

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

Activity Guide for Students



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Québec 

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Activity Guide for Students

RECOGNIZE IT, PREVENT IT, STOP IT

Coordination à la condition féminine

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Introduction

This document designed for educators suggests a series of activities intended to make students aware of the problem of sexual harassment in schools. It complements the in-service session, which is aimed at making school staff aware of the problem of sexual harassment. It may also be used by schools and school boards that wish to implement a policy against sexual harassment.

The Emotions Underlying Sexual Harassment

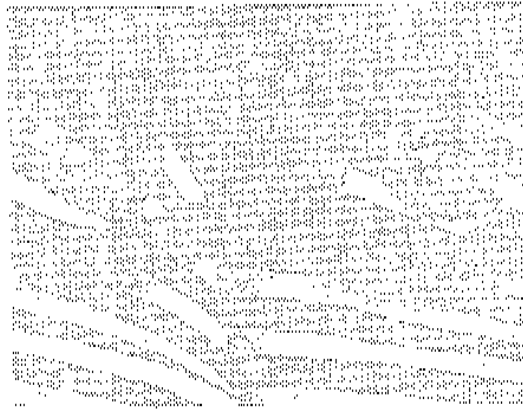
It is important that school staff understand that the violence expressed through sexual and gender harassment, like all other forms of violence, is the result of the perpetrator's inability to pinpoint and name what he or she is feeling. That is why action must be taken; students who perpetrate harassment must learn to identify and name the emotion at the root of the problem. Only then will it be possible to completely eliminate this type of behaviour.

Three general areas for action have been identified with respect to harassment:

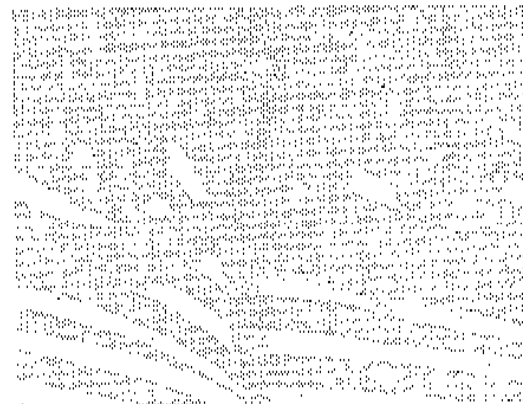
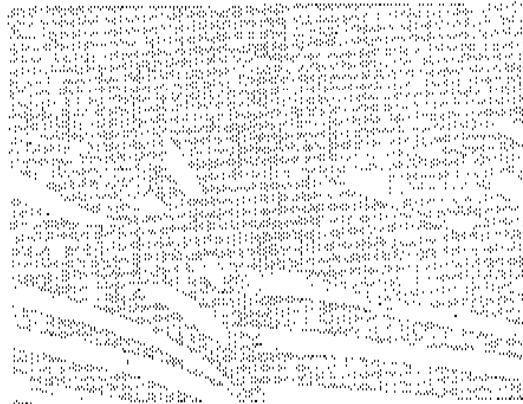
- education on interpersonal relationships
- sex education
- raising awareness of sexual and gender harassment

Activities in the "Interpersonal Relationships" and "Sex Education" sections of the Personal and Social Education program heighten awareness of the problem of sexual harassment. Also included is a series of activities specifically related to sexual and gender harassment.

Sexual and gender harassment is not a common topic of conversation between young people and adults. It has long been taboo, but it still exists, even in schools, where we would expect values such as justice, equity and equality to prevail. School staff is therefore encouraged to recognize cases of sexual harassment and to react to them using the means provided.



The Main Characteristics of Gender and Sexual Harassment among Students



The Main Characteristics of Gender and Sexual Harassment among Students

Research conducted in 1985 by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec¹ among students in secondary school and the second cycle of elementary school shows that most girls live in an environment of harassment that expands as they grow older. The girls surveyed said that relationships with boys often involve discrimination or potential or actual violence. Moreover, the media regularly report on different forms of sexual violence toward boys. Boys are also victims of sexual harassment, but not as often as girls.

Relationships involving power and authority, part of the process of socialization, are largely responsible for sexual and gender harassment among young people. Harassment among young people is a result of the assimilation of discriminatory attitudes toward girls in childhood and adolescence.

In a society in which there has been a significant increase in all forms of violent acts and behaviour, there can only be an emergence of similar incidents in schools. Both boys and girls are victims. The climate of violence results in a resurgence and reinforcement of behaviours associated with sexual stereotypes in boy-girl relationships. In most cases, boys are the aggressors and girls, the victims. This situation is largely the result of the absence of new, meaningful male and female models.

1. Philippe Ricard, et al., *Harcèlement sexiste, harcèlement sexuel, agression sexuelle à l'école primaire et secondaire : analyse explicative des résultats des sondages menés auprès des étudiantes francophones de niveaux primaire 5, 6 et secondaire 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 et 6 du Québec* (Québec: Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, 1985), p. 41.

Elementary 5 and 6 and Secondary I and II Students

Boy-Girl Relationships: Role Differentiation

At the end of elementary school and the beginning of secondary school, boy-girl relationships are developing: boys and girls are showing an interest in the opposite sex, while learning about their own power over them. In this context, girls of this age also assert themselves through teasing or intimidating behaviour, either in response to boys' behaviour or on their own.

Girls, however, seem to value physical contact and attach importance to the expression of affection, while exerting a certain power. Conversely, according to the 1985 study conducted by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, boys often express their affection for the opposite sex through physical or verbal violence. Girls say that boys are attracted by them and want to establish affective and sexual relationships, but only if they are dominant.²

It is thought that boys persist in this behaviour because of a lack of learning or meaningful models of other ways of expressing their affection toward the opposite sex.

Role differentiation is also expressed in sexist behaviours: in boy-girl games, girls rarely demonstrate leadership alone; they usually share it with the boys. This situation reflects societal relationships, in the vast majority of which men are in authority. If these behaviours persist in boy-girl relationships at this level, how can man-woman relationships possibly be expected to change?

Gender Harassment

Gender harassment is a type of behaviour motivated by sexist ideology and the internalization of learned sexual stereotypes. It targets women and girls on the basis of the social characteristics of femininity. It is a power relationship that can result from feelings of fear, powerlessness, hatred or jealousy.

2. Ricard et al., p. 38.

Although, in general, gender and sexual harassment are defined with women and girls as the victims, it must be remembered that boys and men can also be victims of such attitudes and behaviours.

Attitudes and Behaviours Associated with Gender Harassment

These sexist attitudes or behaviours are demonstrated in the following situations:

- boys teasing girls
- boys threatening girls with physical aggression
- boys telling girls that they are “just girls”
- boys telling girls that they are unable to do something
- boys pulling girls’ hair
- boys insulting girls

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment involves any situation in which an individual—usually a girl, but sometimes a boy—is subjected to behaviour with obviously sexual connotations. The victim is reduced to the status of sexual object.

