

Government campaign to raise awareness of violence in intimate and romantic relationships among young people

If love turns violent

This awareness campaign can be an opportunity to initiate reflection and discussion with secondary school students on violence in intimate and romantic relationships.

Intimate and romantic relationships during adolescence are one of the main concerns on the minds of secondary school students. First intimate relationships are generally a healthy experience, but there may also be many challenges or even violence involved, which can be difficult for young people to identify. In order to denormalize violence in intimate relationships among young people, the Secrétariat à la condition féminine has launched a campaign that presents various forms of psychological violence, such as emotional manipulation, threats, belittling and social restriction.

In order to connect with adolescents, videos will be circulating until March 31, 2025, on different digital platforms and on the social media most used by young people aged 12 to 17. Posters will also be displayed in secondary schools, sports centres and bus shelters near schools, among other places. The videos and posters will then remain available online.



Videos (English subtitles only):

- **If love turns violent – The photo**
- **If love turns violent – Friends**
- **If love turns violent – Listen**
- **If love turns violent – The dress**

Posters (in French only):

- **If love turns violent – The photo**
- **If love turns violent – Friends**
- **If love turns violent – Answer**

How to address the subject with students

- Analyze the campaign with the students by, for example, asking them about:
 - their impressions and their understanding of the campaign and its slogan, as well as their analysis of the similarities and differences between the various tools
 - their understanding of the gradual, evolving nature of the violence depicted in the videos and on the posters
 - their knowledge of support services, such as SOS violence conjugale, the organization presented in the campaign tools
- Use the campaign to initiate activities related to, for example:
 - positive and egalitarian intimate relationships, the warning signs of violence in intimate relationships, the different forms of violence in these types of relationships, the differences between conflict and violent behaviour, seeking help, and the obstacles and the elements that facilitate seeking help
 - the effects of gender stereotypes and gender norms on intimate relationships, violence, inequalities and the ability to recognize violence
- Ask the student council what the most relevant places to display the posters would be and whether any related activities could be carried out (e.g. handing out brochures of support services during lunch time).
- As part of a lesson, ask students to imagine different results that could stem from the campaign videos or posters. This could be an opportunity to talk about the possible ways to end a situation of violence, what to do when witnessing a situation of violence or acting as a confidant, how to deal with a breakup, how to seek help, and local organizations and their services, among other things.
- Set up a kiosk presenting campaign content relating to intimate relationships and violence, during kindness month, for example. This kiosk could be run by a community organization with the help of students.
- Create learning activities on topics that can help prevent violence in intimate relationships, such as communication, sexual consent, emotional and conflict management, and the use of digital technology (e.g. online safety, **the non-consensual sharing of intimate images**).
- On the student radio, present informational clips or conduct an interview on positive and egalitarian relationships that are friendly or intimate in nature.

What elements should be considered when addressing violence in intimate and romantic relationships with young people?

- Before covering violence in intimate relationships with students, it is a good idea to first address the subject of positive and egalitarian intimate relationships. This helps students to first gain an understanding of what is positive and desirable before learning about what should be prevented and avoided. Being able to recognize what positive and egalitarian relationships look like also helps students grasp what is considered violence in a relationship.
 - It is important to be mindful of how the subject of violence in intimate relationships is broached, given that many students may be experiencing or have experienced this type of violence in their intimate relationships, either as victims, perpetrators or witnesses.
 - When addressing violence in intimate relationships, it is possible to shift the discussion to other types of relationships (e.g. friendships) so that students can apply the reflection and learning to all their relationships.
- It is recommended that a safety net be set up for students before violence in intimate relationships is addressed, that is, to plan a variety of strategies that make it possible to take effective action should a situation warrant it, such as if a student were to demonstrate a need for support. Students can also be introduced to resource persons who are available to help them in class or elsewhere. This also means refraining from covering this topic before a long break, for example, to enable the school to remain in touch with the students.
 - Since families are also responsible in ensuring this safety net, it is prudent to plan for a means of communicating with them about intimate relationships in adolescence and violence in relationships, for example, by proposing support services and providing ideas for discussion with their children.

Actions taken in relation to this campaign may contribute to the implementation of:

- prevention measures set out in the school’s anti-bullying and anti-violence plan
- **the Culture and Citizenship in Québec program**
- **sexuality education content**
- the school’s educational project

To learn more about violence in intimate relationships among young people, watch [this video](#) (in French only) produced by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec.