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# POSITION STATEMENT

## CYBER BULLYING

an Ethical  
Examination Made  
by Young People

COMMISSION DE L'ÉTHIQUE  
DE LA SCIENCE ET DE LA TECHNOLOGIE

Québec 





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The French  
version  
prevails

**Commission de l'éthique  
de la science et de la technologie**  
1200, route de l'Église  
3rd floor, Suite 3.45  
Québec (Québec)  
G1V 4Z2  
[www.ethique.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.ethique.gouv.qc.ca)

**PRODUCTION SUPPORT**

Supervision  
**Nicole Beaudry, notary**  
Meeting secretary  
**Emmanuelle Trottier**  
Coordination, research and writing  
**Emmanuelle Trottier**

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Secretariat  
**Louise Trudel**  
Documentation  
**Patricia Keable**  
Editing supervision  
**Emmanuelle Trottier**  
Translation  
**George Tombs**  
Design and layout  
**Matteau Parent graphisme et communication inc.**  
Photos  
**Benoît Gagnon et Katerine Hamel**  
Printing  
**Imprimerie Solisco inc.**

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# THE MEMBERS OF CEST-JEUNESSE 2009

## CHAIR<sup>1</sup>

### **Maéva Robert-Halabi**

International Baccalaureate in Economics  
Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf

## MEMBERS

### **Chanel Blouin**

International Baccalaureate in Economics  
Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf

### **Katherine Boudreault**

International Baccalaureate in Economics  
Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf

### **Sarah Cloutier**

Human Sciences, individual profile  
Collège Montmorency

### **Catalina Bianca Dragomir**

International Baccalaureate in Economics  
Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf

### **Dominic Dufour**

Mechanical Engineering Techniques  
Cégep de Jonquière

### **Mélanie Dufour**

Special Education  
Cégep de Jonquière

### **Stéphanie Gravel**

Human Sciences, individual profile  
Collège Montmorency

### **Jessica Laforest**

Special Education Techniques  
Cégep de Jonquière

### **Joanie Morissette**

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Cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe

### **Fanny Pignedoli**

Social Work Techniques  
Cégep du Vieux-Montréal

### **Simon Prévost**

Special Education  
Cégep du Vieux-Montréal

### **Gabrielle Tremblay-Lussier**

Social Action and the Media  
Cégep du Vieux-Montréal

## MEETING SECRETARY

**Emmanuelle Trottier**, Ethics Advisor, CEST

## TEACHERS

**Katerine Deslauriers**, CEST-Jeunesse advisor,  
Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf

**Pierre Després**, Collège Montmorency

**Samir Jemel**, Cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe

**Michel-Rémi Lafond**, CEST-Jeunesse advisor,  
Collège de l'Outaouais

**Manon Lortie**, Cégep de Jonquière

**Emmanuelle Marceau**, Cégep du Vieux-Montréal

**Serge St-Laurent**, Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf

## OBSERVERS

**Édith Deleury**, Chair of CEST

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## COMMUNICATIONS

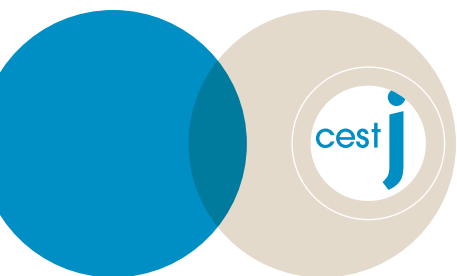
**Katerine Hamel**, Communications Advisor, CEST

<sup>1</sup> Designated by her peers during the April 17th-19th meeting.



CEST-Jeunesse members, teachers,  
and some members of the CEST  
and secretariat.

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## PREAMBLE OF THE COMMISSION DE L'ÉTHIQUE DE LA SCIENCE ET DE LA TECHNOLOGIE

The Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie (CEST) is pleased to publish CEST-Jeunesse's third position statement. Focusing on cyberbullying in schools, this project ran from January to May 2009 thanks to the participation of philosophy teachers at the CEGEP level.

Every two years since 2005, CEST has organized a youth activity known as "Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie – Jeunesse (CEST-Jeunesse)". This project has two objectives: 1) to enable young people at the CEGEP level to focus concretely on the ethical issues associated with a given science and technology application as part of their Ethics course; 2) to provide fifteen of them with the opportunity to become familiar with CEST operations and ethical debate in the context of issues studied in their courses.<sup>2</sup> CEST-Jeunesse brought out a first publication in 2005 on electronic plagiarism, and a second in 2007 on neuromarketing and advertising.

In order to support the students during the preparation and implementation of the project, the Commission has profited again this year from the advice of two experienced teachers who participated in previous editions,<sup>3</sup> and from the contribution of three resource persons, all experts in the area under study, working for various ministries and organizations.<sup>4</sup> The Commission takes this opportunity to thank them for their generosity.

The activities of CEST-Jeunesse are made possible by the voluntary participation of philosophy teachers in the CEGEP system. Accordingly, five teachers from various regions of Quebec included the topic of cyberbullying in their Ethics course during the winter term of 2009, and worked with their students on this subject until mid-term.<sup>5</sup>

While teachers remain entirely free to design their courses as they see fit, they have their students work from a summary document prepared by the Commission secretariat. Students conducted research, wrote essays and sometimes made oral presentations on the proposed theme. Halfway through the term, three students from each group were designated to be part of CEST-Jeunesse. CEST-Jeunesse 2009<sup>6</sup> then met from April 17-19 at the Station touristique Duchesnay.<sup>7</sup> Students were then accompanied by their teachers as well as observers drawn from the CEST membership and from professionals working for the Commission secretariat.<sup>8</sup> On the opening evening, a conference on cyberbullying<sup>9</sup> provided all CEST-

Jeunesse members with a quick overview of the topic and some ideas about possible solutions.

Teachers received documentation before the winter term started, as well as constant support. Indeed, several articles were distributed by the CEST secretariat in order to foster reflection, and telephone conferences between teachers, resource persons and the CEST secretariat provided the opportunity for regular reviews of the situation as well as adjustments needed to achieve project objectives. The Commission would like to underline the importance of research papers on cyberbullying written by students as part of their Ethics course. Teachers forwarded these papers to the Commission, and once the names of student authors were removed, the papers were incorporated into the April conference workbook.

The Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie is pleased to note that this new edition of CEST-Jeunesse contributes in a very special way to enriching the ongoing debate on cyberbullying. Indeed, the ethical perspective proposed by CEST-Jeunesse members reveals a desire to see a more harmonious integration of digital information technologies into everyday life, as well as a desire to make a more active commitment to change the current situation. For this reason, CEST-Jeunesse members have made five recommendations, and have also proposed a series of actions which can be implemented in order to counter cyberbullying. Their voices are important in this debate not only because they are digital natives themselves, but because, as young people directly concerned, they are key players in this area.

