudeness or aggressiveness) and identify their role and responsibilities in applying the rules of conduct. A five-step intervention model is presented and can be used to guide the intervention of an adult who witnesses this type of behaviour. The workshop serves to initiate the school team to this approach or provide a refresher. 2.5 Integrate the theme into the annual planning of the school's complementary services (e.g. spiritual care and guidance and community involvement animator, psychoeducator, special education technician, resource teacher). 2.5.1 With the help of the student council, plan to award certificates to students and staff members twice during the year. a) Template for certificate of kindness (see Appendix)
During the year	Students Staff Administration Parents	2.6 Take advantage of theme weeks already celebrated at school to further explore the themes of living together in harmony, openness to others and kindness. 2.7 Include concrete measures for kindness in the school's educational project (Commitment-to-success plan: Challenge 5.1). Many educational projects define respect and openness to others as priority values. By going a step further and including kindness as an inspirational value in the educational project, the value of consideration for others is also highlighted, fostering a positive school climate.

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
During the year	Students Staff Administration Parents	2.8 Make sure the school rules reflect an approach that promotes kindness rather than being solely coercive. See 2.4.3: Provide opportunities for professional development 2.9 Remind staff members of the importance of respectful communication. a) Healthy email communication (see Appendix)
During the year	School principal School committee Staff	3. Organize a launch activity. A few ideas: a) Class portrait (see Appendix), an activity for elementary students Reflection, discussion and creation activity to help students become aware of the importance of feeling welcome and helping to create a warm welcome b) Personalized logo (see Appendix), an activity for elementary and Secondary Cycle One students Multidisciplinary project that can be done with a class, a level or an entire school c) Kindness placemats (see Appendix), an activity for elementary and Secondary Cycle One students Reflection, discussion and creation activity in which students carry out a large-scale group project d) A collective work (see Appendix), an activity for elementary and secondary students and staff The day before the theme is officially launched, invite all school staff and students to prepare to highlight one kind attitude, action or behaviour.
2018-2019 Back-to-school activities	Director general and School principal	4. Activities to welcome staff and/or school administrators 4.1 Project the official visual in the form of a PowerPoint presentation so that the theme is present and everyone knows what it is right from the start of the school year. a) Visuals for the 2018-2019 theme (see 2018 Pedagogical Materials)

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
2018-2019 Back-to-school activities	Director general and School principal	4.2 Draw a parallel, in the welcome message, between the importance of kindness in schools and establishing a healthy and safe environment. a) Context for the 2018-2019 theme (see 2018 Pedagogical Materials) b) Suggested greeting from the director general or school principal (see Appendix) 4.3 Present to staff any data available about their school climate. Tools are available to draw up a portrait of the situation and to work with the school team using readily available information. These tools include the <i>Mobilisation CVI</i> survey, the SEVEQ survey (Équipe de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence dans les écoles québécoises) and the Socio-Educational Environment Questionnaire. Other in-house tools can be used as sources for the presentation. 4.4 From the choices below, select one video to start the year and show the importance of relationships in a school setting. 4.4.1 Consideration improves students' daily lives (video: 3 min 49 s) This video shows how interactions between children and adults can affect young people's education. The Atlanta Speech School has posted the video "Every Opportunity," which presents a day at school from the point of view of a young student. While the child begins the day with enthusiasm, the responses and behaviours of his teachers and other adults leave him discouraged. The video also shows how small changes in adults' behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, can transform the situation. a) Suggested activity: Every Opportunity (see Appendix) 4.4.2 "Every kid needs a champion" (video: 7 min 48 s) Presented by Rita Pierson, who has been teaching for 40 years, this video is a passionate call to teachers to have faith in their students and to develop meaningful personal relationships with them. Using humour, she shows the importance and power of a good teacher-student relationship. Although her focus is on teachers, all school staff will relate to this video. a) Suggested activity: Every kid needs a champion (see Appendix)