Attitudes and Behaviours Associated with Sexual Harassment

These sexual attitudes or behaviours are demonstrated in the following situations:

- boys grabbing girls' breasts
- boys grabbing girls' buttocks
- boys lifting girls' skirts
- boys brushing up against girls
- boys exposing girls to voyeurism or exhibitionism
- boys fondling girls against their will

The Harasser and the Scene of Gender and Sexual Harassment

In general, the perpetrators are boys of the same age as or older than the girls and the incidents occur in the most heavily frequented places in the school: the classroom and the school yard.

Reactions and Feelings toward Gender and Sexual Harassment

Until puberty, girls defend themselves rather well against gender and sexual harassment, which does not preclude their feeling embarrassed, angry and humiliated. Unfortunately, no studies have been conducted to gather information on boys' reactions. Depending on their age, girls and boys are apparently able to recognize certain conflict situations as cases of gender and sexual harassment.

Consequences of Gender and Sexual Harassment

The types of gender and sexual harassment to which young people are subject can, on the one hand, cause them to develop a sexual identity in conformity with existing social stereotypes; on the other hand, these same types of harassment can lead them to develop new models based on sexual equality.

Secondary III, IV and V Students

Unlike elementary school students, girls in secondary school are undergoing physiological, biological and hormonal changes and becoming women. They are able to recognize sexual harassment when the situation has obvious effects at the personal or physical level. In other cases, in which the relationship or the aggression is less violent, they, like older women, have difficulty distinguishing gender harassment from flirting.

Attitudes and Behaviours Associated with Gender and Sexual Harassment

Unlike younger girls, girls in secondary school experience more or less the same type of harassment as adults. For example, a student may:

- be undressed with the eyes;
- be presented with pornography;
- receive unsolicited sexual proposals.

The Harasser and the Scene of Gender and Sexual Harassment

In general, classmates are still mainly responsible for gender and sexual harassment. The study conducted by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec on gender and sexual harassment and sexual assault against girls in elementary and secondary school, however, emphasizes that the more contact girls have with adult male staff, the more likely they are to experience harassment.

In secondary school, most harassment occurs in situations in which boys are in a group; these are situations in which there is less supervision and more traffic and in which girl-boy relationships are more impersonal. Thus, corridors, classrooms, the cafeteria, locker areas and bathrooms are often the scene of harassment. Most sexist comments and behaviours occur in the classroom.

Reactions and Feelings toward Gender and Sexual Harassment

Faced with sexual harassment, girls react more strongly when the situation affects them personally, or is more threatening. They then react forcefully and emotionally.

In cases of gender harassment, girls, like women, pretend they have not heard or have not been affected. This attitude results in an inappropriate increase in their tolerance level toward harassment.

Schools are not exempt from situations in which girls are harassed by an adult male, usually a teacher, who uses blackmail or threats. Such situations may last a long time before steps are taken to intervene. These situations are usually known to a number of individuals who keep quiet about them.

Consequences of Gender and Sexual Harassment

One of the consequences of harassment that distinguishes girls from women is that some girls are left with a determination to demand more respect, but that does not preclude their being emotionally shaken, feeling devalued or guilty, or slowly adopting negative attitudes toward men. Like women who, in the same circumstances, are affected in their work performance, girls in secondary school turn away from their studies.

Responsibilities of School Staff

The study conducted by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec shows that in school, and particularly in the classroom, girls are much more likely to experience harassment from male classmates than from teachers or any other staff members, for example, janitors or principals. This observation would indicate that school staff, although less likely to harass the girls, tolerates a fair amount of harassment on the part of the students. This high level of tolerance is probably due to the difficulty of detecting and bringing to light gender and sexual harassment.

The study reveals that not only does school staff tolerate gender harassment, it contributes to it. Teachers should take advantage of sexist comments made in class to counter the problem by explaining the social repressiveness of such behaviours; hence a reexamination of the effects and influence of pedagogical practices is in order. It is not enough to eliminate sexism in textbooks; educational practices, language, the atmosphere in the school and the attitudes of young people in groups must be analyzed.

In the past few years, girls have begun, albeit timidly, to explore new areas in vocational education, long a bastion of male students. Many girls have had to, and still have to, face gender and sexual harassment too often tolerated by teachers and sometimes perpetrated by them. Some girls have even dropped out of vocational education because the atmosphere became intolerable. Girls, already a minority in this sector, experience double isolation created by classmates and staff.

It would be in the interest of all educators to examine gender and sexual harassment. The ministère de l'Éducation has prepared teaching materials to assist those who wish to become involved in this issue.



Tables of Activities and Concepts



Tables of Activities and Concepts

The following tables give an overview of the activities to promote understanding of sexual and gender harassment, as well as related concepts. They are divided into sections (interpersonal relationships, sex education, and sexual and gender harassment) and levels of instruction (elementary and secondary). The objectives of each activity are clearly defined.

The activities in the “interpersonal relationships” and “sex education” sections are borrowed from the Personal and Social Education program; references to the relevant activity guides are provided. The activities in the “sexual and gender harassment education” section are described in subsequent chapters of this guide.

A glossary at the end of this chapter provides definitions, key words and examples related to sexism and harassment.

Suggested Activities, Elementary Level

Elementary - Interpersonal Relationships¹			
Themes	Cycle	Terminal Objectives	Activities
The Message	1	To observe that when they express feelings they communicate messages to others.	1.5.1 3.5.1
Interaction	1	To recognize that in a relationship each person reacts to the other person's behaviour.	2.4.1 3.4.1
Emotional Reactions	2	To understand that their emotional reactions influence their behaviour towards others.	4.4.1 5.4.1 6.4.1 6.4.2
Interpretation	2	To understand that when people interpret the behaviour of others, they are inferring how those individuals feel towards them.	5.5.1
Exchange and Compromise	2	To understand that all good relationships demand mutual exchanges and compromises.	6.9.1
Harmony	2	To recognize the importance of harmonious relationships within a couple.	4.10.1 6.10.1

Elementary - Sex Education²			
Themes	Cycle	Terminal Objectives	Activities
Male-Female	1	To appreciate being boys and girls.	2.3.1 3.3.1
Roles and Sex-Role Stereotypes	1	To define the concept of sex role.	2.6.1
Sex Roles and Sex-Role Stereotypes	2	To recognize the many different sex roles assumed by men and women and to choose their own roles.	4.7.1 4.7.2 5.7.1
Sexual Exploitation	2	To show an understanding of what to do in case of sexual exploitation.	4.6.1 5.6.1 6.6.1

1-2. These activities are borrowed from the Personal and Social Education program.

Elementary - Sexual and Gender Harassment³

Themes	Cycle	Terminal Objectives	Activities
Equality	1	To recognize that men and women can play the same roles.	1
Gender Harassment	1	To study the effects of hurtful or unpleasant comments about either sex.	2
Harassment	1	To learn that the term <i>harassment</i> implies <i>constraint, force, hounding</i> .	3
Sexual Harassment of Girls	1	To recognize cases of sexual harassment.	4
Sexual Harassment of Boys	1	To recognize cases of sexual harassment.	5
Stereotypes	2	To analyze their own behaviour for sexual stereotypes.	6
Expressing Affection	2	To distinguish between expression of affection and harassment.	7
Dual Discrimination	2	To become aware of behaviour that excludes girls.	8
Behaviours Constituting Harassment	2	To become aware of behaviours constituting harassment.	9
Sexual Violence	2	To become aware of the sexual violence experienced by adolescent girls and to discuss possible solutions.	10

3. These activities are described in subsequent chapters of this guide.

Suggested Activities, Secondary Level

Secondary - Interpersonal Relationships ⁴			
Themes	Cycle	Terminal Objectives	Activities
My Profile	1	To compare their relationships with those of their adult role models.	1.1.1
Types of Relationships	1	To describe the interpersonal relationships experienced in adolescence.	2.4.1
Conflict	1	To be aware that they must confront conflicts.	2.5.1 2.5.2
Message Clarification	1	To evaluate different ways of finding out how the other person feels.	2.6.1
Choosing a Relationship	2	To associate correctly the type of relationship they are seeking with their basic psychological needs.	3.6.1
Attitudes	2	To show that attitudes toward others influence the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships.	3.8.1 4.8.1
Conflict	2	To identify the values that should guide them in a conflict.	5.7.1
Message Clarification	2	To discover the point of view of others in various interpersonal relationships.	5.9.1 5.9.2

4. These activities are borrowed from the Personal and Social Education program.

Secondary - Sex Education⁵

Themes	Cycle	Terminal Objectives	Activities
Sexual Behaviour	1	To recognize the different ways in which boys and girls express their feelings and the various meanings of these feelings.	2.8.1
Sexual Exploitation	1	To be aware of the different forms of sexual exploitation and of the available support services.	2.11.1
Personal Choices	1	To understand that the quality of their life as sexual beings will depend increasingly on themselves and on their own actions.	1.5.2
Sexual Awakening	1	To understand sexual awakening.	1.7.1
Sexual Behaviour	1	To recognize the different ways in which boys and girls express their feelings.	1.8.1 1.8.2 2.8.1
Sexual Exploitation	2	To have an objective understanding of the different forms of sexual exploitation.	3.9.1 4.9.1 5.9.1
Sex Roles and Sex-Role Stereotypes	2	To understand the various sex roles and sex-role stereotypes in society.	3.10.1 4.10.1 5.10.1

5. These activities are borrowed from the Personal and Social Education program.

Secondary - Sexual and Gender Harassment⁶

Themes	Cycle	Terminal Objectives	Activities
Stereotypes	1	To analyze their own behaviour for sexual stereotypes.	6
Expressing Affection	1	To distinguish between expression of affection and harassment.	7
Dual Discrimination	1	To become aware of behaviour that excludes girls.	8
Behaviours Constituting Harassment	1	To become aware of behaviours constituting harassment.	9
Sexual Violence	1	To become aware of the sexual violence experienced by adolescent girls.	10
Behaviours Constituting Harassment	2	To become aware of behaviours constituting harassment and the effect of these behaviours on the other sex.	11
Sexual Harassment and Abuse	2	To become aware of attitudes and behaviours related to sexual harassment or abuse and to find solutions instead of keeping silent.	12
Sexual Violence	2	To become aware of the sexual violence experienced by adolescent girls and to discuss possible solutions.	13
Myth and Reality	2	To become aware of the myths surrounding sexual and gender harassment, and the reality.	14
Peer Group Influence	2	To become aware that peer groups can often pressure individuals to do things they would not do if they were alone.	15
Strategies for Action	2	To learn to react, express their feelings and discover possible solutions in cases of harassment.	16

6. These activities are described in subsequent chapters of this guide.

Glossary

Definitions of Terms Related to Sexism and Harassment⁷

Definitions	Key terms	Examples
SEXISM		
Set of beliefs, values and attitudes that, on the basis of stereotypical and internalized models, divides roles, skills, interests and behaviours according to sex, resulting in a limitation of individual development at all levels: personal, emotional, professional and social. One of its main effects is discrimination against women and the alienation of the two sexes.	- <i>Division of roles according to sex</i> - <i>Limitations on the development and opportunities of the individual</i> - <i>Injustice for girls and women is the main consequence</i> - <i>Stereotypical models are the root of the problem</i>	- Asking girls to water plants and boys to carry heavy books - Urging a girl to study ballet when she would rather play hockey - Discouraging a boy from becoming a secretary because it is not a man's job - Refusing to team up with girls because they are girls - Using qualifiers such as "tomboy" for girls and "sissy" for boys - Telling a girl that she can succeed or play "as well as a boy" - Punishing a boy by seating him next to a girl, or vice versa

7. Québec, ministère de l'Éducation, *You & Me—Adult's Guide* (Code 28-2632A) (Québec: Coordination à la condition féminine, 1994), p. 15-18.

Definitions	Key terms	Examples
EQUALITY		

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The fact of being equal, that is, of the same nature, quality or value. - Relationship between two equal individuals who have the same rights and responsibilities. | <p><i>Same value</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In quantity - In quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Girls and boys are equal. - Whites and Blacks are equal. |
|--|--|---|

Note: Perfect equality does not exist; it is a concept created by humans, and therefore abstract and mathematical. It is often preferable to speak of "equivalency."

Equivalency:
That which has the same value or function, which is comparable in quantity or quality.

Definitions	Key terms	Examples
DISCRIMINATION		
Discrimination is the result of a distinction, exclusion or preference based on a prohibited motive that denies or compromises an individual's right to equality in the exercise of his or her rights and freedoms. <i>Prohibited motives, according to the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, include:</i> - race - colour - sex - sexual orientation - civil status - religion - political convictions - language - ethnic or national origin - social condition - a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap <i>Intentional discrimination:</i> deliberately unjust practices resulting from prejudice or lack of goodwill.	- <i>Distinction</i> <i>Exclusion</i> <i>Preference</i> based on race, colour, sex and so on - <i>Against the law</i> - <i>Harming</i> someone on the basis of prejudice	- Male teams have greater access to the gym after school. - A garage owner refuses to hire a woman mechanic, although she has all the required skills. - A building owner refuses to rent an apartment to a person because he or she is Black or a single parent. - Students wishing to join a computer club are required to have a computer at home.

Definitions	Key terms	Examples
STEREOTYPE		
Simplified and distorted representation (judgment, feeling, opinion, image) of reality based on one or several characteristics of an individual or group. Stereotypes are <i>reductionist</i> and this reduction results in an elimination of nuances, attributing a <i>general</i> image to all individuals in a given group. <i>Discriminatory stereotype:</i> stereotypes are discriminatory because their general character triggers negative behaviours and attitudes. <i>Sexual stereotype:</i> stereotype based on an individual's sex.	- An <i>image</i> of an individual based on a <i>model</i>, a <i>photograph</i> or a traditional prejudice - <i>Generalizing</i> this image to all individuals in a given group	- Girls are emotional. - Boys are aggressive. - Blacks have a natural sense of rhythm. - Amerindians are good hunters. - Blind people have an acute sense of hearing. - Women are perfectionists. - Men have good business sense and are aggressive, ambitious, independent, and so on. - Boys do not like music lessons. - Girls are neat, organized, passive, unambitious and irrational. - Boys are leaders. - Girls do not like rough sports.

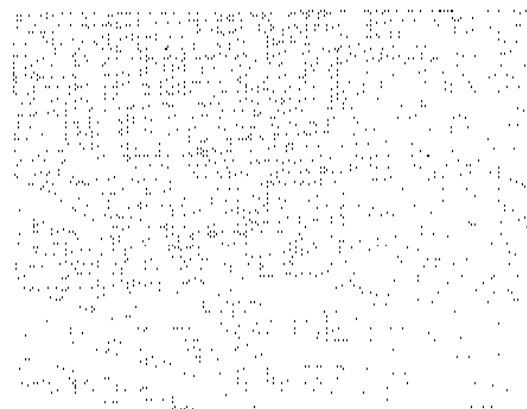
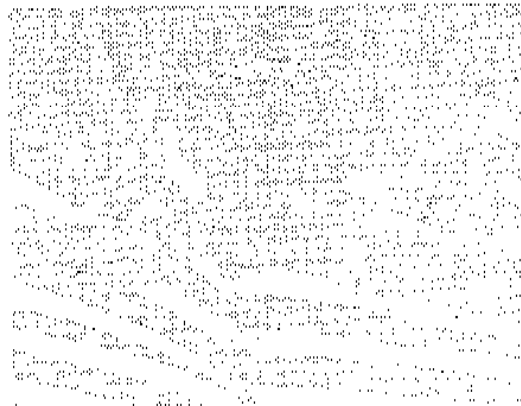
Definitions	Key terms	Examples
ROLE		
Function assigned to a person; behaviour that is expected from him or her.	<i>Function</i> <i>Behaviour</i>	- The role of a teacher is to teach students and help them in their development.
<i>Sexual role</i> : role related to sex.	- For example, actors and actresses have roles to play in a movie.	- The role of a crossing guard is to ensure the safety of children crossing the street.
<i>Sex role</i> : role attributed to one sex in particular.	- In daily life, each person plays a number of roles.	- In adult life, women and men have a number of roles, for example: - workers - spouses - parents
<i>Traditional role</i> : a stereotypical role may be interpreted as a traditional role.		

Definitions	Key terms	Examples
PREJUDICE		
- Belief or <i>preconceived</i> notion often imposed by one's environment, upbringing or time. - Premature judgment, way of seeing things without valid logic or basis, with either favourable or unfavourable results.	<i>Belief, opinion:</i> that is, prejudice is subjective and related to individual or collective experience. <i>Doubtful arguments:</i> that is, they do not stand up to analysis or the facts.	- Immigrants are dirty, I know some. - Men do not cry. - A woman's place is in the home. - Girls are better at English and boys at science. - Girls are too fragile to play hockey. - Women only work to buy luxury items. - Women in non-traditional occupations take jobs away from men. - Men do not like to work for women.
Note: Prejudice contributes to sexism, most often by offering an irrational justification for the division between the sexes.		

Definitions	Key terms	Examples
HARASSMENT		
Behaviour consisting, in part, of the repetition of words, acts or gestures of a vexatious or contemptuous nature with regard to a person or group of persons.	<i>Motives for harassment:</i> - social condition - handicap - ethnic origin - sex - religion - race - sexual orientation - age	- Being repeatedly told by a colleague that well-educated women do not become welders, mechanics, firefighters, and so on.
<i>Sexual and gender harassment:</i> social mechanism for the repression of women with a view to keeping them, through fear and anxiety, within the framework defined by patriarchal domination.		
<i>Gender harassment:</i> takes the form of symbolic verbal or nonverbal behaviour intended to denigrate women or keep them in an inferior position with respect to men. It openly perpetuates sexist stereotypes.		- Sexist attitudes and comments - Sexist jokes - Negative comments about physical appearance
<i>Sexual harassment:</i> Sexual intervention; form of sexist domination and sexual control of women in a context of unequal power in which the harasser can even use open threats of violence, that relegates women to the status of sexual objects. The most violent sexual harassment leads to sexual assault.		- Unwanted touching - Voyeurism - Propositions involving promises of compensation - Propositions involving threats



Activities for the First Cycle of Elementary School



Activities for the First Cycle of Elementary School

In the first cycle of elementary school, boy-girl relationships are usually harmonious and do not involve power. Children of this age, however, may witness harassment and be tempted to mimic related behaviours.

The activities in this chapter are intended to make children aware of the appropriate orientation of girl-boy and, later, man-woman relationships. They are designed to prevent harassment by or of students in the first cycle of elementary school. Research has shown that problems related to sexual and gender harassment are much more widespread among older students.

In order that these objectives can be attained, equality between the sexes must be encouraged through the abolition of all forms of sexual or discriminatory violence toward either sex.

Activity 1

Changing Our Roles

Theme

Equality

Objective

To recognize that men and women can play the same roles.

Time

45 minutes

Procedure

Write on the board four roles of people in the school (two women and two men). Have the students specify the various duties of these people. For example:

- the school principal: _____

- the janitor: _____

- the nurse: _____

- the kindergarten teacher: _____

Then, change the sexes of the four people (e.g. have a male janitor become a female janitor, a male principal a female principal, and so on). Have the students redefine their duties based on the new sex.

Ask the students whether they know women who play roles traditionally reserved for men (e.g. police officers, politicians). You may repeat the same exercise with men (e.g. secretaries, receptionists).

- Does it make any difference if a job normally reserved for one sex is held by someone of the other sex?

Activity 2

What Are Little Girls Made Of?

Theme

Gender harassment

Objective

To study the effects of hurtful or unpleasant comments about either sex.

Time

45 minutes

Procedure

Explain to the students that the two nursery rhymes "What Are Little Girls Made Of?" and "What Are Little Boys Made Of?" give stereotyped views of both sexes and are hurtful to children of both sexes.

Ask them if they are familiar with these rhymes and if they know other, similar ones.

- What do these rhymes say about how boys and girls are treated differently?
- How do the students feel about what the rhymes say about their own and the other sex? Do boys and girls feel the same way about the rhymes? Do they find them hurtful?

Activity 3

Harassment Implies Constraint¹

Theme

Harassment

Objective

To learn that the term *harassment* implies *constraint*, *force*, *hounding*.

Time

45 minutes

Learning Context

Ask the students to express their feelings toward animals and suggest role-playing to find out what the animals think and how they feel about certain situations they experience with children.

Procedure

- Describe to the students a situation of improper treatment (exploitation) experienced by each one of the animals (see Resource Sheet A) and ask two students to role-play each situation (i.e. the child and the animal).
- Asking questions about the situations, help the students identify the concepts of *constraint*, *harassment* and *physical well-being*:

1. This activity is based on Activity 1.5.1 in: Québec, ministère de l'Éducation, *Personal and Social Education—Sex Education—Elementary School—Activity Guide* (Code 16-2707-02A) (Québec: Direction générale des programmes, 1989), p. 84-86.