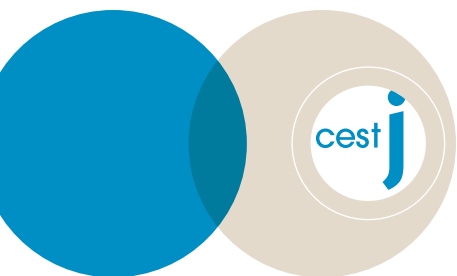
The Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie sincerely hopes that the the recommendations in this CEST-Jeunesse position statement will help publicize the phenomenon of cyberbullying and will, in particular, counter cyberbullying among young people. The Commission wishes to thank members of CEST-Jeunesse and all those who helped make this event a success, and commits to holding a further CEST-Jeunesse in 2011 on a brand new topic.

Chair of the Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie,



Édith Deleury

- 2 For more information on the organization of this activity, see Appendix 2.
- 3 Michel-Rémi Lafond, Collège de l'Outaouais, and Katerine Deslauriers, Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf.
- 4 Danielle Marquis, responsible for the Violence at School file at the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (Education, Recreation and Sport, MELS), Isabelle Ouellet, of the Coordinating Office of Investigations of Computer Crime at the Sûreté du Québec, and Sarah Tanguay, who was responsible for the cybercrime file at the ministère de la Sécurité publique (Public Security, MSP).
- 5 Pierre Després (Montmorency), Samir Jemel (Saint-Hyacinthe), Manon Lortie (Jonquière), Emmanuelle Marceau (Vieux-Montréal) and Serge St-Laurent (Jean-de-Brébeuf).
- 6 The make-up of CEST-Jeunesse is described at the beginning of this document. It should be noted that CEST-Jeunesse 2009 consisted of 13 members, the great majority of whom were girls (11 out of 13).
- 7 See the programme in Appendix 3.
- 8 From the CEST membership: Édith Deleury (Chair of the Commission), Benoît Gagnon and Dany Rondeau. From the secretariat: Nicole Beaudry (Secretary General), Emmanuelle Trottier (Ethics Advisor) and Katerine Hamel (Communications Advisor).
- 9 Guest speaker : François Guité, coordinator of the Réseau d'information pour la réussite éducative (Learning Success Information Network) at the Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec.



## INTRODUCTION

Digital information technologies are in general increasingly accessible and routinely used. These technologies open the door to new learning and teaching opportunities, but also raise “issues about privacy, online respect, safety and appropriate use of technology, both inside and outside the classroom.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, unfortunate and sometimes tragic cases are proving more and more common, involving the bullying of young people – and even of adults – on the Internet, casting a shadow across what is generally considered to be the alluring promise of digital information technologies.

The present position statement of CEST-Jeunesse 2009 has been prepared in fulfilment of the mandate of the Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie, which is to conduct activities related to the promotion of ethics. This project was an opportunity for CEGEP students in all programmes to address the ethical issues arising from a subject which is particularly worrisome in the educational sector, namely cyberbullying.

What uses do young people make of digital information technologies? In what context do they engage in cyberbullying, or are they victims of this practice? What reasons are cited by young people when engaging in this practice? Do they perceive the consequences of their actions? How can the responsible use of these new technologies be encouraged? These questions are among those raised by the thirteen members of CEST-Jeunesse 2009 and before them, by classmates in Ethics courses.

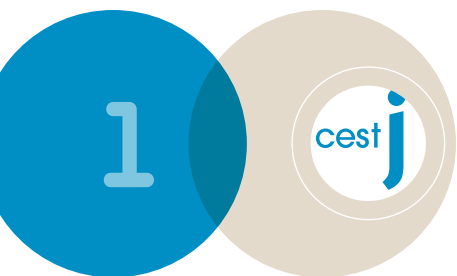
In the present position statement, CEST-Jeunesse first presents statistics on the integration of information technologies in young people's lives; then goes on to describe the benefits of using these technologies as well as the characteristics of cyberbullying. Finally, the position statement defines which values are at stake and which are in conflict. The last part of the position statement contains five recommendations aimed at preventing cyberbullying for the sake of



better living together and with a view to supporting the different actors. A list of suggested actions to be taken, in order to prevent or stop cyberbullying, is found in the appendix.

CEST-Jeunesse 2009 is concerned about the scope of cyberbullying, especially among younger people who often learn on their own to use digital technologies, with all the curiosity and the ease of learning that characterize their age group. The Youth Commission hopes that its position statement will be seen and interpreted as a collective effort to understand the situation from an ethical viewpoint and that its recommendations are received by the various parties concerned with seriousness, enthusiasm and a spirit of openness.

10 [Government of Ontario, \*Get Connected, Get in the Know: Online Respect and Responsibility\*, Ministry of Education brochure, 2008, p. 1.](#)



## CYBERBULLYING IN CONTEXT

Young people today are growing up in a technological world very different from that known by preceding generations. They are digital natives, in other words, “those born after 1974 who grew up in a digital world, are familiar with computers, video games and the Internet, and spend much of their lives online.”<sup>11</sup> For digital natives, the virtual world is an extension of their life and not a separate entity as in the case of some adults. Even so, young people do not always understand the meaning or scope of “virtual portion(s)” of their identity.

### **A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT OF THE USE OF DIGITAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE**

Data on young people’s use and integration of information and communication technologies will help better understand the phenomenon. In particular, CEST-Jeunesse focused on the 2005 study published undertaken by the Media Awareness Network, which identified the practices of 5,272 Canadians between the ages of 9 to 16 years.<sup>12</sup>

According to this study, 94% of young people say they have home access to the Internet.<sup>13</sup> Once they reach Secondary 5, half of these young people possess their own personal computers. This is important because these young people spend on average twice as much time online during the school week as those sharing a computer with the rest of the family.

In addition, 23% of young people surveyed have a cell phone. When this percentage is combined with the proportion of young people who say they use the family cell phone, an estimated two out of three young people have access to this type of device. Among young people with access to cellular telephones, 44% can use them to browse the Internet and 56% can use them to send text messages. In addition, 22% of young people surveyed have a Web camera and 17% have a cell phone featuring a camera.

Early on, young people integrate the Internet into their social life. Starting in Grade Six, instant messaging is the most popular online activity with girls. In Secondary 3, 80% of young people

use messaging, and listen to music on a daily basis. The Media Awareness Network study notes that the critical mass of young people who have their own computer and digital equipment peaks at exactly the age when using the Internet to communicate with friends and listening to music become the two most popular activities among young people.

It is at this stage that the boundary between cyberspace and the real world becomes increasingly blurred for young people: “[The] merge of virtual and real spaces is accompanied by a similar convergence between traditional media and networking. In [Secondary 2], over three quarters of young people listen to or download music online and one third of them use the Internet to download movies or TV shows. This new media landscape offers many opportunities for communication, self-expression and having fun while browsing continuously and almost without interruption between the real world and cyberspace.”<sup>14</sup> For young people, the computer is not a working tool, it is a recreational object that keeps them connected to their social network.

