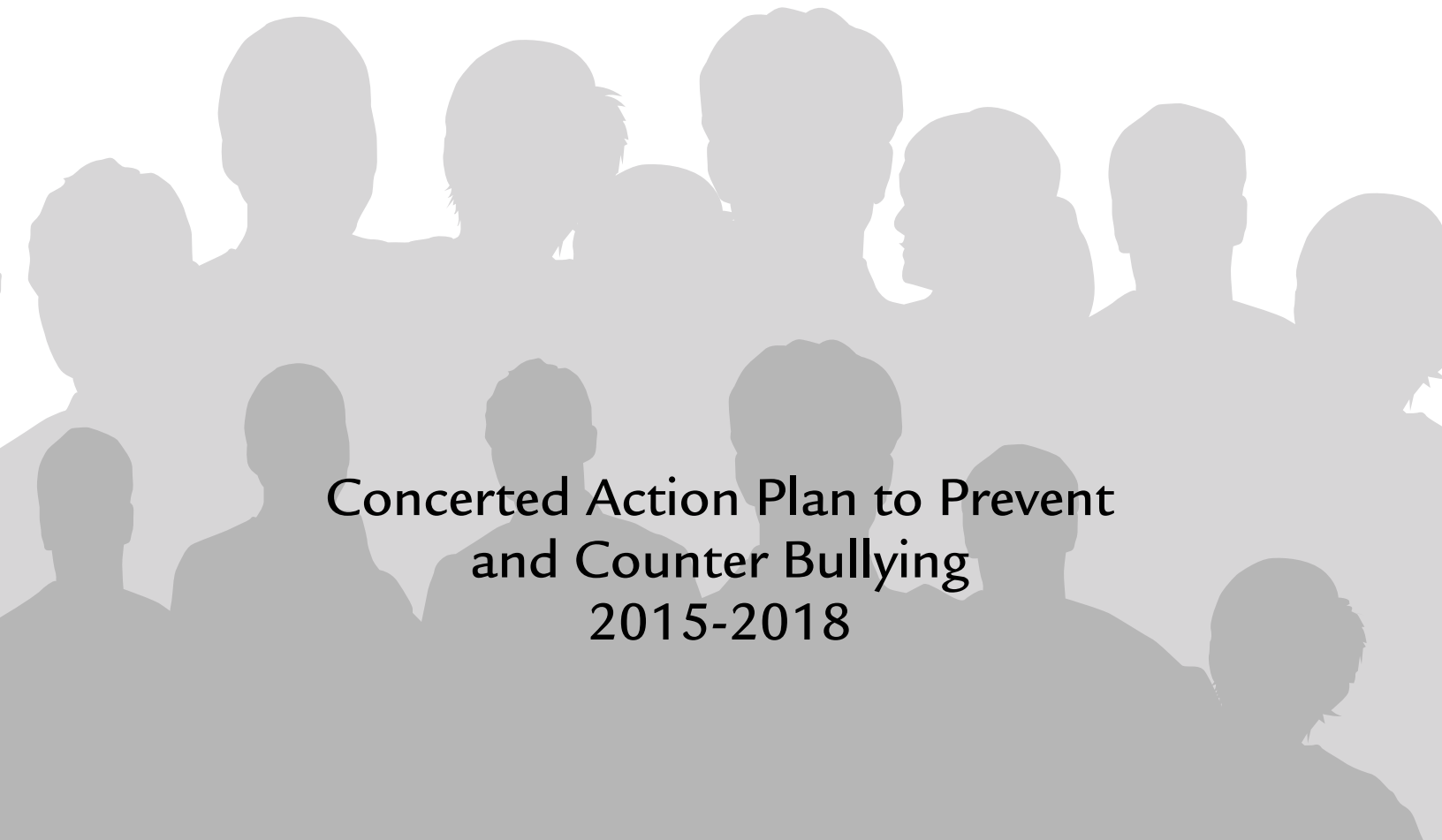


TOGETHER AGAINST

Bullying

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY



Concerted Action Plan to Prevent
and Counter Bullying
2015-2018

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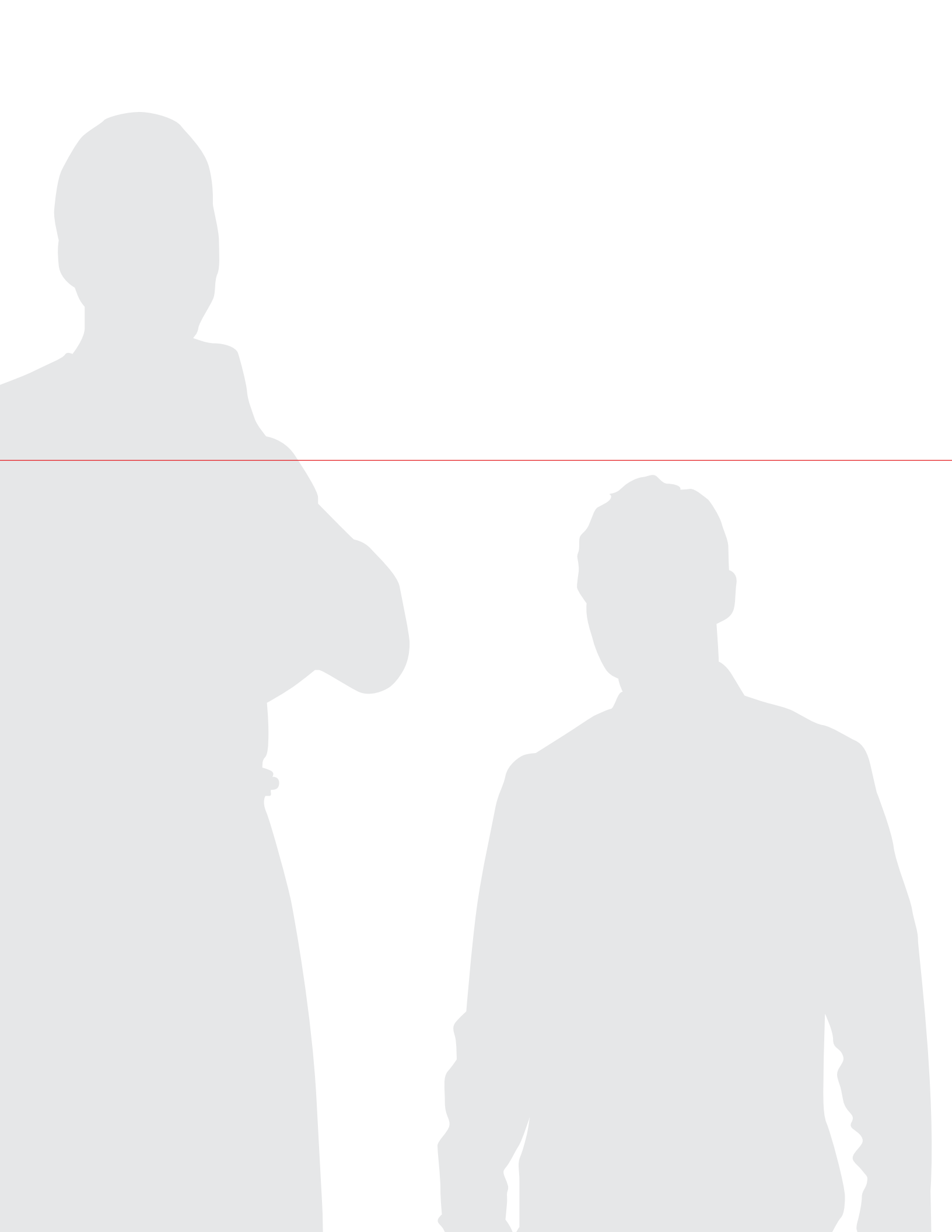
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Bullying is an affront to human dignity. We must fight it by acting firmly and cooperatively to create a movement across Québec that will enable all citizens to live and grow in a safe and healthy environment. Today in Québec we cannot accept that people are harassed or humiliated for their sexual orientation, appearance, origin, difference, or whatever other reason. Every citizen has the right to feel safe and respected everywhere.

On October 2, 2014, when I had the honour of presiding over the Forum sur la lutte contre l'intimidation (forum against bullying), I shared my goal with the people of Québec: to release in 2015 a plan for society in which everyone is called upon to create a common front against bullying. I am therefore proud to present this concerted action plan to prevent and counter bullying, "Together Against Bullying, A Shared Responsibility." This is the fruit of an exemplary governmental and citizen collaboration—a plan that is also distinguished by its non-partisan approach, with the three National Assembly opposition groups having been consulted throughout the process. In that regard, I extend my warm gratitude to them for their valued support.

The government and its partners are already taking action against the various forms of abuse and violence that may include acts of bullying. This action plan completes the measures that are in place with new initiatives to build a tolerant and respectful society—a society for all ages, which cares for its vulnerable members; a society that is open to differences and rich for its diversity. That is the Québec we strive to build together. Everyone is asked to participate.

The Premier of Québec,

Philippe Couillard

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF FAMILIES, MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR SENIORS, AND MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR ANTI-BULLYING



Minister of Families, Minister
responsible for Seniors,
and Minister responsible
for Anti-Bullying


Francine Charbonneau

On April 24, 2014, the Premier made a historic move by naming the first ever Cabinet Minister responsible for Anti-Bullying. I was very proud to accept this important mandate, from which this first concerted action plan against bullying has now resulted. The plan is a testament to our profound commitment and to our sincere desire to improve the lives of citizens.

The action plan stems from the will to give consideration to all individuals in Québec society—people of all ages and from all milieus—and to heighten public awareness, in order to prevent bullying and diminish its consequences.

Bullying can happen in any part of our living environment, be it at home, in a care facility, in the neighbourhood, at school, or at work. In recent years, bullying has also occurred in cyberspace, where our social interactions have now expanded.

Since the issues related to bullying affect us all, we have taken a collective approach to finding solutions. Participation at the Forum sur la lutte contre l'intimidation and response to the public consultations that followed confirmed the mobilization of citizens and organizations around this problem. The implementation of a concerted action plan is the next logical step to this mobilization and a response to the concerns expressed.

The result of this collective work is an action plan that marks the way for a society in which civility and respect for one another are fundamental, in all milieus. In particular, the plan focuses on the importance of realizing that bullying affects us all and concerns us in our relations with others. As Minister responsible for Anti-Bullying and on behalf of my colleagues, I invite you to participate in this collective effort to continue building a better Québec.

MESSAGE FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT TO THE PREMIER (YOUTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD, ANTI-BULLYING)



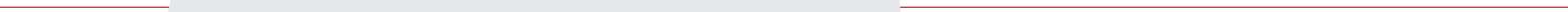
Parliamentary Assistant to
the Premier (Youth and Early
Childhood, Anti-Bullying)


Caroline Simard

I am very pleased to be involved in this effort to prevent and counter bullying. I am also thrilled by the inclusive nature of the action plan being launched by our government. The plan includes a set of transversal measures that will assist different groups, including youth.

Young people are currently benefiting from the actions of the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche to prevent and reduce bullying at school and will now be supported by new initiatives put forward by this action plan.

Those initiatives target schools as well as other spheres of life, such as sports where new efforts are being made to promote good sportsmanship. In addition, knowing that high school is unfortunately fertile ground for homophobic and transphobic bullying, I hope that the measures implemented to increase respect and openness will find a rapid response among youth. Everyone—whatever their differences—deserves to be treated with kindness, courtesy, and respect.



MESSAGES FROM THE OPPOSITION



Member for Richelieu and Official
Opposition Critic for Seniors
and Anti-Bullying

Sylvain Rochon

With this concerted action plan to prevent and counter bullying, Québec is giving itself an important tool to face this growing problem—one that has ramifications on all spheres of society. This plan is the result of a thorough consultation with members of the National Assembly, the various government departments concerned, and stakeholders working in the field. Its success will depend on the efforts made by all Quebecers. My party is proud to have participated in the preparation of this plan to ensure that the most vulnerable among us can live in a more respectful and just Québec.



Member for Repentigny and Second
Opposition Group Critic for Families
and Anti-Bullying

Lise Lavallée

Bullying is a disturbing phenomenon. The behaviour of some members of our society makes us realize that bullying is a scourge and that it's urgent we intervene to thwart the harmful effects these misdeeds can have on the public. As such, I am pleased to have collaborated on the 2015-2018 concerted action plan against bullying, which coordinates efforts and offers concrete measures to fight bullying. This is an important step to eliminate it and ensure the harmonious development of Québec society in the long term.



