

SEPTEMBER 28 TO OCTOBER 2, 2015  
ANTI-BULLYING AND VIOLENCE  
AWARENESS WEEK AT SCHOOL

# PREVENTING VERBAL ABUSE

## FACILITATION GUIDE

Preschool  
+  
Elementary  
+  
Secondary

# WORDS MATTER:

Send a positive message  
at school

ENSEMBLE CONTRE

**l'intimidation**

 Pacific Path  
Institute

Mariebourg Center | Conflict Resolution | Social Mediation

Québec 



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## TITLE OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENT

**Mes paroles, j'y vois : pour une communication positive à l'école**

## ENGLISH TRANSLATION

**Direction des services à la communauté anglophone**

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## THE PARTNERS

### INSTITUT PACIFIQUE

The Institut Pacifique is a non-profit organization created in 1976 and devoted to the development of programs and services to promote expertise in conflict resolution and mediation among preschool, elementary and secondary school students. It has earned a reputation for the quality and serious nature of its activities, and now teaches peaceful conflict resolution to more than 100 000 students every year.

### MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION, DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE

Preventing and stopping violence and bullying in schools are priorities for the Québec government. The same holds true for the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, which has supported and assisted schools and school boards with this task since 2008 by promoting the creation of a positive and caring school climate. It supports schools and school boards by enforcing the provisions of the *Education Act and the Act respecting private education* aimed at preventing and fighting violence and bullying in schools, and also provides funding, expertise from experienced regional support officers, and tools and reference documents for staff.



## SOME DEFINITIONS

### COMMUNICATION

Communication is a broad and complex notion. Every person who communicates alternates between the roles of sender and receiver. The attitudes and actions of people in each of these roles have an impact on everyone involved in the communication process. At school, where a positive and welcoming atmosphere is essential, the verbal messages sent by members of the community on a daily basis are especially important. Regardless of whether they take the form of clear, targeted remarks (insults, denigrating allusions, etc.), non-targeted spontaneous verbal reactions (swearing, loud sighing, unpleasant comments, etc.) or coarse words used as codes or elements of communication between the members of a group, these verbal messages all convey meaning. Although often considered innocuous or inoffensive, remarks such as these inevitably have a significant impact on individuals and on the school climate. Every person in the school environment must therefore strive to develop positive oral communication to help ensure the well-being of others and maintain a positive, welcoming atmosphere.

### VERBAL ABUSE<sup>1</sup>

Verbal abuse occurs when a person uses words to harm or hurt another person directly or indirectly, for example by name-calling or sending mean or humiliating messages. Verbal abuse can include placing restrictions on others, as well as blackmail, insults or threats, and creates tension, distress and even fear. It is the most common form of violence in Québec's schools, and must be recognized as such by everyone concerned so that its impacts and repercussions for other people and the environment can be measured. By identifying abusive verbal remarks, ranging from clear insults to subtle allusions and indirect threats, school staff can intervene appropriately and make it clear that all such remarks and messages are unacceptable in a school environment that is designed to be healthy and welcoming for everyone.

### RUDENESS AND CIVILITY

Rudeness can be defined as remarks and behaviours that are discourteous, impolite or disrespectful towards other people, often as a result of ignorance or a refusal to follow the rules of common decency in society.<sup>2</sup> Conversely, civility is an attitude or behaviour that is respectful of and considerate towards others and that is conducive to good relationships and peaceful coexistence within a common space.

1. C. Beaumont, (2010), "La violence en milieu scolaire : S'entendre sur une définition opérationnelle du phénomène", *Vie pédagogique*, vol. 156, 9-11.

2. Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche. *Guide pour soutenir l'intervention du personnel scolaire dans la lutte contre l'intimidation et la violence à l'école*. Working document, to be published.

Rudeness can take different forms, such as swearing when receiving the results of a test, or failing to be polite, for example by not saying “thank you” or by talking at the same time as a classmate or the teacher. Rude remarks can be directed at another individual, but may also result from an impulsive or spontaneous reaction not intentionally directed at anyone in particular. In both cases, it is important to realize that rudeness in all its forms has a negative impact on other people and on the climate in general. Accumulated rudeness can adversely affect the climate of the entire school, create an impression of disorder or disrespect, or cause conflict. On the other hand, civility generates positive effects, such as mutual trust between individuals, mutual respect and an environment in which people feel safe.

### POSITIVE ORAL COMMUNICATION

Positive oral communication involves making a conscious choice to express one’s emotions and opinions in a respectful and healthy way in order to limit the negative impacts for other people and for the general atmosphere. It requires the use of kind and positive terms that are respectful and demonstrate civility towards other people or the group to which they belong, and reflects a desire to avoid negative, impulsive or violent expressions of emotions or opinions. Positive oral communication therefore consists in the use of positive, respectful terms, combined with concern for the welfare of others and a positive opinion of others. Basically, the term applies to all speech that takes place on a daily basis in classrooms, hallways, school yards and staff rooms, and in discussions with parents and other people, which has a positive, constructive impact on the individuals concerned and on the school climate.



SOME STATISTICS

**Verbal abuse, whether direct or indirect, is the most common form of violence.<sup>1</sup>**

ON AVERAGE, IN QUÉBEC'S SCHOOLS:<sup>2</sup>

**21%** of elementary students and **17%** of secondary students say they are insulted or called names by fellow students at least two to three times per month during the school year.