Communications habits of young people are very different from those of previous generations. “Today’s average college grads have spent less than 5,000 of their hours reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games (not to mention 20,000 hours watching TV).”<sup>15</sup> These new habits lead researchers to conclude that today’s students think and manage information in very different ways from their predecessors. And this in turn is changing the relationship that society maintains with young people: “It is no longer possible to address this generation the way one could address previous ones, because this generation is impervious to linear communications. This generation is used to clicking here and there, does not hesitate to challenge official information by comparing it with other available sources, and prefers interactivity.”<sup>16</sup>



- 11 OFFICE QUÉBÉCOIS DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE, *Le grand dictionnaire terminologique*, [online].
- 12 MEDIA AWARENESS NETWORK. *Young Canadians in a Wired World. Phase II, Trends and Recommendations*, November 2005, report drafted by Valerie Steeves
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 4. The statistics below are also drawn from this report, pp. 6-8, unless otherwise noted.
- 14 MEDIA AWARENESS NETWORK, 2005, p. 6.
- 15 Marc PRENSKY, “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants”, *On the Horizon*, MCB University Press, 9(5), October 2001, p. 1.
- 16 Jean-Marc LE GALL, “Génération ‘always on’”, *Le Monde économie*, November 6 2007.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

The integration of information technologies offers a wide range of advantages. For example, information technologies foster a culture of participation and present few barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement. They support creation and the sharing of that creation; they also open the way to a form of mentoring, since the experiences of people who have been around can be shared with novices.<sup>17</sup>

In the opinion of CEST-Jeunesse, information technologies:

- facilitate creation and access to digital data (sending and receiving), even when delocalized. For example, a blog created by a cybernaut can be read and commented on anywhere in the world. It can also be referenced by search engines several times<sup>18</sup> (thereby increasing its visibility);
- foster the development of critical thinking, particularly regarding the relevance and validity of information found on the Internet;
- cause a flattening of hierarchical classes, given that everyone feels free to communicate with other people, regardless of their situation or status: “Everyone has his place on the Internet”;
- provide the opportunity to remain in contact with people who are physically far away, either through friendship, for professional reasons or for any other reason;
- enable information to travel with unmatched speed, to be available, accessible and modifiable at the user’s convenience – the massively multiplayer online games are a good example: these games are “online and in real time [and involve] hundreds of thousands of players worldwide [who] can participate simultaneously and in the virtual world which is constantly changing, with players connected to the game server”;<sup>19</sup>
- enable some young people, through virtual interactions and games, to escape into another world: these young people have the opportunity to create a virtual identity for themselves made up of traces or a large number of custom avatars.

However, new digital information technologies can also be used for less desirable purposes, such as cyberbullying. When taken to the extreme, this form of violence can have devastating effects on people’s lives.

## DEFINING AND UNDERSTANDING CYBERBULLYING

Ten to fifteen per cent of children are victims of *intimidation*, or intimidate someone else, on a weekly basis:

“Bullying begins in kindergarten, involves various degrees of violence and comprises various forms of harassment. Bullying can be physical or psychological, overt or covert, random (indiscriminate) or discriminatory. For a variety of reasons, educators may not recognize bullying for what it is, and victims sometimes find it difficult to substantiate covert or psychological forms of bullying. This is because such behaviour is easily confused with teasing and generally occurs on playgrounds, in hallways and now most frequently in cyberspace (email, text messaging, web sites), away from the watchful eyes of teachers or other supervisors.”<sup>20</sup>



Cyberbullying differs from traditional bullying in several respects:

- It is often anonymous, that is to say that cyberbullies conceal their identity, use avatars unknown to the victim or, again, pretend to be someone else;
- It can occur at any time, because young people are “connected” by cellphone and computer and can therefore be reached at all times;
- It spares no one, since even the most popular young people are subject to cyberbullying;
- Digital technologies make it possible to disseminate words, images and video content in an instantaneous, unlimited and virtually irreversible manner.

“The result is that victims of cyberbullying may feel even more overwhelmed and powerless than in cases of traditional bullying. Cyberbullying can reach new heights in terms of intimidation and distress.”<sup>21</sup>

- 17 Carrie JAMES et al., *Young People, Ethics, and the New Digital Media: A Synthesis from the Good Play Project*, Harvard Graduate School of Education, February 22 2008, p. 6.
- 18 Rerefencing means “registering a Web site with research engines and directories, to make it better known among cybernauts, to enhance its visibility and as a result to increase the number of hits.” (OFFICE QUÉBÉCOIS DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE, *Le grand dictionnaire terminologique*, [online].)
- 19 OFFICE QUÉBÉCOIS DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE, *Le grand dictionnaire terminologique*, [online].
- 20 Shaheen SHARIFF, *Cyber-bullying: Issues and Solutions for the School, the Classroom and the Home*, Londres et New York : Routledge, 2008, p. 11-12
- 21 Elizabeth LINES, *A Kids Help Phone Research Study of Kids Online*, April 2007, p. 3.

This position statement uses the following definition: “cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as email, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.”<sup>22</sup> But even with this definition, it is still difficult to identify certain types of cyberbullying.

CEST-Jeunesse held extensive discussions in order to identify actions that may or may not constitute cyberbullying. For example, an argument on MSN or exchanging aggressive e-mails does not *a priori* constitute cyberbullying. However, the way a given situation is assessed is subjective and depends both on the context and on the actors involved. If a person is intimidated and does not realize it or does not mind, is intimidation really involved? Besides, the lack of nuance in the tone of voice and facial expression of the “author” of a text on the Internet helps dehumanize the relationship between author and recipient. The latter may feel under attack because he does not perceive the emotion of the author who, meanwhile, had no intention of intimidating anyone.

Since bullying is often characterized by a lack of any kind of control, each situation should be clearly assessed. Indeed, the bully loses control once the message is sent: he cannot predict how many people will see it or what their reactions will be. The person being bullied, meanwhile, is subject to the action, but also has very little control over what happens. In addition, young people are often alone at the computer when cyberbullying strikes; this may reinforce the sense of isolation they experience and change their understanding of the situation or their own reaction to the incident.

Cyberbullying can take many forms. Behaviours that are considered acts of cyberbullying are: flaming, harassment, denigration, identity theft, incitement to disclose or actual disclosure of personal information of another person, exclusion, cyberstalking and videolynching.<sup>23</sup>

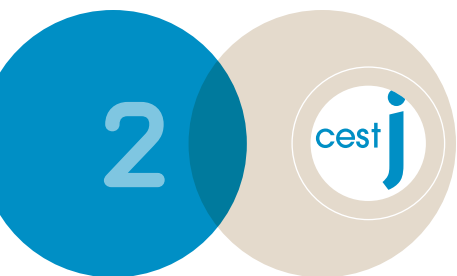
The preferred mechanisms for committing these acts vary from one person or circumstance to another. For example, flaming, which involves transmitting incendiary remarks about a person, has the greatest impact when it takes place on high traffic websites; harassment is best-suited to person-to-person forms of communication, such as email.<sup>24</sup> The most frequently used channels of communication for bullying are instant messaging, email, text messaging, social networking sites, chat rooms, blogs, websites, message boards and massively multiplayer gaming sites.<sup>25</sup>

CEST-Jeunesse has been concerned particularly with cyberbullying among young people, but these latter are not in fact the only targets of cyberbullying nor even the only predators. Adults, especially teachers, sometimes face cyberbullying and the costs and consequences for them can be severe, both professionally and personally. However, it is hard to evaluate the scope of the problem facing them. According to the Canadian Federation of Teachers, 20% of teachers surveyed in a poll “reported being threatened or harassed online.”<sup>26</sup> According to another poll, conducted by the Ontario College of Teachers, “84% of teachers say they are victims of cyber bullying.”<sup>27</sup> These data suggest that stakeholders do not interpret cyberbullying in the same way and that raising awareness is needed to clarify the situation.

Finally, adults may also be cyberbullies. In one highly publicized case in autumn 2008, a Missouri woman found herself in court after having forged a false online identity with the intention of entrapping a teenage girl who may have harmed her own daughter. The woman, who had claimed to be a young man, began a virtual relationship with the girl, and finally wrote that “the world would be a better place without you.”<sup>28</sup> The girl in question was grappling with depression, and committed suicide.

This example illustrates a worst-case scenario. The consequences of cyberbullying can vary greatly. In the next part of this document, CEST-Jeunesse focuses on the conditions that facilitate cyberbullying, the consequences of cyberbullying, and also on the people concerned with the set of problems and values at stake.

- 22 Bill BELSEY, quoted in Beatrice SCHRIEVER, “Cyberbullying,” *Professionally Speaking*, September 2007, p. 10.
- 23 Robin KOWALSKI, Susan P. LIMBER and Patricia W. AGATSON, 2008, pp. 47-51. Flaming is “sending an incendiary message to another user participating in a forum or a mailing list, in order to express disapproval”; videolynching is a “reprehensible practice in which a young person or a group of young people assault or humiliate a victim, generally unknown to them, while an accomplice films the scene with a cell phone in order to broadcast images of violence on the Internet.” (OFFICE QUÉBÉCOIS DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE, *Le grand dictionnaire terminologique*, [online]).
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 51-57.
- 26 CANADIAN TEACHERS FEDERATION. *Addressing Cyberconduct*, A Brief to the Department of Justice Canada, June 2008, p. 1.
- 27 Beatrice SCHRIEVER, 2007, p. 10.
- 28 Jennifer STEINHAEUER “Verdict in MySpace Suicide Case”, *The New York Times*, November 27 2008.



## THE CONSEQUENCES OF CYBERBULLYING

### THE CONDITIONS THAT FACILITATE CYBERBULLYING

Particular conditions facilitate or encourage cyberbullying. For instance, some bullies have themselves been victims of bullying or have been rejected by their peers. In speaking about the subject, young people use this fact to justify their actions: "I was tired of feeling pain. I wanted somebody on the outside to feel the pain that I was feeling on the inside." According to Kids Help Phone, several young people who engage in bullying out of a desire for revenge admit to having felt remorse after the incident: "Kids know cyber-bullying is wrong, but they need help identifying appropriate outlets for their feelings."<sup>30</sup>

Peer pressure, pleasure and emotional release are other reasons for engaging in cyberbullying: "Bullying someone online is not a right thing to do. I did it for two reasons, that either it was that person that had bullied me, or my friend(s) was over and I was just going along with it. It was either by anger or just for 'fun.'"<sup>31</sup> In the same vein, the bully may indulge in cyberbullying in order to feel a sense of superiority, popularity or power. Somehow, he raises his self-esteem by lowering others or making fun of them.

The Media Awareness Network maintains that the "anonymous" character of the Internet makes it easier for young people to engage in cyberbullying, whereas they would not dare commit such acts in real life: "Believing themselves to be anonymous, some young people feel free to commit acts online that they would never carry out in person. In addition, the frequency with which adolescents share online passwords provides perpetrators, when caught, with the ready excuse that someone else may have assumed their identity to send bullying messages."<sup>32</sup> There is no direct contact between bully and victim, and this distance makes cyberbullying easier.

Some people are not always aware of the consequences of their actions. Since most information technologies are instantaneous, the lapse of time between a thought impulse and an action is too short to allow for the exercise of judgment or reflection. Moreover, the bullying starts in some cases in elementary school, and as a result some bullies will not have integrated the informal rules of responsible conduct online (or even in the real world) at that age. Finally, CEST-Jeunesse is of the view that people learn the rules of conduct and etiquette better in the presence of others: "If you insult someone to their face, you realize the effect you have on the other person and you learn. With the Internet, you skip this learning phase. People think it's a world where there are no consequences."

CEST-Jeunesse is particularly concerned about the nature of social pressures that have a negative impact on the use of digital technologies. The increasingly blurred line between what is private and what is considered public means young people may end up exposing themselves more than necessary and thus be vulnerable to criticism and cyberbullying. For example, girls send their boyfriends naked photos of themselves (an action commonly called sexting); once they break up, these images could be disseminated on the Internet and harm the girls involved. Again, it is very difficult a priori to assess the possible consequences of such an action.

Finally, the members of CEST-Jeunesse believe that the voyeurism, lack of modesty and lack of respect prevalent in society encourage the misuse of information technologies. Without trivializing the responsibility of young people who bully their peers or their teachers, it is clear that “Popular culture is jammed with abusive conduct, from TV shows to movies to professional sport.”<sup>33</sup> The popular phenomena of trash radio and reality TV are particularly noteworthy, given their negative influences on behaviour.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF CYBERBULLYING

CEST-Jeunesse identifies three groups of players who face the consequences of cyberbullying. The first group consists of young people who are victims of cyberbullying (persons being bullied); a second group consists of cyberbullies (aggressors); and finally in the third place, CEST-Jeunesse directs its attention to society as a whole, which is grappling with the consequences of cyberbullying.

For the person being bullied, cyberbullying has many different consequences:

- loss of privacy, invasion of privacy;
- loss of security, confidence, self-esteem;
- injury to reputation, loss of friends;
- fear and anxiety;
- difficulties in school, social and interpersonal difficulties;
- difficulty defending oneself or even of knowing who the bully is;
- vulnerability, feelings of guilt;
- isolation, closing oneself to others, runaway, depression, suicide.

29 Nicole BAER, “The Battle Against Bullying”, in GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, *Building Safer Communities*, National Crime Prevention Strategy, Winter 2002-2003, vol. 7, National Crime Prevention Centre, p. 4.

