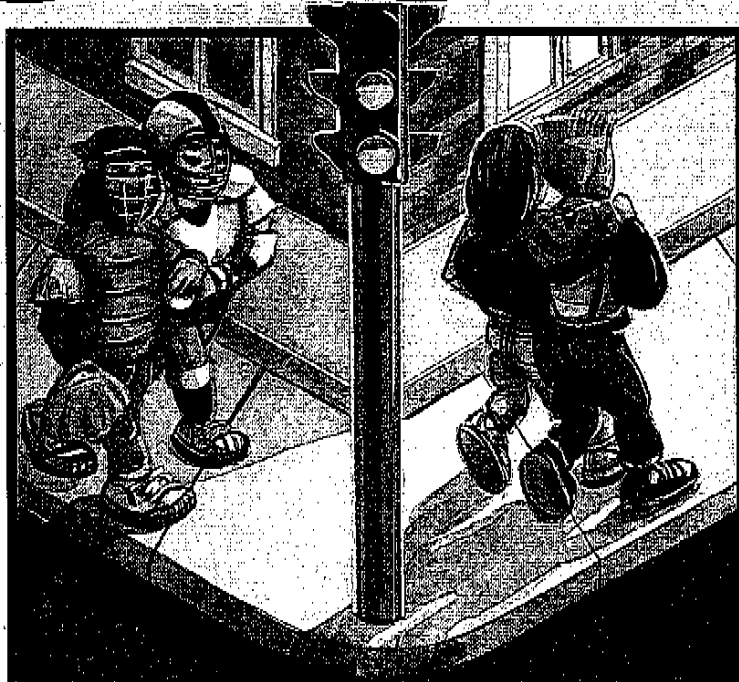


# STOP!



**DATING VIOLENCE  
AMONG ADOLESCENTS**



**WORKSHOP FOR SCHOOL STAFF**

070100  
0095002

**Québec** 

# STOP!

**DATING VIOLENCE  
AMONG ADOLESCENTS**

**WORKSHOP FOR SCHOOL STAFF**

**Coordination à la condition féminine**

Lisette Bédard, Coordinator

Christiane Miville-Deschênes, Project Coordinator

This document is based on the *Session de sensibilisation et d'information sur la violence dans les relations amoureuses des jeunes s'adressant au personnel scolaire* developed by Francine Lavoie and Marjolaine Roy at Université Laval's École de psychologie. We would like to thank them for their contribution. All of the exercises and some of the text in this document are taken from *STOP! Dating Violence among Adolescents—Classroom Activities*, by Francine Lavoie, Annie Gosselin, Line Robitaille and Lucie Vézina.

**Design and Development**

Véronique Billette

Nancy Cooper

Annie Gosselin

Serge Rock Leclerc

Christiane Miville-Deschênes

**Graphics**

Monique Chaussé

Carole Henry

**Translation**

Services à la communauté anglophone, Direction de la production en langue anglaise

© Gouvernement du Québec  
Ministère de l'Éducation, 1995

ISBN 2-550-25275-6

Legal Deposit — 1995 — 95-1005  
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART ONE</b>	
Introduction . . . . .	3
A Brief History . . . . .	5
The Concept of Violence as Defined in the STOP! Program . . . . .	7
Classroom Activities . . . . .	9
Causes of Violence among Adolescents . . . . .	10
The Effects of Violence . . . . .	11
STOP!—First Period . . . . .	13
<b>PART TWO</b>	
STOP!—Second Period . . . . .	17
Typical Profiles? . . . . .	22
Intervention . . . . .	23
How to Talk to Victims . . . . .	24
What to Do . . . . .	24
What to Avoid . . . . .	26
How to Talk to Aggressors . . . . .	27
What to Do . . . . .	27
What to Avoid . . . . .	29
True or False Exercise 1 . . . . .	30

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1: Answers to True or False Exercise 1 . . . . . 33**

**Appendix 2: True or False Exercise 2 . . . . . 35**

**Appendix 3: Answers to True or False Exercise 2 . . . . . 37**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . 41**

**PART ONE**



## INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behaviour among adolescents is so common that we have come to tolerate violent words and actions without being aware of it. The purpose of this workshop is to make school staff more aware of the need to intervene in preventing dating violence among adolescents.

Violence in intimate relationships is not physical at first. Before a couple gets to that point, there are other, more subtle forms of abuse that are every bit as destructive. Such forms of abuse slowly eat away at the victim, who begins to accept the situation as "almost normal," and there lies the root of the problem.