**20%** of elementary school staff and **15%** of secondary school staff say they are on the receiving end of rude remarks or insults by students at least two to three times per month during the school year.

**2%** of elementary school students and **5%** of secondary school students say they are shouted at, sworn at or glared at by an adult at least two to three times per month during the school year.

REPERCUSSIONS OF VERBAL ABUSE

- Violates psychological integrity
- Harms physical health (stomach ache, loss of appetite, depression, etc.).
- Damages interpersonal relationships
- Reduces the sense of safety and well-being
- Adversely affects school climate

1. <http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca>

2. Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif. *Portrait de la violence dans les établissements d'enseignement au Québec*. Report by the SÉVEQ Research Group, June 2014.

## PREVENTING VERBAL ABUSE: DEVELOPING PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS

Violence or abuse is a relationship-based problem to which relationship-based solutions must be applied, among other things, through educational interventions aimed at developing personal and social skills for students in general as well as for victims, perpetrators of violence and bystanders, starting at a very early age.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore essential to consider this aspect when attempting to encourage positive oral communication as a means of building a positive, welcoming environment at school.

### PERCEPTIONS

Individuals interpret reality according to their own perceptions, which are influenced by a variety of factors including education, values, life experiences, irritants, fatigue and so on. In a context such as school, the students interpret the messages they hear in the surrounding environment, and their verbal reactions, among other things, are inevitably influenced by how they perceive a given situation. As they become aware of and confirm their own view of the situation, the students will be better able to understand both the situation itself and the feelings it generates. This awareness will help them to prevent the situation from degenerating, or to express themselves more appropriately and less impulsively. Maintaining a caring atmosphere therefore depends, among other things, on the quality of everyday verbal messages, and on confirming personal perceptions and avoiding impulsive or abusive verbal reactions.

### MANAGING AND COMMUNICATING EMOTIONS

Schools, through their mission of qualifying, educating and socializing, allow students to experience a variety of emotions generated by a host of different situations. Friendships, group life, attitudes to rules of conduct, academic and other types of performance all generate emotions that can sometimes be difficult to manage. In some cases, these emotions are expressed impulsively and may lead to violence, bullying or rudeness, depending on the severity of the reaction. To maintain a healthy and positive climate, it is therefore important for students to manage and communicate their emotions in an appropriate way. In doing so, they are able to recognize and harness their emotions and take a step back to find a healthy, peaceful way of managing them. As a result, they communicate more effectively and express their feelings more precisely. In some cases, learning to convert anger, disappointment or fear into words will help prevent escalation into physical violence.<sup>2</sup>

1. Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif. *Portrait de la violence dans les établissements d'enseignement au Québec.*, Report by the SÈVEQ Research Group, June 2014.

2. Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, *La violence à l'école : ça vaut le coup d'agir ensemble!*, vol. 1, no. 7, Winter 2014, [http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site\\_web/documents/dpse/adaptation\\_serv\\_compl/BulletinViolenceEcole\\_Vol1No7Hiver2014\\_.pdf](http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/adaptation_serv_compl/BulletinViolenceEcole_Vol1No7Hiver2014_.pdf)

Appropriate, effective, controlled communication can therefore be a means of preventing not only verbal assaults on other people, but also expressions of rudeness. It is therefore a factor in maintaining a healthy and safe environment at school.

### LISTENING AND EMPATHY

Listening involves more than simply hearing something. It requires a person to pay attention to and make a conscious effort to accept and understand what the other person is saying. Students who listen and show empathy are as attentive to the message as they are to the person sending it. They become aware of the impacts of messages sent by themselves or by their classmates. As they learn to listen and show empathy, they will understand the benefits of positive, constructive communication in their everyday interpersonal relationships. The fact of being in an environment where the adults set an example in this respect will obviously help them to learn these skills themselves.

# INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES

Pedagogical activities are offered as part of Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School for adults, 5-year-old kindergarten students, elementary students, secondary students and all members of the school community (students and staff). They can also be used throughout the year. Positive oral communication is everyone's business. The table below sets out the aims and activities of each activity.

## ACTIVITY FOR ADULTS: POSITIVE CHAT

### ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS (Preschool and Elementary Cycle One – Elementary Cycles Two and Three – Secondary Cycles One and Two)

### ACTIVITY FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS – POSITIVE INVASIONS

AIMS	ACTIVITY FOR ADULTS: POSITIVE CHAT	ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS (Preschool and Elementary Cycle One – Elementary Cycles Two and Three – Secondary Cycles One and Two)	ACTIVITY FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS – POSITIVE INVASIONS
By the end of the activity, adults will be able to:	By the end of the activity, adults will be able to:	By the end of the activity, students will be able to:	By the end of the activity, adults and students will be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- define what is meant by verbal assault, rude remarks and positive oral communication</li> <li>- be aware of the impacts of their remarks on other people and on classroom and school climate</li> <li>- take responsibility for using positive language in their everyday lives</li> <li>- associate the aims of the various activities available for students with the theme of the 2015-2016 edition of Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School: <i>Words matter: Send a positive message at school;</i></li> <li>- support the students in the various pedagogical activities on positive oral communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- define what is meant by verbal assault, rude remarks and positive oral communication</li> <li>- be aware of the impacts of their remarks on other people and on classroom and school climate</li> <li>- take responsibility for using positive language in their everyday lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- take steps to promote a positive and caring school climate</li> <li>- take action together to help maintain a positive and caring school climate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- take steps to promote a positive and caring school climate</li> <li>- take action together to help maintain a positive and caring school climate</li> </ul>

TARGET AUDIENCE	SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS	STUDENTS	THE ENTIRE SCHOOL (STAFF MEMBERS AND STUDENTS)
<p><b>TOPICS ADDRESSED</b></p> <p>Verbal abuse Rude remarks Positive oral communication</p>	<p>Verbal abuse Rude remarks Positive oral communication</p>	<p>Verbal abuse Rude remarks Positive oral communication</p>	<p>Verbal abuse Rude remarks Positive oral communication</p>
<p><b>WHEN AND WHERE</b></p> <p>At the beginning of Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School, or at any other time during the school year, preferably in a room large enough to hold all school staff members</p>	<p>During Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School, in class</p>	<p>During Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School (or at any other time during the school year), following the adult activity entitled <i>Positive Chat</i>, throughout the school, and on the school's Web site and social media pages</p>	<p>During Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School (or at any other time during the school year), following the adult activity entitled <i>Positive Chat</i>, throughout the school, and on the school's Web site and social media pages</p>

**HOW**

The activity takes the form of a chat session for staff members, and is conducted using the facilitation plan and other tools (see the facilitation plan, page 10) for *Words matter: Send a positive message at school*.

An activity organized for a group of students, conducted using the facilitation plan and other tools (see the facilitation plan, page 10) for *Words matter: Send a positive message at school*.

- Posting of theme-based citations in strategic locations at school and on the school's Web site and social media pages
- Posting of speech bubbles (showing examples of the type of positive oral communication required at school) in strategic locations throughout the school
- An assembly attended by all members of the school community (students and staff members), or use of the school's interphone to reach all members of the school community, and presentation of the activity using the facilitation plan and other tools (see the facilitation plan, page 10)

**TYPES OF ACTIVITIES**

- Introspective questionnaire
- Dialogue and discussions
- Cartoon strips (Preschool and Elementary Cycle One)
- Impact technique (Elementary Cycles Two and Three and Secondary Cycles One and Two)

- Posting of citations and speech bubbles
- Assembly or interphone message

**FACILITATOR**

A school administrator, a professional or a member of the committee created in compliance with the provisions of the *Education Act* and the *Act respecting private education* aimed at preventing and fighting violence and bullying in schools

A teacher or school staff member

- A school administrator, a professional or a member of the committee created in compliance with the provisions of the *Education Act* and the *Act respecting private education* aimed at preventing and fighting violence and bullying in schools
- Volunteer students

**DURATION**

50 minutes

50 minutes

A few minutes per day throughout Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School, and ideally throughout the school year

## FACILITATION PLAN:

**POSITIVE CHAT**

## ACTIVITY FOR ADULTS

**AIMS**

By the end of the activity, adults will be able to:

- define what is meant by verbal assault, rude remarks and positive oral communication
- be aware of the impacts of their remarks on other people and on classroom and school climate
- take responsibility for using positive language in their everyday lives
- associate the aims of the various activities available for students with the theme of the 2015-2016 edition of Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School: *Words matter: Send a positive message at school*
- support the students in the various pedagogical activities on positive oral communication

**MATERIALS** | [education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation](http://education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation)

- Introspective questionnaire entitled *How I Communicate Orally at School*, available on the Web site of the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche
- Felt-tipped pens for each table
- One or more blank speech bubbles (on the Web site) for each table
- Optional: tea, coffee, desserts

**Note for the facilitator:**

See pages 8 and 9 of this Guide for further information on facilitation methods

**PROCEDURE****BEFORE THE ACTIVITY**

- Set up the room for small teams (several tables).
- Place a felt-tipped pen on each table.

**INTRODUCTION**

- Invite the staff members to sit down.

- Talk about the structure of the activity, which is divided into three parts as follows:
  - **Part 1:** Personal reflection
  - **Part 2:** Information on the theme and concepts of the Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Awareness Week at School
  - **Part 3:** Dialogue, discussion and desired behaviours

**PART 1: PERSONAL REFLECTION**

- Hand out the introspective questionnaire entitled *How I Communicate Orally at School*.
- Tell participants that the results will not be analyzed or disclosed, and that their answers will remain confidential.
- State that the aim is for each person to become aware of different aspects of how they communicate orally at school.
- Allow a few minutes for participants to complete their questionnaires individually.
- Review the exercise by asking participants to share their impressions on the activity. Based on their remarks:
  - Identify strategies to ensure positive everyday communication with co-workers and students.
  - Make sure they are aware that they set an example and that they influence the atmosphere at school.

**PART 2: INFORMATION ON THE THEME OF POSITIVE COMMUNICATION**

- Introduce the theme of the week by asking the following questions and using the potential answers set out below as your springboard:

**QUESTIONS**

**POSSIBLE ANSWERS**

**Question 1 :**  
What are verbal abuse and rude remarks?

- **Verbal abuse** occurs when a person uses words to harm or hurt another person directly or indirectly, for example by name-calling or sending mean or humiliating messages. Verbal abuse may include placing restrictions on others, as well as blackmail, insults or threats, and creates tension, distress and even fear.
- **Rude remarks** can be defined as remarks and behaviours that are discourteous, impolite or disrespectful towards other people, often due to ignorance or a refusal to follow the rules of common decency in society.

