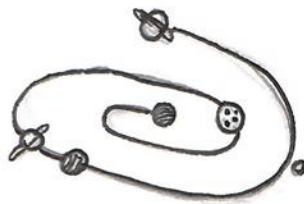
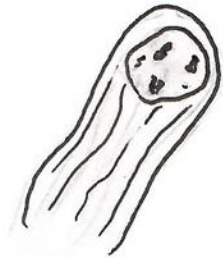
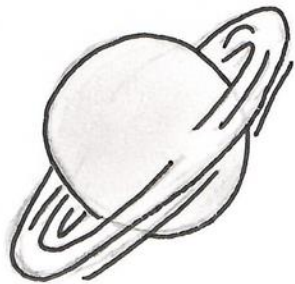


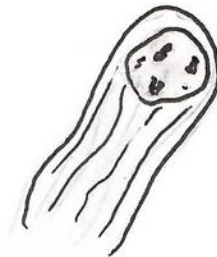
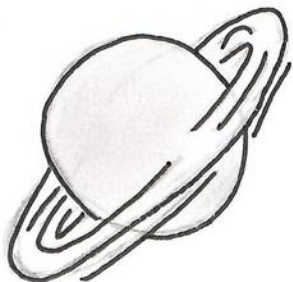
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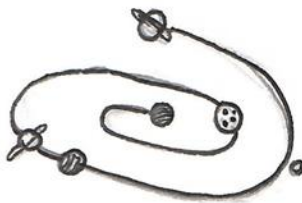
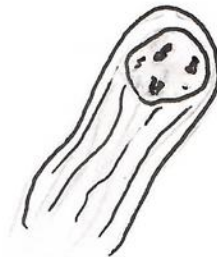
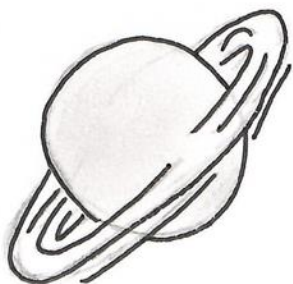
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Translation by Angie Garrick-Garneau





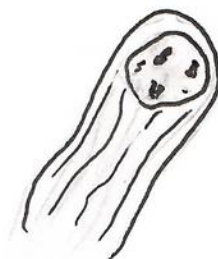
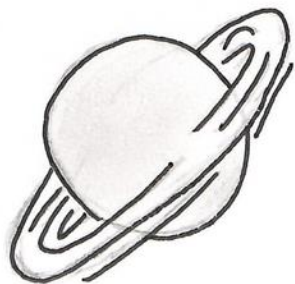






My relationship with Point D'Appui started at the end of secondary 3 following several difficult trials in my life. When I was offered to work with the organization to find a way to connect with teens, I immediately had the idea of creating a book. I decided to write this chronicle with the goal of educating young women about important issues. There were several times in my life during which I would have needed help but never had the courage to ask for it. It's for this reason that Point D'Appui and I came together to create this booklet, in hopes of reaching people who, like me, need help but avoid asking for it.





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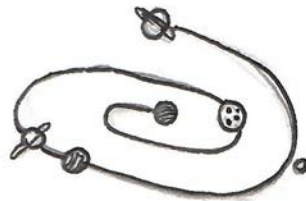
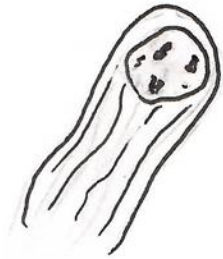
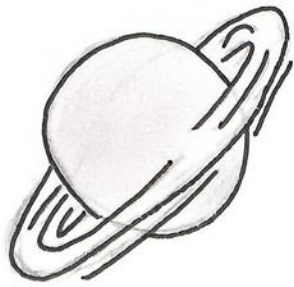
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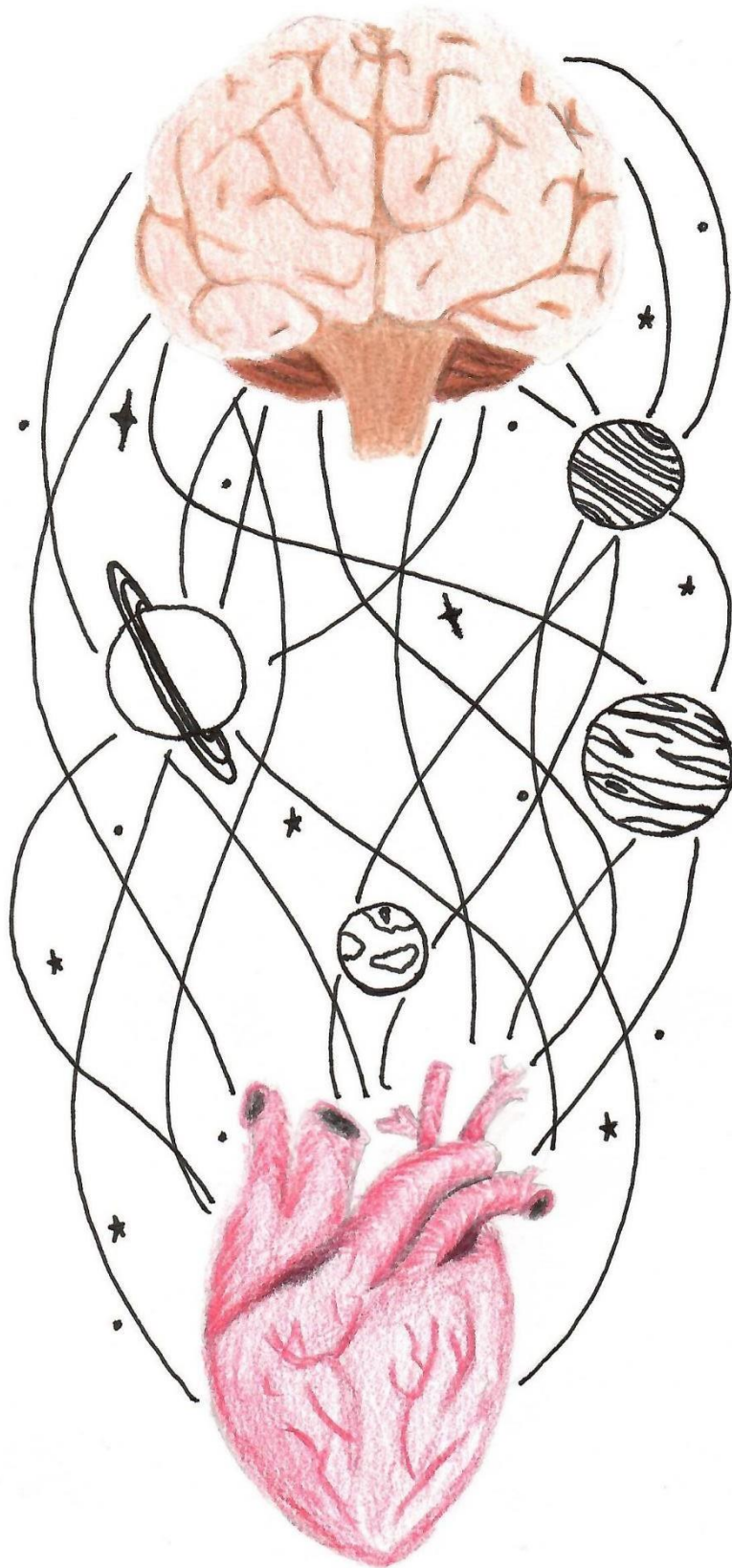
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Healthy Relationships





My Story

When I was in secondary 3, I experienced my first long term relationship that lasted nearly a year, it was very toxic.

It was a relationship filled with domestic violence, threats, manipulation, bullying and much more. Since he was my first "real" boyfriend, I didn't really know what was right or wrong. I was extremely subdued during this relationship, equally by his insults and his threats. I wasn't allowed to spend time with friends or even speak to other people.

I was under constant surveillance. He often made offensive comments about my appearance by telling me that I needed to lose weight. He'd say that his comments were for my own good, that they were intended to help me. I ended up believing that I deserved what was happening to me and that it was normal relationship. I developed several eating disorders. I would deprive myself of eating in order to please him. I forgave many situations that should not have happened in the first place. I think that the main reason I stayed so long in a relationship that was so toxic is that I was very misinformed on the subject. No one teaches young people how to assert themselves or how to apply boundaries. We're not taught what a healthy relationship is or what is or isn't acceptable.

How do we know when reach out for help?