There have been a number of studies conducted on violence against women. Research done by universities, the Bureau de la statistique du Québec and Statistics Canada has all arrived at the same conclusion: one woman in eight is a victim of conjugal violence.

There is a tendency to underestimate the seriousness of violence among adolescents. Yet, the number of cases of dating violence among adolescents is estimated at 20 percent<sup>1</sup> and 13 percent of Secondary IV boys admit to having used sexual violence at least once.<sup>2</sup> Behaviours acquired during adolescence usually continue into adulthood.

There is a tendency also to underestimate the importance and influence of intimate relationships among adolescents. For adolescents, having a girlfriend or boyfriend is a means of attaining social recognition; certain abusive behaviours are sometimes accepted in order to maintain this recognition.

In order to be able to intervene in situations related to violence in dating relationships, it is essential both to accept that this violence exists and to question one's own ideas. Participants in this workshop may be confronted with prejudices or myths so long-standing that they are deeply rooted.

---

<sup>1</sup>Shirley Litch Mercer, "Not a Pretty Picture: An Exploratory Study of Violence Against Women in High School Dating Relationships," *Resources for Feminist Research/Documentation sur la recherche féministe*, 17, 2 (1988): 15-23.

<sup>2</sup>Marie-Hélène Gagné, "La violence dans les relations amoureuses des adolescents et des adolescentes : une étude quantitative," unpublished dissertation (École de psychologie, Université Laval, 1993), vol. 2, p. 28.

They may, therefore, react with surprise or disagree with certain facts presented. Some reactions may set in motion a process of questioning that will continue after the workshop. The implementation of the STOP! program in schools may encourage students to confide in resource persons and to request their help. It is essential that the resource persons know where they stand psychologically with regard to the problem. They will have to determine whether they feel able to implement the STOP! program and to provide the adolescents who come to see them with support. The workshop is intended to help resource persons in this role.

## A BRIEF HISTORY

Today, one out of every eight women is abused by her partner. Conjugal violence has led women to join together to assert their right to women's shelters. In Québec, there are only 82 shelters for women victims of abuse and 24 therapy groups for violent men, yet the demand is much greater. Women's shelters cannot accommodate the population of abused women. In 1989-90, the shelters took in 9 802 women and 6 053 children. Conjugal violence is equally present in every social class and in all age groups.

Only six percent of abused women make use of women's shelters. Statistics show that one of every five women in hospital emergency wards are there because of a violent episode at home.

Between 1987 and 1991, 88 Québec women were killed by their partners or ex-partners and 151 women were victims of attempted murder. In 1991, 10 226 cases of conjugal violence were reported to the police. Generally, aggressors are fined and ordered to "keep the peace" and, sometimes, to undergo therapy for violent men. Only a very few are sent to prison.

*What does this have to do with adolescents in Secondary III and IV?*

Women do not become abused and men do not become violent overnight. Abusive relationships are the result of a long-standing pattern of neglected problem behaviours. That is why the STOP! program was developed. Violence in intimate relationships is as common among adolescents as it is among adults.

There is no such thing as a typical victim of dating violence. The submissive behaviours and weakness associated with victims of dating violence are the result of abuse rather than personality traits.

It is a commonly held belief in our society that women in violent relationships provoke their partners to the point of abuse. Some people even think that abused women and girls are happy with their situation, since they remain in it. This completely disregards the social, intimate and family contexts, and the fear and stress that abuse causes. Some abused adult women are able to break the cycle of violence only after approximately 35 violent episodes.

Abused girls come to feel guilty and responsible for the abuse they believe they have provoked; that is why so few girls and women cry out against it. The popular belief that leaving an abusive partner will put an end to the abuse is also false. If the partner does not accept her leaving, the abuse and harassment may escalate.

Also contrary to popular belief, alcohol and drug use is not a cause of violence; rather, it is an external factor. Violent partners will, however, use this excuse and others to play down the seriousness of their actions.