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- An accumulation of verbal abuse and rudeness can affect the atmosphere of the entire school, create an impression of disorder or disrespect, or cause conflict.
- This is why educational interventions are required, in compliance with the rules of life at school.

### Question 2 :

What manifestations of verbal abuse and rude remarks are generally observed in schools?

- Every form of verbal abuse that can be heard in schools:

#### Examples:

- Insults
- Rumours
- Threats
- Unpleasant insinuations
- Crude nicknames.

- Every form of rude remark that can be heard in schools:

#### Examples:

- Swearing, sighing loudly
- Interrupting someone
- Reacting negatively to a remark made by someone.

### Question 3 :

What are the repercussions of verbal abuse and rude remarks?

- Verbal abuse and rude remarks have many repercussions for people and they have different targets. For example:
  - loss of motivation and interest on the part of students who are verbally abused by classmates or adults
  - loss of self-esteem and self-confidence
  - irritation and loss of patience on the part of staff members who are verbally abused or treated rudely by students



## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- misunderstandings, lack of understanding or conflicts due to poor communication or failure to communicate, generating feelings such as frustration, disappointment or anger
- broken relationships
- loss of productivity and poor performance on the part of students and adults
- an unpleasant atmosphere due to frequent, thoughtless use of crude remarks or habit of speaking or responding in negative terms

**Question 4 :**  
What is positive oral communication?

- Positive oral communication does not include verbal abuse, either direct (insults directed at an individual) or indirect (spreading of rumours about an individual). It excludes rude remarks that adversely affect the social environment, especially negative, spontaneous or deliberate reactions or outbursts, regardless of whether or not they are directed at a specific individual.
- Positive oral communication involves a conscious choice to express one's emotions and opinions in a respectful and healthy way in order to limit the impacts for other people and for the general atmosphere.
- In short, the term applies to all speech that takes place on a daily basis in classrooms, hallways, school yards, staff rooms and in discussions with parents and other people which has a positive, constructive impact on individuals and on the general atmosphere at school.
- Positive oral communication is characterized by the use of carefully chosen words, expressions of encouragement, accurate, non-accusatory expressions of emotion and a conscious attempt not to express negative, impulsive or violent emotions or opinions.

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

## Examples:

- Greeting colleagues or students
- Positively and verbally acknowledging good ideas proposed by students or colleagues
- Expressing emotions and opinions in a calm and respectful way
- Not sighing loudly or swearing when reacting to a behaviour or remark made by a student or colleague

**Question 5 :**

What can I do to be more attentive to how I communicate?

What can I do to promote positive oral communication among the students?

What can I do to help maintain a positive and caring class or school climate?

- How people communicate affects not only the person to whom they are speaking and the group that witnesses the interaction, but also the general atmosphere.
- Positive, welcoming oral communication can be achieved by applying values such as politeness, courtesy, respect for difference, trust in other people, concern for the well-being of others and a positive view of others.
- You can also help maintain a positive and caring class or school climate by remarking on positive behaviour, successes or efforts by students and colleagues.

**PART 3: DIALOGUE, DISCUSSION AND DESIRED BEHAVIOURS**

- Remind participants of some of the manifestations of verbal abuse and rude remarks that were identified.
- Also remind them that positive oral communication in everyday life requires a thoughtful choice of words and oral expressions.
- Based on these elements, ask the participants to discuss and select some specific, constructive oral communication behaviours (e.g. *saying "thank you," offering help, apologizing when bumping into someone, offering encouragement or congratulations, indicating disagreement in an appropriate way, listening actively by reformulating what is said, using appropriate language in public*) that they would like students and staff members to use and adopt during the year. (Encourage them to avoid negative formulations ["Don't . . ."] of these desired behaviours.)

- Give one or more blank speech bubbles to each table and ask the participants to write down the desired behaviours on the bubbles (one behaviour per bubble).
- Tell participants that the speech bubbles will be posted in different locations at school during Anti-Bullying Week to inform students and remind staff of the kind of positive oral communication techniques that everyone would like to see at school.
- Tell participants that the students will also be asked to produce their own speech bubbles expressing desired behaviours as part of their activities, and that these speech bubbles may also be displayed in the school.
- Collect the speech bubbles so that they can be reused during the activity entitled *Positive Invasions* for students and school staff members (page 33 of this Guide).
- End the activity by thanking the staff members for taking part and encouraging them to play a proactive role in promoting positive oral communication at school. Be aware of any training or support needs that may emerge during the meeting.

## FACILITATION PLAN:

# THE BAG OF WORDS

5-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN – ELEMENTARY CYCLE ONE

## AIMS

By the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- define what is meant by verbal assault, rude remarks and positive oral communication
- be aware of the impacts of their remarks on other people and on the classroom and school climate
- take responsibility for using positive, respectful language in their everyday lives

## MATERIALS | [education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation](http://education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation)

- Cartoon strip, available in PDF format on the Web site of the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche: Print enough copies for all the students, or project the cartoon onto a screen.
- Blank speech bubbles (on the Web site).

### *Note for the facilitator:*

*See pages 8 and 9 of this Guide for further information on facilitation methods.*

## PROCEDURE

- Project the cartoon strip onto a screen or hand out copies to all the students in the class.
- Ask for two volunteers to read the cartoon strip out loud. If the students are not yet able to read, perform this step yourself.
- Ask the following questions. Direct the answers based on the content below, and encourage discussion.