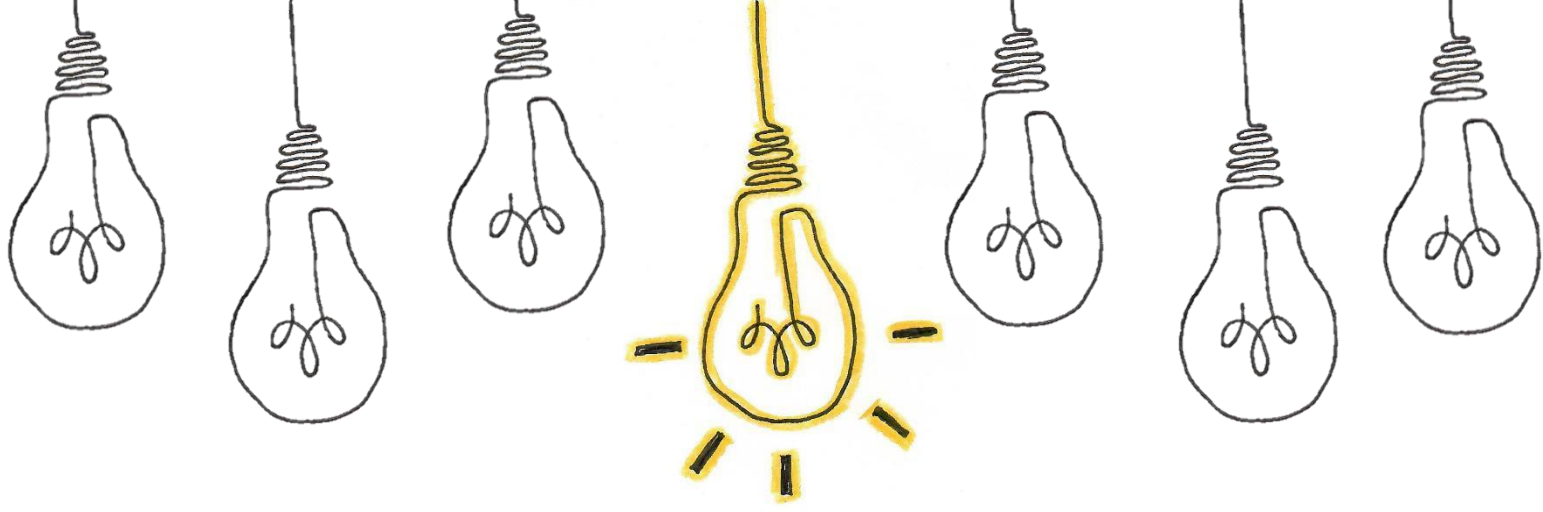
What should we do to express ourselves correctly?

How do we know if we're in a healthy romantic relationship or not?

How do we know when something has gone too far?

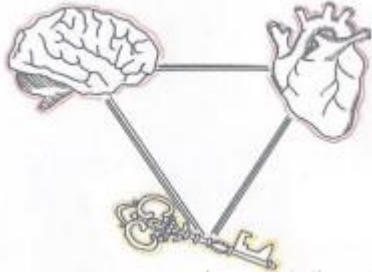
How does spousal abuse start and who is at risk for it?

What do we do if we find ourselves in an abusive relationship?



What I've Learned

This relationship made me realize to what point I lacked information about healthy relationships. Before living through this, I didn't know that spousal abuse could happen to anyone or at any age. We don't learn anything about these subjects at school. If our parents don't talk to us about it, how are we supposed to know when it's happening to us? Where do we find valid, helpful information? I also learned that some forms of manipulation can be very subtle and can be very difficult to detect when we don't know the signs. Once our confidence and our self-esteem are destroyed by someone, we end up believing that we deserve what is happening to us. The repercussions of a toxic relationship can be destructive. No one should ever be allowed to make us doubt our self value, no matter who they are! No one has the right to insult you even if they tell you it's for your "own good". Know that you are enough and that no one has the right to make you think or feel otherwise. You have the right to reach out for help and to admit that you're in an abusive situation. Also, it's OK if you're not ready to get help but know that you're not alone. You're not stuck in this situation. You have the right to leave an unhealthy relationship. Don't worry, you will find better.



What is a Healthy Relationship?

For me, a healthy relationship is a loving relationship based on respect. A relationship in which you can communicate without the fear of being judged or shunned. In this relationship, both people are equal regardless of their sex. There is no power struggle. For me, being in a healthy relationship means that you feel secure and happy.

Once you are in a relationship, never forget that:

- You have the right to say no.
- You have the right to disagree.
- You are not responsible for the actions of others.
- You have the right to have your own emotions.
- You have the right to express your needs.
- You are enough.

Asserting Yourself

Asserting yourself in a relationship is something that is primordial. When you communicate with your partner, you need to think about yourself. Be honest about what you want, this will let the other person know how they should act towards you. Every person is different and have their own needs. Don't forget to remain attentive to your partner's needs as well.

My Experience

I've often had difficulty asserting myself in my relationships. Fearing the pain that I would cause and even fear losing their love. Know that if your partner truly loves you, they'd want you to assert yourself. Communication between a couple is very important. I would've liked to know that it wasn't normal not to be able to express myself within my relationship. There shouldn't be consequences when you express your emotions or needs.

I also would've appreciated some guidance on how to assert myself.



A Few Tips to Help You Assert Yourself

1. You are aloud to assert yourself when something isn't right.
2. Try as much as possible to use "I" and avoid accusing others. This technique will allow for better communication because the other person won't feel attacked by your words. For example: "During our dispute, my feelings were hurt, and I'd like to talk more about it."
3. Try not to generalize a situation by using words like: "always", "every time", "never", etc.
4. Speak calmly and take your time to breathe. Sometimes, expressing yourself can be stressful. Take your time and everything will go well.
5. Try to assert yourself more and more. It'll become easier over time, and gradually the people around you will become accustomed to it.
6. Listen to what your partner has to say. Communication means taking the time to listen and allowing the other person to express themselves.



How do I Know if I'm in a Toxic Relationship?

You should know that violence, isn't only physical. It may also be exhibited psychologically, verbally and sexually.

An Abusive Partner May...

- demand to see calls / messages / etc. (with or without their partner's permission)
 - control who their partner talks to and who they spend time with
 - limit where their partner can go and when
 - tells their partner what they can / can't do
 - constantly check in, repeatedly calling/messaging, or stopping by unannounced
 - threaten to hurt their partner (or themselves) if their partner tries to leave
 - act jealous or get angry for no apparent reason
 - restrict access to things their partner needs
 - spread rumours, harass or humiliate their partner online or in person
 - share or threaten to share sexual images of a partner without their consent
 - blame others for their abusive behaviour, or deny it altogether
- (kids help phone 2024)

There are many other situations or actions that can be considered toxic or unhealthy. If you're not sure, don't be shy to ask questions. You're not alone there are many people available to help. You can consult the kids help phone website (<https://kidshelpphone.ca/>) or (<https://itsnotviolent.com>) or one of the other resources found at the end of this booklet.



Remember That This
Isn't Love; It's Violence.

You're really stupid!

You've gained weight; if you want me to stay in this relationship, you should try losing some.

If you don't want to make love to me it proves that you don't really love me!

It doesn't matter if you don't sleep with me; I'm going to tell everyone that you did, anyway.

What are you doing?
Who's with you?
Where are you?
When are you coming back?

Come on, you can't wear that to go out!
It's way too sexy!

Do whatever you want. I know that you don't really love me anyway.

You're always with your friends; you never think about me.

A Little Message of Hope

Know that even if toxic relationships exist, it is possible to find a healthy one. Don't put too much pressure on yourself. Take your time. You'll find your right match. Keep in mind that it's normal if it doesn't happen right off the bat.

Remember that it's your right to establish clear boundaries and express your limits and it's crucial to do so.

No matter what your past may look like, the right person will be ready and willing to take their time and follow you at your own pace.

You deserve all the happiness in the world and I'm certain that you will find it.

A Message from the Point d'Appui

Remind yourself that relationships can be unhealthy and toxic in many aspects, not only physically. It's often very subtle and accomplished through a lot of manipulation. It can make the abuser harder to recognize. Here are some examples of actions that are unacceptable in a relationship. If you can relate to one of these elements in your relationship, don't hesitate to reach out for help. Several resources can be found at the end of this booklet.

Here are some different forms of violence in a relationship:

- Physical Abuse: Your partner pushes or hits you, or breaks your personal belongs;
- Control: Your partner tells you what to do and/or how to dress, decides which friends you can or cannot see. Is always questioning where you are or threatens you in order to force you to do something; for example, he/she will threaten to hurt you;
- Humiliation: Your partner openly insults you, belittles you, or embarrasses you in front of other people;
- Unpredictability: Your partner is quick to anger without you knowing what set them off. You have the impression that you're constantly walking on eggshells, that you can't be yourself;
- Pressure: Your partner makes you do things that you don't want or feel ready to do. For instance: having sexual relations, taking drugs, or drinking alcohol. Even if you refuse, your partner threatens or manipulates you in order to change your mind.



The Cycle of Violence:

Violence can be difficult to understand. Did you know that there is a cycle that allows it to continue? Here are the 4 stages that can generally be found in the cycle of violence:



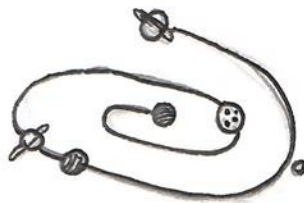
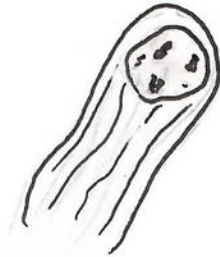
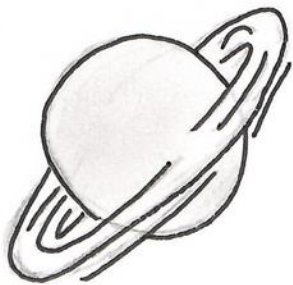
Note: The Cycle of Abuse was originally created by psychologist Lenore Walker. The Cycle does not represent all cases of domestic violence.