- Do you think the turtle enjoyed playing Laura's game? Why or why not?
- Do you think John really wanted to hurt Target?
- If animals could talk, do you think they would sometimes refuse to play certain games children like to play? Would they have a right to refuse? Why or why not?
- Examine with the students other situations of improper treatment and harassment that children sometimes experience among themselves:
 - cheating in a game
 - exchanging a toy with a younger child knowing the exchanged toy does not work
 - fighting with a smaller child
 - being called names (e.g. "sissy," "tomboy")
 - being touched against their will
- Ask the students to express their feelings regarding past situations in which someone took advantage of them because they were younger or less informed than others (e.g. situations in the classroom, among siblings or friends, with adults).
- Ask the students to repeat the role-playing games replacing the situation with one in which each person is respected and enjoys the company of the other:
 - John meets Target. Target, very happy to see John, runs toward him. What does John do?
- Ask the students what is meant by *harassing* someone. Then ask them to draw a picture of a situation of harassment and explain it to the class.

The Dog

John, returning from school, meets Target, the neighbour's dog. Target, very happy to see John, runs toward him, jumps and rolls over. Target wants to play but John grabs him by the tail and will not let go.

The Fly

Celia is very interested in insects. She enjoys observing them to learn more about them. She likes to catch flies and keep them in her hands as long as possible to see how long it will take them to die.

The Cat

Paul is very proud of his little cat. According to him, his cat is the smartest cat in the world. Michael, a friend, is playing at Paul's house. To show how smart his cat is, Paul picks it up and lets it drop from quite high to show Michael that a cat always lands on its feet.

The Turtle

Laura received a nice little turtle for her birthday. Laura plays with her turtle by leaving it on its back for long hours just to see whether it will be able to get back on its feet on its own.

The Bird

Right in front of Robert's house there is a large maple tree. In this tree there is a robin that sings all day. Robert can hear it but he cannot see it because of the thick leaves. So he decides to throw rocks to force the bird out of the tree.

Activity 4

Krista's Story²

Theme

Sexual harassment of girls

Objective

To recognize cases of sexual harassment.

Time

45 minutes

Learning Context

Tell the students the following story:

Krista's brother and his friends think it's fun to lift girls' skirts at home and at school. Krista's brother says, "I can see your bum!" and laughs. Krista does not like this but, although she has told him so, her brother will not stop. Now Krista doesn't want to wear skirts any more; she will only wear pants.

Discussion

Ask the students the following questions:

- Do you think that what is happening to Krista is fair?
- Why do some boys act that way?
- How would you feel if you were teased, bothered and harassed like that?
- What Krista is experiencing is harassment. Do you know of other cases of harassment?

2. This activity is based on an activity in: Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, *Le harcèlement sexuel...8 mars. Aujourd'hui c'est moi qui décide! Je veux que ça arrête : Guide de réflexion et d'intervention* (Québec: Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, 1987), p. 7.

Activity 5

Julian's Story

Theme

Sexual harassment of boys

Objective

To recognize cases of sexual harassment.

Time

45 minutes

Learning Context

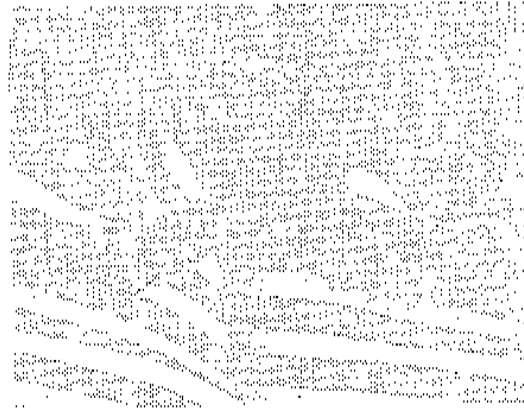
Tell the students the following story:

Julian's sister and her friends tease him by kissing him and touching him against his will at home and at school. They say, "I want to kiss you," and other such things. Julian does not like this but, although he has told them so, they will not stop harassing him. Now Julian doesn't want to leave the house any more, because he does not want to be teased and harassed by the girls.

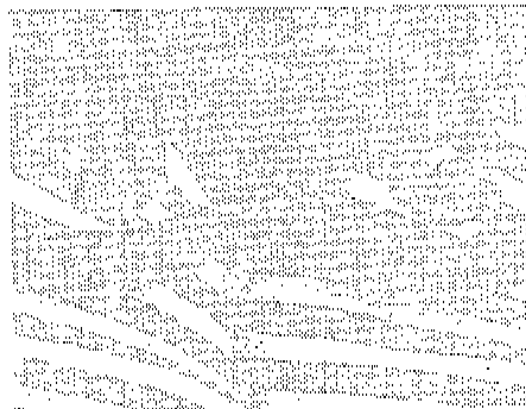
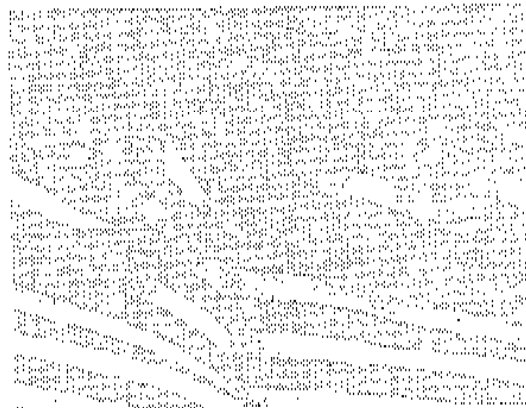
Discussion

Ask the students the following questions:

- Do you think that what is happening to Julian is fair?
- Why do some girls act that way?
- How would you feel if you were teased, bothered and harassed like that?
- What Julian is experiencing is harassment. Do you know of other cases of harassment?



Activities for the Second Cycle of Elementary School and Secondary I and II



Activities for the Second Cycle of Elementary School and Secondary I and II

According to the study conducted by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec,¹ young people in the second cycle of elementary school and at the beginning of secondary school exhibit sexual and gender harassment behaviours. The salient points of this study, highlighting the ambivalence and discomfort present in girl-boy relationships, appear at the beginning of this activity guide. This ambivalence and discomfort is attributed to the beginning of puberty. Society contributes to this discomfort by failing to offer young people certain guidelines that could help them as they develop into adults.

This situation gives rise to paradoxical and often aggressive behaviour, and it is usually girls who bear the brunt. It is important to make students aware of the emotions underlying harassment.

1. Ricard et al.

Activity 6

Sexism²

Theme

Stereotypes

Objective

To analyze their own behaviour for sexual stereotypes.

Time

60 minutes

Learning Context

Have the students answer the questions in Activity Sheet A. Make sure to define the term *stereotype* and give examples.