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

**Question 1 :**  
What is the matter with Luke?

- Luke has a sore back because his bag is much too heavy.
- Luke is exhausted and tired, and doesn't want to carry around such a heavy bag any more.

**Question 2 :**  
Why is Luke's bag so heavy?

- The bag is heavy because it contains a lot of "bad words" that people use many times during the day.
- These words may not always be said to another person; they also include some general "bad words" that people say out loud, but not to anyone in particular (e.g. *Pff, this is so boring, or Ugh, it stinks in here*).
- The bag is heavy because, although we may not realize it, all these words affect how people feel and may damage the atmosphere in class (e.g. *if the students complain every time the teacher proposes an exercise, the teacher may end up being discouraged; if nobody ever says "thank you" when you lend them something, you may end up not wanting to lend anything to anyone*).

**Question 3 :**  
Are the words in Luke's bag positive?

- No. In fact, they constitute verbal abuse and rude remarks.
- **Verbal abuse** means using spoken words to hurt someone, either directly by saying crude or mean things to them, or indirectly by spreading rumours or lies about them.

#### Examples of verbal abuse:

Note: You can also use the examples from the activity appendix.

- *You're such a baby, you cry all the time.*
- *Go away, you stink.*
- *She's dumb, she can't even read.*

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- **Rude remarks** are remarks that are impolite or disrespectful towards other people (e.g. not saying “thank you,” not asking for permission or not apologizing).

### Examples of rude remarks:

Note : You can also use the examples from the activity appendix.

- *This exercise is boring.*
- *Oh no, not again! God, I hate school!*
- *It's not fair, he's always the one who's chosen for this kind of thing.*

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### Question 4 :

Are there any other words that you hear at school and that could also be put into Luke's bag?

- Verbal expressions or words used by students or adults.

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### Question 5 :

What impacts might these words have?

- Although you might think people soon forget the things they hear, some words have impacts on individuals and on the atmosphere in the classroom.
- These impacts may not always be visible—for example, feeling sad, being afraid or having a stomach ache.
- Verbal abuse or saying mean things to a friend may destroy the friendship.
- Negative words may make it less fun for both the students and the teacher to be at school or in the classroom.
- In the cartoon strip, Luke is sad because his bag is full of negative words.

---

### Question 6 :

What can we do to be respectful of one another and create a good atmosphere in the classroom?

- By using positive oral communication.

## QUESTIONS

**Question 7 :**  
What is positive oral communication?

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- Positive oral communication consists in using kind, positive words that are respectful of people and the groups to which they belong. It is conducive to community life.
- Here are some examples of the types of behaviour that encourage positive oral communication:
  - being careful about the words we use, in order to be respectful of others and create a good atmosphere in the classroom
  - expressing opinions, feelings and frustrations in a calm, respectful way, without accusing people

### Examples of positive oral communication:

- *I'd like you to stop, please.*
- *I don't really like this activity.*
- *I'm sad you don't think my drawing is good.*
- showing interest in other people, asking questions about their interests and tastes, and being respectful even if they are different
- using positive words in everyday interactions

### Examples of positive words:

- *Congratulations, you did it!*
- *I like this activity, it's fun!*
- *I'm sorry I bumped into you.*
- *Thanks for lending me your pencil.*
- using more positive words and fewer negative words to maintain a positive, welcoming atmosphere in the classroom and at school

- Invite the students to identify some of the attitudes and words that may help create positive oral communication in the classroom or at school. Write the words in the blank speech bubbles and keep them for the *Positive Invasions* activity (page 33 of this Guide).
- End the activity by thanking the students for taking part and encouraging them to use positive words for the rest of the school year.

## FACILITATION PLAN:

**THAT'S ENOUGH!**

ACTIVITY FOR ELEMENTARY CYCLE TWO AND ELEMENTARY CYCLE THREE

## AIMS

By the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- define what is meant by verbal assault, rude remarks and positive oral communication
- be aware of the impacts of their remarks on other people and on classroom and school climate
- take responsibility for using positive language in their everyday lives

MATERIALS | [education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation](http://education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation)

- Nine heavy objects chosen by the teacher.
- Nine statements written on separate strips of paper (or on the same sheet if you choose the variant suggested below). There are separate lists of statements for students in Elementary Cycle Two and Elementary Cycle Three (see the appendices *That's Enough! – Elementary Cycle Two*, and *That's Enough! – Elementary Cycle Three*). Both lists are available in PDF format on the Web site of the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche.
- Blank speech bubbles (on the Web site).

**Note for the facilitator:**

See pages 8 and 9 of this Guide for further information on facilitation methods

## PROCEDURE

- Ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class.
- Identify nine other volunteers, and hand each volunteer a strip of paper and one of the nine heavy objects chosen for the activity.
- Ask the student with statement no. 1 to stand up.
- Ask the student at the front of the class to go and stand next to the other student and hold his or her hands out.
- Ask the student with the statement to read it out loud, and then to place the object in the hands or arms of the other student.