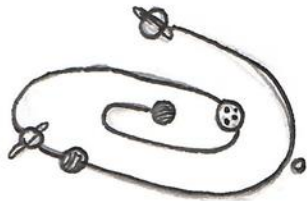
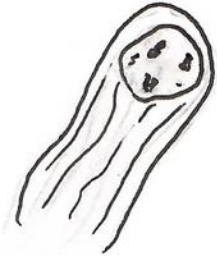
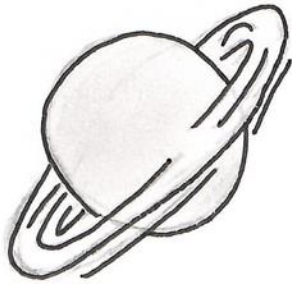
DomesticShelters.org

In a healthy relationship, there should be...

- **Liberty:** You can do what you want without your partner's reproach. You can spend time with your friends without it causing a fight. You're not obligated to constantly text him/her. You have the right to your alone time;
- **Security:** You are not afraid that the other person will hurt you, physically or psychologically (threats, blackmail, manipulation);
- **Respect:** You feel like the other person accepts you as you are, that they respect what you like and what you don't like. They don't try to change you. You feel like you can be yourself with this person;
- **Equality:** You don't feel inferior to the other person and you don't consider yourself superior to them. You share your interests, your opinions and your experiences. You relate as equals.

If you have questions regarding your relationship, you can visit the SOS violence conjugale website and fill out the interactive questionnaire which will help you identify if there are abusive behaviours in your relationships. It can be found in the website's menu under "Looking for answers."







SEXUALITY





Why Talk About Sexuality?

For me, sexuality is a very important subject. It affects everyone but we're so misinformed about it! I believe that it's important to have validated unprejudiced information on the subject.

I would have liked to have been informed on what is consent and when is it no longer valid.

I would have liked to know that it's normal not to reach an orgasm with every sexual relation but that it doesn't necessarily have to end once your partner reaches orgasm. You also have the right to this pleasure!

There are many options available to prevent pregnancy, but I would have liked to know one option that might work for one person doesn't necessarily work for everyone. There are options other than just "the pill" (contraceptive pill). It's possible that it's not the best solution for you or it may not be compatible with your body.

What options protect us against STIs?
What exactly is an STI*, and how can you get it?

*STI (sexually transmitted infection) formally known as STD (sexually transmitted disease)

Before starting any kind of sexual activity, and through out it's duration, it's important to have obtained valid consent. But how do we know if a yes, is really a yes?

Consent is invalid when:

- It's obtained through threats, emotional blackmail or violence.
- Your partner hides important information from you. (Ex: he/she has an STI and doesn't tell you)
- It's given by another person. (Ex: a friend gives your consent for you.)
- One of the partners is incapacitated by alcohol or drugs or even unconsciousness.
- The consent is given to a person in a position of authority.

When consent is considered invalid for whatever reason, it becomes a sexual assault. It is a criminal act that should be reported to the police. If a situation like this has happened to you or a friend, you can ask for help or file a complaint. You are not alone.

In summary:

Your consent is only valid when **you** give it, and it's something that **you** truly want. Nobody has the right to force you to say yes, no matter the context of your relationship.

No answer = No

Yeah...okay...= No

I feel like it! = Yes

I want to! = Yes

I'm not really sure = No

No = No

Yes = Yes

Contrary to certain beliefs, asking for permission before a sexual relation doesn't take the excitement away. It's a sign of respect and it's very important even if it's not the first time you're having sexual relations with this partner.

Different Types of Sexual Assault

Sexual abuse: "When I was with my ex-boyfriend, he would often force me to have sex with him, even if I refused repeatedly. He was so insistent that I would end up saying yes so he would leave me alone. He would also do certain sexual acts without consulting me, like anal penetration, without asking my permission." - **Karen, 21 years old**

Incest: "When I was a child, my older brother would often come join me in my bed at night and force me to have sexual relations with him. He'd threaten not to lend me his Nintendo DS and not to spend time with me anymore if I said no to him. This went on for years. My parents had no idea." - **Sylvie, 25 years old**

Sexual harassment: "One day, a boy that I didn't know added me on Snapchat. He was always asking me questions on my past sexual relations. He was always telling me that I must look sexy in high heels. Often making comments about my body or my sexuality even though I repeatedly asked him to stop." - **Marjorie, 17 years old**

Exhibitionism: "I often received pictures of genitals without my asking or giving my permission." - **Sacha, 16 years old**

Voyeurism: "When I lived at my mom's, I discovered that her boyfriend was filming me when I was taking my shower or while I was in my bedroom. Using his cellphone, he was able to film me from outside windows and even suspended ceilings. I tried confronting him about it, but he denied everything. My mom still doesn't know." - **Caroline, 18 years old**

Sexual exploitation: "When I was with my ex-boyfriend, to help pay the rent, I would have to sleep with his friends in exchange for money." - **Manon, 32 years old**

Genital mutilation: "In my culture, female genital circumcision, also known as excision, is a common rite of passage. In my case, they completely removed my clitoris and inner lips. This procedure was done by medical personnel in my country." - **Fatima, 23 years old**

*** This has been known to be illegally practised in Canada***

The names and ages of the people mentioned above have been changed in order to keep their anonymity

Pornography

I believe it's important to talk about pornography for many reasons. It's important to understand that what we see in these videos is rarely the reality. It's equally important to know that we don't all have the same fantasies and therefore we don't all like the same things. It's completely normal to want to watch pornography, but know that it is illegal for minors to do so. Also, keep in mind that it shouldn't create standards. There is no "normality" with sexuality; it's even possible that it doesn't interest you at all and that is completely normal! Don't let anyone make you believe that what you feel towards your sexuality isn't normal.

Are there any risks?

Indeed, there may be risks to watching pornography. It all depends on the quantity and frequency in which it is used. One of its risks is developing a dependency or addiction to pornography.

It can also create unrealistic fantasies and/or sexual expectations. Pornography may also create a loss of sexual interest in your partner or lower your sexual desire altogether.

What are the signs of addiction?

1. You need to watch it in order to achieve a high level of excitement.
2. You feel the need to watch it several times a day, even in inappropriate places, such as work or at school.
3. The idea of having sex with a partner doesn't excite you anymore.
4. When you try to stop watching it you feel like something is missing and/or can't stop thinking about it.

Know that there may be other signs. If you have any doubts or feel that you need help, there are services available that can help you such as *Porno-dependance du Centre d'intervention en violence et agressions sexuelles (CIVAS)*.

Taboos Surrounding Sexuality

In our society there are many misconceptions and false beliefs in regards to sexuality. These are noticeably present in adolescents. How can we tell if the information is true or false? Is it normal not to achieve orgasm with every sexual relation? Let's try to clarify things...

Foreplay

There is a lot of pressure in regards to what should or should not be done during foreplay. It's important to know that no one has the right to force you to do anything during sex. It's possible that there are certain things that you don't like doing and that's completely normal. You should be comfortable enough to discuss these things with your partner and they should accept your decision just as you should accept theirs. Each person has different sexual fantasies and different erogenous zones. Communication is essential; it permits partners to have fun while providing mutual respect.



Orgasm

It's false to think that we have to reach orgasm every time we have sex! On the contrary, it's completely normal not to. We also need to remember that an orgasm isn't the ultimate goal of every sexual encounter and that it doesn't necessarily end when one of the partners has one. There needs to be an exchange and clear communication between partners. Never put pressure on yourself because there is no magic wand or miracle recipe for reaching orgasm. Each person is different and has a body that reacts in its own unique way. Getting to know your body is the best way to develop your ability to have orgasms.

Frequency

There is no "normal" frequency in which you should be having sex. It's possible that in your relationship you want to have it several times a week, as much as it's normal not to desire it every week. This decision is solely up to you and your partner and no one has the right to question or judge you. Never put pressure on yourself to meet society "standards" because they aren't always realistic.





Size

Dear boys, know that the size of your penis actually isn't very important. Each person has completely different tastes and there is no need to compare yourself to others.

The principle remains the same for breasts size and the appearance of the vulva. Every woman has a different body. Once again, each person has their own preferences on this subject. Comparing your body to others is useless. You are perfect just the way you are and you will find someone who will truly appreciate you.



Duration

The duration of a sexual intercourse can vary depending on different factors such as stress, excitement, etc. There is no "normal" duration to sex. Don't put pressure on yourself for this!

Duration is not synonymous with pleasure.



Condom

Contrary to some beliefs, condoms don't prevent you from having pleasure during sexual intercourse and putting one on shouldn't cause discomfort. It protects against unwanted pregnancy and against STIs. It's important to protect yourself during sex; never let anyone make you think otherwise.