*When you cannot or will not react to a person on the basis of his or her personal characteristics, you are stereotyping, that is, rigidly applying an image to all members of a social group to describe them. . . . A stereotype becomes discriminatory when it limits the development, expression or rights of people belonging to the social group to which it refers.*³

For example:

- Girls don't play ball very well.
- Boys don't like music class.

2. Diane Cantin and Lisette Lambert, *Teaching Non-Sexist Attitudes Through Pedagogical Practices and Activities—In-Service Session for Cycle Two Elementary School Teachers—Student Activity Guide* (Code 28-2426-02A) (Québec: ministère de l'Éducation, 1991), p. 45-48.

3. Québec, *You and Me—Adult's Guide*, p. 19.

Have the students share their answers with the class. Review each hypothetical situation and discuss the choices made by the students.

Help the students assess their ability to adopt non-stereotypical behaviours. You might want to help them become aware of their openness to growth or, on the other hand, to examine why they made the choices they did.

Activity Sheet A

Sexism

Find a partner and try to guess each other's answers before sharing them.

1. In phys ed class, you are paired with a partner of the opposite sex. You:
 - a) choose another activity instead.
 - b) tell the teacher you don't want that partner.
 - c) hide your displeasure and take part in the activity.
 - d) don't have a problem with your partner.
 - e) other answer: _____

2. Because you have shown an aptitude for this activity, you are asked to join a hockey team (if you are a girl) or a dance group (if you are a boy). You:
 - a) flatly refuse, because it is not an appropriate activity for a girl, or for a boy.
 - b) refuse because you are afraid of being laughed at.
 - c) say you would like to think about it, and ask your parents for advice.
 - d) are flattered, and accept immediately.
 - e) other answer: _____

3. The teacher asks for students to help with the children in the kindergarten class. You:
 - a) think this activity is more appropriate for girls.
 - b) think this activity is more appropriate for boys.
 - c) think this activity is equally appropriate for girls and boys.

4. Your parents are planning to go out, and they call a male babysitter to take care of you.
- a) You're not pleased; in fact, it bothers you. You tell your parents it's not a job for a guy.
 - b) You tell your parents it bothers you a bit because it's new for you, but you accept it.
 - c) It bothers you a bit because it's new for you, but you don't say anything because you don't have any choice in the matter.
 - d) It doesn't make any difference to you if it's a guy or a girl, as long as you get along well together.
 - e) You find it normal, you are used to having a male babysitter.
 - f) Your parents would never have a male babysitter take care of you.
5. You're a guy and you love cooking. Cakes are your specialty, and the whole family enjoys them. You:
- a) are proud of your skill, and talk about it to your friends.
 - b) are proud of your skill, and you even make cakes for your friends.
 - c) are proud of your skill, but you never say anything about it to your friends, because they would laugh.
 - d) warn your family not to tell anyone about it.
6. **For boys:** One day at school, you want to do some painting, but you've forgotten your smock. The teacher offers to lend you one with flowers on it. You:
- a) flatly refuse to wear it, without saying why.
 - b) ask the teacher to lend you a smock that's not a girl's.
 - c) realize it's a girl's smock, but it doesn't bother you.
 - d) put it on without saying anything, but you don't feel comfortable in it.

7. You are visiting friends, and you all decide to go skating. The only skates that fit you are boys' skates (if you're a girl; reverse the situation if you're a boy). You really want to go skating.

You:

- a) decide not to go, because you don't want to wear those skates and get laughed at.
- b) decide not to go, because you don't feel like it any more.
- c) hesitate, but since you really want to go skating, you put on the skates and hope nobody notices them.
- d) put on the skates. It doesn't matter to you, as long as you can go skating and have fun.
- e) don't understand why anyone would refuse to wear them if she or he wanted to go skating.

8. It's your birthday party, and you can invite friends of either sex.

You:

- a) only invite friends of the same sex as yourself, because none of your friends of the opposite sex would want to come.
- b) only invite friends of the same sex as yourself, because you don't have any friends of the opposite sex.
- c) invite both boys and girls, since you have friends of both sexes.
- d) would like to invite girls (if you're a boy), or boys (if you're a girl), but you're too shy.
- e) would like to invite kids of the opposite sex, but they wouldn't want to come.

9. **For girls:** The class is dividing up for workshops. There's an opening in the carpentry workshop. You:

- a) think it's more appropriate for boys.
- b) think it's more appropriate for boys, but you decide to take part anyway, if another girl does too.
- c) refuse to take part if there are only boys in it.
- d) take part in it, because you don't have a choice, it's your turn.

- e) are glad to take part in it, because you think it's just as appropriate for girls as for boys.
- f) never go to the workshop because it's always full of boys.

10. **For boys:** The class is dividing up for workshops. There's an opening in the workshop on sewing, knitting and dolls. You:

- a) think it's more appropriate for girls.
- b) think it's more appropriate for girls, but you decide to take part anyway, if another boy does too.
- c) refuse to take part if there are only girls in it.
- d) take part in it, because you don't have a choice, it's your turn.
- e) are glad to take part in it, because you think it's just as appropriate for boys as for girls.
- f) never go to the workshop because it's always full of girls.

Activity 7

Affection

Theme

Expressing affection

Objective

To distinguish between expression of affection and harassment.

Time

60 minutes

Learning Context 1

Highlight expressions of affection that students give and receive.

Procedure

Present the students with one of the following two scenarios.

Scenario A

You are given the responsibility of taking care of a baby animal that has been separated from its family (you choose the kind of animal).

Questions

How will you take care of it?

How will you show your affection for it (e.g. stroking it, talking to it, giving it attention)?

How do you feel?

How do you show your affection for others and how do they show it for you?

How do you feel?

Scenario B

How do you show affection to your best friend or to whoever is the most important person in your life right now?

Learning Context 2

Highlight behaviour constituting harassment.

Procedure

Explain to the students what *harassment* means: to oblige, force or constrain a person (or animal) to undergo something he or she does not want to. Then ask them to consider the following scenario.

Scenario

Julie and Eric both get turtles for their birthday. They think it's fun to lay the turtles on their backs to find out how long it will take them to turn over.

Questions

What do you think about this behaviour?

What are the constraints experienced by the turtles?

Describe situations in which you harass others or are harassed by them:

- lifting girls' skirts
- not letting a boy (or a girl) play a game
- grabbing a boy's (or girl's) behind

(See the chapter on the main characteristics of gender and sexual harassment among students for other harassment behaviours.)

How do you react? How does it make you feel?

Activity 8

Why Not?

Theme

Dual discrimination

Objective

To become aware of behaviour that excludes girls.

Time

60 minutes

Note

The results of the study conducted by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec clearly show that girls are subjected to dual discrimination in game playing. On the one hand, they cannot demonstrate leadership alone and, on the other hand, they are excluded from certain games because they are girls.

Ask the students whether, in fact, girls are excluded from, or have difficulty participating in, certain games with boys. If so, proceed with the following activity.

Learning Context

Exclude boys from an activity.

Procedure

Ask the students to consider the following scenario.