- Repeat the same process with the other eight volunteers.
- Invite the student carrying all the objects to come to the front of the class again, and ask the following question: *How does it feel to have to hold all these objects?*
- Listen, without comment, to what the student has to say. Take back the objects and ask the student to go and sit down.
- Thank all the volunteers who took part in the activity.
- Then ask the following questions. Direct the answers based on the content set out below, and encourage discussion.

**VARIANT**

- Ask for three volunteers to come to the front of the class.
- Ask the first student to hold out his or her hands.
- Ask the second student to stand beside the nine heavy objects and give the sheet containing the nine statements to the third student.
- Ask the student with the sheet to read the first statement out loud.
- Ask the second student to place one of the objects in the first student's hands.
- Repeat the process for the other eight statements.
- Ask the first student: *How does it feel to have to hold all these objects?*
- Listen, without comment, to what the student has to say. Take back the objects and ask all three students to go and sit down.
- Thank the three volunteers who took part in the activity.
- Then ask the following questions. Direct the answers based on the content set out below, and encourage discussion.



## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

### Question 1 :

What do the objects represent?

- Each object represents a hurtful, upsetting or abusive word.
- All words carry weight, even those that seem inoffensive or trivial. Some words carry more weight than others.
- Taken together, all these words are very heavy and have impacts not only for other people, but also for the atmosphere in the classroom and at school.
- As all these hurtful, nasty or impolite words accumulate, they can adversely affect the sense of well-being in the classroom and at school, for both the students and the teacher.

### Question 2 :

What do all the statements have in common?

- Each statement contains an example of verbal abuse or a rude remark.

### Question 3 :

What are verbal abuse and rude remarks?

- **Verbal abuse** occurs when a person uses words to harm or hurt another person directly or indirectly, for example by name-calling or sending mean or humiliating messages. Verbal abuse includes placing restrictions on others, as well as blackmail, insults or threats, and creates tension, distress and even fear.
- **Rude remarks** can be defined as remarks that are discourteous, impolite or disrespectful towards other people.
- Verbal abuse and rude remarks can hurt or harm three types of "targets":
  - 1- Our friends or acquaintances (statements 1, 2 and 3 from the activity in which the students took part).
  - 2- People we do not know or with whom we have little contact (statements 4, 5 and 6).
  - 3- The atmosphere or climate in the group to which we belong (statements 7, 8 and 9).

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

### Question 4 :

What other words or verbal expressions are used at school and could also be classified as verbal abuse or rude remarks?

- Verbal expressions or words used by students or adults.

### Question 5 :

What impacts do words have for individuals or the general atmosphere?

- It is sometimes hard to imagine the impacts that words can have when we are not their main target. Words can have consequences, even if the consequences are not always visible.
- Often, the cumulative impacts of all the negative words used on a daily basis will have a negative effect on the people concerned or on the general atmosphere in the classroom or at school.

#### Examples of possible impacts:

- Lower self-esteem
- Conflict
- Damage to interpersonal relations and communications
- Physical health problems (e.g. stomach aches, stress)
- Reduced sense of well-being
- Fear, confusion, insecurity, etc.
- These impacts directly affect the well-being of every person in the classroom or school, as well as the general atmosphere at school.

### Question 6 :

What is positive oral communication?

- Positive oral communication consists in using kind, positive words that are respectful of people and the groups to which they belong. It is conducive to community life.

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

### Question 7 :

How can we help create a positive school climate?

- We can all play a role in being mutually respectful and maintaining a positive school climate:
  - by avoiding discriminatory remarks based on prejudice
  - by being careful about the words we use
  - by choosing our words and verbal expressions carefully
  - by expressing our opinions, feelings and frustrations in a calm, respectful and non-accusatory way

### Examples of positive oral communication:

- *I'd like you to stop criticizing the way I play. Can you show me how you do it, please?*
- *I'm very disappointed with my grade. I thought I'd done better.*
- *I'm sad you didn't choose me for your team. Maybe next time?*

- by applying the rules for good communication (speaking in turn, using the "I" form, speaking calmly and respectfully, standing apart from the others); this fosters constructive dialogue, prevents tension and conflict, and allows good communication to be established
- by showing interest in other people and asking questions about their interests and tastes, even if they are different from one's own
- by using positive expressions in everyday interactions

### Examples of positive communication:

- *This looks like fun!*
- *Don't give up! It's a tough exercise, but you'll get there. You can do it!*
- *I'm sorry I bumped into you.*
- *Thanks for your help!*

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- by paying attention to negative actions or words that we tend to use spontaneously in unpleasant situations, and trying to avoid them (sighing loudly, cursing, complaining, whining, etc.)
- Every civil, polite or courteous word or action helps create a positive community spirit and has a positive impact on the general atmosphere.

- 
- Invite the students to identify attitudes and words that may help establish positive oral communication with someone in the classroom or school. Write these words on the blank speech bubbles and set them aside for the *Positive Invasions* activity (see page 33 of this Guide).
  - End the activity by thanking the students for taking part and encouraging them to use positive oral communication for the rest of the school year.

## FACILITATION PLAN:

# THE BAG OF HURT

ACTIVITY FOR SECONDARY CYCLES ONE AND TWO

## AIMS

By the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- define what is meant by verbal assault, rude remarks and positive oral communication
- be aware of the impacts of their remarks on other people and on classroom and school climate
- take responsibility for using positive language in their everyday lives

## MATERIALS | [education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation](http://education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation)

- An empty backpack.
- Nine heavy objects chosen by the teacher.
- Nine statements written on separate strips of paper (or on the same sheet if you choose the variant suggested below). There are separate lists of statements for students in Secondary Cycle One and Secondary Cycle Two (see the appendices *The Bag of Hurt – Secondary Cycle One*, and *The Bag of Hurt – Secondary Cycle Two*). Both lists are available in PDF format on the Web site of the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche. Mettre URL
- Blank speech bubbles (on the Web site).