Number of Partners

The number of people you've had sex with isn't important. Girls are not "whores" because they've had sex with multiple people, just as guys are not "cooler" if they've had large number of sex partners. It's important to go at your own pace and to respect yourself.

The First Time

To begin, it's normal that your first time isn't perfect. It's normal to be stressed, but don't put pressure on yourself. Wait until you are ready and until you find the person who makes you feel comfortable and who respects you.

Furthermore, the age at which you make love for the first time doesn't matter. The main thing is that you are ready and that you do it with someone you really trust. However, in Quebec, there is a minimum age for your consent to be legal. Go to page 29 to know more!

Take your time and don't let anyone tell you when you should be ready. Only you know when it's the right time.

Different Types of Contraception

There are many different types of contraception available. Not all types are made for everyone. It's important to speak to a health care professional in order to be properly informed about the different options available to you. It's very possible that even with all the available information, the type chosen doesn't suit you, it's always possible to change.

But what are the different options available? Here are a few:

Oral Contraception:



One of the most popular options available is the contraceptive pill (commonly known as "the pill"). There are many different brands available with different strengths. This type of contraception prevents women from ovulating.

The Contraceptive injection:

The contraceptive injection, also called Depro-Provera, is a liquid that is injected by a nurse, either in the arm, butt or thigh, every 3 months. This method also prevents women from ovulating.



An Intrauterine Device (IUD):

There are two types of IUDs, the hormonal IUD and the cooper IUD.

The hormonal IUD progressively releases hormones in the uterus which blocks or traps the sperm and prevents the implantation of the embryo.

The cooper IUD which doesn't have hormones to release. Instead for it creates an unfavorable chemical climate in order to prevent the fertilization of the embryo.

The IUD must be installed by a doctor or a gynecologist and the longevity can vary from one model to another.



The Vaginal Ring:



It's a ring that must be placed in the vagina. It releases hormones to prevent ovulation. The ring must be kept in place for 21 days and then removed for a maximum of 7 days (during menstruation).

The Contraceptive Patch:



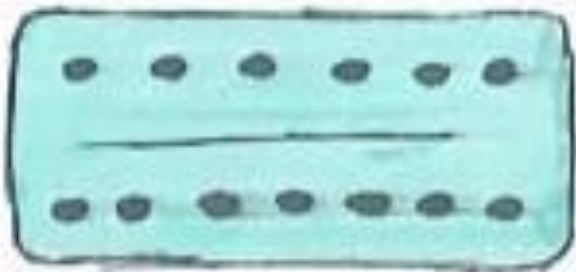
The contraceptive patch is a small sticky square shaped patch that is stuck directly to the skin. It releases hormones for a week to prevent ovulation. The patch must be changed once a week on the same day of the week. For example: every Sunday.



There are other methods of contraception but the ones that we've mentioned are the most popular. You need to know that other than the condom, other contraception methods don't protect you from sexually transmitted infections or diseases (STI/STD). That's why it's important to always use a condom even if you're using another method of contraception. There are different side effects depending on type of contraception you choose, so talk to a pharmacist or a healthcare professional if you have any questions. Some methods can be used on a continual basis to lessen or stop menstrual bleeding altogether.



Methods of contraception are not mandatory, and may not be suited for you.



A message from Point d'Appui

Consent: it's already been covered in this chapter, but to summarize, sexual consent, is when a person agrees to participate in a sexual activity. For consent to be valid, it must be voluntary, informed and continuous.

That means:

- You shouldn't feel pressured when you make your decision and you shouldn't be afraid to refuse (whether it's for your physical or psychological safety)
- You must know all the necessary elements to be able to give informed consent (the person's real identity, their age, if they think they have an STI/STD, etc.)
- You have to give your consent for every sexual act and you are free to withdraw your consent at any time. Just because you said yes yesterday doesn't mean you have to say yes today, whether it's about having sex or for a specific sexual activity.

Did you know that there's a law that regulates the age difference between sexual partners?

The legal age to give consent in Canada is 16, however, there are some exceptions:

Age of the younger partner	Age gap allowed
Less than 12 years old	Consent is never valid
12-13 years old	Less than 2 years
14-15 years old	Less than 5 years
16 years and over	No age restriction as long as the partner isn't in a position of authority

If this isn't respected, the oldest person can receive criminal charges.

What is a position of authority?

If you are under the age of 18, you can not give your consent to a person that has any sort of authority over you. Meaning a person that who's decisions could have an impact on you in different spheres:

- a teacher
- a personal trainer
- a music teacher
- an employer, etc.

This person could face criminal charges because the notion of consent is invalid due to the power they hold over you.



In this chapter, we gave you many examples of different types of sexual assault. What you need to remember:

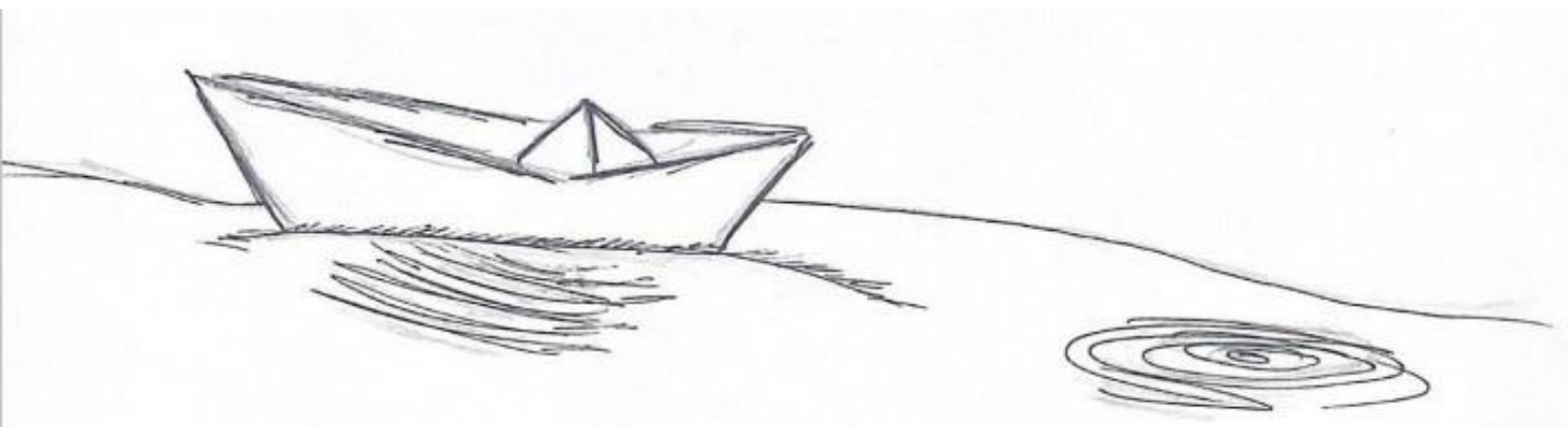
Sexual assault concerns everyone, boys as much as girls, no matter what their sexual orientation is. You and your partner must always make sure that consent is respected.

What should I do if I know someone around me was a victim of a sexual assault?

First of all, when someone confides in you about this type of situation your reaction should be:

- Believe them: don't ask them questions about what happened, just believe that what they're saying is true.
- Respect them: respect their rhythm, don't rush what's being said.
- Be honest: if you're not comfortable listening to the details of the events being explained, tell the person. It's normal for you to have your limits and social workers are there to listen to what the person has to say. You can simply guide them by explaining that you believe them, but that you feel uncomfortable hearing details.
- Listen: listen to what they have to say and respect them if they don't want to elaborate.
- Reassure them: you can tell them it's normal if they don't feel well, that it's a difficult thing to experience, but that they don't have to feel alone.
- Remove feelings of guilt: you can tell them what happened wasn't their fault, that they didn't do anything wrong.
- Inform them: on the resources and people that are available to help them.

It can be a lot of information to take in, and it's normal not to know how to react when someone confides in you about such a difficult subject. If you don't know what to say, try to kindly steer that person towards the right resources, and just that can help.



Who can you steer them towards?

- To their parents, to a member of their family or a trustworthy adult;
- To the school social worker or to a teacher that they trust;
- To an organism; "le Point d'appui" offers services to women 14 and up; there's "le Groupe IMAGE" that offers their services to young men.

You can offer to go with them to see someone and/or you can help them find the coordinates of the person that can help them. It's important that you set your limits as well so that the situation doesn't affect you too much.

Talk about sexuality!

Sexuality shouldn't be taboo! Whether it's between friends, teachers, social workers or any adult that you trust. Don't hesitate to ask questions. It can only be useful to know more, whether it's about sexuality in general, about consent, contraception, STI's. There can be more consequences if you don't talk about it. For example, certain STI's don't heal so it's very important to be informed on the ways of protecting yourself before having sexual relations rather than putting yourself at risk.

Pornography

A person under the age of 18 cannot visit pornographic sites. If you feel like viewing pornography because you have questions, insecurities or inquiries, it's better to ask an adult you trust. The sexual relations shown on these sites do not reflect reality. Often, consent isn't validated and pleasure between partners is rarely prioritized. The videos are often focused on performance, not communication and being attentive to your partner, which should be the real priority during sexual relations. It's in these situations that consent is forgotten and sexual assault can happen. Also, men are often showed as being dominant, and women often portrayed as submissive. This isn't reality and it isn't how sexual relations should take place. Each person has the liberty to express their desires, their expectations, be respected and heard.