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
2018-2019 Back-to-school activities	Director general and School principal	4.4.3 “Construire un climat de classe positif et favorable aux apprentissages” (video: 2 min 40 s) (French only) The classroom climate has an effect on brain chemistry and therefore on learning. Based on a well-structured environment and group cohesiveness, it must respond to three basic needs. a) Suggested activity: How classroom climate affects learning (see Appendix) 4.5 Download this year’s official posters from the ministerial website. These are intended for adults and should be posted in staff areas. 4.5.1 Visuals for the 2018-2019 theme (see 2018 Pedagogical Materials) 4.6 Take a moment to welcome new staff members. As mentioned earlier, how new people are welcomed has an influence on the organization’s climate. It is important for principals to plan time to create a warm welcome for new staff members. Ideally, the principal greets them personally. 4.6.1 Give new staff members the tools they need to carry out their work. 4.6.2 Designate a staff member who will act as a mentor to each new employee.
2018-2019 Back-to-school activities	Administration Staff	5. Staff welcome or parent-teacher night (invitation to parents and students) 5.1 Name the staff members who will be responsible, along with the principal, for greeting parents and showing them around the school. Some staff members or students will be delighted to take on this responsibility. For parents, it’s an opportunity to meet some of the people who work in the school. 5.2 Project the official visual in the form of a PowerPoint presentation so that parents are aware of the theme right from the start of the school year. a) Visuals for the 2018-2019 theme (see 2018 Pedagogical Materials)

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
2018-2019 Back-to school activities	Administration School committee Staff	6. Student welcome: Integration activities to promote kindness on the first day of school 6.1 During the first pedagogical days, before students return to school, take some time as a school team to think about what colour to give to back-to-school activities in terms of kindness. 6.1.1 Avenues for reflection: a) How can we get students, especially this year, to view our school as welcoming? b) What are our strengths? c) What could we do differently? d) What should our priorities be? 6.1.2 A few ideas: a) During the first few days, the principal can visit each class or grade level to deliver a personalized welcome message to students. b) Group activity: The colour of MY kindness (see Appendix) Each staff member chooses a kind attitude or behaviour that he or she will uphold throughout the year. This is a group action which introduces this year's theme right away and helps to promote it among the students.
October	Students School committee Staff Administration	7. UN International Day of Non-Violence: October 2 7.1 Display the <i>Safe, positive and caring school climate</i> logo. 7.2 Distribute the first publication: Being a MODEL of kindness. Publication for staff and parents.
November	Students School committee Staff Administration	8. Parent-teacher meeting: The first report card 8.1 Greet parents The first report card is a good opportunity to greet parents and make them feel welcome and comfortable in the school. It's also the time to highlight the importance granted to the second part of the mission of Québec schools, <i>to socialize students</i>. 8.1.1 Plan to have some people present, including a few students, to greet parents warmly and direct them to where the meetings are being held.

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
November	Students School committee Staff Administration	8.1.2 With the help of the students and staff on the committee, present to parents the anti-bullying and anti-violence plan, as well as the actions tied to this year's theme. 8.1.3 Explore the idea of a “mobile” booth (parents often have to wait their turn in different places, which limits their ability to visit a booth in a fixed location). 8.1.4 Produce a video presenting the activities that have taken place at the school in connection with the theme so far. This is a chance to show parents that students and staff are proud of their school. 8.2 Add to the collective work [continue activity 3(d)]. Invite parents to add to the collective work already begun by students and staff at the launch. Each parent could be given a card where they write a behaviour or attitude they would like to promote as a model of kindness. It would be the parents' turn to display the colour of THEIR kindness.
February	Administration Administration Teachers Parents	9. Annual School Transportation Safety Campaign The annual School Transportation Safety Campaign will take place from February 4 to 15, 2019. The website of the Bus Carriers Federation offers a number of tools and suggestions. To recognize the work and collaboration of school bus drivers and crossing guards, here are a few ideas: 9.1 Give the bus drivers and crossing guards associated with your school thank-you letters that recognize and express satisfaction with the work they do. a) Sample letter to bus drivers (see Appendix) b) Sample letter to crossing guards (see Appendix) 9.2 Make students aware of the importance of the work carried out by bus drivers and crossing guards so that they will pay special attention to their attitude toward these individuals.
February	Administration School committee Staff	10. Week of Valentine's Day 10.1 During this week, invite staff members to participate in an activity to celebrate Valentine's Day and, at the same time, take care of a random colleague in a special way. Names can be drawn anonymously using free online software such

When	Person in charge	Suggestions
February	Teachers Staff Parents Administration	Hooked on School Days (February 11 to 15, 2019) will take place under the theme <i>Your actions, a + in their success</i>. 12.1.2 Sample activities: Estrie 2018 12.1.3 Sample activities: Gaspésie 2018 13. Distribute the second publication
April	Students Staff	14. National Volunteer Week 14.1 Perform a good deed. Group project to be promoted among everyone at school following the same procedure as in activity 3(d).

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Research chair

The theme and proposed documentation were developed based on the work of the Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif.

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