## THE CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE AS DEFINED IN THE STOP! PROGRAM

*The program deals only with violence experienced by adolescents in their dating relationships with other adolescents. Although violence can and does exist in homosexual relationships, because of the limited amount of time available for the program the focus is on violence within heterosexual couples. The examples, therefore, do not reflect other types of relationships.*

*It cannot be denied that many forms of violence exist in relationships between adolescents of all ages. For this reason, preventive measures should be adopted as soon as adolescents begin dating.*

*The STOP! program defines violence as any behaviour that hinders the personal development of another individual, compromising his or her physical, psychological or sexual well-being. Thus:*

- 1. According to the STOP! program, violence is an unacceptable behaviour.*
- 2. By definition, violence is not limited to physical abuse, but includes all other forms of violence, which may, sooner or later, lead to physical abuse.*
- 3. The main cause of violence is social inequality between the sexes. Abusers express this inequality by controlling their partners and considering only their own ends, to the detriment of the other person. Some even go so far as to show contempt for their partners. Emphasis must be placed on the role that learning (e.g. a history of family abuse) and reinforcement (peer pressure) play in this violent behaviour.*
- 4. Abusers are responsible for their own behaviour.*
- 5. Victims, especially of sexual abuse, are usually girls. As for physical abuse, the damage inflicted on girls is usually more serious than that inflicted on boys.*

6. *The preceding statement in no way implies that girls are incapable of violent behaviour. Often, their violence will be in the form of self-defence. However, studies show that reciprocal violence, and even violence initiated by girls, does exist. Such violence among adolescent girls usually disappears in time, since it is not reinforced by society.*<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>Francine Lavoie et al., *STOP! Dating Violence among Adolescents—Classroom Activities* (Québec: ministère de l'Éducation, 1995), p. 2-3.

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

This document contains the first section of the STOP! program, which includes classroom and complementary activities. Classroom activities consist of two 60- to 75-minute periods. The Personal and Social Education program, as well as the Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction program, the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program and the Moral Education program lend themselves well to STOP! themes. The themes may also be dealt with in other courses.

It is essential that the messages conveyed be reinforced so that attitudes and behaviours begin to change. Schools are encouraged to commit to the project, and all school personnel to participate in the workshop.

The STOP! program addresses two main themes: control and rights. The first step is to make students aware of dating violence among adolescents. Time should be set aside for the adolescents to become aware that this type of violence exists.

---

## CAUSES OF VIOLENCE AMONG ADOLESCENTS

### **The Model on Which the STOP! Program Is Based**

The social model attributes the causes of violence to social inequality, stereotypes and values. Some examples of this are different socialization for boys and girls, sexism, and the oppression of women, which is to some degree condoned by society.

Also, there is a rather high level of tolerance toward violence, particularly toward violence against women. Some people also laud violence as an effective means of control. Others embrace violence to gain peer acceptance.

Finally, pornography, popular romance novels and music videos give people unrealistic and often unacceptable expectations of their partners.

Drug and alcohol use and sources of stress (e.g. difficulties in school or at home, financial difficulties) do not cause violence; they are used as excuses.

## THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE

*The effects of conjugal violence on women are physically and psychologically painful. Abuse may lead to health problems, from slight bruises to serious injuries or fractures, and even death.*

*It also has serious effects on mental health: social isolation, depression, drug and alcohol abuse and attempted suicide are all results of conjugal violence. A study conducted on 225 people who had attempted suicide revealed that 83 percent of them were abused women. Finally, this type of violence can lead women to take their frustrations and anger out on their children.*

*The aggressor is a prisoner of a means of expressing his feelings that makes him feel increasingly contemptible and guilty and increasingly unable to experience a satisfying relationship with his partner. He is drawn into a form of compulsive behaviour to which he sees no alternative, for which he might be arrested and condemned, and lose his wife, children and place in society.*

*As witnesses to conjugal violence, children are vulnerable at every stage of their development. In the short and medium terms, the danger is twofold: their emotional stability and physical health are jeopardized by the violent episodes and tense atmosphere at home. This results in learning and socialization difficulties, violent behaviour with peers and the appearance of psychosomatic complaints. [...] In the long term, in order to survive emotionally, these children develop a high level of tolerance for violence. They begin to accept these behaviours as "normal means of expression" and will duplicate them in their future relationships.<sup>4</sup>*

Dating violence among adolescents has more or less the same consequences as conjugal violence. Adolescents grow up to be adults and repeat the same behaviours acquired and deemed acceptable within their social group. Neither the victim nor the aggressor feels at ease in a violent dating relationship.

---

<sup>4</sup>Fédération des ressources d'hébergement pour femmes violentées et en difficulté au Québec, *La violence enfante la violence—Guide de sensibilisation à la violence conjugale* (Longueuil: n.p., 1992), p. 12-13. (Translator's note: This citation is a free translation.)