Don't forget that talking about consent can be very sexy. Asking your partner what they like, their preferences and their fantasies opens the conversation. The more you talk about sexuality, the more comfortable you'll be communicating together. Being able to give consent and put clear boundaries allows you to avoid breaking them and therefore committing sexual assault. These conversations are very important and much more representative of reality than what you may find in pornography.

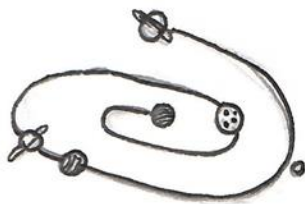
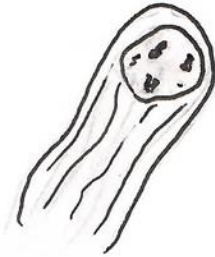
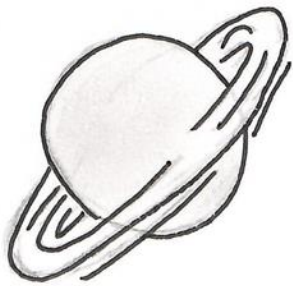
Juvenile Pornography

Did you know it is illegal for a minor to take sexually explicit photos or videos (production of juvenile pornography), having it (possessing juvenile pornography) or sending it to someone else (distribution of juvenile pornography)? No matter how old you are, it is illegal to possess or to distribute sexually explicit content of a minor. You can be criminally prosecuted if you commit one of these offences.

The people with whom you share these sexually explicit images of yourself may share this content with others without your knowledge or consent. Even if it is illegal, the pictures or videos can circulate and never completely disappear. For the victim, it can be devastating because their private life has been exposed and their confidence destroyed. Some may also become victims of intimidation and/or blackmail after this type of situation, they may even have symptoms of depression and/or suicidal thoughts. It's a very serious problem that should never be taken lightly.

The simplest way to avoid this type of situation is to never share explicit content of yourself with anyone, even if it's with your lover. Don't forget that sharing explicit sexual content with someone isn't proof of love. There are other ways to share intimate moments and show affection to your partner than sharing daring pictures or videos. You can write to your partner to let them know how you feel about them when you're not together, make plans to spend time together one on one and plan activities you enjoy doing together.





Body and Mental Health



Why Talk About the Body in Relation to Mental Health?

In high school, my body changed a lot: I faced a lot of judgments about my appearance. It's during those years that I realized to what point the judgments of others and the standards in our society can affect our mental health. Adolescence is already a difficult period in someone's life without having to worry about the judgments of others. Our body changes enormously and I believe that we need to eradicate all prejudice about this subject.

It's not true that your body is supposed to resemble the women in magazines. All bodies are beautiful and different, and will develop at their own pace.

Body Image

My Experience

For a long time, I had an unhealthy relationship with my body image. My body changed tremendously in the last years and I had a lot of trouble adapting. I often searched for the approval of others to feel loved and to feel beautiful. I learned that we are all beautiful to someone but also that we cannot be loved or liked by everyone. I believe that the most important thing is to love ourselves before being loved by others. The only person that we can truly rely on is ourselves and that's why I think that it's important to have a good rapport with oneself and demonstrate self-care.

Beauty Standards

Beauty standards have changed a lot through the years but they still exist today. These standards have a lot of negative consequences, especially with teenagers. Young women (also young men) often compare themselves to these standards. I think that they need to show more body diversity in advertisements, social media, etc. This could really help people accept themselves and help endorse a healthier relationship with their body image.

The Negative Effects of Societal Standards

The beauty standards in our society can have many effects. Here are some examples:

- The development of certain eating disorders: Whether its anorexia, bulimia, binge eating etc., the development of an eating disorder can lead to many consequences. It's a way to try to regain control. Freeing oneself of this type of disorder can be difficult but not impossible. It's important to remember that it's not your fault if you're experiencing an eating disorder and that help is available. (Kids Help Phone) *More information about eating disorders can be found on page 38*
- The pressure regarding body image: The lack of diverse body types spotlighted in our society can put pressure on people in regards to the body image that they project. Comparing ourselves to certain body types can lead us to believe that our bodies aren't beautiful when that isn't the case at all!
- Weight discrimination: Beauty standards can also create problems or hate towards certain body types. For example: on TikTok (a popular app among young people) there is a certain rivalry between the "skinny" girls and the "chubby" girls. By trying to prove that we cannot accept all body types, we're creating rivalries that shouldn't exist.

Eating Disorders

My Experience

When I started having anxiety, I developed an eating disorder called "bulimia nervosa". In my case, my episodes were triggered when I had moments of high anxiety. I felt the need to eat constantly, even if I wasn't hungry at all. I could go from cookies to ice cream or even from cereal to a plate of pasta. I would eat till my stomach ached. I felt so guilty about eating so much that for the days following my episodes, I would barely eat at all. The year that my eating disorder developed I gained 85lbs. I went from being a fit teen, weighing 120lbs to a girl feeling uncomfortable in her own skin, weighing in at 205lbs. Today my eating disorder is almost completely under control, and I've managed to lose 25lbs by listening to my body and eating until I've satisfied my hunger.

I've finally been able to accept myself as I am, and feel good in my body. So, finding your way out of an eating disorder can be difficult but not impossible.

During:

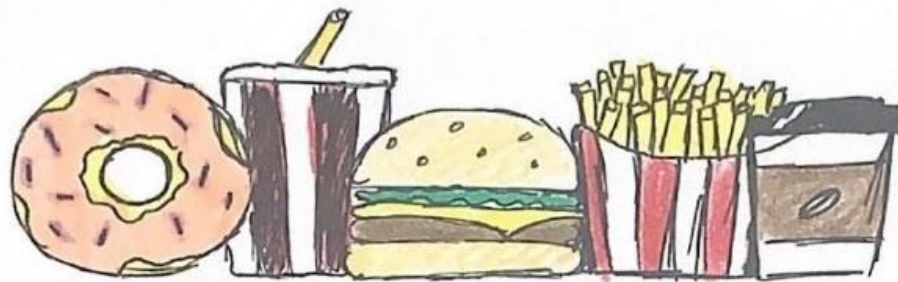


Before:



After:





What Are the Primary Eating Disorders?

Anorexia Nervosa: Anorexia nervosa is a mental health disorder characterised by sudden weight loss as a result of intense dieting, fasting, self-provoked vomiting, the use of laxatives, or excessive physical exercise. Anorexia nervosa is also associated with an intense fear of weight gain as well as distorted body image.

Bulimia: Bulimia is a mental health disorder characterised by compulsive eating behaviour followed by compensatory measures such as intense dieting, fasting, self-provoked vomiting, excessive exercise, and more. Feelings of shame, guilt, and disgust often follow the episodes of compulsive eating.

Binge-eating: Binge-eating disorder is also a mental health disorder characterised by periods of compulsive eating but without compensatory measures. Compulsive eating is often accompanied by a feeling of a loss of control. After these episodes, the person suffering from binge-eating disorder experiences guilt, shame, feelings of regret, and disgust.

Bigorexia: Bigorexia, or muscular dysmorphia, is characterised by the feeling of being too skinny or never muscular enough. It is also called megarexia or reverse anorexia. Bigorexia is an eating disorder more commonly experienced by men and by very athletic people.

Orthorexia: Orthorexia is characterised by an obsession with eating healthily. The person suffering from orthorexia will put a lot of energy into their choice of food and how it is prepared. Generally, nutritional value is put first, and the pleasure of eating comes second.

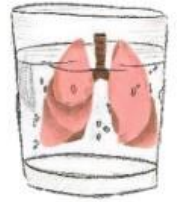
(ANEB, 2024)

If you recognize yourself in one of these descriptions, want more information, if you need help or know someone who needs help, ANEB is there for you. A helpline and more information are at your disposal.

Anxiety



Nearing the end of my 4th year of high school, I was diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). I always have anxiety. At times I'll have more intense episodes or attacks, but I never get a moment of complete respite. When asked to describe my attacks, I often use the imagery of my lungs filling up with water, I feel like I can't breathe. With my heart beating a mile a minute, these symptoms are uncontrollable.



How do I manage my anxiety?

Obviously, managing my anxiety isn't always easy. I have periods when it's uncontrollable and other times where it's calm.

One of the things that helps me manage my anxiety the most, is my medication. It doesn't solve the problem, but it helps me live normally. It allows me to go to my classes, go to work, go out with my friends, etc.

Another thing that helps me enormously is my cat (zoo-therapy). He's a very affectionate cat who follows me everywhere. His presence calms me when I'm not feeling well.

Music helps calm me down when I'm having a panic attack. It allows me to be in my bubble and isolate myself when I'm in a public place like school or in a store.

Meditation. Yes, I know it sounds "cliché", but it can really help when it's done on a regular basis. I do it mostly to fall asleep at night. There are hundreds of guided meditations available for different purposes. It really helps you to control your breathing better especially when you feel like you're going to have a panic attack.