Scenario

Your teacher decides that, this Christmas (or Easter, etc.), only the girls will plan, design and make the classroom decorations. While the girls are thus occupied, the boys will be doing school work.

Discussion

Ask the students the following questions:

- How would the excluded group react?
- How would the privileged group react?
- Why did the teacher decide to exclude the boys?

You may repeat this activity, assigning leadership roles to girls only (e.g. minister, mayor, judge, principal).

Activity 9

Perpetrators and Victims of Harassment⁴

Theme

Behaviours constituting harassment

Objective

To become aware of behaviours constituting harassment.

Time

90 minutes

Learning Context

Hand out the questionnaires on the following pages.

Have the students work individually, checking off yes or no for each statement.

Have each student think about the behaviours showing that he or she is a victim of harassment (first questionnaire).

Have the students form groups of three or four of the same sex to compile their answers and comment on them.

Have them proceed in the same manner for the second questionnaire (perpetrator), that is, individually and then in groups.

4. This activity is based on: Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, p. 14.

Procedure

Write the boys' results on one side of the board and the girls' results on the other. Suggest the following game.

Game

Compare the results of the questionnaires.

Observe the behaviours in which girls or boys are perpetrators of harassment.

Observe the behaviours in which girls or boys are victims of harassment.

Discussion

You may ask the students the following question:

- According to the results, is it true that, in general, boys are perpetrators and girls are victims of harassment?

If the results show that girls and boys are both perpetrators and victims, assess how these behaviours are experienced by the victims.

Conclusion

Take the opportunity to emphasize harassment behaviours that have been denounced by the students (both boys and girls), and discuss how they can change the situation.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GIRLS
Victim

Situations	Yes	No
1. Boys tease me about my physical appearance.		
2. Boys examine me from head to toe (undress me mentally).		
3. Boys make advances or sexual propositions that I do not want.		
4. Boys pat my buttocks.		
5. Boys kiss me against my will.		
6. Boys touch my buttocks against my will.		
7. Boys ridicule me.		
8. Boys touch me against my will.		

Perpetrator

Situations	Yes	No
1. I tease boys about their physical appearance.		
2. I examine boys from head to toe (undress them mentally).		
3. I make advances or sexual propositions to boys that they do not want.		
4. I pat boys' buttocks.		
5. I kiss boys against their will.		
6. I touch boys' buttocks against their will.		
7. I ridicule boys.		
8. I touch boys against their will.		

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BOYS

Victim

Situations	Yes	No
1. Girls tease me about my physical appearance.		
2. Girls examine me from head to toe (undress me mentally).		
3. Girls make advances or sexual propositions that I do not want.		
4. Girls pat my buttocks.		
5. Girls kiss me against my will.		
6. Girls touch my buttocks against my will.		
7. Girls ridicule me.		
8. Girls touch me against my will.		

Perpetrator

Situations	Yes	No
1. I tease girls about their physical appearance.		
2. I examine girls from head to toe (undress them mentally).		
3. I make advances or sexual propositions to girls that they do not want.		
4. I pat girls' buttocks.		
5. I kiss girls against their will.		
6. I touch girls' buttocks against their will.		
7. I ridicule girls.		
8. I touch girls against their will.		

Activity 10

Sexual Violence

Theme

Sexual violence

Objective

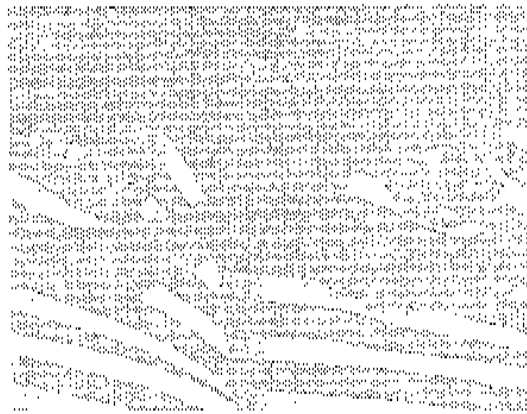
To become aware of the sexual violence experienced by adolescent girls and to discuss possible solutions.

Time

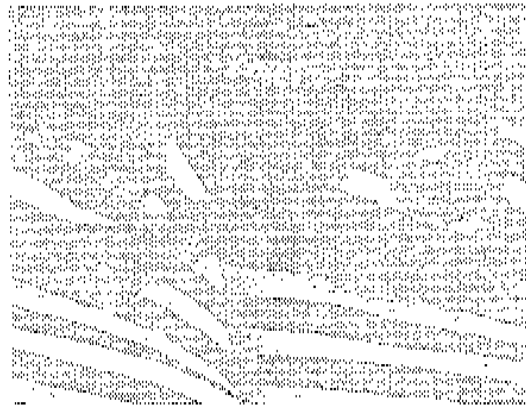
60 minutes

Procedure

Describe a dozen cases of sexual harassment experienced by adolescent girls and ask the students whether they have witnessed similar cases.



Activities for Secondary III, IV and V



Activities for Secondary III, IV and V

According to the study conducted in 1985 by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, girls experience the same kind of gender and sexual harassment that women do. Since they are at a stage of physiological, psychological and hormonal development, they are less able to distinguish the various forms of gender harassment. They are better able to identify sexual harassment in situations in which they are personally and physically involved.

There have been no studies to provide information on the various forms of gender and sexual harassment experienced by boys. Activities have been designed, however, to allow them to identify the types of gender and sexual harassment they may be experiencing.

Activity 11

Perpetrators and Victims of Harassment

Theme

Behaviours constituting harassment

Objective

To become aware of behaviours constituting harassment and the effect of these behaviours on the other sex.

Time

55 minutes

Learning Context

Hand out the questionnaires on the following pages.

Have the students work individually, checking off yes or no for each statement.

Have the students form groups of three or four of the same sex to compile their answers and comment on them.

Procedure

Write the boys' results on one side of the board and the girls' results on the other.

If the results show that girls and boys are both perpetrators and victims, assess how these behaviours are experienced by the victims.

Conclusion

Take the opportunity to emphasize harassment behaviours that have been denounced by the students (both boys and girls), and discuss how they can change the situation.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GIRLS

Victim

Situations	Yes	No
1. Boys tease me about my physical appearance.		
2. Boys examine me from head to toe (undress me mentally).		
3. Boys make advances or sexual propositions that I do not want.		
4. Boys pat my buttocks.		
5. Boys kiss me against my will.		
6. Boys touch my buttocks against my will.		
7. Boys ridicule me.		
8. Boys touch me against my will.		

Perpetrator

	No	Yes		
Situations		They like it	They don't like it	They don't mind
1. I tease boys about their physical appearance.				
2. I examine boys from head to toe (undress them mentally).				
3. I make advances or sexual propositions to boys that they do not want.				
4. I pat boys' buttocks.				
5. I kiss boys against their will.				
6. I touch boys' buttocks against their will.				
7. I ridicule boys.				
8. I touch boys against their will.				