Member for Sainte-Marie-Saint-Jacques

Manon Massé

I am pleased to have collaborated with my colleagues from the other parties in this trans-partisan effort to fight bullying in Québec. This plan is a first step toward a more respectful society in which everyone can thrive in their differences. The expression of such differences enriches our society, and no one should have to suffer for them. Together, we can eliminate the stereotypes and prejudices that are the true sources of discrimination and bullying. Because we are all equal in dignity and in rights!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This action plan draws on various consultations:¹ the Forum sur la lutte contre l'intimidation (forum against bullying); targeted consultations with youth, seniors, and Aboriginal organizations; an online consultation; the submission of briefs;² and meetings with researchers and partners. The contributions of organizations, citizens, and researchers—who generously shared their experience, knowledge, and observations at one or another of these consultations—have enabled this action plan to be a concerted project.

The action plan also benefited from the reflections of members of the Comité d'experts sur la cyberintimidation (expert panel on cyber-bullying).³ We thank them for their invaluable contributions.

Finally, this concerted action plan was prepared by an inter-ministerial working committee coordinated by the Ministère de la Famille and on which other concerned government departments and agencies were represented. Their members also made valued contributions.⁴ We are grateful for their dedication and for having shared expert knowledge of their domain.

1. The consultations are presented in Appendix 1.

2. The list of people and organizations that submitted a brief is presented in Appendix 2.

3. Members of the Comité d'experts sur la cyberintimidation are listed in Appendix 3.

4. The list of government departments and agencies that served on the working committee is presented in Appendix 4.

In the last few years, the people of Québec have expressed alarm over bullying, including cyber-bullying. The consequences for both the people subject to bullying and those around them cannot be ignored and, in the end, concern all citizens. The cries for help from people who suffer from bullying and those close to them demonstrate the pressing need for concerted action to prevent and counter bullying and to propose solutions so that every person can live in a safe, benevolent environment that promotes their growth and well-being.

The action plan “Together Against Bullying, A Shared Responsibility” gives concrete expression to the Government of Québec’s commitment to counter bullying at all ages and in all environments, including in cyberspace.

In pursuing this commitment, the government can draw positively on the significant advances made in schools. For years now, the many stakeholders in this area have found ways to ensure a healthy and safe environment for Québec students and staff. With the adoption in 2012 of the Government Strategy Against Bullying and Violence in the Schools and the adoption of Bill 56, which amended the Public Education Act and the Private Education Act with special provisions, several actions have been taken to prevent and reduce acts of violence and bullying. These actions have grown over the years.

If these actions are still necessary among youth, especially in schools, then it is time to expand them into other areas. The approach taken by the Government of Québec is to ensure that the entire array of possible measures is employed, from promotion and awareness of the regulations to support and education.

On the one hand, the government is putting in place additional preventive measures and invites the entire population to build an inclusive society and to learn to live together more harmoniously. With this in mind, the action plan emphasizes the promotion of egalitarian relationships, civic behaviours, and cyber-citizenship, in part through a societal campaign. Special attention is given to the development of prosocial behaviours beginning in early childhood. Ultimately, living together harmoniously will become an objective shared by all.

On the other hand, the government employs measures to encourage the reporting of acts of bullying, to raise the awareness of witnesses, and to direct people affected by bullying as quickly as possible to resources to put an end to the situation and to restore balance in their lives. These measures include support for people who commit acts of bullying so that they can learn appropriate behaviours in their relations with others. The measures target behavioural change and the discouragement of bullying gestures. In this way, not only the relationship between the people who commit such acts and those who are subject to them, but also the witnesses and other people around them, can have an influence on resolving the situation. Among the most important means to respond to these needs are information and training so that every person feels enabled to act. The use of information and communications technologies (ICT)⁵ by a growing number of citizens in every age group increases the chances of being

5. The definitions of all initialisms and acronyms used in this document are presented in Appendix 5.

bullied online. Information and awareness of Internet users are also addressed, sometimes by specific measures and more frequently by the deployment of actions targeting bullying in a broader sense.

The Forum sur la lutte contre l'intimidation (forum against bullying) and targeted consultations with senior citizens, youth, and Aboriginals were an opportunity to learn that a multitude of stakeholders are concerned by bullying and that, over the years, they have developed highly relevant field expertise and have put in place partnerships that must be maintained and reinforced. These individuals and organizations, working in different environments, can bring important contributions so that the actions included in the present plan make a substantial difference in the field. In addition to measures that foster better knowledge and enhance the value of existing resources, one important measure in the plan is to support specific initiatives in the prevention of and action against bullying or to improve those already in place.

The measures proposed in this action plan lead and support the government's initiatives already in place and the existing legislation. On the one hand, bullying is often an integral part of other forms of violence or discrimination, which the government and its partners already address through policies, action plans, and strategies.

On the other hand, an analysis of the existing legislative framework⁶ shows that it is already legally possible to punish acts of bullying. Whether in charters or laws, existing legislation describes different illegal acts and misconduct related to bullying, including cyber-bullying, which can result in criminal charges or civil suits, including in situations of violence, abuse, discrimination, and harassment. If, in the opinion of legal experts, the existing laws are sufficient, actions are still necessary to support the legal education of all citizens and to ensure better understanding of the law.

The action plan is a continuation of the Government Sustainable Development Strategy. It particularly supports the objective of promoting healthier and safer living environments. Its actions are compatible with many basic principles including health and quality of life, prevention, fairness and social cohesiveness, participation and commitment, access to knowledge, and partnership.

Convinced of the necessity of continuing and expanding the actions it has undertaken, and to give concrete expression to its commitment to this priority of preventing and countering bullying, the government is investing \$4.4 million over three years for the implementation of this action plan. These investments are in addition to actions already in progress and to come by government departments and agencies as well as a plethora of initiatives carried out by the different communities involved. This action plan embodies a project to build together an inclusive and benevolent society.

6. This legislative framework is summarized in Appendix 6.

DEFINITION

In the Education Act, the word “bullying” means: “any repeated direct or indirect behaviour, comment, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not, including in cyberspace, which occurs in a context where there is a power imbalance between the persons concerned and which causes distress and injures, hurts, oppresses, intimidates or ostracizes” (Section 13, para. 1.1).

This action plan is based on this definition and broadens the application to all living environments. To ensure a common understanding, the preferred approach is to take time to describe the many situations and behaviours that can be experienced when one believes that acts of bullying are involved. The explanations and examples given here clarify the concept of bullying and foster an understanding of this action plan’s scope.

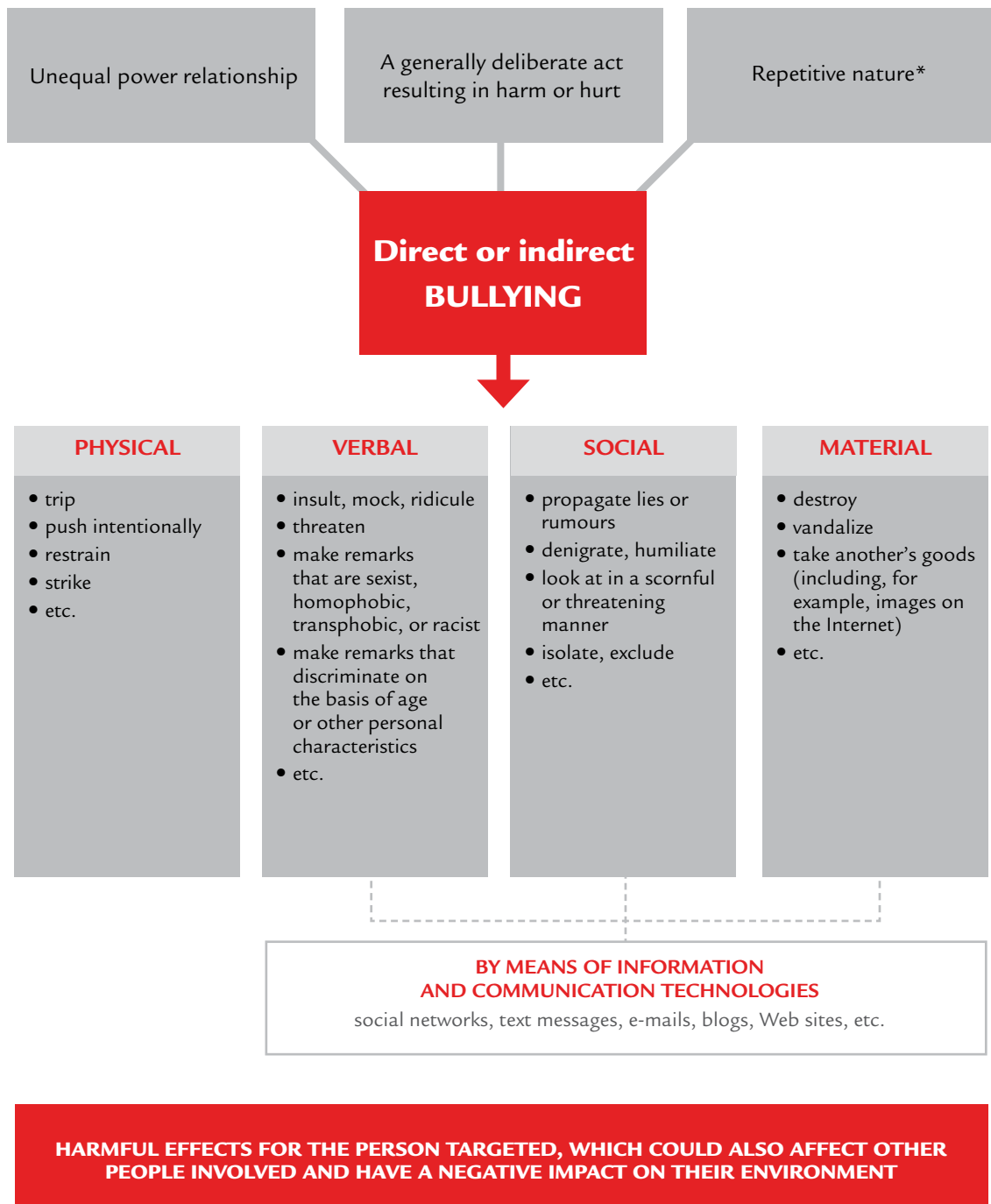
BULLYING: CHARACTERISTICS AND MANIFESTATIONS

Figure 1 presents the key elements that must all be present before one can conclude that an act can be considered as bullying.⁷ The situation must be considered from every angle: the context, the nature of the gestures, and the consequences for the person targeted. Various clarifications are provided after the figure; they explain certain features of these characteristics.

7. This figure was developed with the goal of explaining certain characteristics of bullying to facilitate understanding. Other descriptions are possible, and the present figure is subject to change over time.

Figure 1

CHARACTERISTICS AND MANIFESTATIONS OF BULLYING



* Depending on the context, a single—objectively serious—gesture could also be associated with acts of bullying without being repetitive in nature (i.e. assault causing injury, armed assault, or death threat).

Clarifications with regard to characteristics

- The effects of gestures on the targeted person must always be evaluated. Many acts are not criminal in themselves but have serious consequences for the person targeted (e.g. distress, insecurity, low self-esteem, humiliation, a feeling of powerlessness, etc.) and, in this sense, constitute bullying.

The same gestures may not be considered as bullying if the targeted person does not feel affected. This situation in no way excludes the need for a response to inappropriate behaviour whether it constitutes bullying or not.

- Regarding the repetitive nature, several important clarifications are required:
 - The repetition may result from the fact that the act is repeated many times over a certain period (e.g. one student pushes another when they arrive in front of their lockers at the same time. The situation persists over several weeks.).
 - Repetition may also result when several different people perform the same gesture regularly (e.g. steal their hat, push, insult). Even if each person only performed the gesture once, the sum of the individual acts constitutes bullying.
 - A single gesture that affects the physical or moral integrity of a person requires an intervention even if it is not repetitive.
 - Most single gestures that are objectively considered serious are punishable under the Criminal Code and may be subject to a complaint to police for investigation. If applicable, a complaint may be submitted to the Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales (DPCP, director of criminal and penal prosecutions).
- Although gestures of bullying generally refer to a deliberate behaviour, in some situations they may be involuntary or without realizing the effect on others. This may be the case with youth who, lacking maturity, don't anticipate the effects of their actions, or people with neurological disorders (e.g. associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), cranial trauma, or the consequences of aging) that prevent them from objectively assessing the impact of their behaviour and rob them of the ability to restrain themselves from performing certain gestures. Therefore, the personal characteristics of the author of these acts must always be taken into account.
- The characteristic entitled "Unequal power relationship" may be the result of superiority in numbers, age, physical strength, authority, difference in abilities, or the desire of one participant to gain power at the expense of the other.

Cyber-bullying

Although online bullying is generally the extension into cyberspace of unhealthy relationships that can occur elsewhere, it has characteristics that distinguish it from bullying in the physical presence of a person. The behaviours associated with cyber-bullying exist in an environment in which time and space relations are different. The consequences and even the forms taken by cyber-bullying are influenced by the omnipresence of information and communications technologies, the almost unlimited audience, the "virtual" nature of interactions, the feeling of anonymity, and the spontaneity of communication.

Cyber-bullying does not always result from harmful, malicious, or deliberate intent, but it may have unexpected consequences that the people involved may not be able to control since, in cyberspace, a single act may be repeated indefinitely, copied instantly, and perpetuated in an environment that is very public and has an almost unlimited audience.

Examples of bullying

- A young boy who doesn't fit sexual stereotypes is regularly called "fag" in the cafeteria or gymnasium by some classmates. Other students start to avoid him, and he suffers from this isolation. He tries by every means possible to avoid these locations.
- In a private retirement residence, a senior repeatedly insults another resident. The target of the insults increasingly stays away from common areas to avoid these verbal attacks.
- Some students make fun of the weight of a teacher in a video released on the Internet and forwarded by a large number of users. The teacher suffers consequences that affect his personal and professional life.
- A young girl with an intellectual disability often has her hat, umbrella, or boots taken from her on the school bus. She often cries during the trip and has tantrums before going to school.
- False rumours concerning the sexual behaviour of a girl are circulated at school and in social media. The girl feels humiliated. She does not want to return to her school and is frequently absent without authorization.
- In an arena, a coach repeatedly threatens and insults a young referee during a hockey game. Some parents join in and aggravate the situation. The young referee becomes more and more nervous and full of self-doubt.
- A black boy is the target of repeated racist insults from a group of high school students. He doesn't know how to react, begins to isolate himself, and has difficulty concentrating. This has negative consequences on his academic achievements and personal well-being.
- Degrading graffiti appears regularly on the locker of a homosexual athlete. She does not feel accepted by her teammates, feels lonely, and gives up training and competitions.

Situations that are not bullying

- An argument among friends.
- One person insults another but the targeted person reacts, and the situation is resolved. Neither is the situation bullying if the targeted person decides that the behaviour is not acceptable and puts an end to the relationship or friendship.
- Teasing which amuses everyone, including the person being teased.
- A driver expresses frustration by honking at a traffic light.

Bullying and associated phenomena

The manifestations of bullying may be part of a larger and punishable offence such as abuse, negligence, discrimination, exploitation, or domestic, family, or sexual violence.⁸ For example:

- Bullying is often part of the cycle of **domestic violence**.
- Bullying is, on occasion, a component of **abuse**.
- Victims of **sexual aggression** may be bullied by their aggressor to ensure their silence.
- When a person's belongings are stolen, vandalized, or destroyed (e.g. painting graffiti on a locker, car, or other personal belongings; breaking personal belongings), it is a **criminal act** that can also constitute bullying.
- When a minor sends an intimate image of him- or herself to his or her partner and then finds the image circulating on social networks, he or she may feel betrayed and humiliated. The persons circulating the image, including the minor who created it, may be accused of **possession and distribution of child pornography** and of **publication of an intimate image without consent** (Criminal Code).

Bullying is sometimes confused with associated phenomena. The most important thing is not necessarily to be able to distinguish problems; whether it meets the definition of bullying or not, a gesture that can harm a person's physical or moral integrity should be stopped and met with support for the person.

Examples of behaviours that do not constitute bullying but are nevertheless inappropriate

EXAMPLES	THIS IS ACTUALLY...
A landlord refuses to rent a property to an ethno-cultural minority.	Discrimination
An employer promotes only men within his company.	Sexism
A relative at a family party spends the evening making derogatory jokes and comments about immigrants.	Racism
A manager refuses to hire a handicapped person, believing that the individual won't be productive or won't integrate well with the team.	Discrimination
A man demands access to the bank account of his aging mother claiming that he will go shopping for her. In fact, he uses it to pay some of his own bills. This puts a strain on her finances, and she has difficulty meeting her own needs.	Abuse
A coach asks a swimmer on the team to undress before him for physical condition evaluation purposes.	Sexual assault
A man, unhappy with his wife's behaviour, hits her.	Domestic violence
An argument among young adults in a bar ends in a brawl.	Violence (assault)

8. The phenomena are defined in a glossary in Appendix 7.

CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING

Some researchers and specialists are interested in the consequences of bullying and the risk and protective factors. By building on their work,⁹ we can draw some conclusions, which are summarized in this section and the next.

The consequences of bullying can vary depending on the age and other personal characteristics of the person suffering from those consequences. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, can have an impact on both physical and mental health. Victims are likely to experience consequences in various aspects of their life, and these may have lasting effects.

People who experience bullying may feel fear, insecurity, and anguish and may develop symptoms of low self-esteem, anxiety, or depression, which may even lead to thoughts of suicide.¹⁰ They may also develop high levels of stress, a feeling of guilt, gain or lose weight, or become ill. They may live in social isolation and have their reputation damaged. Among young people who are subjected to acts of bullying there may be consequences on their academic performance (difficulties in learning, concentration, absenteeism, dropping out), problematic social relationships, and an increased risk of delinquency. Bullying of the elderly may have consequences on their functional level, while the bullying of handicapped people may increase the severity of their handicap. The prejudices and stereotypes conveyed about handicapped people and the discrimination and bullying that these attitudes generate can become barriers for their participation in society. People who suffer from bullying may also become the authors of bullying themselves.

The report of the Comité d'experts sur la cyberintimidation (expert panel on cyber-bullying) mentions the distinctive consequences of cyber-bullying as well as the effects on victims: loss of privacy, invasion of privacy, an inability to defend oneself since the identity of the perpetrator is not always known to the person experiencing the bullying.

Bullying may also have an effect on people close to the situation (family, school, sports team, residence, etc.). It is not simply a problem for individuals but may extend to an entire community.

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Situations of bullying may be influenced by different risk and protective factors. Some factors are linked to the characteristics of the individual while others are associated with the social environment, specific attributes of the living environment, or more broadly social determinants. These different factors can have an influence on each other, and the significance varies from one person to the next, one setting to the next, and even from one situation to the next.

Researchers frequently cite individual protective factors as being self-confidence, the ability to express oneself, and social skills. These factors can protect people from victimization, and they are also tools that enable people to assert themselves and to take their place in society without resorting to bullying. Conversely, the risk factors are low self-esteem, being introverted, and difficult social relationships.

9. The sources for the conclusions drawn here are included at the end of this document in the section entitled "Main Reference Documents".

10. Prudence dictates great care before establishing a direct link between bullying (in person or online) and suicide. Although research frequently establishes a link between victimization and depression, the Association québécoise de prévention du suicide reminds us that anyone may have suicidal thoughts, but there are several factors that can weaken the individual (predisposing, contributing, or precipitating factors) or help the person (protective factors).

People who bully typically have little empathy for others, low self-esteem, and poor social skills. In some situations, bullying is encouraged by their social environment with benefits for the perpetrator (e.g. winning at sports, recognition from peers, etc.). In other cases, people who commit acts of bullying may be expressing their own distress by using violent acts.

Stereotypes and prejudices are often the basis for bullying since some people are perceived as being different, either because of their ethno-cultural origins, sexual identity or orientation, appearance (including weight), personal issues (e.g. drug addiction, homelessness, or delinquent conduct), or their disability or use of any means to palliate it. In these cases, they may show characteristics that render them more vulnerable to bullying.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) people may be highly vulnerable, particularly during adolescence. It may be difficult for those who are uncertain of their sexual orientation, or those who have not yet revealed it, to ask for help when they are subject to bullying.

The disabled, either young, adult, or senior, and regardless of their environment, may be more vulnerable to bullying than people without disabilities, because of their marked difference.

As for Aboriginals, the persistence of prejudice feeds demonstrations of discrimination and racism against them. Aboriginals living in urban environments or in transit through cities seem to be particularly exposed to such demonstrations, which may occur in the form of bullying gestures or speech.

In any setting, different social determinants, such as the socioeconomic context, the political context, living conditions, or the social network, may result in consequences including exclusion, isolation, poverty, or stigmatization. These are complex risk factors that underpin the phenomenon of bullying. In an Aboriginal setting, for example, the colonial past has important impacts on physical and psychological well-being and affects living conditions in the communities; these factors are likely to influence the prevalence of bullying within their communities and towards members of these communities.

Although many of the social determinants are beyond the scope of this action plan, taking into account the social dynamics surrounding bullying in different settings may allow us to better understand the factors that motivate these acts and to adjust our response appropriately. Prevention, notably by encouraging social equality and prosocial behaviours, may have a beneficial influence on the well-being of individuals, on their environment, and on their quality of life.

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Bullying may be present in any living environment: at home, in residences, in learning institutions, in the neighbourhood, the workplace, or any other public place. The commitment to prevent and counter bullying is therefore the responsibility of everyone. Whether they are peers, family, volunteers, service providers, or managers, everyone has a role to play in the promotion of equal, civic, and inclusive relationships, in the prevention of bullying, and in responding to it.

The creation and support of conditions favourable to the growth, well-being, and safety of people is the shared responsibility of citizens, communities, and government. Every person should feel concerned about bullying, promote civic behaviour and egalitarian relationships, act at the first signs of bullying, and report such situations, whether they are the person targeted or not, someone close to the situation, or a witness.

The government, the associations that work in various settings, and the people concerned also share responsibility for the support of people targeted by bullying to provide them with the tools to act and to provide assistance for those carrying out acts of bullying so that they can begin to change their behaviour. The participation of various groups in taking action is considered a winning formula by many stakeholders. Initiatives that require the involvement of groups concerned (particularly youth) in the selection, planning, and execution of the interventions must be encouraged.

INCLUSIVE APPROACH

This action plan proposes measures that are applicable to the entire population without specifically targeting any of the groups identified as being particularly vulnerable to bullying during our many prior consultations. The actions proposed were developed to be as inclusive as possible so that they can be applied to, and respond to, various realities and situations. No matter the context or the environment in which a person lives, each citizen is concerned, young, adult, or senior, whether they are LGBT, from an ethno-cultural or racial minority, whether or not they are handicapped physically, intellectually, in speech or language, visually, auditorily, or associated with another sense, connected with an autism spectrum disorder or a mental disability, whatever their weight, their physical characteristics, or their health status.

As for Aboriginals, their unique legal status calls on the Government of Québec to adapt its actions to the context particular to First Nations and Inuit people. This plan demonstrates a desire that some of its measures be adapted to their realities.

EDUCATIONAL AND POSITIVE APPROACH

The necessity of approaching the question of bullying in a positive manner—by first promoting healthy and egalitarian relationships—rather than by an approach of repression and punishment, has been emphasized many times in briefs and during the forum, in particular by researchers, specialists, and field workers as well as by members of the Comité d'experts sur la cyberintimidation. Thus, this action plan focuses on the promotion of inclusive, respectful, and egalitarian relationships, on awareness and prevention, and on learning expected behaviours and developing protective factors.

No situation justifies an act of bullying. The guidelines proposed here regarding the authors of bullying are based on an educational approach, on changing behaviours, and on restorative justice, in particular among youth, by adapting the response to the age and the level of maturity of the people involved.

This approach does not exclude, where necessary, the use of existing legal remedies.¹¹

MULTIFACTOR AND INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Bullying goes beyond the simple relationship between the perpetrator and target. It is the result of an array of individual and social factors, on which we need to act. A multifactor approach takes into account the situation in its entirety. It considers the different dimensions pertaining to the people involved but also the environment in which they interact. Each situation is unique, and the different actions should be adapted and implemented in a coherent and complementary fashion, so that among other things protective factors will be enhanced and risk factors reduced.

COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES TO EXISTING GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS

The measures undertaken to prevent and counter bullying lead and support other governmental actions and existing legislation. Legal provisions often apply broadly and protect citizens in a variety of ways. Several policies and governmental action plans currently in place address specific problems that can be linked or related to bullying. The measures developed and presented in this action plan are intended to enhance those measures, which contribute to the prevention and reduction of these types of violence.

Different actions directly related to the prevention of bullying and to intervention are already being carried out by schools and by the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche. In April 2008, this Ministry launched a three-year action plan to prevent and respond to school violence. The three years of the plan's execution enabled: a structure for support and assistance for school boards and schools; common knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of violence and the best practices to prevent and deal with it; a mobilization of the educational community in a thoughtful, structured, and concerted approach to put in place their local strategy to prevent and respond to violence. School boards and schools expended great effort in the fight against violence and bullying since the launch of the Action plan to prevent and deal with violence in the schools 2008-2011. These efforts have been heightened since the adoption of Bill 56, in June 2012, which amended the Public Education Act and the Private Education Act, making clear the obligations of all stakeholders in the educational system in the fight against violence and bullying. Since then, school boards and public and private educational institutions have worked to implement these new legal provisions, in particular the adoption of a plan, by each school, to fight bullying and violence.

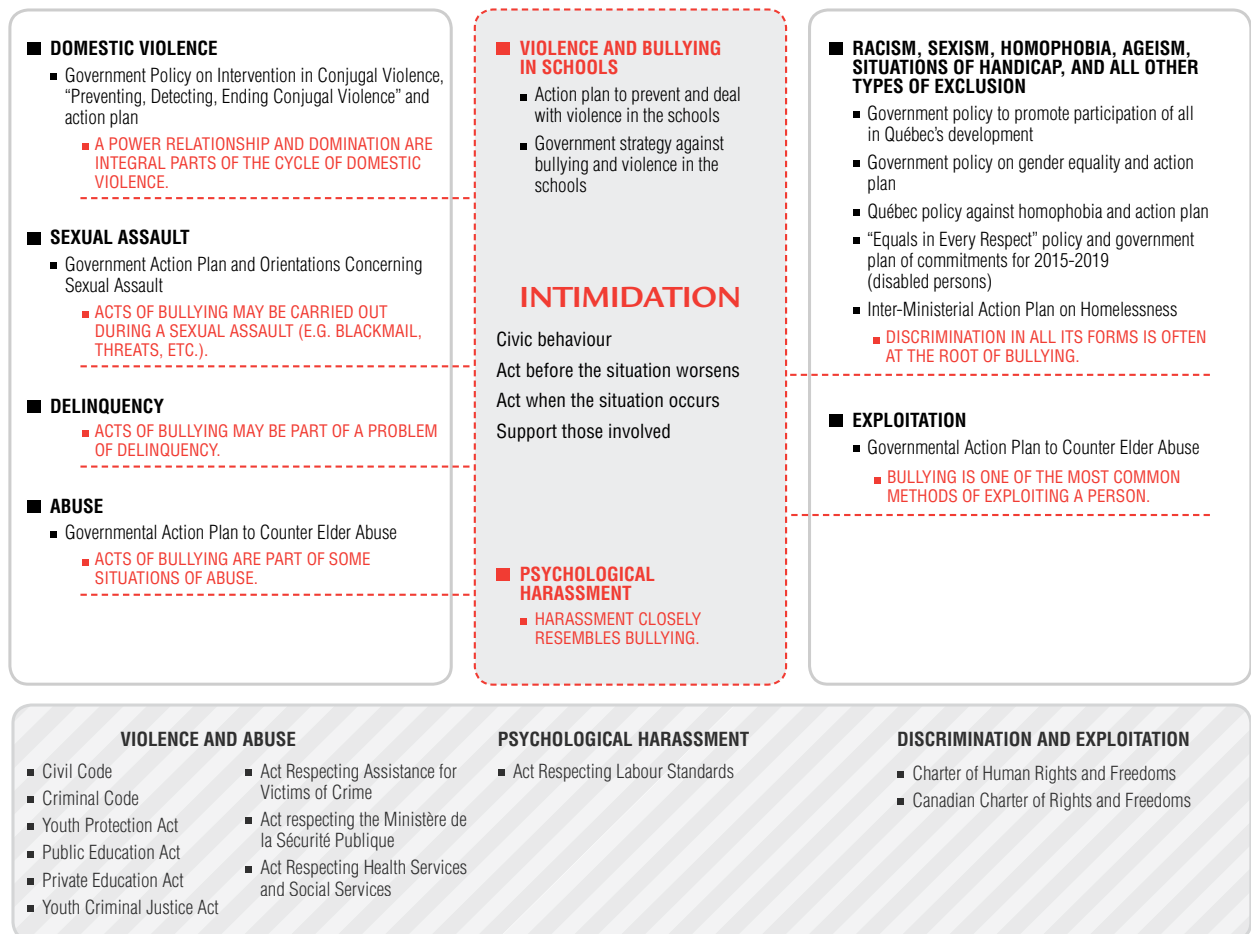
11. For more information on the legislative framework, see Appendix 6.

Harassment in the workplace, which shares many of the characteristics of bullying, has been regulated since 2004. Psychological harassment in the workplace has been recognized in Québec as a prohibited practice, and employers that are subject to the Act Respecting Labour Standards must take reasonable means to prevent it and to put an end to it, if applicable. With this prohibition, the government favours a preventive approach to ensure a healthy and respectful work environment for employees and is taking action to end psychological harassment when it is brought to the attention of the employer.

Figure 2 illustrates the interrelation between bullying and associated phenomena for which the Government of Québec has already taken action; it presents the position of this action plan in relation to existing governmental actions.

Figure 2

BULLYING AND GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS



The guidelines of the action plan “Together Against Bullying, A Shared Responsibility” were developed to complement and promote the many actions already put in place by the government and its partners.

For example, many community organizations offer programs and activities to prevent bullying and cyber-bullying.

In the educational environment, there is a wide variety of measures in place both at the elementary and secondary levels focussed on the people targeted by bullying, on those who commit acts of violence and bullying, and on those who witness these acts. These measures are aimed at both promoting prosocial and civic behaviours and at preventing and reducing aggressive behaviours. The goal is to offer a safe and positive school environment for all students and adults who attend the school. Adult education centres and vocational institutions are also encouraged to put in place a plan for countering bullying and violence while respecting these guidelines. Nevertheless, schools cannot do everything alone. Collaboration between different partners in the educational network, particularly parents, is essential and is a necessary condition to reach the established goals.

In order to prevent and counter violence and bullying, most police departments are present in schools depending on the needs and their capacity to respond to the demands of the school authorities.

Many initiatives that promote sportsmanship also address the prevention of bullying. Sports and schools still remain areas in which promotion and awareness must be continued.

After considering existing actions and in light of the needs expressed by citizens, specialists, and organizations during the many consultations held before developing this plan, five orientations were identified:

- Orientation 1: Benevolent living environment respectful of everyone; egalitarian relationships and civic behaviour
- Orientation 2: An aware and committed public
- Orientation 3: Service providers who are trained and equipped
- Orientation 4: Support and tools for those targeted by bullying, witnesses, and those who perpetrate it
- Orientation 5: Actions based on evidence

The following section describes the measures for each orientation. Some may apply to the objectives of several orientations but they are listed only once, under the orientation that best represents them. In addition, some measures deal explicitly with cyber-bullying, but this does not exclude other measures from also having an impact on this problem.

ORIENTATION 1: BENEVOLENT LIVING ENVIRONMENT RESPECTFUL OF EVERYONE; EGALITARIAN RELATIONSHIPS AND CIVIC BEHAVIOUR

Regardless of their nature, differences are often the source of bullying. These acts are often the result of attitudes of exclusion, prejudice, discrimination, intolerance, or the absence of egalitarian belief. Homophobic harassment, for example, is one of the commonest forms of bullying, among youth in particular. People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans (LGBT), or who do not fit within standards of sexual norms, suffer from the lack of openness and civility of too many of their fellow citizens.

Civility, respect for differences, the equality of all people, inclusion, and mutual support are all values to be encouraged in our living environment for the enhancement of social participation, the growth of individuals and harmonious relations, and the removal of sources of bullying. It is essential to counter stereotypes and prejudice whether they are based on ethno-cultural origins, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, the existence of a handicap or of a method of mitigating one, weight, beauty, age, or financial situation, for example.

It is incumbent on each citizen to use respectful and socially appropriate behaviours with others, in person and in cyberspace, no matter what the situation. Every adult contributes to building a benevolent society simply by acting as a model to children and youth and, more generally, in their community. In the larger view, communities and institutions must focus on individual responsibility and promote prosocial behaviours and cyber-citizenship. Inclusive values must also be apparent in the way they respond to the needs of every person in various living environments.

Building a benevolent society starts in early childhood. It is important to act early to support the social and emotional development of young children and to allow them to learn the prosocial skills necessary for them to adopt the healthy attitudes towards relationships that they will use throughout their life.

At a preschool age it is premature to associate physical or verbal aggression among young children with bullying. During this time, children are developing the capacity to behave in a socially acceptable manner while at the same time their brain is maturing and they are acquiring language skills, among others. At this time, they need to feel safe and to develop in a social and physical environment that is affectionate and respectful. The nurturing and support of parents and other adults enable children to develop a positive attitude towards life in society and inclusive reflexes towards diverse cultures and “differences”, a strong identity, a sense of self-confidence, and good self-esteem.

It is also important to teach young school-age children to use information technologies in a manner that is respectful to others since these technologies are now incorporated into their environment at a younger and younger age.

Finally, over the last 20 years, the practice of sports has taken a larger place in people’s daily activities because of the efforts made to encourage healthy habits within Québec society. Sports activities are beneficial to physical health, and they are most often carried out in a social context where living in a harmonious environment has meaning. Developing a sense of sportsmanship ensures that the activities are carried out and supervised in a healthy, pleasant, ethical, and safe manner. Actions must continue to be reinforced in this regard.

Objectives:

- Raise awareness among the general public and communities of the importance of adopting civic attitudes and relations that are inclusive, egalitarian, and accepting of difference.
- Support, as early as possible, the development of prosocial behaviour, assertiveness, and empathy.
- Promote sportsmanship.

CIVIC BEHAVIOUR, INCLUSION, AND EGALITARIAN RELATIONSHIPS		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
1.1	Implement a societal campaign promoting civic behaviour and inclusion (living harmoniously with others), including in cyberspace.	- General public - Adults - Youth	MCE, (SCG) Famille, MEESR, MJQ (BLCH)		2015-2018
1.2	Invite Internet service providers and other parties involved to actively promote the appropriate use of digital media by highlighting civic behaviour and the protection of privacy.	- General public - Adults - Youth	Famille, MSP MEESR, MJQ	Internet service providers	2016-2018
1.3	Develop a special section dealing with the emotional and romantic lives of youth on the Web portal on equality and sexual and sexist stereotypes.	- Educational childcare staff - School settings - Parents	MJQ (SCF) Famille, MEESR, MSSS	Other partners	Continual
1.4	Promote the tool "Ensemble, on s'élève!" which creates awareness of the potential of young handicapped people. This is an activity kit that leads participants to understand that young handicapped persons can learn and develop according to their aptitudes, needs, and hopes, just like anyone else. The activities encourage youth to think of ways of enhancing the participation of handicapped youth in their environment and the participation of handicapped persons in society in general.	- School settings and recreational environments	OPHQ		2015-2017
1.5	Assist public and private schools in improving the way they take into account diversity in both gender and families.	- School settings	MEESR MJQ (BLCH)	- FCSQ - Discussion table on homophobia	2015-2017