Different Types of Anxiety Disorders

Specific phobia: Specific phobia is a fear associated with a particular object, animal or situation.

Example: The fear of spiders

Symptoms: Heart palpitations or increased heart rate, excessive sweating, stomach-ache, confusion, and more.

Social anxiety: "Social anxiety is an intense fear associated with social activities or performance situations where the person is likely to be observed by others. In these types of situations, they will almost always feel afraid of being judged negatively (fear of being embarrassed, humiliated or rejected)" (Government of Québec, 2024)

Example: Fear of public speaking, fear of eating in public, etc.

Symptom: Heart palpitations or increased heart rate, excessive sweating, blushing or feeling flushed, muscle pain, digestive problems, confusion, dizziness and more.

Generalized anxiety: "A person with generalized anxiety has difficulty controlling their concerns and preventing their worrisome thoughts from interfering with the activities of their daily life. The intensity, duration or frequency of the anxiety is out of proportion. It is referred to as generalized anxiety disorder when the anxiety and worries have been present for at least six months." (Government of Québec, 2024)

Symptoms: Fatigue, trouble sleeping, headaches, excessive sweating, irritability, difficulty concentrating or memory lapses, muscle tension, agitation or feeling overwhelmed, blackouts and more.

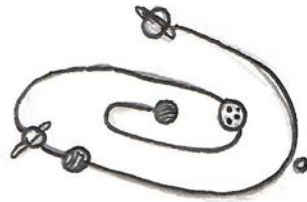
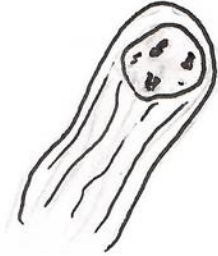
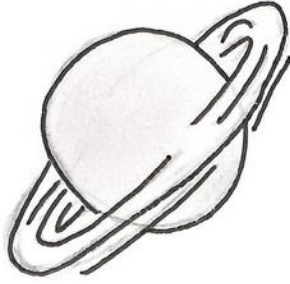
Panic disorder with agoraphobia: Agoraphobia often accompanies panic disorder. Someone with agoraphobia fears public places, often because they are afraid the place may be difficult to exit, or because it may cause them to panic.

Example: A person with agoraphobia could, for instance, be unable to go grocery shopping or go see a concert.

Symptoms: "Heart palpitations or increased heart rate, excessive sweating, trembling or muscle twitching, numbness or tingling sensation, dizziness or feeling that you are about to faint, hot flashes or chills, nausea or abdominal discomfort, feeling of tightness in the chest, choking or strangling feeling, shortness of breath, feeling a loss of control or going crazy, fear of dying, and more." (Government of Québec, 2024)

If you have any of these symptoms, don't wait. You are not alone, it's important that you get help and support. Speak to an adult that you trust, consult a doctor or social worker.







Why Talk About Genitalia?

There are standards in regard to body image as well as sexuality. Whether it's the length of the penis, the shape of the vulva or, even the duration of sexual relations or desires. These standards can create complexes. I believe that we should never have to ask ourselves if our bodies are "okay" because every body is wonderful. There shouldn't be any "normality" in regard to genitalia, because every person is different. You are beautiful.

Let's talk about genitalia!



Genitalia

Women

Female genitalia are comprised of two parts: the vagina and the vulva. The vagina is the interior part and the vulva the exterior part of the female reproductive organ.

Although the vulva may be comprised of the same parts for all women, appearances can differ greatly and it's completely normal!

Don't be shy and don't let anyone tell you that you're less beautiful than other women. All vulvas are unique and beautiful in their own way.

Clitoris

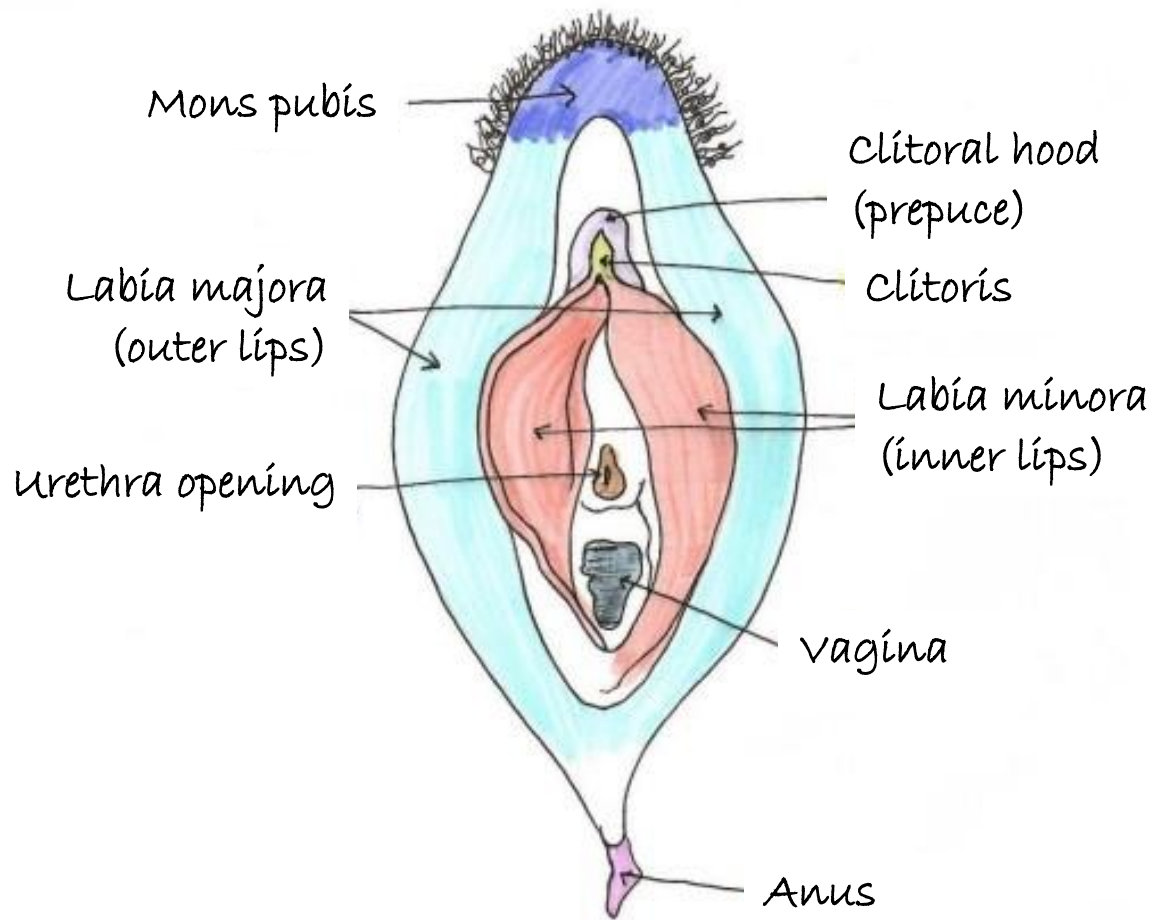
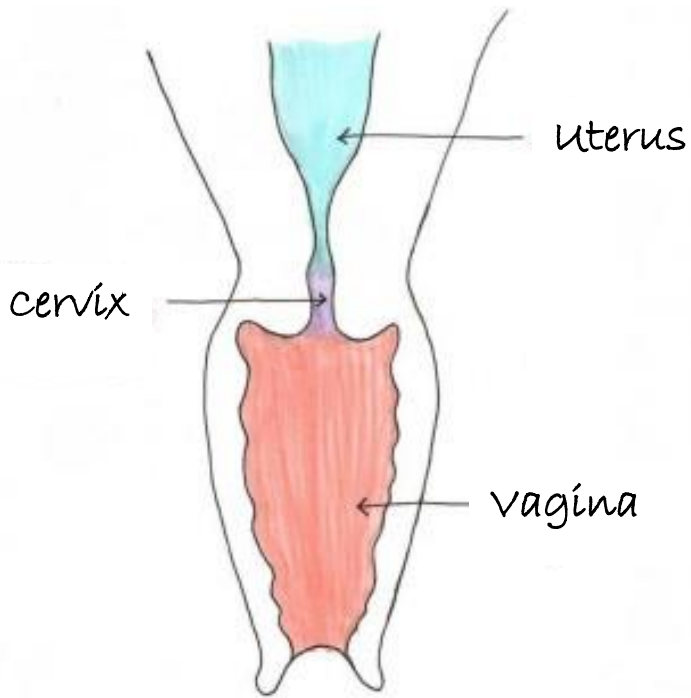
The clitoris is a unique organ because it is the only organ that exists with the SOLE PURPOSE of excitement and pleasure. Some women experience more pleasure through the stimulation of the clitoris than with penetration and for some it's the opposite. Every woman is different, and the best way to discover what we like is to try it.

* If ever you do not like anything pertaining to sexuality, know that you are completely normal! It's what we call "being asexual". It's possible that you feel no desire at all or simply have a very low interest in sex. Don't let anybody try to convince you that it's not normal. *

What is cyprine?