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BOYS

Victim

Situations	Yes	No
1. Girls tease me about my physical appearance.		
2. Girls examine me from head to toe (undress me mentally).		
3. Girls make advances or sexual propositions that I do not want.		
4. Girls pat my buttocks.		
5. Girls kiss me against my will.		
6. Girls touch my buttocks against my will.		
7. Girls ridicule me.		
8. Girls touch me against my will.		

Perpetrator

Situations	No	Yes		
		They like it	They don't like it	They don't mind
1. I tease girls about their physical appearance.				
2. I examine girls from head to toe (undress them mentally).				
3. I make advances or sexual propositions to girls that they do not want.				
4. I pat girls' buttocks.				
5. I kiss girls against their will.				
6. I touch girls' buttocks or breasts against their will.				
7. I ridicule girls.				
8. I touch girls against their will.				

Activity 12

When You Say No¹

Theme

Sexual harassment and abuse

Objective

To become aware of attitudes and behaviours related to sexual harassment or abuse and to find solutions instead of keeping silent.

Time

30 minutes (duration of video)

Learning Context

Have the students view the video entitled *Quand toi tu ne veux pas*.
Note: This activity may be carried out in French class.

Content of the Video

Three students, Michèle, Claire and Francis, are making a video for a school project. They are interested in discovering the attitudes of young people with respect to sexual harassment. Claire quickly realizes that sexual harassment is a form of violence as intimate and serious as her rape seven years earlier by an acquaintance.

In a lighter vein, the second half of the video suggests strategies for stopping sexual harassment and ways of breaking the silence about it.

1. Groupe d'intervention, de recherche et d'information jeunesse. *Quand toi tu ne veux pas*, vidéocassette (Québec, 1984).

Procedure

Review the video by asking the following questions:

- How do you feel?
- How do you feel as girls or boys?
- Have you ever witnessed similar behaviours? In school?
- If so, what did you do to denounce or stop them?
- What do the authorities do in such cases?
- What other strategies could girls devise to defend themselves?
- How are boys affected by these behaviours?
- How could they work to end them?

Activity 13

Sexual Violence

Theme

Sexual violence

Objective

To become aware of the sexual violence experienced by adolescent girls and to discuss possible solutions.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

Describe a dozen cases of sexual harassment experienced by adolescent girls and ask the students whether they have witnessed similar cases.

Activity 14

Myth and Reality

Theme

Myth and reality

Objective

To become aware of the myths surrounding sexual and gender harassment, and the reality.

Time

60 minutes

Learning Context

Before handing out the following quiz, have the students discuss the difference between myth and reality.

Examples of myths:

- Money can buy happiness.
- People who live in warm climates are always happy.
- People who are rich are always happy.

Procedure

Using the students' answers as a point of departure, review each statement using the answer key provided.

True-or-False Questions²

	True	False
1. Victims of harassment are always young and attractive.	()	()
2. Women who are harassed want to be harassed.	()	()
3. Sexual harassment is easy to distinguish from friendly flirting.	()	()
4. Sexual harassment is a natural phenomenon, a human behaviour we must learn to live with.	()	()
5. Boys are as often victims of sexual harassment as girls.	()	()
6. The best way to put a stop to sexual harassment is to ignore it.	()	()
7. Accusations of sexual harassment are usually false or unjustified and motivated by dislike or revenge.	()	()
8. All victims of harassment end up adopting the same level of tolerance toward sexual harassment.	()	()

Discussion

Review all the statements and share current information on the problem of sexual harassment, using the answer key provided.

2. Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are based on: Groupe d'aide et d'information sur le harcèlement sexuel au travail, *Ça fait pas partie de la job!* (Montréal: La pleine lune, 1989), p. 31-39.

Answer Key

1. **False**

There is no single description of victims of harassment. They are from all backgrounds, of all ages and of all sexual orientations.

2. **False**

Certain myths and social stereotypes give victims the impression that they are helpless. Men's social power accentuates this impression. Also, victims of harassment have little credibility, rendering their task even more difficult, if not impossible.

3. **True**

Sexual harassment is unsolicited, while flirting occurs between consenting partners.

4. **False**

A distinction must be made between conditioning and natural phenomena. The behaviour of the harasser is not caused by a particular gene, but by his or her upbringing.

5. **False**

According to available data, in most cases women are harassed by men. The next most common case is men harassed by men, followed by men harassed by women and, finally, women harassed by women.

6. **False**

Burying one's head in the sand can only make matters worse. Most of the time, the harasser will start off subtly and become more and more direct, more and more unbearable. Women have not learned to respond; they have learned to tolerate. It is therefore not easy for them to say no. Saying nothing may be interpreted as a sign of approval, hesitation or weakness. In all cases, silence makes the victim vulnerable and will only encourage the harasser.

7. **False**

Filing a complaint related to sexual harassment involves enormous difficulties and can be very demanding. Most victims of harassment wait for the situation to become intolerable before acting, because they are aware of the difficulties involved.

8. **False**

Every victim of harassment has her own level of tolerance, i.e., a limit to what is bearable and acceptable for her.

Activity 15

Peer Group Influence

Theme

Peer group influence

Objective

To become aware that peer groups can often pressure individuals to do things they would not do if they were alone.

Time

45 minutes

Learning Context

Present the importance of peer group influence on personal development. It can influence an individual to meet challenges—or commit crimes.

Procedure

Remind the students that the different groups to which they belong are each based on common values, interests or affinities (e.g. punks, rockers, artists, athletes). You may ask the students to name a group to which they belong and help them recognize what that group allows them to do:

- How are your actions evaluated? Do you think they are positive? Are they good for the environment?

Have them name one or two positive actions and one or two negative actions that the group encouraged them to perform:

- How do they feel about these actions?
- Have they been perpetrators of sexual harassment as part of a group? Have they been victims or witnesses of sexual harassment by a group?
- How might a student leave a group that no longer corresponds to his or her values or aspirations?

Activity 16

Help! I'm Being Harassed!

Theme

Strategies for action

Objective

To learn to react, express their feelings and discover possible solutions in cases of harassment.

Time

60 minutes

Learning Context

Ask the students who have been victims of harassment to form a group.

Procedure

Allow these students to express themselves on their experiences:

- to tell about their experience of harassment, if they want to;
- to identify its consequences;
- to determine strategies to stop or prevent these behaviours (see “Strategies” in *Sexual Harassment in Schools—In-Service Session* and adapt if necessary);
- to discuss the possibility of a support network in the school, consisting of resource persons under a policy against harassment in the school or school board, friends, other adults;
- to propose coverage by the school newspaper or radio station of strategies and means for preventing or stopping all forms of harassment.

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RECOGNIZE IT, PREVENT IT, STOP IT

This document is intended to help promote egalitarian relationships between women and men and counter the many forms of violence against women and girls. It deals specifically with:

- the characteristics of gender and sexual harassment among students of different ages;
- a series of activities, some of which are borrowed from the personal and social education program, to increase students' awareness of the problem of sexual harassment.

Two other documents complete the series; one is an in-service session for school staff and the other is a guide for implementing a policy to counter sexual harassment in the workplace.

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