DEVELOPMENT OF PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOURS		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
1.6	Enrich Québec's educational program for childcare services (Programme éducatif du Québec), "Meeting Early Childhood Needs" ("Accueillir la petite enfance"), which favours the global development of children; and establish a reference framework for the social and emotional development of young children.	- Daycare for children ages 0 to 5	Famille MEESR, MSSS	- AEETEE - AGPQ - AQCPE - CEIDF - COSGEE - RGPQ - Équipe de recherche Qualité éducative des services de garde et petite enfance - Avenir d'enfants	2017
1.7	Emphasize the development of social skills among young children, pursuing the social campaign "Help them Grow" ("Naître et grandir") and in the contents of its magazine and Web site.	- General public - Parents and grandparents - Stakeholders in early childhood	Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation	- Comité d'experts en petite enfance (expert panel in early childhood) - Avenir d'enfants - Ministère de la Famille	2015-2018
1.8	Identify the current elements of the Québec Education Program that could, starting in the fourth year of elementary school, support a learning continuum on the responsible and ethical use of social media and information and communications technologies.	- School staff	MEESR		2016-2017
PROMOTION OF SPORTSMANSHIP		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
1.9	Promote sportsmanlike conduct and the positive values of sport:				
1.9.1	Designate one or more persons as a sportsmanship ambassador to engage stakeholders and workers in schools and sports to raise their awareness of their ability to create safe and healthy practices in sports and recreation for youth and their families.	- Youth in public and private schools and sports - Parents	MEESR	- Ambassador(s) to be designated	2016-2018
1.9.2	A. Update the promotion of sportsmanship and the positive value of sport during the Jeux du Québec by including the prevention of bullying. B. Include activities to promote awareness of sportsmanship during physical education courses. C. Review and harmonize the promotional tools for sportsmanship among recognized sports federations.	- Youth in sports - Elementary and high school students	MEESR	- Umbrella organizations in sports - FEEPEQ	A. 2016-2017 B. 2017-2018 C. Continual

PROMOTION OF SPORTSMANSHIP	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
1.9.3 Improve understanding of the rules of the game among parents and spectators; promote and recognize the work of referees by putting in place the project "Excellence en arbitrage" (EXAR).	- Sport environments - Parents of young sport players - People attending sporting events	MEE SR	- Sport federations - Arenas - Municipalities	Continual
1.9.4 Make a public statement regarding the importance of sportsmanship, prosocial behaviour, and fun in practising sports when inappropriate acts occur and are broadcast in professional sporting events or in elite leagues.	- Sport environments - General public	MEE SR	- Sport governing organizations	Continual

ORIENTATION 2: AN AWARE AND COMMITTED PUBLIC

Bullying, including cyber-bullying, can be prevented when people are aware of the problems related to it, including the causes and effects. A person who is aware is a person who is well informed and who then has more power to act.

The commitment of citizens and the mobilization of communities become possible when they understand the phenomenon and its implications. It is therefore important to facilitate access to relevant and accurate information on bullying, on the available resources, on the actions to be prioritized to prevent bullying or to react appropriately when such a situation occurs, etc.

Stakeholders involved in providing public information, including the media, play a powerful role. They can become valuable partners in collective mobilization, and by keeping them properly informed of what constitutes bullying and what does not they can help to build a better common understanding of the phenomenon.

Municipalities and band councils, as local community organizations, can play an important role and are encouraged to use the means at their disposal to raise awareness among members of their communities on the importance of preventing and countering bullying and to work together to build a safe and benevolent environment.

Finally, the recognition of exemplary actions can contribute to mobilization by encouraging the commitment of people and organizations so that more and more citizens of Québec, young and old, become fully aware of their power to act in preventing and countering bullying in all its forms.

Objectives:

- Inform and raise the awareness of the public about the phenomenon of bullying and increase their power to act.
- Support the stakeholders who provide public information and people interacting on the Internet.
- Encourage action within municipalities and band councils.
- Underscore exemplary actions.

RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
2.1	Prepare and implement a strategy to raise awareness and inform the public specifically about bullying, including:				
2.1.1	A media initiative with more targeted awareness objectives.	- General public - Youth - Adults	Famille MCE (SCG)		2016-2018
2.1.2	A social media presence to raise awareness continuously, on various platforms, of the importance of preventing bullying and of acting quickly.	- Youth - Adults	Famille Inter-ministerial committee		Continual
2.1.3	Development of the Web section, intimidation.gouv.qc.ca (bullying.gouv.qc.ca), to inform citizens about bullying, the ways to prevent it and respond, available resources, etc.	- General public - Organizations	Famille Inter-ministerial committee	- Content experts	Continual
2.1.4	Improvement of the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones Web site and enhancement of existing communication channels to inform First Nations and Inuit of the governmental and Aboriginal initiatives to prevent and counter bullying.	- First Nations and Inuit	MCE (SAA)	- Aboriginal organizations	Continual
2.1.5	Improvement of the Government of Québec's "Santé et mieux-être" portal to inform and support the public, vulnerable groups and their families, and parents and people close to children under 18 regarding the phenomenon of bullying.	- General public - Vulnerable clients and people close to them - Parents and people close to children and youth aged 0 to 18	MSSS Famille, MEESR		Continual from 2016 on
2.1.6	Inform seniors about cyber-security and responsible behaviour in cyberspace by means of a microsite called "cybervigilance.quebec," offering two quizzes that raise awareness and provide information on resources.	- Seniors	Famille (SA)	- CEFRIQ	Continual

SUPPORT FOR THE MEDIA		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
2.2	Produce an online information package for stakeholders that disseminate public information and interact in the public space, including the media, on the phenomenon of bullying, including cyber-bullying, taking into account the different realities experienced by genders.	- Media and other actors that interact in the public sphere	Famille Inter-ministerial committee	- INSPQ	Fall 2017
2.3	Invite the media to adopt guidelines on how they treat and broadcast information about bullying, including cyber-bullying.	- Media	Famille, MSP MEESR, MJQ, MSSS		2016-2017

PARTICIPATION OF MUNICIPALITIES AND BAND COUNCILS		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
2.4	Encourage municipalities and band councils to use the means at their disposal to help prevent and fight bullying:				
2.4.1	Put in place initiatives that help prevent and counter the bullying of seniors in their jurisdictions within the framework of the Municipalité amie des Aînés (Age-Friendly Municipalities) initiative.	- Municipal actors - Band councils	Famille (SA)	- Research Centre on Aging (Université de Sherbrooke) - CAMF - Conférence des TRCAQ	Continual
2.4.2	Invite municipalities, regional county municipalities, and band councils to plan for an objective to create benevolent living environments and prevent bullying in their territory when they either develop or update a family policy.	- Municipal actors - Band councils	Famille	- CAMF	Continual
2.4.3	Promote the implementation of safe living environments when government orientations on land use planning are being reviewed.	- MRCs - Metropolitan communities	MAMOT MCC, MDDELCC, MSP, MSSS, MTQ		Winter 2016
2.4.4	Raise awareness, among communities subject to the legal requirement* to produce an annual action plan regarding the handicapped, of the importance of including measures to prevent and counter bullying.	- Municipalities	OPHQ		2016-2017
RECOGNITION		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
2.5	Recognize the outstanding contributions of individuals and organizations in preventing and countering bullying by awarding each year the "Ensemble contre l'intimidation" (Together Against Bullying) award.	- Individuals - Organizations	Famille Other departments concerned, if applicable		Continual

* Section 61.1 of the Act to Secure Handicapped Persons in the Exercise of Their Rights with a View to Achieving Social, School and Workplace Integration.

ORIENTATION 3: SERVICE PROVIDERS WHO ARE TRAINED AND EQUIPPED

Service providers¹² and management staff in all sectors may at times have to act to prevent situations of bullying or to make them stop, regardless of their environment.

They must be assured access not only to training and support but also to a wide array of tools. Every service provider will thus be better prepared to prevent bullying; to recognize its manifestations, in person or in cyberspace; to make use of best practices to appropriately support those targeted by bullying, people who commit acts of bullying, witnesses, and those close to them; and to direct them to the appropriate resources.

In some cases, service providers will require help to adapt their responses to ensure that they are culturally appropriate or to take into account the characteristics or disabilities of the people involved.

Since new technologies have profoundly changed interpersonal communications, these people must be equipped to face the challenges caused by the use of technology whether it be in their volunteer or professional practice.

Objectives:

- Support skills development among service providers starting with their initial training.
- Encourage continuing education of service providers in every setting.
- Offer service providers the possibility of being accompanied by resource persons.
- Equip service providers from different environments in order to support their actions.
- Encourage collaboration and the sharing of expertise.

INITIAL TRAINING	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.1 Raise awareness among managers of college education programs of the importance of covering prevention and intervention in the context of bullying, including cyber-bullying, citing for example the use of information and communications technologies and online intervention, targeting certain courses within technical training programs such as: - police training, including the initial training in patrol constable at the École nationale de police du Québec - delinquency intervention - early childhood care and education - special care counselling - social work - community recreation and leadership training	- Managers of relevant college education programs	MEESR MSP		2015-2016

12. The term “service providers” includes all partners operating in the field: police, school staff including teachers, cross-walk guards, staff and volunteers in the community, health and social services sector personnel, municipal employees especially those working in recreational services, staff and volunteers at sports and leisure organizations, the personnel of the OPHQ offering services to the handicapped and their families, etc.

INITIAL TRAINING		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.2	Encourage university faculties and professional governing bodies in the fields of mental health and human relations to take into account in their respective training programs the problems related to use of information and communications technologies and to interventions in the context of cyber-bullying.	- University-level educational institutions - Professional bodies	MEESR	- University-level educational institutions - OPQ – Professional bodies - Table de concertation en matière de formation universitaire - Table de concertation MEESR-OPQ-MSSS	2015-2018
3.3	Support skills development of future school personnel in the prevention and reduction of violence and bullying, by collaborating with those responsible for training programs for teaching and school management.	- Teaching staff - Senior management of educational institutions	MEESR	- ADIGECS - ADEREQ - CAPFE	2015-2018
CONTINUING EDUCATION		THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.4	Offer flexible, personalized training to workers without prior specialization in terms of bullying by developing e-learning modules on bullying (that could also be printed) that take into account the different gender realities.	- Service providers - Volunteers - Management personnel	Famille Inter-ministerial committee	- Content experts	Fall 2017
3.5	Support skills development and the sharing of expertise among school personnel regarding healthy and positive relationships by offering regional training courses.	- Members of the committee on bullying and violence in school - First Nations schools - Schools of Cree and Kativik school boards - Community nursing staff	MEESR	- Fondation Jasmin Roy - Peace Grantmakers Network - Prevnet - Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif (Université Laval)	2015-2018
3.6	Encourage the development of knowledge and practice in social and citizen mediation in outreach workers by giving them access to specific training on the subject.	- Outreach workers	MSP MJQ, MSSS	- ROJAQ - ASSOJAQ - ROCQTR - ATTRueQ	2016-2017
3.7	Produce a seminar on bullying for the various police forces in Québec.	- Québec police forces - Aboriginal Nations police forces	MSP, École nationale de police du Québec MEESR		2016-2017

CONTINUING EDUCATION	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.8 Offer, within the health and social services network, the training program on the Guide de référence pour contrer la maltraitance envers les personnes âgées, which includes aspects related to bullying.	- Stakeholders of the health and social services network - Community organizations	Famille (SA) MSSS		Continual

RESOURCES FOR WORKERS	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.9 Support and accompany school boards and schools with the help of regional support agents: - in the development, at the start of elementary school, of prosocial behaviours among students, education on egalitarian relationships, education on civic behaviour and on the challenges inherent in the use of information and communications technologies relating to respect for others and legal rights, especially regarding freedom of expression, illicit activities, and the right to privacy - when creating and updating action plans to fight violence, bullying, and cyber-bullying - by sharing best practices - by encouraging community participation, including parents, at every step of the process in the school - by promoting inclusion and openness to diversity (sexual, cultural, etc.).	- School settings	MEERS	- School boards - Discussion table on homophobia - Table provinciale de concertation sur la violence, les jeunes et le milieu scolaire	Continual

SUPPORT TOOLS FOR DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.10 Support school boards in making the student ombudsmen aware of the problem of bullying and of the provisions under the Public Education Act for preventing and combating bullying and violence.	- Student ombudsmen	MEESR	- Director generals of school boards - Regional support agents	2016-2018
3.11 Ensure that school boards and private schools have guidelines clarifying the ethical use of information and communications technologies and professional liability in cases of cyber-bullying, in compliance with the law.	- School boards - Private educational institutions	MEERS MJQ, MSP	- School boards	2015-2017
3.12 Encourage colleges to prevent and counter bullying in their institutions.	- Stakeholders of the college network	MEESR	- Colleges - RIIPSO	Continual
3.13 Encourage the university network to develop tools for prevention, detection, and intervention in cases of bullying, adapted to the reality of youths aged 17 to 24 and, more widely, to all university-level students.	- Student associations - Student services - Faculties of university-level educational institutions	MEESR	- Universities	2015-2018