**Note for the facilitator:**

See pages 8 and 9 of this Guide for further information on facilitation methods.

## PROCEDURE

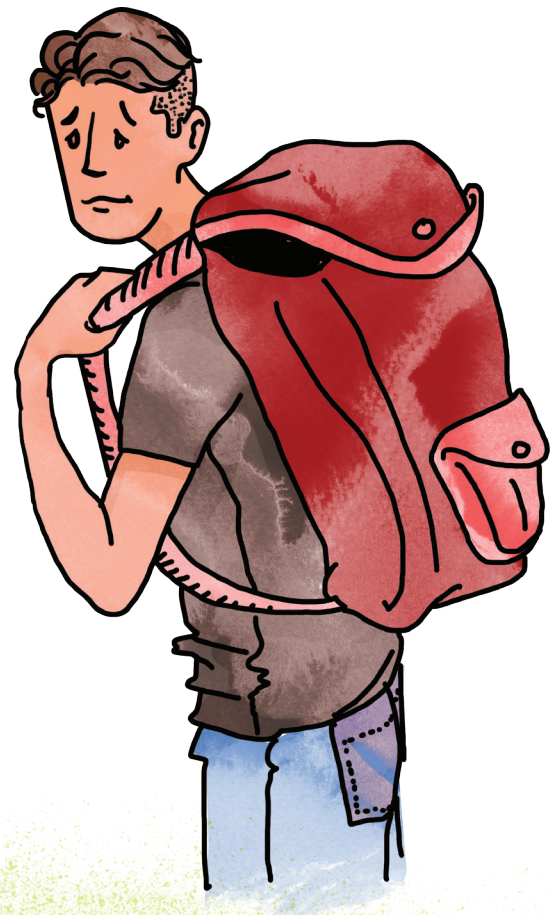
- Ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class.
- Give the backpack to the volunteer and ask him or her to wear it.
- Identify nine other volunteers and hand each volunteer a strip of paper and one of the nine heavy objects chosen for the activity.
- Ask the student with statement no. 1 to stand up.
- Ask the student with the backpack to go and stand next to this student.

- Ask the student with the statement to read it out loud, and then to place the heavy object in the other student’s backpack.
- Repeat the same process with the other eight volunteers.
- Ask the student with the backpack to return to the front of the class, and ask the following question: *How does it feel to have to wear the backpack?*
- Listen, without comment, to what the student has to say. Take the backpack and objects away, and ask the student to go and sit down.
- Thank all the volunteers who took part in the activity.
- Then ask the following questions. Direct the answers based on the content set out below, and encourage discussion.

### VARIANT

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- Ask for three volunteers to come to the front of the class.
- Give the backpack to the first volunteer and ask him or her to wear it.
- Ask the second student to stand beside the nine heavy objects, and give the sheet containing the nine statements to the third student.
- Ask the student with the sheet to read the first statement out loud.
- Ask the second student to put one of the objects in the first student’s backpack.
- Repeat the process for the other eight statements.
- Ask the first student: *How does it feel to have to wear the backpack?*
- Listen, without comment, to what the student has to say. Take the backpack and objects away, and ask the student to go and sit down.
- Thank the volunteers and ask them to sit down.
- Then ask the following questions. Direct the answers based on the content set out below, and encourage discussion.



## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

### Question 1 :

What do the objects represent?  
What does the backpack represent?

- The heavy objects represent the impact or weight of the negative and violent remarks we hear in everyday life.
- The objects are heavy because, although remarks such as these may appear inoffensive or trivial, they can have significant impacts for individuals or for the general atmosphere in the classroom.
- The backpack represents classroom and school climate, and the morale of the people who frequent these places.
- The backpack is heavy because the accumulation of negative remarks heard every day has a negative impact not only on the general atmosphere in the classroom or school, which is much less pleasant as a result, but also on the morale of the people in it.

### Question 2

What do all the statements have in common?

- Each statement contains an example of verbal abuse or a rude remark.

### Question 3 :

What are verbal abuse and rude remarks?

- **Verbal abuse** occurs when a person uses words to harm or hurt another person directly or indirectly, for example by name-calling or sending mean or humiliating messages. Verbal abuse includes placing restrictions on others, as well as blackmail, insults or threats, and creates tension, distress and even fear.
- **Rude remarks** can be defined as remarks that are discourteous, impolite or disrespectful towards other people.

#### Examples of rude remarks:

- Friends calling one another "stupid."
- Swearing when receiving a bad mark.
- Interrupting someone



## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- Verbal abuse and rude remarks can hurt or harm three types of “targets”:
  - 1- Our friends or acquaintances (statements 1, 2 and 3 from the activity in which the students took part).
  - 2- People we do not know or with whom we have little contact (statements 4, 5 and 6).
  - 3- The atmosphere or climate in the group to which we belong (statements 7, 8 and 9).
- Verbal abuse and rude remarks are sometimes perceived as being an integral part of everyday language, and are often trivialized as a result.
- In some cases the use of certain unpleasant or crude terms may become a sign of group membership.
- Trivialization and tolerance of abusive remarks and rudeness has a negative impact on individuals and on the atmosphere in the classroom or school.