30 Elizabeth LINES, *Cyber-bullying : Our Kids' New Reality*, A Kids Help Phone Research Study of Kids Online, April 2007, p. 14.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 15.

32 MEDIA AWARENESS NETWORK, *Cyberbullying Backgrounder*. [2008].

33 Beatrice SCHRIEVER, 2007, p. 11.

Where the bully is concerned, one possible consequence is that he could repent in due course and feel remorse for his actions. Moreover, if he is identified as the wrongdoer, legal sanctions may be imposed. Finally, if identified, the bully could also become the target of other bullies and face the same consequences as those mentioned for persons being bullied.

Cyberbullying also affects society. Members of CEST-Jeunesse note several consequences of cyberbullying that in its view tear the social fabric apart:

- guilt, a lot of questioning, and even a sense of helplessness when cyberbullying strikes a child, a family member, a close friend or a stranger to whom one can identify oneself;
- a loss of solidarity and trust, because virtual bullying often stigmatizes victims;
- a possible fear of technologies, which are sometimes poorly understood or misused and therefore give the impression that they should be feared rather than integrated into our way of life;
- an incitement to trivialize violence, which is already omnipresent, particularly in the media given their dissemination of a lot of violent images and behaviours, for instance on trash radio;
- a lowered quality of relationships with others, especially because it is so easy to indulge in unconstructive criticism.

## THE VALUES AT STAKE

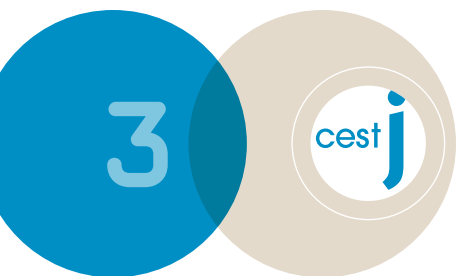
Values underpin our actions: in other words, our actions make sense because they are motivated by values that we cherish. As CEST-Jeunesse explained above, cyberbullying occurs for all sorts of reasons, but three values are at the heart of the problem: **freedom of expression**, which confronts **respect for others** and must be tempered by the value of responsibility.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental freedom enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This value is crucial in any democratic society. However, this does not mean it is acceptable to express oneself without restriction, regardless of the subject and circumstances: for example, the right to freedom of opinion and expression should not be exercised to another person's disadvantage. Indeed, freedom of expression should be tempered or should take account of other values recognized and promoted by Quebec society, including respect for others and responsibility for one's own actions.

In the view of members of CEST-Jeunesse, any act of cyberbullying violates a core value: respect for the person which includes a person's integrity and identity. Defamation and the posting of degrading images or words online are ways of showing disrespect for another person. Disrespect has the effect of damaging relations between individuals and creates an unhealthy atmosphere, characterized by a loss of control of the situation on both sides; in fact, once hurtful or slanderous information is posted on the Internet, it spreads quickly and it is virtually impossible to withdraw it from cyberspace.

As a way of getting out of this deadlock situation, CEST-Jeunesse stresses the importance of the value of responsibility in discussion on the practice of cyberbullying. Indeed, each person as a moral being remains ultimately responsible for his actions. In the view of CEST-Jeunesse, responsibility includes acknowledging oneself as the author of one's own actions and reflecting on the impact of these actions.





## FOR A BETTER-LIVING TOGETHER

The deliberations and reflections of CEST-Jeunesse on cyberbullying lead it to make five recommendations. The first two concern the need to carefully define cyberbullying so that the public as a whole can be better informed and educated about this harmful practice. The two recommendations after that stress the need for acquiring tools to combat cyberbullying. The last recommendation is less directly related to the set of problems as a whole, and concerns the preferred approach to cases of cyberbullying.

### **FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF CYBERBULLYING**

Cyberbullying is a serious act that can have significant consequences. Young people are still impressionable and are a long way from integrating all the skills needed for a better-living together. For this reason, cyberbullying is an easy way to “get one’s message across”, often anonymously, without worrying about the consequences of one’s actions. It is also an isolating action, since the young person targeted by cyberbullying soon finds himself alone with the problem. The young person feels trapped by a person who enters his private life to harm him, and is often unfamiliar with available remedies to help resolve the situation. The young person may hesitate to talk with his parents for fear of losing access to home computers – which in turn would have the ultimate effect of depriving him of his virtual social network.

Members of CEST-Jeunesse wish to draw attention to the generational gap that separates them from their parents. Actually, parents know very little about the way their children use digital technologies. Ironically, children are often more skilled than parents when it comes time to installing parental control software on a computer. This gap makes cyberbullying easier, since the young person most often is left to his own devices when using the computer without parental supervision. Once cyberbullying strikes, the lack of dialogue between the young person and his parents regarding his online practices increases his feeling of loneliness, misunderstanding and victimization.

Before speaking of actions which can help stop or even prevent cyberbullying, CEST-Jeunesse is of the view that one must first understand the phenomenon, describe it carefully and define the ways in which cyberbullying differs from traditional bullying. Accordingly, CEST-Jeunesse is calling for more research to be undertaken in order to determine the causes and effects of cyberbullying, so that society is better equipped to deal with the situation.

CEST-Jeunesse is of the view not only that more needs to be known about the phenomenon, but also that cyberbullying should not be analyzed in isolation, without making information accessible to society as a whole. Indeed, young people are full members of society, rooted particularly in two important places of socialization – the family and the school setting. It is therefore essential that the knowledge base developed for a better understanding of the phenomenon of cyberbullying should be transmitted to all people concerned. The MELS has developed an action plan to prevent and address violence in schools,<sup>34</sup> and favours building up research and documentation on violence in schools; this information should be disseminated not only in schools but also in society as a whole.

Considering that cyberbullying is poorly defined and not well-known, CEST-Jeunesse recommends:

That the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, together with the Quebec granting agencies, encourage research into the causes and effects of cyberbullying in order to better understand the phenomenon.

That the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, in the implementation of its action plan to counter violence in schools, develop information and outreach campaigns to publicize the problem of cyberbullying in society.

34 GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC [n. d.]. *La violence à l'école : ça vaut le coup d'agir ensemble!*, Plan d'action pour prévenir et traiter la violence à l'école 2008-2011, abridged version, ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

## ACCESSING TOOLS TO FACE THE SITUATION TOGETHER

Cyberbullying is more insidious than traditional bullying and has special characteristics that must be taken into account if it is to be prevented and controlled. Even today, despite the fact that multiple information packages or sites have been developed to raise awareness of online security, parents, teachers, socio-community stakeholders and law enforcement officials are still poorly equipped for coping with the phenomenon of cyberbullying. For this reason, CEST-Jeunesse calls on the various stakeholders to confer with one another in order to produce documentation tailored to the specific context of cyberbullying and encourages them to present a range of concrete actions.