SUPPORT TOOLS FOR DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.14 Review the existing material (information for parents and guidelines for coaches and administrators) in sports for preventing and punishing unethical acts (violence, abuse, harassment, homophobia, racism, sexism, etc.).	- Sport environments - Parents of young sport players	MEESR MJQ (BLCH, SCF)	- Sport federations	Starting in 2016-2017
3.15 In the area of sports, enhance the project Engagement et attitude responsable (EAR) by adding new measures: - Directory of initiatives aimed at positively influencing the behaviour of parents (Web site of the MEESR); - Case study manual.	- Sport environments - Parents of young sport players	MEESR	- Sport federations - Arenas	2017-2018
3.16 Develop and disseminate awareness and information tools and training courses on the bullying of seniors taking into account knowledge gained on their mistreatment.	- Stakeholders or future stakeholders working with seniors - Community organizations	Famille (SA) MSSS	- Research Chair on Mistreatment of Older Adults (Université de Sherbrooke)	Continual
3.17 Evaluate the relevance of developing a police policy on bullying by consulting members of the committee on police practices.	- Québec police forces	MSP	- École nationale de police du Québec - Committee on police practices	2017-2018
COLLABORATION AND EXPERTISE SHARING	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
3.18 Encourage knowledge and information sharing, networking and the exchange of practices, and consistent and complementary actions to prevent and fight bullying using existing collaboration mechanisms (round tables, committees, coordinators specialized in elder abuse, etc.).	- Organizations - Stakeholders (community, police, sport, health and social services settings, etc.)	Famille, MEESR, MIDI, MJQ, MSP, MSSS, MTESS (STRAV) MAMOT		Continual
3.19 Share the knowledge and experience of the MEESR with the Cree and Kativik school boards and Aboriginal organizations that offer education services.	- Schools of Cree and Kativik school boards - Aboriginal organizations that offer education services	MEESR MCE (SAA)		2016-2017
3.20 Assist school boards in developing and implementing collaborative agreements between schools and police forces.	- School settings - Police officers	MEESR, MSP	- Table provinciale de concertation sur la violence, les jeunes et le milieu scolaire	2015-2017
3.21 Put in place communication mechanisms to encourage collaboration between school boards and the Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales (DPCP), and between private schools and the DPCP.	- School settings - Bureau des affaires de la jeunesse	MEESR, MJQ	- School boards - DPCP	2016-2017

ORIENTATION 4: SUPPORT AND TOOLS FOR THOSE TARGETED BY BULLYING, WITNESSES, AND THOSE WHO PERPETRATE IT

Any citizen can be affected by bullying. Any individual can be a perpetrator, witness, or target. Some people, however, are more likely to be targeted due to prejudices regarding their differences. It should be noted that bullying, for example against gender or age, can be expressed differently depending on the environment and people involved.

Those on the receiving end of bullying as well as those who witness it and who perpetrate it need to be given support and tools. To a certain degree, the actions described in the previous orientations respond to this concern and focus on the well-being of all citizens.

It is essential that all people targeted by bullying be able to report the situation easily and safely and that they be guided to appropriate resources. Some actions of the plan are designed to end the isolation of those who are bullied and to support them. In addition, relatives and people close to the situation must be informed of the different resources available and have a common understanding of the legal remedies and framework applicable in the case of bullying.

Resources and support needs vary considerably from one group to another and from one environment to another. In accordance with the principles described previously in this action plan, different initiatives must be fostered to prevent situations of bullying and support those who suffer from it and those close to them. The role of witnesses deserves special attention since they may often make a difference; their involvement can have a real impact on putting a stop to bullying behaviour. On the other hand, their inaction can encourage, even promote, the person who is bullying.

When bullying occurs in cyberspace, the effects are often unpredictable and difficult to manage. Internet service providers will be encouraged to help find ways to enable a person and those close to them to put an end to situations of cyber-bullying.

Objectives:

- Facilitate the implementation of preventive measures and denunciation procedures and publicize the available resources and existing remedies.
- Encourage different milieus to put in place various initiatives to prevent bullying or to reduce its consequences.
- Identify a variety of means to end cases of cyber-bullying.

PREVENTION, USEFUL RESOURCES, AND DENUNCIATION MECHANISMS	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
4.1 Develop a guide to help the different milieus and organizations in the implementation of preventive practices and denunciation procedures that are safe and confidential, as well as referral mechanisms.	- Organizations from various settings	Famille Inter-ministerial committee	- Content experts	Spring 2017
4.2 Improve existing mechanisms in the health and social services network and ensure their proper use to prevent cases of bullying or mistreatment and to better manage them (examples of mechanisms: quality assessment visits in living environments, code of ethics, users' committees and residents' committees, complaint review systems).	- Users of health and social services institutions	MSSS	- CPM - OPHQ - RPCU	Fall 2016
4.3 Improve the communication of information concerning the rights of users and residents who receive health care and services from establishments of the RSSS (welcoming residents, pamphlets, etc.), as well as of the mechanisms and existing remedies (residents' committees, local complaints and service quality commissioners, etc.).	- Users, professionals (physicians, nurses, etc.) and other stakeholders in the health and social services network	MSSS OPHQ	- RPCU - CPM - Local complaints and service quality commissioners - Complaints help and support centres	Continual
4.4 Disseminate information about existing remedies for victims of all types of inappropriate acts in sports.	- Sport environments - Athletes - Training staff - Parents	MEESR	- Umbrella organizations in sports	2015-2018
4.5 Diversify the means used to inform the handicapped and their family about available support services, their rights, and the remedies available in cases of bullying.	- People with disabilities and their family	OPHQ		2017-2018
4.6 Publicize programs for the prevention of bullying put in place by the police and ensure regular updates to the directory on the Web site of the Ministère de la Sécurité publique.	- Québec police forces - Aboriginal Nations police forces - Stakeholders - General public	MSP	- Québec police forces - Aboriginal Nations police forces	Continual
SUPPORT FOR VARIOUS INITIATIVES	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
4.7 Support projects intended to prevent or counter bullying by putting a financial support program in place.	- Non-profit organizations	Famille Departments and agencies concerned		2016-2018
4.8 Support initiatives to adapt tools for prevention, intervention, and support regarding bullying to the realities of the First Nations and Inuit, based on their needs.	- First Nations and Inuit	MCE (SAA) Famille, MESSR, MSSS	- Aboriginal organizations	2016-2018

SUPPORT FOR VARIOUS INITIATIVES	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
4.9 Continue the support offered to schools in Aboriginal communities for implementing projects that encourage a positive and benevolent educational environment.	- First Nations' schools - Schools of Cree and Kativik school boards	MEESR MCE (SAA)		2015-2018
4.10 Support projects and initiatives that help prevent and counter bullying, cyber-bullying, and discrimination based on age within the framework of the Québec Age-Friendly program.	- Organizations eligible for the Age-Friendly program	Famille (SA)	- Comité des partenaires nationaux non gouvernementaux	Continual
4.11 Combat homophobic and transphobic bullying, one of the financing priorities in the call for proposals under the Fight Against Homophobia (Lutte contre l'homophobie) Program.	- Community organizations	MJQ (BLCH)		2015-2016
4.12 Support service providers who assist seniors who are vulnerable and likely to experience bullying.	- Community groups - Vulnerable seniors	Famille (SA)		Continual
COLLABORATION WITH INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
4.13 Establish ways of collaborating with Internet service providers to involve them in the search for solutions to cyber-bullying.	- Internet service providers	Famille, MSP MEESR, MJQ, MSSS		2016-2018

ORIENTATION 5: ACTIONS BASED ON EVIDENCE

Research on bullying is relatively new. Up until now, in Québec, the problem has been studied mostly among youth in schools. It is time to extend our knowledge to other sectors of activity and other age groups.

A broad knowledge of bullying, including cyber-bullying, its consequences, risk and protective factors, the scope of the problem, and its manifestations in different living environments or among certain groups, could guide the actions of stakeholders. Better knowledge of evidence-based practices will enable us to identify efficient interventions.

Objectives:

- Learn more about the phenomenon of bullying in different groups of the population and in different environments, including cyberspace.
- Document evidence-based practices to prevent bullying or reduce its consequences.

KNOWLEDGE ON BULLYING	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
5.1 Support research with the goal of: - documenting little known aspects of bullying, including cyber-bullying - documenting bullying according to gender and setting, taking into account segments of the population with unique realities - analyzing the actions taken to prevent bullying or reduce its consequences - promoting collaborative research between researchers and field workers	- Researchers - Research groups	Famille Inter-ministerial committee	- FRQSC	2016-2018
5.2 Document the phenomenon of bullying, including cyber-bullying, as it relates specifically to seniors, taking into account acquired knowledge on elder mistreatment and the available data relating to gender.	- Departments - General public - Seniors	Famille (SA) MSSS	- Research Chair on Mistreatment of Older Adults (Université de Sherbrooke)	Winter 2017
KNOWLEDGE ON PRACTICES	THIS ACTION APPLIES TO	RESPONSIBILITY COLLABORATION	COOPERATION (PARTNERS)	CALENDAR, DEADLINE
5.3 Catalogue and promote the practices that are most promising in preventing and countering bullying of seniors in public spaces.	- Municipal actors - General public	Famille (SA)	- Research Centre on Aging (Université de Sherbrooke) - CAMF - Conférence des TRCAQ	Continual
5.4 Increase the understanding and communication of police initiatives in progress: 5.4.1 List promising police practices concerning bullying and communicate the information to better support the police in their work and to transfer their knowledge. 5.4.2 List the agreements negotiated between police forces and educational institutions (school boards and private schools) as well as the preventive measures described therein. 5.4.3 Support the development of a tool for compiling the number and nature of police interventions associated with cases of bullying in the school environment.	- Québec police forces - Aboriginal Nations police forces - Stakeholders	MSP MEESR, MSSS	- Québec police forces - Table provinciale sur la violence, les jeunes et le milieu scolaire	Continual
5.5 Produce statistics on the interventions carried out on bullying by outreach workers.	- Workers	MSP	- Funded organizations - ROCQTR	2016-2017

FOLLOW-UP AND REPORTING

The development of an action plan is only one step in our collective effort to prevent bullying and to reduce its consequences. It is important to follow up on the actions described in the plan and to report on the work completed, the successes, and the remaining challenges. Certain mechanisms are planned to this end.

The Ministère de la Famille is responsible for coordinating the implementation and follow-up of the plan. It is supported by the departments and agencies that are members of the inter-ministerial committee and are responsible for their commitments, progress, and annual follow-up.

The actions carried out will be the subject of an analysis in the last year of the action plan. This will provide an overview of the implementation of the measures and an understanding of the difficulties encountered as well as the causes of success in prevention, intervention, and support. Its production will be coordinated by the Ministère de la Famille in collaboration with the inter-ministerial committee.

CONCLUSION

It cannot be said enough: bullying prevention and reduction concerns everyone. Implementation of this action plan will be successful if citizens and partners in every sector contribute to its objectives. This 2015-2018 concerted action plan to prevent and counter bullying marks the beginning of a collective project designed to cover all sectors of society in response to the concerns that have been addressed by the education and employment sectors for several years now. It deals with bullying from a perspective of intervention and support for the people involved but also the promotion of behaviours and attitudes that must be instilled early on, such as respect and civic behaviour.

Among the 53 actions listed under five orientations, the action plan includes cross-sectional measures that apply to people of all ages, workers as well as organizations, and in every milieu. Other more targeted measures address specific groups of people (e.g. seniors, LGBT, Aboriginals) and specific environments (e.g. schools, sports).

The actions described in this plan, “Together Against Bullying, A Shared Responsibility” are expected to grow and hopefully to generate other actions; to inspire other initiatives from the organizations concerned; to encourage a growing number of individuals to act rapidly in situations of bullying; and to multiply the number of citizens who interact in a courteous and respectful manner at all times.

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APPENDICES

CONSULTATIONS

Citizens of the province of Québec, experts, and stakeholders were invited to share their thoughts on bullying in several ways:

- On October 2, 2014, the Forum sur la lutte contre l'intimidation was held. Presided by the Premier, Philippe Couillard, the event gathered close to 200 attendees from various sectors of society and who play a part in preventing and decreasing bullying (education network, health and social services network, community organizations, central labour bodies, immigration sector, some municipal and Aboriginal organizations, research, etc.). The discussion showed that bullying concerns everyone and requires the involvement of all milieus (home, school, residential settings, neighbourhood, work environment, and any other public space).