*As teachers, no one among us wants to see the adolescents we know today featured in the headlines a few years from now as victims or perpetrators of conjugal violence.*

**STOP!—FIRST PERIOD**

**Objectives**

- To distinguish between self-control or control of one's environment and the abusive control of others.
- To identify various forms of control in dating relationships.
- To associate abusive control with violence.
- To understand the seriousness of dating violence.

**Sketch**

**Scene 1**

---

---

---

**Scene 2**

---

---

---

**Scene 3**

---

---

---

**Scene 4**

---

---

---



## **PART TWO**



## STOP!—SECOND PERIOD

### Objectives

- To be familiar with the definitions of the different types of abuse.
- To be familiar with some of the rights of both partners in a relationship.
- To be able to apply these rights in specific situations in which there is a risk of abuse.
- To know that each partner has a responsibility to respect the rights of the other.
- To understand that the abuser, not the victim, is responsible for the abuse.

### Review of the First Period and Definition of the Different Types of Abuse

Begin the session by asking students to sum up the main points brought out in the first period (abusive control of others and the fact that it is unacceptable). Then, give definitions of the various types of abuse<sup>5</sup> so as to establish a link between abusive control and violence. Explain that the program deals mainly with psychological abuse, since it is the most difficult to detect. The students will understand more easily if they are asked to give examples of each type of abuse.

Sexual abuse may involve sexual relations without consent, unwanted sexual touching, or being forced to engage in humiliating, degrading sexual activity. Coercion or the threat of coercion is often used to gain the compliance of the victim.

### Example:

---

---

---

---

<sup>5</sup>Health Canada, *Dating Violence* (Ottawa: The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, 1990), p. 1-6.

Physical abuse may involve punching, kicking, slapping, pushing, choking, biting, burning, hair pulling, physically confining, striking with an object, or assaulting with a weapon.

**Example:**

---

---

---

Psychological abuse may involve intimidation, fear, threats, humiliation, insults, pressure, destruction of property, control of one's partner's movements, yelling and screaming to induce fear, forced isolation from friends and family, or other expressions of jealousy.

**Example:**

---

---

---

## EQUAL LOVE

**A** *In your opinion, is this situation acceptable or unacceptable? Circle your answer.*

**B** *Use the statements in the following list to fill in the blanks in each situation. Use each number only once.*

### YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:

1. To demand respect
2. To expect that what you did or said in intimate moments will not be made public
3. To refuse to go any further; to set limits
4. To want to share affection
5. To change your mind
6. To have preferences different from the other person's

### YOU DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT:

7. To take revenge by attacking your partner's reputation
8. To put down your partner or insult him or her
9. To force your partner to have sexual relations

### SITUATION 1

Claude often asks  
Dominique:



The situation is:

- acceptable
- unacceptable

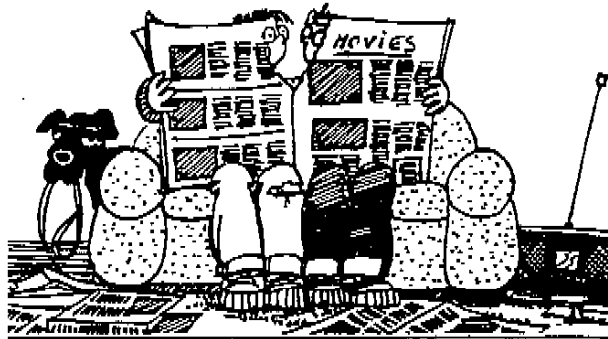
Dominique has the  
right:

Claude does not  
have the right:

## SITUATION 2

---

It's Friday night and Dominique wants to go see a horror movie. Claude would rather go see a comedy.



The situation is:

- acceptable
- unacceptable

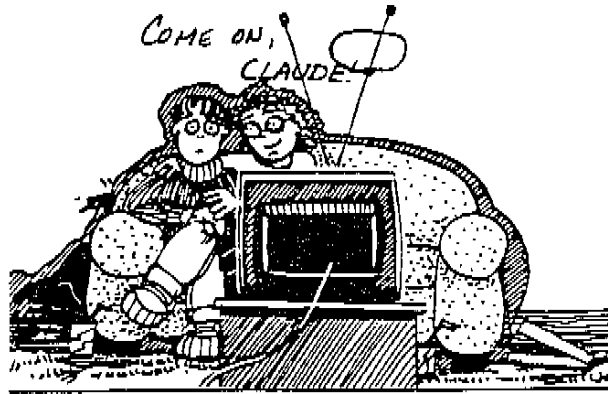
Claude and Dominique have the right:

---

## SITUATION 3

---

Dominique's parents are out and Dominique keeps saying:



The situation is:

- acceptable
- unacceptable

Dominique has the right:

---

But Claude also has the right:

---

#### SITUATION 4

Claude and Dominique used to date, but Claude broke off the relationship.