Furthermore, CEST-Jeunesse considers it important to promote freedom of expression that is responsible and respectful of differences. CEST-Jeunesse wonders how to incorporate and promote these values in the use of information technologies. In this sense, it sees in the creation of the new Ethics and Religious Culture programme in elementary and secondary schools an opportunity to integrate cyberbullying into the themes to be raised with young people. Follow-up content could also be offered at the CEGEP level, in the Ethics course.

In the view of CEST-Jeunesse, the ability to engage in dialogue is inherent to the practice of ethics; it is of particular interest because lacking the ability to engage in dialogue can lead to cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is a curse because people do not take the time to communicate in a respectful manner. The awareness of all young people could be raised by integrating this value into the Ethics and Religious Culture programme, which is compulsory throughout elementary and secondary school.

Considering that parents, teachers, socio-community stakeholders and law enforcement officials are poorly equipped to cope with the reality of cyberbullying, CEST-Jeunesse recommends:

That the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, in collaboration with the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and the ministère de la Sécurité publique, produce a document that equips educational, social services and community stakeholders, and law enforcement officials, so they are able to act in cases of cyberbullying.

That school counselors and teachers be encouraged to take advantage of the Ethics and Religious Culture programme in primary and secondary, and of the Ethics course at the CEGEP level, to discuss the issues of cyberbullying with young people.

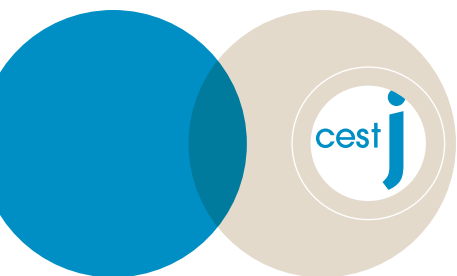
## ZERO TOLERANCE FOR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Finally, CEST-Jeunesse recognizes how easy it is to let the situation deteriorate rather than move quickly to resolve the problem. Young people are still undergoing the process of personal development, and must become aware that certain acts are reprehensible because they run counter to the common good. Given this context, it is urgent to maintain a culture of responsibility. Since the best prevention campaigns will not stop some people from indulging in cyberbullying, CEST-Jeunesse believes it is necessary that a zero-tolerance policy against cyberbullying be applied. By zero tolerance, it means that when a young person is found guilty of cyberbullying a classmate, he should promptly be called to a meeting with law enforcement officials, in order to discuss the consequences of his actions. The presence of law enforcement officials gives a clear indication that cyberbullying is unacceptable and that the school will take all necessary measures to stop it or prevent it from occurring.

Considering that cyberbullying is a serious act that can have adverse consequences and that a zero tolerance policy should be applied, CEST-Jeunesse recommends:

That the ministère de la Sécurité publique encourage police intervention with young people in cases of cyberbullying.





## CONCLUSION

The use of information technologies and the emergence of phenomena like cyberbullying are a problem that falls within the broader concerns of society. Given that young people are digital natives, they face this phenomenon both as actors and as key partners. CEST-Jeunesse has addressed this situation, because of the interest of the media in certain cases of cyberbullying, the anxiety of parents and teachers regarding online safety for young people and the questions raised by young people themselves about the responsible use of information technologies.

Information technologies are powerful tools whose responsible use provide benefits, and facilitate people's lives. However, in the hands of less conscientious (or simply unaware) or even malicious users, unacceptable practices may occur and cause serious consequences. Society as a whole would benefit from understanding the phenomenon of cyberbullying. CEST-Jeunesse is making two recommendations in this regard.

Considering that cyberbullying is poorly defined and not well-known, CEST-Jeunesse recommends:

That the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport , together with the Quebec granting agencies, encourage research into the causes and effects of cyberbullying to better understand the phenomenon.

That the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, in the implementation of its action plan to counter violence in schools, develop information and outreach campaigns to publicize the problem of cyberbullying in society.

Beyond understanding the act of cyberbullying, tools are needed to cope with the situation. Indeed, many parents are simply overwhelmed by the technological skills of their children; teachers, socio-community stakeholders and law enforcement officials are in turn used to dealing with traditional bullying, whereas cyberbullying calls for new approaches or at least new pedagogical material.

Considering that parents, teachers, socio-community stakeholders and law enforcement officials are poorly equipped to cope with the reality of cyber bullying, CEST-Jeunesse recommends:

That the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport , in collaboration with the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and the ministère de la Sécurité publique, produce a document that equips school, social services and community stakeholders, as well as law enforcement officials, so they are able to act in cases of cyberbullying.

In addition, given that the situation can only improve if people learn to live better together, and that the Ethics and Religious Culture programme in elementary and secondary schools and the Ethics and Policy course at the CEGEP level allow the inclusion of such concerns,

CEST-Jeunesse recommends:

That school counselors and teachers be encouraged to take advantage of the existence of the Ethics and Religious Culture programme in primary and secondary schools, and of the Ethics course at the CEGEP level, to discuss the issues of cyberbullying with young people.

Finally, in certain extreme cases, cyberbullying can drive young people to depression and even incite them to want to kill themselves. The problems of insecurity and loss of self-confidence, combined with the necessary transition from adolescence, may also have a significant impact on young people. Cyberbullying among young people should not be taken lightly.

Considering that cyberbullying is a serious act that can have adverse consequences and that a zero tolerance policy should be applied, CEST-Jeunesse recommends:

That the ministère de la Sécurité publique encourage police intervention with young people in cases of cyberbullying.

With this position statement, CEST-Jeunesse hopes to nurture the ongoing discussion in society about the role and responsible use of information technologies. Cyberbullying is a problem that should concern society as a whole and not just young people or those in the school setting. Indeed, since the youth of today will be the leaders of tomorrow, it is important that they be well equipped to cope with and to participate in life in society. CEST-Jeunesse believes that awareness and prevention are two powerful remedies that can be applied to counter the practice of cyberbullying. However, when cyberbullying occurs, it should not be tolerated.





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## Suggested websites

### Podcasts

24 HEURES EN 60 MINUTES, Société Radio-Canada, *L'intimidation à l'école*, broadcast March 31 2009, [http://www.radio-canada.ca/emissions/24\\_heures\\_en\\_60\\_minutes/2008-2009/Entrevue.asp?idDoc=77720](http://www.radio-canada.ca/emissions/24_heures_en_60_minutes/2008-2009/Entrevue.asp?idDoc=77720).

24 HEURES EN 60 MINUTES, Société Radio-Canada, *L'intimidation à l'école – suite*, broadcast March 31 2009, [http://www.radio-canada.ca/emissions/24\\_heures\\_en\\_60\\_minutes/2008-2009/Entrevue.asp?idDoc=77846](http://www.radio-canada.ca/emissions/24_heures_en_60_minutes/2008-2009/Entrevue.asp?idDoc=77846).

### Blogs and websites

Action Innocence, pour préserver la dignité et l'intégrité des enfants sur Internet, <http://www.actioninnocence.org/suisse/index.aspx>.