<http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/synthese-forum.pdf> (in French)

- A consultation on bullying was held online from July 10 to November 30, 2014. In total, there were 3,093 participants. The results of this consultation highlight the importance that citizens give to preventing and fighting bullying. The need for better tools to prevent and fight bullying was also expressed as a concern.

<http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/Rapport-consultation-intimidation.pdf> (in French)

- From mid-September to November 30, 2014, 65 briefs were submitted to the Ministère de la Famille.¹³ These briefs show that the prevention of and fight against bullying attract much interest and confirm the need for joint action. Almost half of the briefs talk about bullying among youth, especially in school settings. Several possible actions emerged from this consultation, such as raising people's awareness on the importance of adopting civic, egalitarian, and inclusive behaviours, developing prosocial behaviours as well as training, dialogue, and mobilization.

<http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/intimidation/memoires/Pages/index.aspx> (in French)

- On September 10, 2014, a youth consultation was organized by the Secrétariat à la jeunesse. The goal was to hear their concerns and their suggestions on the ways to prevent and counter bullying. This day of exchange was the opportunity to discuss each region's realities and issues, based on previous regional consultations. The consultation also allowed participants to expose priority actions and conditions for projects to successfully prevent and reduce bullying among youth.

<http://www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca/consultations-jeunesse/intimidation.asp> (in French)

- On September 18 and 23, 2014, the Ministère de la Famille (Secrétariat aux aînés) held two days of reflection on concerns about bullying among seniors. The meetings respectively gathered representatives of the Comité des partenaires nationaux non gouvernementaux, and the Tables régionales de concertation des aînés. They enabled them to voice their point of view and their recommendations on the ways to prevent bullying among seniors.

13. See Appendix 2 for a list of people and organizations that submitted briefs.

- On April 24, 2015, a specific approach also took place with First Nations and Inuit. Sixteen representatives from Aboriginal organizations took part in the day of reflection, which was co-chaired by the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister of Families, Minister responsible for Seniors, and Minister responsible for Anti-Bullying. The discussions revealed the ways in which this problem is lived in an Aboriginal context, presented current actions in Aboriginal and other communities, and brought forth solutions that could prevent and counter the bullying that Aboriginals experience (youth, adults, and seniors) in their community as well as in urban settings.

https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/Synthese-int-autochtone_AN.pdf

- In May and June 2015, government departments and agencies consulted partners and experts regarding the broad guidelines of the action plan.

LIST OF PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUBMITTED BRIEFS

- À cœur d'homme, Réseau d'aide aux hommes pour une société sans violence
- Association des garderies privées du Québec
- Association des grands brûlés F.L.A.M.
- Association des services de garde en milieu scolaire du Québec
- Association LGBT Baie-des-Chaleurs
- Association pour l'intégration sociale – région de Québec
- Association pour la santé publique du Québec
- Association québécoise de gérontologie
- Quebec Association of Senior Centres
- Association québécoise du loisir municipal
- Asthme et allergies Québec
- Cap Santé Outaouais
- Carmen Landry
- Carrefour action municipale et famille
- Centrale des syndicats du Québec
- Centre de liaison sur l'intervention et la prévention psychosociales
- Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Gatineau
- Interdisciplinary Research Center on Family Violence and Violence Against Women (CRI-VIFF)
- Research Centre on Aging, CSSS–University Institute of Geriatrics of Sherbrooke
- Research Chair on Mistreatment of Older Adults
- Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif
- Coalition Avenir Québec
- LGBT Family Coalition, Conseil québécois LGBT and Line Chamberland (Chaire de recherche sur l'homophobie, UQAM)
- Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse
- Confédération des syndicats nationaux
- Centre de santé et de services sociaux Cavendish
- Curateur public
- Gender Creative Kids Canada
- Ensemble for the respect of diversity
- ÉquiLibre
- Fédération des cégeps
- Fédération des établissements d'enseignement privés
- Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec

- Fédération québécoise de l'autisme
- Filipino Women's Organization of Quebec
- Fondation Pleins pouvoirs pour tous
- Fonds d'aide aux victimes d'intimidation
- Forum jeunesse de l'île de Montréal
- Forum jeunesse Laval
- Forum jeunesse Mauricie
- Forum jeunesse régional Chaudière-Appalaches
- Générations Tel-Jeunes / Ligne Parents
- Groupe Femmes, Politique et Démocratie
- Institut national de santé publique du Québec
- Institut Pacifique
- Jessica Huneault
- Julie Blaquière
- Michel Dorais
- MISA-Québec
- Ordre des psychoéducateurs et psychoéducatrices du Québec
- Ordre des travailleurs sociaux et des thérapeutes conjugaux et familiaux du Québec
- Paul Dufresne
- Québec en forme
- R.A.P. Jeunesse des Laurentides et École de service social de l'Université Laval
- Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services
- Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec
- Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale
- Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers
- Réseau des carrefours jeunesse-emploi du Québec
- Peace Grantmakers Network
- Service de police de la Ville de Québec
- Sport'Aide
- Table de concertation des forums jeunes régionaux du Québec
- The Angela Ali Foundation
- Vanier College Student's Association

COMITÉ D'EXPERTS SUR LA CYBERINTIMIDATION (EXPERT PANEL ON CYBER-BULLYING)

Co-chairmanship

- Brigitte Thériault, Assistant Deputy Minister, Direction générale des politiques, Ministère de la Famille
- Marie Gagnon, Associate Deputy Minister, Direction générale des affaires policières, Ministère de la Sécurité publique

Members

- Claire Beaumont, Psychologist and Full Professor in School Adjustment at the Faculté des sciences de l'éducation, Université Laval, Researcher at the Centre de recherche et d'intervention sur la réussite scolaire, chair of the Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif, and Secretary General of the International Observatory of Violence in School
- Emmanuel Blondin, Psychosocial Support Worker at Volteface, an alternative justice organization
- Sophie Bourque, Educational Consultant in coordination and complementary educational services development for the Commission scolaire de Montréal
- Patrice Corriveau, Full Professor, Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa
- Captain Frédéric Gaudreau, Manager, Centre stratégique sur la cybercriminalité, Sûreté du Québec
- Alain Johnson, Clinical Supervisor and Director of Clinical Services in French at Kids Help Phone (Jeunesse, j'écoute)
- Shaheen Shariff, Associate Professor, Department of Integrated Studies in Education, Faculty of Education, McGill University, Affiliate Researcher at the Centre for Internet and Society, Stanford Law School, and Associate Member of the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, Faculty of Law, McGill University

Three departments were also represented on the committee:

- Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche (Danielle Marquis)
- Ministère de la Justice (Patrick Gingras)
- Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (Johanne Bolduc)

DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES SERVING ON THE COMITÉ DE TRAVAIL INTERMINISTÉRIEL SUR L'INTIMIDATION (INTER-MINISTERIAL WORKING COMMITTEE ON BULLYING)

- Ministère de la Famille
 - Secrétariat aux aînés
- Ministère de la Justice
 - Secrétariat à la condition féminine
- Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
- Ministère de la Sécurité publique
- Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche
- Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion
- Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire
- From the Ministère du Conseil exécutif:
 - Secrétariat à la communication gouvernementale
 - Secrétariat aux priorités et aux projets stratégiques
 - Secrétariat à la jeunesse
 - Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones
- From the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale:
 - Secrétariat du travail
- Commission des normes du Travail
- Office des personnes handicapées du Québec

INITIALISMS AND ACRONYMS

ADEREQ

Association des doyens, doyennes et directeurs, directrices pour la recherche en éducation au Québec

ADIGECS

Association des directions générales des commissions scolaires

AEETEE

Association des enseignantes et enseignants en techniques d'éducation à l'enfance

AGPQ

Association des garderies privées du Québec

ASSOJAQ

Association des organismes de justice alternative du Québec

AQCPE

Association québécoise des centres de la petite enfance du Québec

ATTRueQ

Association des travailleurs et des travailleuses de rue du Québec

BLCH

Bureau de lutte contre l'homophobie (Office for the fight against homophobia)

CAMF

Carrefour action municipale et famille

CAPFE

Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement

CEFRIQ

Centre facilitating research and innovation in organizations with information and communication technology

CEIDEF

Centre d'études interdisciplinaires sur le développement de l'enfant et de la famille

CPM

Conseil pour la protection des malades

CQSGEE

Conseil québécois des services de garde éducatifs à l'enfance

DPCP

Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales

Famille

Ministère de la Famille

FCSQ

Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec

FEEPEQ

Fédération des éducatrices et des éducateurs physiques enseignants du Québec

FRQSC

Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture

ICT

Information and communications technologies

INSPQ

Institut national de santé publique du Québec

LGBT

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people

MAMOT

Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire

MCC

Ministère de la Culture et des Communications

MCE

Ministère du Conseil exécutif

MDDELCC

Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques

MEESR

Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche

MIDI

Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité
et de l'Inclusion

MJQ

Ministère de la Justice

MRC

Municipalités régionales de comté (regional county
municipality)

MSP

Ministère de la Sécurité publique

MSSS

Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

MTQ

Ministère des Transports

OPHQ

Office des personnes handicapées du Québec

OPQ

Office des professions du Québec

RGPQ

Rassemblement des garderies privées du Québec

RIIPSO

Réseau intercollégial des intervenants psychosociaux

ROCQTR

Regroupement des organismes communautaires
du Québec en travail de rue

ROJAQ

Regroupement des organismes de justice alternative
du Québec

RPCU

Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers

RSSS

Réseau de la santé et des services sociaux

SA

Secrétariat aux aînés

SAA

Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones

SCF

Secrétariat à la condition féminine

SCG

Secrétariat à la communication gouvernementale

STRAV

Secrétariat du travail

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Québec and Canadian charters of rights and freedoms, the Civil Code, the Criminal Code, and many specific laws regulate, within their scope of application, various behaviours that may qualify as bullying, depending on the context and the nature of the acts. These provisions acknowledge people's rights to dignity and integrity and give the opportunity to punish the actions of people who are creating the most serious situations of bullying and cyber-bullying, as well as for various phenomena that may be linked to it, namely harassment, threats, encouraging others to hatred, or distributing or publishing non-consensual images.

The charters

1. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that everyone has the right to life, liberty, security, and integrity, and has the freedom of conscience and religion, of thought, belief, opinion, and expression. The Charter also stipulates certain legal rights for individuals who interact with the government or the criminal justice system. Anyone accused of an offence also has legal rights.

Under the Charter, everyone has the right to the equal benefit of the law, without discrimination, in particular without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

2. The Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms states that every human being has a right to life, security, inviolability, and to freedoms of opinion and expression, as well as the right to equality in the recognition of their rights and freedoms. This Charter also states the right to the safeguard of dignity, honour, and reputation as well as the right to respect for private life, which is particularly important for people who experience bullying. The Charter also states that every senior person and every handicapped person has a right to protection against any form of exploitation (section 48).

The acts

1. The Civil Code states the provisions that may apply to bullying or cyber-bullying.
2. The Criminal Code prohibits a series of behaviours of a criminal nature and stipulates their sanctions.

Some forms of bullying may be expressed by various behaviours, like hitting or pushing someone, spitting on someone, or threatening to cause death or serious bodily harm to any person. Under sections 264.1 and 265, these behaviours are all considered crimes. In the case of repetitive threats, this may be considered as criminal harassment under section 264.

3. Protecting the public is one of the main objectives of the Youth Criminal Justice Act. However, the youth criminal justice system is different from the one that applies to adults in many areas. The youth system gives adolescents a just and proportionate responsibility that is compatible with their level of maturity. It helps rehabilitate and reintegrate youth back into the community and insists on the importance of intervening quickly.