The situation is:

- acceptable
- unacceptable

Claude has the right:

---

Dominique does not have the right:

---

#### SITUATION 5

Claude and Dominique are on a camping trip.



The situation is:

- acceptable
- unacceptable

Dominique has the right:

---

Claude does not have the right:

---

**TYPICAL PROFILES?**

**Victim**

**Aggressor**

## INTERVENTION

In some cases, the implementation of the STOP! program may elicit confidences on the part of both victims and aggressors. Most school staff, regardless of their good intentions, are not specialists in dating violence. It is therefore necessary to direct the victims and aggressors toward resource persons or groups that are better able to meet their needs and help them face their problems.

However, students who confide in school staff expect more than just a telephone number. The workshop therefore includes a second part prepared with a view to helping resource persons respond to such confidences. This part describes what should be done and, especially, what should be avoided, in order to ensure the well-being of the resource person and that of the student who chose to confide in him or her.<sup>6</sup>

### Role Playing

Claudine and Eric have just had a fight. Each of them goes to consult a resource person at the school (teacher or non-teaching professional).

---

<sup>6</sup>The following pages are based on C. Sousa, et al., *Preventing Teen Dating Violence—A Three-Session Curriculum for Teaching Adolescents* (Cambridge, MA: The Dating Violence Intervention Project, Transition House and Emerge, n.d.).

## HOW TO TALK TO VICTIMS

*Because the victims of dating violence are most often young women, we have chosen to approach the problem from that angle. This in no way implies that young men cannot be victims.*

A young woman who has been the victim of abuse or sexual assault will be hesitant to talk about it for a number of reasons. It is not easy for her to talk about it. It is therefore important not to rush her, or she will close up entirely and become increasingly isolated. Generally, she will report having experienced a violent episode, but will tell herself that it is all her fault.

She may also tend to play down the violence for fear of reprisals, of losing her boyfriend or of having her parents find out what she is going through. She may also be ashamed to reveal that she is dating someone who is abusing her. She has a negative image of herself and, in most cases, thinks that no one is interested in her problems. This is the state she will be in when she confides in the person she has chosen.

### WHAT TO DO

- First, assure her that everything she says will be held in strict confidence. If you think you will have to talk to someone else, ask her permission.
- Congratulate her for her courage in talking about the situation and seeking help.
- Believe what she says and do not try to play down the events. *Do not think she is guilty.*
- Confirm that neither she nor anyone else deserves to be abused.
- Respect the pace at which she expresses herself and her ambivalence toward her boyfriend: "I love him and don't want to leave him."

- Help her to recognize that the reasons her boyfriend gives to justify his violence are false. If he uses alcohol or drugs as an excuse, explain that he may have a drinking or drug problem, but that drugs and alcohol are not causes of violence—they are merely excuses.
- Explain that, although her boyfriend undoubtedly told her he lost control of himself, that violence is not so much a loss of self-control, as an exertion of control over the other person.
- If she feels guilty and responsible for having provoked her boyfriend, help her to see that words and actions do not justify violence.
- If she believes that he would not be violent, possessive or jealous if he did not love her, help her to understand that possessiveness and jealousy are not indications of love.
- Sympathize with her, support her and direct her, if she wishes, toward competent individuals who will be able to help her break the cycle of violence.
- Remind her that you are available to listen to her or offer assistance if she needs to see you again.

## **WHAT TO AVOID**

- Asking her if she provoked her partner and judging her guilty of triggering the violent behaviour. You would only convince her that she is responsible for the abuse she is experiencing.
- Believing that she deserves what she is experiencing.
- Being impatient with the pace at which she understands and makes changes.
- Telling her that she should leave her boyfriend or that you know what she should do. She trusts you and will be afraid of displeasing you or making you angry with her. She already has someone who is controlling her; do not add to the problem.
- Offering to speak to her partner or doing so without her permission. You may compromise her safety.
- Trying to speak to both of them at the same time and acting as mediator.
- Pushing or rushing her to make decisions.
- Telling others about her situation.