Cyprine is a name more commonly used in French for the liquid secreted in the vagina (by the Bartholin's glands or the Vestibular glands) to obtain lubrication. In general, this liquid is secreted due to sexual arousal. In English it is more commonly known as arousal fluid or simply "being wet".

* Note that "being wet" is NOT a sign of consent! At no time does the presence of cyprine (arousal fluid) allow your partner to determine if you're consenting or not. The body may secrete cyprine in a purely mechanical way, it doesn't make a sexual relation acceptable if consent has not been given. *



Men

Men have a genital organ called the “penis”. It is composed of three parts.

- The tip (glans penis)
- The shaft (body)
- The root (base)

Sexual relations are possible due to a phenomenon called “erection”, that is created by a surge in blood flow that is directed from the heart to the penis. As for ejaculation, its purpose is for reproduction.

What is it?

Circumcision

Circumcision, is an optional surgical procedure that involves removing the prepuce (the foreskin that covers the tip/glans of the penis)

When is it necessary?

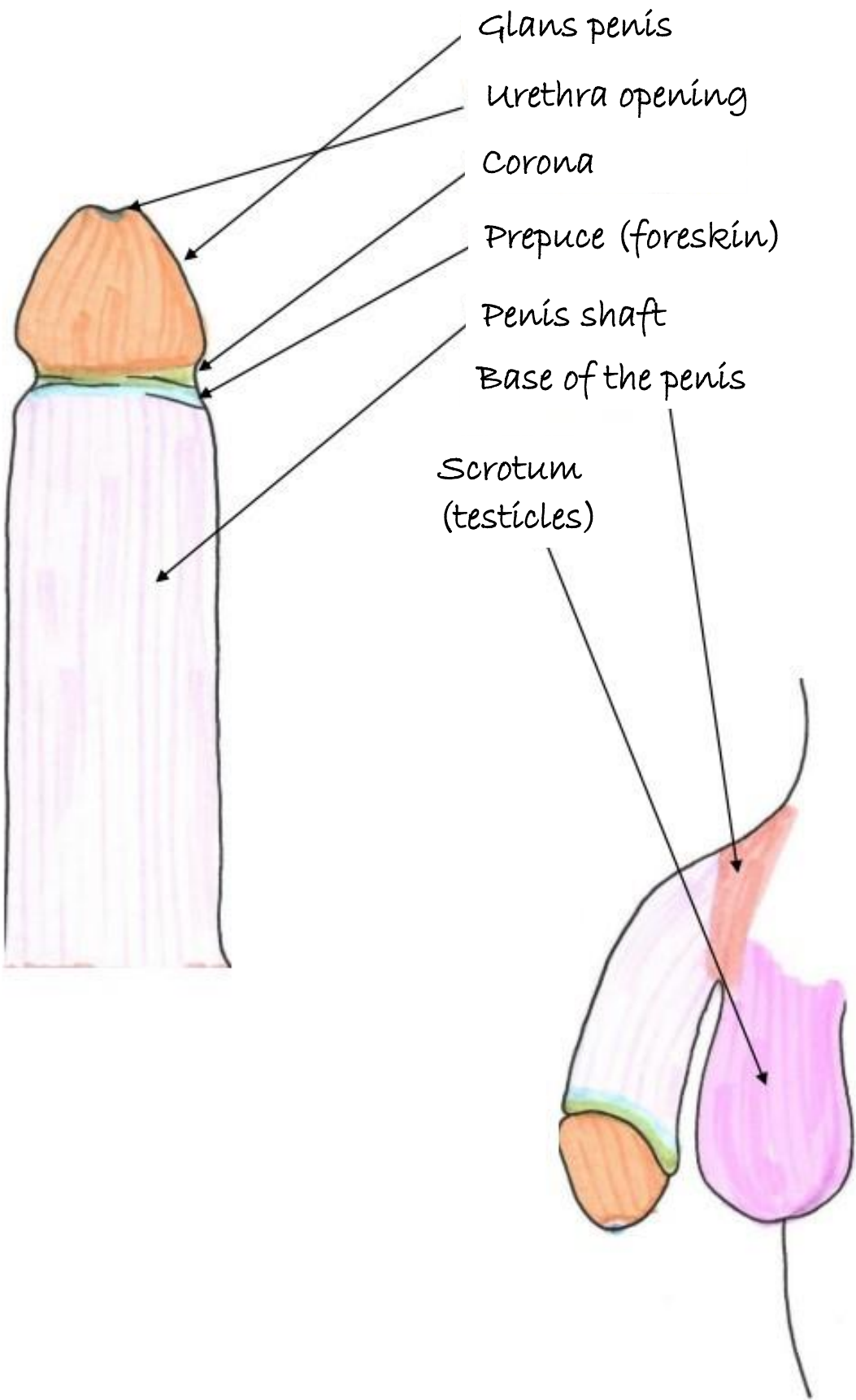
Circumcision is performed when it's requested by the parents or when a child presents with symptoms of the following:

Phimosis: when scarring and thickening of the foreskin makes the opening too small, preventing the retraction of the foreskin over the glans if it creates a problem for the flow of urine, circumcision may be considered as a last resort.

Paraphimosis: when the foreskin becomes trapped behind the glans and cannot come back to its normal position. There are several solutions to this problem but if it persists, a circumcision can be performed.

Recurring infections of the glans and foreskin (posthitis): When basic hygiene isn't sufficient in solving the problem, circumcision may be considered.
(Naitre et grandir, 2024)

In summary, whether you're circumcised or not, know that in no way does it make your penis less beautiful or less able to perform. Don't be shy because all penises are different and beautiful in their own way.



An Eco-Friendly Menstrual Period

Having your menstrual period can be a complicated ordeal but having it while trying to respect the environment is easier than it looks. Now there are many more feminine hygiene products available outside of the traditional single use pads and tampons.

Here are a few...

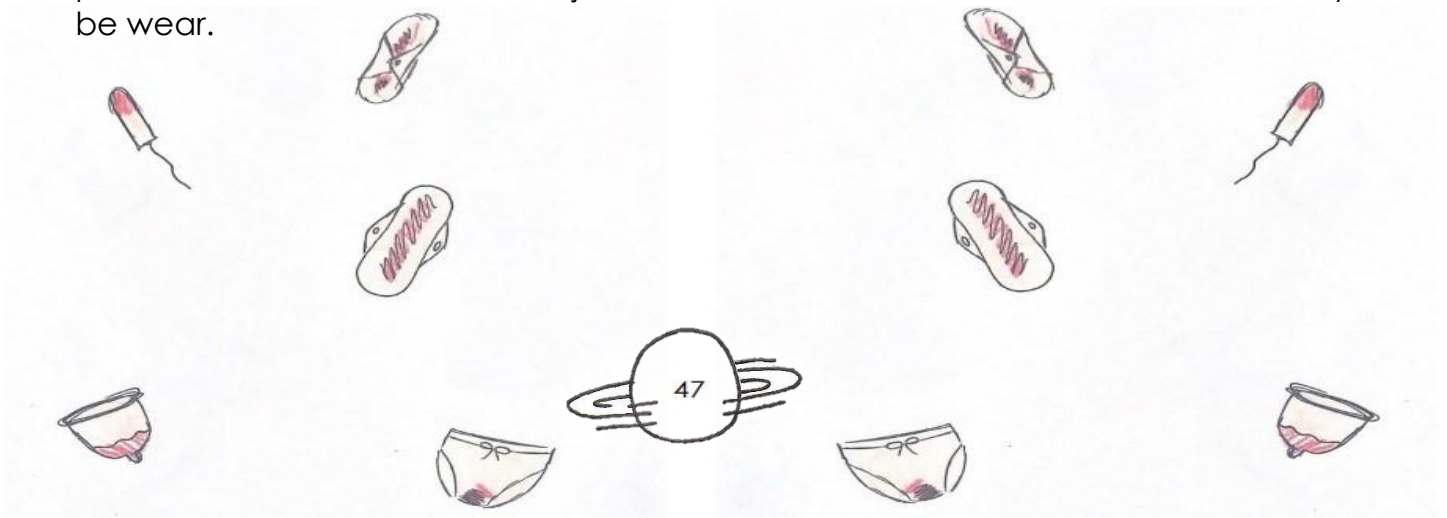
The menstrual cup: It's a funnel shaped cup made of hypoallergenic silicone used to collect menstrual fluid (blood). It's considered Eco-friendly because it's reusable! It has the added benefit of collecting up to three times more fluid than a conventional tampon. However, some women can find it difficult to insert or remove the cup. To do so you'll need to use your fingers. There's often a suction effect which may render the process more difficult. It may be difficult to find the right fit or technique in the beginning but once you're used to it, it's great.

Reusable menstrual pads: Reusable pads function the same way as disposable pads. It's placed in the underwear and secured there by a small fastener. After use it can be rinsed, washed, dried and then reused.