A Look at Bullying, <http://sandeelee.blogs.com/bullying/>.

Bullying UK, [http://www.bullying.co.uk/schools/National\\_Bullying\\_Survey\\_2006/index.aspx](http://www.bullying.co.uk/schools/National_Bullying_Survey_2006/index.aspx).

Canadian Centre for Child Protection, Cybertip.ca, <http://www.cybertip.ca/app/en/home>.

Canadian Observatory on School Violence Prevention, <http://www.preventionviolence.ca/>.

Cyberbullying.ca, <http://www.cyberbullying.ca/>.

Deal.org, affiliated with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. See in particular the online game “Cyberbullying: the Dark Side of Technology”, <http://www.deal.org/content/index.php>.

Digital Media – the GoodPlay Project, <http://www.goodworkproject.org/research/digital.htm>.

Digital Natives, <http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/digitalnatives/>.

Focus Adolescent Services: *Bullying: What Parents and Teachers Must Know*, <http://www.focusas.com/Bullying.html>.

Kids Help Phone line, Cyberbullying portal, [http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/en/informed/cyberbullying/cyberbullying\\_default.asp](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/en/informed/cyberbullying/cyberbullying_default.asp).

Media Awareness Network, <http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/index.cfm>.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, site “My privacy. My choice. My life”, <http://www.youthprivacy.ca/en/>.

Pour la prévention de la cyberintimidation, <http://cybernaute001.blogspot.com/>.

Stop Cyberbullying, <http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/>.

Sûreté du Québec. *Parents et enseignants, la Sûreté vous conseille*, section cyberintimidation, <http://www.sq.gouv.qc.ca/parent-et-enseignants/la-surete-vous-conseille/cyberintimidation-parents-enseignants.jsp>.

Vidéotron – Vigilance sur le Net, <http://vigilancesurlenet.com/fr/accueil/index.php>.

Welcome to Internet 101, <http://www.internet101.ca/en/index.php>.

## EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

### WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

- Discuss the meaning of freedom of expression and the responsibility that accompanies that freedom.
- Incorporate a theme day on cyberbullying in the school calendar – put on a play, invite young people to prepare these activities and take part in them.
- Encourage young people to defend the victims of cyberbullying in chat rooms and other virtual social spaces, and report instances of cyberbullying.
- Distribute or show videos, illustrating what cyberbullying can do, invite former victims to speak out: this is a good way to raise awareness.
- Considering that a great part of the socialization of children takes place in the school setting, improve communication and dialogue between students.
- Organize activities around cyberbullying (this might seem less preachy if the organization of these activities were entrusted to young people rather than to adults).
- Use leaders among bullies in order to direct them towards good actions – turning them into positive leaders as a way of improving their status.
- Organize an activity involving the victim and the intimidator to open up discussion in a supervised setting.
- Stage a trial involving a case of cyberbullying. This is an effective means for young people to get into the skin of bullies and those being bullied.
- Children should be encouraged to give courses to their parents about the possibilities of IT.

### WITH PARENTS

- Encourage parents to talk with young people about their Internet activities as a way of understanding their situation and without getting moralistic.
- Install the computer in a common room of the house.

### IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

- Develop classes to explain the use of the Internet and other information technologies.
- Establish a mentoring system in schools between young and old to create greater solidarity among students.
- Provide intervenors in the school setting with appropriate tools so the young person feels confident when seeking help.

- Raise the awareness of parents about the problem of cyberbullying.
- Intervenors in the school setting should intervene, and follow-up should take place.
- Take advantage of classes in the Ethics and Religious Culture programme to address the theme of dialogue in a pluralistic society, in order to identify ways of communicating in a respectful manner.
- Integrate projects in class on the topic of cyberbullying.
- Offer a practical approach and publicize or display content for victims of cyberbullying.
- Promote initiatives for building bridges between home and school, which are both living environments for young people.

#### **WITH POLICE**

- Ensure greater police presence where young people are, especially on the Internet.
- Add a “Help against cyberbullying” button on websites, so that police can quickly identify the problem and conduct an intervention.
- Develop awareness campaigns which incorporate concrete actions.
- Uphold the need for police presence at school as a way of demonstrating how serious the issue is.
- Follow up with cyber-bullies and their parents as well as victims and their parents.

#### **IN GENERAL**

- Advertise on this issue, conduct awareness campaigns in the media that young people consult.
- Use the tools of cyberbullying in order to stop it.
- Finance public activities that promote team spirit and sports, day camps for building awareness.
- Establish a government program to familiarize parents with IT.
- Support and promote confidential phone services such as Tel-Jeunes or Kids Help Phone.

## DESCRIPTION OF CEST-JEUNESSE 2009 ACTIVITIES

The idea of holding a “Commission de l’éthique de la science et de la technologie – Jeunesse (or CEST-Jeunesse)” was inspired by the Youth Parliament, which has been held for several years by the Directorate of Educational Services at the Assemblée nationale du Québec. At its meeting of October 14th 2004, the Commission de l’éthique de la science et de la technologie adopted the principle of holding a Youth Commission.

“CEST-Jeunesse 2009” was held in Quebec City between Friday evening April 17th and Sunday noon April 19th 2009. The groundwork for this meeting was conducted in the classroom, from January to April 2009, by students in the Ethics and Policy course and under the supervision of teachers participating in the project.

### Objectives

- To enable young CEGEP students to focus specifically on ethical issues associated with science and technology applications, in order to draft a position statement and to develop recommendations for the Government of Quebec.
- To provide fifteen of these students – as designated by their peers – with the opportunity to become familiar with CEST operations, by bringing them together to discuss the content of a draft position statement and accompanying recommendations, and submit it to the Commission de l’éthique de la science et de la technologie. At its June meeting, CEST studies the project submitted, and decides what action to take: a “CEST-Jeunesse” report or a “CEST-Jeunesse” position statement. In both cases, the document is tabled with the ministère du Développement économique, de l’Innovation et de l’Exportation (Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export, MDEIE) through the Conseil de la science et de la technologie (CST).

### Educational Objectives

- In terms of science and technology development, take on an appropriate theme in terms of content in order to define ethical issues associated with this theme.
- Engage in deliberative ethics or discussion on the various facets of the issue under consideration in the context of identifying and prioritizing the values at stake
- Arrive at recommendations for policy makers and institutional decision-makers (or other parties who may be interested in the subject) to ensure ethical management of the issues raised as well as impacts on society or on some population segments.

## PROPOSED WORK THEME

For this third edition of CEST-Jeunesse, the Commission has chosen as its work theme **cyberbullying in the school setting**.

## ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CEST WITH RESPECT TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

1. In the first week of January, the Commission provides teachers who have agreed to take part in the project:
  - with a summary document giving an overview on the topic of cyberbullying;
  - with a bibliography on the subject;
  - with a list of suggested websites which may enrich reflection or provide further information.
2. Throughout the project, the Commission secretariat remains available to answer questions from teachers as necessary.
3. CEST takes care of organizing the April meeting in Quebec City and covers travel and subsistence costs for students making up “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” as well as teachers who have supervised these young people during the school term. The results of course work undertaken during the school term (summary and recommendations) must be submitted to the CEST secretariat no later than March 23rd, for distribution to all members of CEST and “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” two weeks ahead of the April meeting.
4. CEST members remain on site during the weekend meeting in April, to supervise and assist “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” in its work.
5. If the results of deliberations undertaken by the “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” are consistent with expected results, CEST publishes and disseminates a position statement based on those deliberations. The document based on the deliberations of “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” is submitted for adoption at CEST’s June meeting. The position statement is scheduled to be released in September.
6. The publication of a document based on the work of CEST-Jeunesse specifies the names of members of CEST-Jeunesse 2009 and their teachers.

## **PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS**

For this project, the Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie relies on the collaboration of CEGEP teachers who are offering the Ethics and Policy course.

The responsibilities of teachers

1. Incorporate the proposed topic in the content of the Ethics and Policy course for the winter 2009 term.
2. Propose research papers on the subject and discuss the subject with students.
3. Supervise students as usual.
4. Inform the secretariat (by email, for example) of any notable difficulties or successes encountered and, if necessary, propose adjustments or ask for help.
5. Providing the best research papers, summaries and draft recommendations by March 23rd 2009.
6. By March 23rd and in collaboration with students in the course, designate students as members of CEST-Jeunesse 2009; strike a balance between various training areas: science, social studies, vocational training;
7. Help those students so designated to draft a short CV (half a page) that will be distributed to all members of CEST-Jeunesse 2009 and a brief oral presentation (ten minutes). The CV and presentation should enable students to choose the president of CEST-Jeunesse 2009.
8. Accompany students and supervise them as needed.

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINES

- June 2008 – Adoption by CEST of the work theme
- Summer 2008 – Exploring the theme
- September 2008 – Call for nominations
- October 2008 – Selection of participating colleges and teachers
- December 2008 – Submission of summary document for teachers
- January 7th 2009 – Meeting of the Working Committee and participating teachers (Quebec)
- January 19th 2009 – Beginning of winter semester and the Ethics and Policy course with the working theme “Cyberbullying in the school setting”
- March 23rd 2009 – Receipt at the Commission secretariat of documents and proposed recommendations as well as names of student delegates with their CV
- April 6, 2009 – Mailing the conference workbook to individual members of “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” so they prepare for the April 2009 meeting
- April 17th 2009, evening – Reception for members of “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” and accompanying adults
- April 18th and April 19th - Proceedings of “CEST-Jeunesse 2009” and adoption of the draft position statement and recommendations
- April 19th – Closing lunch



## CEST-JEUNESSE 2009 MEETING PROGRAMME

### WORK SESSION FROM APRIL 17TH TO 19TH 2009

#### Station touristique Duchesnay

#### Opening evening of CEST-Jeunesse 2009

Friday, April 17th

*Auberge Duchesnay*

**17 h 30** Arrival at Duchesnay (registration at the Inn) and checking in at villas

*Salle Myosotis*

**18 h 30** Reception: M<sup>e</sup> Nicole Beaudry, CEST Secretary General  
Welcoming remarks: M<sup>e</sup> Edith Deleury, CEST Chair

**18 h 45** Introduction of participants and nomination for the presidency of CEST-Jeunesse 2009

**19 h 15** Cocktail and presentation, followed by a question period:

“Contre la cyberintimidation: de victime à acteur” (“Countering cyberbullying: from victim to actor”)

Mr. Francois Guité, coordinator of the Réseau d'information pour la réussite éducative (Learning Success Information Network) at the Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec

**20 h** Dinner

#### Discussion Day on cyberbullying

SATURDAY, APRIL 18TH

*Morning work – Pavillon Forestier*

**8 h 30** Overview of the subject: special concerns about cyberbullying among members of CEST-Jeunesse, as young people; definition and contextualization; identification of stakeholders directly or indirectly involved

**10 h** Health Break

**10 h 15** Start of work and discussions on the motivations of bullies and conditions facilitating bullying

**11 h 45** Summary of exchanges and questions or comments from observers

**12 h** Lunch at the Inn (*Bistro Quatre-temps*)

### *Afternoon work – pavillon forestier*

- 13 h 30** Resumption of work and discussions on the consequences of cyberbullying for specific stakeholders; definition of values at stake
- 15 h** Summary of exchanges and questions or comments from observers
- 15 h 15** Health Break
- 15 h 30** Resumption of work and discussions on possible solutions to counter cyberbullying: what role for each actor / stakeholder?
- 17 h** Summary of exchanges and questions or comments from observers
- 17 h 15** Free time
- 18 h 30** Dinner at the Inn (*Bistro Quatre-temps*)
- 20 h 30** Free time or pursuit of work without observers (only if necessary) – *Pavillon Élan* Hall (living-room)

## Formulation of recommendations

**SUNDAY, APRIL 19TH**

### *Morning Work – Pavillon Forestier*

- 9 h** Development of recommendations
- 10 h 15** Summary of exchanges and questions or comments from observers
- 10 h 30** Health Break
- 10 h 45** Resumption of work
- 12 h** Summary of exchanges and questions or comments from observers
- 12 h 30** Brunch at the Inn (*Bistro Quatre-temps*)
- 14 h** Closing Remarks and Acknowledgments





# MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION DE L'ÉTHIQUE DE LA SCIENCE ET DE LA TECHNOLOGIE

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Bioethics programmes  
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### M<sup>e</sup> Nicole Beaudry



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*Cyberbullying: an Ethical Examination Made by Young People* is a position statement stemming from work undertaken by a Youth Commission established by the Commission de l'éthique de la science et de la technologie. In their capacity as CÉGEP students, the members of CEST-Jeunesse have a good grasp of student realities. This has enabled them to rapidly develop ethical reflection on a topic that affects particularly young people nowadays: cyberbullying.

In the current position statement, CEST-Jeunesse 2009 first presents statistics on the integration of information technologies in young people's lives, then goes on to describe the benefits of using these technologies as well as the characteristics and the consequences of cyberbullying. The position statement also defines which values are at stake and which are in conflict. The last part of the position statement contains five recommendations aimed at preventing cyberbullying for the sake of better living together and with a view to supporting the different actors. A list of suggested actions to be taken, in order to prevent or stop cyberbullying, is found in the appendix.

This CEST-Jeunesse 2009 position statement and other CEST publications are available at [www.ethique.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.ethique.gouv.qc.ca)

*The mission of the CEST consists, on one hand, of informing, raising awareness, gathering, opinions, fostering reflection, and organizing debates on the ethical issues raised by developments in science and technology and, on the other hand, of proposing general guidelines for stakeholders to refer to in their decision making.*