## HOW TO TALK TO AGGRESSORS

Young adolescent aggressors often have misconceptions of themselves, their girlfriends and relationships. They have traditional ideas about the roles of men and women and believe that men have authority over women. They believe in violence as a way of solving problems. It is probably not the first time they have used violence in their dating relationships.

They want to stop, but they play down what they have done. When they talk about their girlfriends, they always focus on their own needs and ignore the woman's needs and preferences. They admit to having been violent, but project their faults onto their partners. They lack self-confidence; if they compare themselves to others, they are "no good." Yet, despite all this, if they are talking about their problem, they have already taken the first step to change their ways, and are perhaps not very proud of themselves. Before talking to them, you must be able to accept them as they are and not be unsympathetic, or you will be unable to help them and will risk doing more harm than good.

### WHAT TO DO

- Ask him to describe in detail the violence he is talking about (e.g. pushing, slapping, hitting, threatening with a weapon). This will help him become aware that what he is doing is abusive.
- Ask him if he uses other forms of abuse such as control, criticism, yelling, jealousy. Help him to see that these are also forms of abuse and that they may lead to physically abusive behaviour.
- Avoid judging him; focus instead on his abusive actions.
- Encourage him to talk about his violence, tell him that it takes courage to face one's problems.

- Tell him firmly that he alone is responsible for his violence.
- Help him identify the effects and consequences of his violence. Without playing down the legal consequences, ask him what the effects of violence are on his relationship with his partner: does she feel closer to him? does she trust him more?
- Show him the difference between possessiveness, control and love: love involves respect for one's partner, without the use of any form of intimidation.
- If he cites stress, difficulty in school, drugs, alcohol or any other excuse for his violence, help him see that these are external factors and not causes of violence.
- Tell him that it is normal to sometimes get furious or angry, but that there is an enormous difference between "experiencing" and "expressing" such feelings. Anger and violence are not synonymous.
- Encourage him to try to change.

## **WHAT TO AVOID**

- Judging the whole person rather than his actions.
- Believing his excuses. He will probably accuse his partner of provoking him when she was perhaps simply expressing anger.
- Treating him abusively or punishing him physically. He will continue to believe that violence is a way of solving problems.
- Thinking that a good talking to will render him non-violent.
- Directing him toward a support group and ensuring that he attends sessions.
- Believing that it will never happen again. Tell him that, without specialized help, he will probably do it again and that the problem might get worse.
- Believing that remorse guarantees change.
- Telling the aggressor that he is not responsible for his violence, that there may have been extenuating circumstances.
- Allowing him to believe that external factors are the cause of his violence. If he seems to have a drug or alcohol problem, encourage him to seek help.
- Telling others about his situation.
- Agreeing to arbitrate in his relationship.

## TRUE OR FALSE EXERCISE 1<sup>7</sup>

Working individually, answer the following questions by circling "True" or "False."

1.	Jealousy is an indication of love.	True	False
2.	Abuse ends when the relationship ends.	True	False
3.	Alcohol and drug use is the main cause of dating violence.	True	False
4.	Dating violence only occurs among the poor and less educated.	True	False
5.	Physical abuse is the easiest to stop.	True	False
6.	Anyone who physically abuses another person, adopts a contemptuous or controlling attitude, or practises verbal abuse is entirely responsible for his or her actions.	True	False
7.	Abused girls and women deserve what they get because they provoke their partners.	True	False
8.	Terminating an abusive intimate relationship is easier for young people than for adults because they are not married and have no children.	True	False
9.	Respecting one's partner implies never being angry with him or her.	True	False
10.	With the right amount of love, it is possible to change a partner's violent behaviour.	True	False
11.	Dating violence is the result of a total loss of control.	True	False

---

<sup>7</sup>Questions 1, 2 and 8 are taken from Line Robitaille and Francine Lavoie, *La violence dans les relations intimes des jeunes : formation destinée aux bénévoles des services d'écoute téléphonique* (Québec: Groupe de recherche multidisciplinaire féministe, Université Laval, 1991).

# **APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX 1: ANSWERS TO TRUE OR FALSE EXERCISE 1

1. **False**

Jealousy is an indication that we feel our relationship is being threatened and that we are afraid we will not be able to deal with the situation. Not only does it represent a lack of confidence in the other person but, more importantly, a lack of confidence in oneself.

2. **False**

After a break-up, abuse can occur in the form of increased threats or harassment.

3. **False**

Alcohol and drugs are external factors, excuses. Furthermore, people's reactions after having used drugs or alcohol vary immensely. Some people will be more aggressive than others. Alcohol and drugs take away inhibitions. They are a precipitating factor.

4. **False**

Violence is found everywhere, independent of environment or level of education. There is no such thing as a "typical" aggressor.

5. **True**

This behaviour is the easiest to unlearn; psychological abuse is much more subtle and persistent.

6. **True**

People who act violently have made a choice: the choice to use violence. No one else is responsible for the act, contemptuous attitude or insult, especially not the victim.

7. **False**

No one wants to be abused. Violent people are the ones who have chosen to use violence.

8. **False**

In adolescence as well as adulthood, it is difficult to end a relationship, even when it involves violence. It is often difficult for adolescents to end a relationship in which they are emotionally involved. Also, abuse may continue after a break-up.

**9. False**

A person has the right to be angry, but the way in which the anger is expressed is paramount. It is important to give your opinion and express your anger, but in a healthy way, that is, with respect for the other person.

**10. False**

Sometimes, victims think they can change their partners with the right amount of love but, because of the particular context of dating relationships, violent people need professional help. They will only be able to change their behaviour if they want to and if they are really aware that they are abusive. Unfortunately, victims in "dominant-dominated" relationships are not in a very good position to help their partners.

**11. False**

Dating violence is an exertion of control over the other person.

## APPENDIX 2: TRUE OR FALSE EXERCISE 2<sup>8</sup>

Answer the following questions by circling "true" or "false."

1.	Love is always beautiful in young couples.	True	False
2.	Abuse does not end when adolescents move in together.	True	False
3.	Break-ups are easier for young people.	True	False
4.	The first sexual encounter is not always very romantic.	True	False
5.	Most sexual assaults are committed by people known to the victim.	True	False
6.	A girl or woman may be sexually assaulted by her boyfriend or husband.	True	False
7.	People who hit their partners often do it as a sign of affection, even though the behaviour is unacceptable.	True	False
8.	It is easy to spot a violent person by his or her attitude or physical appearance.	True	False
9.	Suicide threats can be considered acts of violence.	True	False
10.	Women and girls do not like to be abused.	True	False
11.	Women and girls who are victims of violence are weak and submissive.	True	False
12.	Some women and girls seek out abuse.	True	False
13.	When a woman or girl says "no," she usually means "yes."	True	False

<sup>8</sup>Questions 1-7 are taken from Line Robitaille and Francine Lavoie, *La violence dans les relations intimes des jeunes : formation destinée aux bénévoles des services d'écoute téléphonique* (Québec: Groupe de recherche multidisciplinaire féministe, Université Laval, 1991) and Francine Lavoie, et al., *STOP! Dating Violence among Adolescents—Classroom Activities* (Québec: ministère de l'Éducation, 1995).

14.	It is useless to try to help abused women and girls, since they will return to their violent partners or end up in a new relationship with another violent partner.	True	False
15.	Being victims of violence in their dating relationships can affect people's success in school.	True	False
16.	There are more than 200 women's shelters in Québec.	True	False
17.	There is not always room in women's shelters, even for emergency cases.	True	False
18.	In all, 22 percent of abused women go to women's shelters.	True	False
19.	Abused women break the cycle of violence after the fifth or sixth violent episode.	True	False
20.	Between 1987 and 1991, 88 Québec women were killed by their partners or ex-partners.	True	False
21.	In 1991, 3250 cases of conjugal violence were reported to the police.	True	False
22.	Men who are prosecuted for conjugal violence are usually given a prison sentence and forced to undergo therapy.	True	False
23.	Therapy guarantees that violence will stop.	True	False
24.	Dating and conjugal violence only occur in large cities.	True	False

### APPENDIX 3: ANSWERS TO TRUE OR FALSE EXERCISE 2

1. **False**

Both adolescent and adult intimate relationships involve highs and lows. It is not always easy. Many people may suffer in their intimate relationships, regardless of their age.

2. **True**

On the contrary, it may become worse.

3. **False**

Most adolescents and adults are shaken after the break-up of an intimate relationship. Remember how serious relationships were in adolescence.

4. **True**

In many cases, it is a stressful and worrisome, although wanted, experience. It may also be the result of pressure or threats on the part of one's partner. For example, "If you love me, you will go all the way."

5. **True**

Eighty-four percent of victims of sexual assault know their assailant. In 1991 in Québec, 4312 charges of sexual assault were laid and 355 of them involved serious and armed sexual assault.