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### Question 4 :

What other words or verbal expressions are used at school and could also be classified as verbal abuse or rude remarks?

- Verbal expressions or words used by students or adults.

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### Question 5 :

What impacts do verbal abuse and rude remarks have?

- It is sometimes hard to imagine the impacts that words can have when we are not their main target. Words can have consequences, even if the consequences are not always visible.
- Often, the cumulative impacts of all the negative or abusive words used on a daily basis will have a negative effect on the people concerned or on the general atmosphere in the classroom or at school.

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### Examples of possible impacts:

- Lower self-esteem
- Conflict

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- Damage to interpersonal relations and the quality of communication
  - Physical health problems (e.g. stomach aches, stress, addiction to illicit substances)
  - Reduced sense of well-being
  - Fear, confusion, insecurity, etc.
- These impacts directly affect the well-being of every person in the classroom or school, as well as the general atmosphere at school.

### Question 6 :

Are verbal abuse and rude remarks normal and acceptable?

- No, verbal abuse and rude remarks are neither normal nor acceptable.
- Emotions such as frustration, disappointment, anger or sadness are normal. However, this cannot be said of all the ways in which these various emotions can be expressed.

**Below are some examples of attitudes that are disrespectful or rude and that damage the community spirit:**

**Note :** You can also use the examples given in the appendix for this activity.

- Yelling at or calling someone names because we are angry.
- Spreading a rumour about someone who has disappointed us.
- Swearing when receiving a bad grade.
- Criticizing a teacher behind his or her back.
- Sighing loudly when a student asks a question, etc.

### Question 7 :

What is positive oral communication?

- Positive oral communication consists in using kind, positive words that are respectful of people and the groups to which they belong. It is conducive to community life.

## QUESTIONS

### Question 8 :

How can we help create a positive school climate?

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- We can all play a role in being mutually respectful and maintaining a positive and caring class and school climate:
  - by avoiding discriminatory remarks based on prejudice
  - by being careful about the words we use
  - by choosing our words and verbal expressions carefully
  - by expressing our opinions, feelings and frustrations in a calm, respectful and non-accusatory way

### Examples of positive oral communication:

- *I don't agree with your idea. Can we talk about it?*
- *I'm very disappointed with my grade. I thought I'd done better.*
- by applying the rules for good communication (using the "I" form, being calm and respectful, being in the right place, etc.); this fosters constructive dialogue, prevents tension and conflict, and allows for good communication to take place
- by showing interest in other people and asking questions about their interests and tasks, even if they are different from one's own
- by engaging in constructive dialogue with other people, thereby fostering healthy interpersonal relations
- by paying attention to negative actions or words that we tend to use spontaneously in unpleasant situations, and trying to avoid them (sighing loudly, cursing, complaining, whining, etc.)

### For example, the following attitudes may help create a positive, welcoming atmosphere:

- Participating actively in class and exchanging ideas.
- Encouraging a student who struggles with class material a course.

## QUESTIONS

## POTENTIAL ANSWERS

- Being respectful when the teacher or another student is speaking.
  - Greeting teachers in the corridor.
  - Thanking the cafeteria staff.
  - Thanking staff members who provide help.
- All these civil, polite or courteous words and actions help create a positive community spirit and have a positive impact on the general atmosphere.
- 
- Invite the students to identify attitudes and words that may help establish positive oral communication with someone in the classroom or school. Write them on the blank speech bubbles and set them aside for the *Positive Invasions* activity (see page 33 of this Guide).
  - End the activity by thanking the students for taking part and encouraging them to use positive oral communication for the rest of the school year.

## FACILITATION PLAN:

**POSITIVE INVASIONS**

ACTIVITY FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

**AIMS**

By the end of the activity, students and school staff members will be able to:

- take steps to promote a positive and caring school climate
- take action together to help maintain a positive and caring school climate

**MATERIALS** | [education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation](http://education.gouv.qc.ca/semaineintimidation)

- Citations, which may be downloaded from the Web site of the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche.
- Speech bubbles filled out by school staff members, promoting positive behaviours aimed at creating a positive and caring climate
- Speech bubbles filled out by students.

**Note for the facilitator:**

See pages 8 and 9 of this Guide for further information on facilitation methods.

**PROCEDURE****THROUGHOUT THE AWARENESS WEEK**

- Post the citations as they are chosen, and also post the speech bubbles filled out by students and adults, at different places in the school (e.g. hallways, secretary's office, cafeteria, bathrooms, etc.) and on the school's Web page and Facebook page.

**ON THE THURSDAY OR FRIDAY OF THE AWARENESS WEEK**

- Gather all the students at an assembly (or organize several assemblies, by level or cycle) in the school yard or gym, or make a general announcement over the interphone.
- Read some of the citations posted during the week and some of the speech bubbles filled out by the school's adults and students to promote the positive behaviours that everyone would like to see at school in order to maintain an atmosphere they can all enjoy.
- End the activity by encouraging the students to think carefully about the words they use so that positive oral communication becomes the norm among themselves and with adults.

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**Institut de la statistique du Québec**  
[www.stat.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca)

**Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche**  
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