4. The Youth Protection Act applies to children who are living situations that compromise or may compromise their security or development and where the parents fail to correct the situation. It applies to children deemed to be in great difficulty and in need of protection.
5. The Act Respecting Assistance for Victims of Crime acknowledges the rights of victims of criminal acts and those of their immediate families and dependents.
6. The Crime Victims Compensation Act enables victims of a criminal offence to receive financial compensation in the event of psychological or physical harm, and for medical and paramedical expenses spent on their rehabilitation.
7. The Education Act regulates the duties and obligations of public educational institutions, in particular the obligation of adopting and implementing an action plan against bullying and violence.
8. The Act Respecting Private Education regulates the duties and obligations of private educational institutions, in particular the obligation of adopting and implementing an action plan against bullying and violence.
9. Under the Act Respecting the Ministère de la Sécurité publique, this department must prevent crime and safeguard the public's security and protection. Thus, it is in charge of maintaining public security and preventing crime. It must also oversee the social rehabilitation of inmates.
10. The Act to modify the organization and governance of the health and social services network, in particular by abolishing the regional agencies and the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services give health and social services institutions the responsibility to implement health services and social services for the population of Québec as a whole.
11. The Act Respecting Labour Standards states the right of any employee to work in an environment free from psychological harassment and the duty of the employer to take all reasonable means to avoid psychological harm and, when such conduct is brought to the employer's attention, to make it stop.
12. The Act to Secure Handicapped Persons in the Exercise of Their Rights with a View to Achieving Social, School and Workplace Integration is designed to ensure the rights of handicapped persons and, by a commitment from the departments and their networks, municipal administrations, and public and private organizations, to encourage their integration into society on an equal basis with other citizens. To achieve this, the Act provides various measures for handicapped persons and their families, their living environments, and the development of resource and service organizations. The Act provides for the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec to play efficiently its role in assessing the integration of handicapped persons, ensuring the respect of principles and rules described in the Act, and to play a significant role as an advisor, coordinator, and collaborator to improve opportunities for handicapped people.

GLOSSARY

Assault

“Assault is a crime. It happens when a person uses force or threatens to use force on another person without their consent. It doesn’t matter if the person makes the threat directly or indirectly. A person does not give true consent if someone uses force to get their consent, or if they consent out of fear or deception.”

Source: Ministère de la Justice du Canada (2012). “Child Abuse is Wrong. What can I do?”

Criminal harassment

The Criminal Code stipulates that “no person shall, without lawful authority and knowing that another person is harassed or recklessly as to whether the other person is harassed, engage in conduct referred to in subsection (2) that causes that other person reasonably, in all the circumstances, to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone known to them.”

Source: Criminal Code of Canada.

Death threat

Threats to cause death that are uttered and conveyed in any manner.

Source: Criminal Code.

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when, after the person admits it or proofs have been analyzed to this effect, it is clearly based on one or several of the grounds prohibited. These discriminations occur in situations where someone refuses to rent to people, to hire them, or to grant them access to a public space or a means of transportation.

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2008). “La diversité : une valeur ajoutée”, Plan d’action gouvernemental pour favoriser la participation de tous à l’essor du Québec 2008-2014, Ministère de l’Immigration et des Communautés culturelles.

Discrimination

“Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on race, colour, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap. Discrimination exists where such a distinction, exclusion or preference has the effect of nullifying or impairing such right.”

Source: Québec’s Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

Discriminatory harassment

According to the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse du Québec, discriminatory harassment may be defined as conduct involving “repeated words, actions or gestures (or, in some circumstances, a single serious action that creates an ongoing negative effect), designed to annoy or express contempt, targeted at a person or group, based on one of the grounds listed in Section 10 of the Charter [of Human Rights and Freedoms].

Harassment may be sexual or racial, or based on sexual orientation, a handicap, ethnic or national origin or any other ground for discrimination.”

Source: Adaptation from André Loiselle (2000). “Les enquêtes en vertu de la Charte des droits et libertés de la personne”, Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is characterized by a series of repetitive actions that usually follow an upward curve. [...] Aggressors perpetuate a cycle defined by consecutive phases marked by tension building, aggression, avoiding taking responsibility, remission, and reconciliation. In this cycle, the victim will feel fear, anger, responsibility for the violence, and hope that the situation will get better. All phases may be present or not and may follow a different sequence.

Domestic violence includes psychological, verbal, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as actions of financial domination. It is not the result of a loss of control, but it is, on the contrary, a chosen means to dominate others and assert power over the victim. Domestic violence can be experienced at any stage of life in a marital, extramarital, or dating relationship.

Source: Adaptation from Gouvernement du Québec (1995). “Prévenir, Dépister, contrer la violence conjugale”, Politique d’intervention en matière de violence conjugale, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux et al.

Elder abuse

“Elder abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person. [...]” There are different forms of abuse: physical, psychological or emotional, sexual, material or financial, human rights violations, and neglect.”

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2010). Governmental Action Plan to Counter Elder Abuse 2010-2015, Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés.

Exploitation

“Exploitation is the act of taking advantage of a person’s vulnerability or dependency to deprive them of their rights. The Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms prohibits exploitation of the elderly and of disabled persons.”

Source: Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, [online], section « Exploitation », <http://www.cdpcj.qc.ca/en/droits-de-la-personne/pratiques/Pages/exploitation.aspx>

Extortion

“Everyone commits extortion who, without reasonable justification or excuse and with intent to obtain anything, by threats, accusations, menaces or violence induces or attempts to induce any person, whether or not he is the person threatened, accused or menaced or to whom violence is shown, to do anything or cause anything to be done.”

Source: Criminal Code of Canada.

Homophobia

“All negative attitudes leading to the rejection of and direct or indirect discrimination against gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals and transgenders, or against persons whose appearance or behaviour does not conform to masculine or feminine stereotypes.”

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2009). “Fight Against Homophobia”, Québec Policy Against Homophobia, Ministère de la Justice.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination stems from the application of a seemingly neutral rule, policy, or practice that nonetheless adversely affects a person or a group of people.

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2008). “La diversité : une valeur ajoutée”, Plan d’action gouvernemental pour favoriser la participation de tous à l’essor du Québec 2008-2014, Ministère de l’Immigration et des Communautés culturelles.

Intersectional discrimination

Intersectional discrimination means any situation of discrimination that is based on more than one of the prohibited grounds under Québec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, namely sex and ethnic origin or sexual orientation and social status.

Source: Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion.

Neglect

In this Act, "neglect" refers to a situation in which the child's parents or the person having custody of the child do not meet the child's basic needs, failing to meet the child's basic physical needs with respect to food, clothing, hygiene or lodging, taking into account their resources; failing to give the child the care required for the child's physical or mental health, or not allowing the child to receive such care; or failing to provide the child with the appropriate supervision or support, or failing to take the necessary steps to provide the child with schooling."

Source: Youth Protection Act.

"The omissions of any act required to maintain the well-being of a senior, regardless of whether the omission is deliberate or due to a lack of knowledge or lack of awareness about any given situation."

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2010). Governmental Action Plan to Counter Elder Abuse 2010-2015, Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés.

Physical abuse

"Physical abuse" refers to "a situation in which the child is the victim of bodily injury or is subjected to unreasonable methods of upbringing by his parents or another person, and the child's parents fail to take the necessary steps to put an end to the situation; or a situation in which the child runs a serious risk of becoming the victim of bodily injury or being subjected to unreasonable methods of upbringing by his parents or another person, and the child's parents fail to take the necessary steps to put an end to the situation".

Source: Youth Protection Act.

Prejudices

Prejudices based on stereotypes. They are judgments, usually unfavourable, made by an individual against another individual, whom he or she does not know, and by giving him or her characteristics specific to the group to which he or she belongs.

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2008). "La diversité : une valeur ajoutée", Plan d'action gouvernemental pour favoriser la participation de tous à l'essor du Québec 2008-2014, Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles.

Psychological harassment

"[...], 'psychological harassment' means any vexatious behaviour in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures, that affects an employee's dignity or psychological or physical integrity and that results in a harmful work environment for the employee. [...] A single serious incidence of such behaviour that has a lasting harmful effect on an employee may also constitute psychological harassment."

Source: Act Respecting Labour Standards.

It should be noted that sexual harassment is included in the legal definition of psychological harassment.

Psychological ill-treatment

"In this Act, [...] "psychological ill-treatment" refers to a situation in which a child is seriously or repeatedly subjected to behaviour on the part of the child's parents or another person that could cause harm to the child, and the child's parents fail to take the necessary steps to put an end to the situation. Such behaviour includes in particular indifference, denigration, emotional rejection, isolation, threats, exploitation, particularly if the child is forced to do work disproportionate to the child's capacity, and exposure to conjugal or domestic violence."

Source: Youth Protection Act.

Racial profiling

“Any action taken by one or more people in authority with respect to a person or group of persons, for reasons of safety, security or public order, that is based on actual or presumed membership in a group defined by race, colour, ethnic or national origin or religion, without factual grounds or reasonable suspicion, that results in the person or group being exposed to differential treatment or scrutiny. Racial profiling includes any action by a person in a situation of authority who applies a measure in a disproportionate way to certain segments of the population on the basis, in particular, of their racial, ethnic, national or religious background, whether actual or presumed.”

Source: Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (2011). “Racial Profiling and Systemic Discrimination of Racialized Youth”, Report of the consultation on racial profiling and its consequences.

Racism

Ideas, attitudes, and actions that as a whole intend to or have the effect of considering national or ethno-cultural groups as inferior socially, financially, culturally, or politically, which is keeping them from fully taking advantage of the benefits granted to other citizens.

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2008). “La diversité : une valeur ajoutée”, Plan d’action gouvernemental pour favoriser la participation de tous à l’essor du Québec 2008-2014, Ministère de l’Immigration et des Communautés culturelles.

Sexual abuse

“Sexual abuse” refers to a “situation in which the child is subjected to gestures of a sexual nature by the child’s parents or another person, with or without physical contact, and the child’s parents fail to take the necessary steps to put an end to the situation; or a situation in which the child runs a serious risk of being subjected to gestures of a sexual nature by the child’s parents or another person, with or without physical contact, and the child’s parents fail to take the necessary steps to put an end to the situation”.

Source: Youth Protection Act.

Sexual and sexist stereotypes

Stereotypes are used to attribute rigid characteristics to men and women that have the effect of placing them in limiting roles (boys must be good at sports, aggressive, ambitious, and girls must be kind, emotional, and sexy). A person who does not respond to the stereotypes associated with a particular gender may be marginalized. Also, sexual stereotypes maintain unbalanced relationships between men and women, where women remain at a disadvantage in comparison to men.

Source: Secrétariat à la condition féminine.

Sexual assault

Sexual assault means a gesture of a sexual nature, made by an individual without the consent of the person concerned, with or without physical contact, or, in some cases, namely with children, using emotional manipulation or blackmail. This gesture is made with the intent to subject someone else to one’s own desires through the abuse of one’s power, using force or restraint, or making implicit or explicit threats. Sexual assault violates fundamental rights, namely one’s psychological and physical integrity and safety.

This definition applies regardless of the age, sex, culture, religion, or sexual orientation of the victim or the sexual abuser, regardless of the type of sexual act committed or the location or social context in which it was committed, or the relationship between the victim and the sexual abuser.

Sexual assault includes other descriptions such as rape, sexual abuse, sexual offence, sexual contact, incest, prostitution, and child pornography.

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2001). Orientations gouvernementales en matière d’agression sexuelle, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is an infringement of equality rights. Among other things, it is prohibited under Sections 10, 10.1, and 46 of Québec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms as well as under Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Sexual harassment:

- “can be words, gestures, behaviour or physical contact of a sexual nature
- usually occurs repeatedly, but can also be one serious incident
- is unwelcome by the person targeted, man or woman
- has a negative effect on the work environment, including a direct impact such as dismissal or disciplinary measures, or an indirect impact, such as an uncomfortable work environment.”

Source: Éducaloi. [Online] “Sexual Harassment in the Workplace”,
<https://www.educaloi.qc.ca/en/capsules/sexual-harassment-workplace>

Stereotypes

Ready-made, caricaturized images of members of a group that are imposed on us by the environment or the culture, and repeated, or acted upon, without ever submitting them to critical scrutiny.

Source: Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse. [Online], “Situations d'apprentissage pour les enseignants et enseignantes du premier cycle du secondaire”,
http://www.cdpedj.qc.ca/fr/formation/situations/Pages/racisme_references.html.

Systemic discrimination

Systemic discrimination arises when various laws, rules, policies, or practices, directly or indirectly discriminating in nature, interact to produce or maintain exclusion effects for the members of a group or a community to whom the prohibition of the discrimination applies based on one or several of the grounds prohibited by Québec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2008). “La diversité : une valeur ajoutée”, Plan d'action gouvernemental pour favoriser la participation de tous à l'essor du Québec 2008-2014, Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles.

“Systemic discrimination is part of the rules, practices, cultural schema and methods used in a given environment. While they may not necessarily discriminate intentionally or even consciously, these ways of doing things penalize a given social group, in this case women.”

Source: Gouvernement du Québec (2007). “Turning Equality in Law into Equality in Fact”, Government Policy for Gender Equality, Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine.

Bullying