6. **True**

Sexual assault by boyfriends or husbands is recognized as a crime of the same nature as sexual assault by a stranger and may be pursued in court.

7. **False**

Violent acts and injurious and contemptuous attitudes and words are used to control the other person, to establish a relationship based on power.

**8. False**

People who are violent in their dating relationships are not necessarily violent in their social or work relationships. Involved, sociable and popular individuals can be as violent as those who are timid and withdrawn. There is no such thing as a "typical" violent person. In fact, anyone can be violent, man or woman.

**9. True**

In some cases, suicide threats can be used in order to control another person emotionally. It is important to take the threats seriously, but you should not give in to them. Refer to the nearest suicide prevention centre.

**10. True**

No one likes to be abused. There are a number of reasons why some victims of violence remain in their relationships (e.g. loss of self-esteem, fear, hope).

**11. False**

Attitudes of submissiveness and weakness, often associated with the personality of victims of violence, are consequences of the control exerted by the partner and of the atmosphere of fear and contempt in which they live.

**12. False**

No one seeks out abuse. The violent person is the one who has chosen to be violent.

**13. False**

When a girl or woman says "no," it means the same thing as when a boy or man says "no."

**14. False**

Helping an abused girl or woman helps her to start taking steps to get out. Regaining control over her own life and rediscovering her potential is a difficult process, and requires a significant amount of support. It is important to respect the person's rate of progress, even if it seems slow.

**15. True**

For example, the abused person may start missing classes, become more distracted, disturb others or become more isolated than usual. It all depends on the individual's reaction to the situation.

**16. False**

There are only 82 women's shelters in Québec.

**17. True**

Most of the time, women's shelters function at maximum capacity; sometimes even the couch is occupied for the night.

**18. False**

Only six percent of abused women use the services of women's shelters.

**19. False**

On average, women leave their partners for the first time after the 35th violent episode.

**20. True**

Between 1987 and 1991, 88 women were killed by their partners or ex-partners.

**21. False**

In all, 10 226 cases were reported to the police in 1991. Considering the number of cases that go unreported, the actual figure is, of course, much higher.

**22. False**

A man would have to be prosecuted a number of times for the same crime before being condemned and imprisoned. Men accused of conjugal violence are usually fined.

**23. False**

Therapy groups supply the necessary tools, but success depends on personal motivation. Violent men rarely join one on their own initiative. They usually go under court order or because their partner is pressuring them.

**24. False**

Conjugal violence occurs in every region of Québec, in both large cities and villages.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Canada. Correctional Service Canada. *Breaking the Cycle of Family Violence*. Ottawa: Correctional Service Canada, 1988.
- Canada. Health Canada. *Dating Violence*. Ottawa: The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, 1990.
- Fédération des ressources d'hébergement pour femmes violentées et en difficulté au Québec. *La violence enfante la violence—Guide de sensibilisation à la violence conjugale*. Longueuil: n.p., 1992.
- Gagné, Marie-Hélène. "La violence dans les relations amoureuses des adolescents et des adolescentes : une étude quantitative." Unpublished dissertation, École de psychologie, Université Laval, 1993.
- Lavoie, Francine, et al. *STOP! Dating Violence among Adolescents—Classroom Activities*. Québec: ministère de l'Éducation, 1995.
- Mercer, Shirley Litch. "Not a Pretty Picture: An Exploratory Study of Violence Against Women in High School Dating Relationships." *Resources for Feminist Research/Documentation sur la recherche féministe*, 17, 2 (1988): 15-23.
- Roy, Marjolaine, and Francine Lavoie. "Session de sensibilisation et d'information sur la violence dans les relations amoureuses des jeunes s'adressant au personnel scolaire." In Francine Lavoie, et al. *Développement et évaluation formative d'un programme de promotion voulant contrer le problème de la violence dans les relations intimes des jeunes*. Québec: Université Laval, 1993.
- Robitaille, Line, and Francine Lavoie. *La violence dans les relations intimes des jeunes : formation destinée aux bénévoles des services d'écoute téléphonique*. Québec: Groupe de recherche multidisciplinaire féministe, Université Laval, 1991.
- Sousa, C., et al. *Preventing Teen Dating Violence—A Three-Session Curriculum for Teaching Adolescents*. Cambridge, MA: The Dating Violence Intervention Project, Transition House and Emerge, n.d.



Gouvernement du Québec  
Ministère  
de l'Éducation

26-2665-03A