Reusable pads are a great way to reduce waste, but they can add complexity to your day. If you'll be wearing them away from home, plan on carrying a water-proof bag to store your used pads. (treehugger.com)

Eco-friendly tampons: Eco-friendly tampons function in the same way as regular disposable tampons but they are 100% biodegradable and made from natural products. Using biodegradable tampons allows you to reduce your environmental footprint without having to make big changes in your routine.

Period underwear: Period underwear looks and feels like regular underwear, but it's designed specifically to absorb menstrual blood. The big advantage to this underwear is not having to use any other feminine hygiene products because the protection is built in. After use, it just needs to be washed, dried and then it's ready to be wear.



What I've experienced with my menstruation's and my Poly-cystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

I started taking a contraceptive pill when I was in secondary 2. I often suffered from migraines so it was difficult for my doctor to find a pill that suited me and wouldn't cause more migraines. After a few tries we managed to find a pill that worked, at least that's what we thought. I realized a few months later that I wasn't getting my period anymore. I spoke to my doctor, who made me take a blood test to see if I was pregnant. The test came back negative, but it was at that moment that I found out that I have Poly-cystic Ovary Syndrome.

What is PCOS?

Poly-cystic Ovary Syndrome is characterized by minor obesity, irregular periods, or even lack of periods in some cases, and a high level of male hormones (androgens)

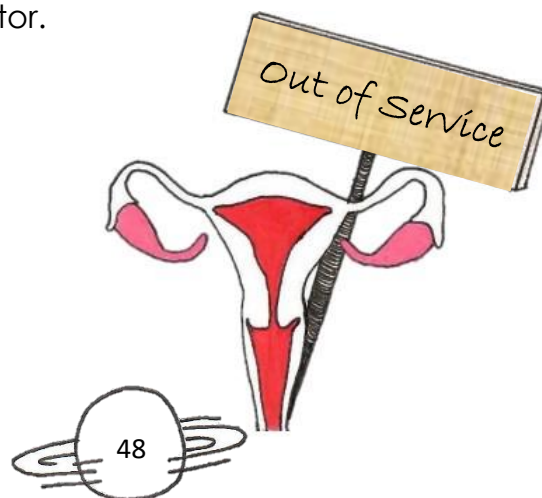
A woman who suffers from PCOS has an increased risk of obesity, and an excessive growth of hair in locations that are typically masculine (Hirsutism).

It is also the leading cause of infertility in woman. If a woman with PCOS manages to become pregnant, the risk of pregnancy complications is increased.

(Merck Manual, 2024)

To summarize, that chances that I might become a mother one day are very slim. Which makes it difficult for me emotionally in regard to my period. So, I now take Depo-Provera, which stops my menstruation all together.

If you have any questions or doubts about your sexual health, don't hesitate to contact a gynecologist or doctor.



Message from the Point d'Appui

Did you notice that we often see the same types of images in advertisements and on social media? Skinny women with large breasts, flawless skin and perfect make up. Muscular men, brawny and often bare chested. The fact that these images have been repeatedly shown has created a certain standard over time and many people put pressure on themselves to reach these standards.

These images often have a sexual aspect that is associated with a behaviour or a product that has no link to sexuality. It's called hypersexualization.

* If you want concrete examples of these images in advertisement, you can go on the Government of Quebec site: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/childhood/child-development/effects-stereotypes-personal-development/effects-hypersexualization> *

When you see an advertisement and you wonder if it's hypersexualized, ask yourself these questions:

- Is the product being sold highlighted?
- Is nudity used to attract your eye?
- Is it necessary to use nudity to sell this product?
- Is it demonstrating equality between men & women?
- Is it illustrating a dominant relationship?
- Why is it being used to sell this product?

If your answer is yes to one of these questions, the advertisement you're watching is most likely hypersexualized.

They display beautiful women who are submissive and only want to please. Their bodies are showcased and not their opinions. They show dominate men who are impertinent and focused on sex. Casting people in these gender specific roles that do not portray them accurately is disrespectful and toxic. It's also done on social media, in music videos and with lyrics. Do you really know what the songs you are listening to really mean? Is the message respectful? Are they promoting violence? Take the time to really listen to or even read the lyrics and watch the music videos. You might have second thoughts about the music you enjoy.

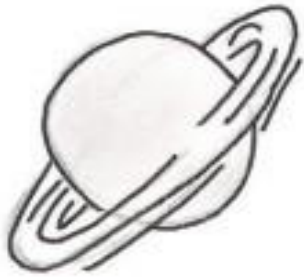
Hypersexualization trivializes sexual assault. How? By creating false information. For example, men are only interested in sex, women are always sexually available or that women are infatuated by sexual violence or male domination (like the image shown above). Even if we don't consciously think that way, the fact that we are continuously seeing these images can cloud our judgment. It may eventually impact our attitudes and even influence our sexual behaviour. The more a person is exposed to images where women are portrayed as sexual objects (ex: music videos, advertisements, social media content) and to representations of sexual violence (ex: a detailed scene of a sexual assault in a popular tv series), the more they will grow to accept that abuse as normal.

We must be cautious of what we watch on the internet as well as on television. If you aren't certain if what you're watching is appropriate, if you have the impression that sex is used unnecessarily, if it makes you question yourself or feel uncomfortable, talk about it. Speak up!

Whether it's with friends or an adult around you, it's important to have these discussions. You don't have to mimic those sexual behaviours even if it's on social media.

It's the same principal for beauty standards; you don't have to compare your body to others. The important thing is that you feel good about yourself. If you have concerns about your physical or mental health, don't hesitate to consult a professional. It's normal to question yourself and there are a lot of people out there who can help you:

- Family Doctor
- Child and Youth care worker (Youth Clinic)
- Social worker or school nurse
- Tel-Jeunes & Kids Help Phone





Social Media and Cyber Sexuality

Influencers

In the last few years, the influencers' movement has grown tremendously. Whether it's with YouTube, Instagram, or TikTok, people share their pictures, videos and 'stories' of their daily lives. It's important to increase awareness on the difference between those images and reality. Although some influencers are more authentic than others, it's important to understand that we only see what they choose to post, which tends to be the more positive side of their lives. I believe that it's important to follow people who make us feel good about ourselves and motivate us to become a better person.

We must also keep in mind that the people who look perfect in pictures also have their own flaws and imperfections!

Who should I follow?

I must mention that I am not a social media professional! I still have a long way to go regarding how I portray myself on different platforms.

For starters, I've learned that it's important to follow people who make you feel good. If you're scrolling on social media and you come across something that makes you feel inadequate, uncomfortable or even disgusted with yourself, then it's not healthy.

My second piece of advice would be to follow people that resemble you, whether it's physically or if they share your values and ideas. It allows you to feel understood and to compare yourself to people with similar values (even if it's not healthy to compare yourself to someone).

Finally, restricting your time on social media is important, especially if spending time on different platforms makes you feel worse. It's important to do something else, whether it's a hobby or quality time with your friends and family.

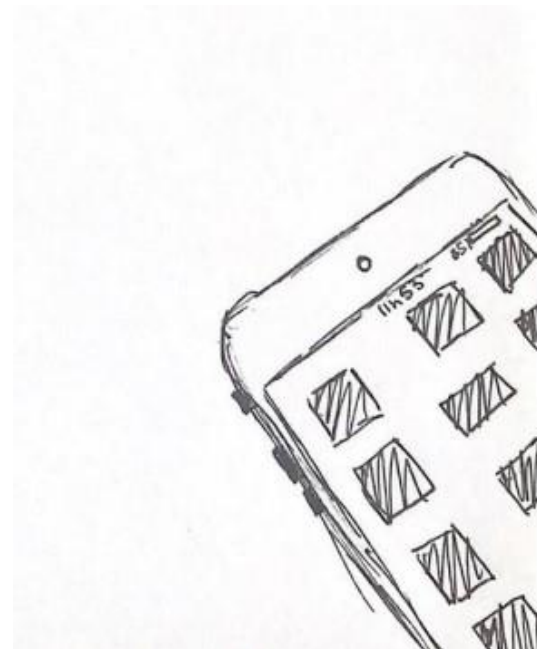


Influencers and Advertising

The most popular way for influencers to make money is through advertising. They 'try' a product and afterwards give their opinion to influence us to buy it. In return, they obtain a payout. Some are very honest and will say what they really think about the product but that's not always the case.

Another problem with advertising is that it creates a false need and influences us to buy products that aren't always useful or necessary. It's not because your favourite influencer has a certain bag or a particular shirt that you need the same one. It's important to question yourself before buying a product.

- Do I really need it?
 - Do I really have the means to buy it?
 - Will I really use it?
- Etc.



What is cybersex?

According to the web site <<https://www.verywellhealth.com/>>, Cybersex isn't one thing. Instead, the word describes a group of activities that has one crucial aspect in common: it takes place over the Internet. In other words, cybersex is fundamentally virtual and does not involve person-to-person physical contact.

Sexting, webcam sex, online porn, teledildonics, AR and VR sex etc.

Cybersex is illegal for minors and that's why it's important to talk about it. With social media networks like Snapchat and Instagram, it's become more common for teens to send sexual pictures to either their partner, a friend or even to a stranger. The possession or distribution of sexual photos or videos of minors is child pornography and is punishable by law.

"Nudes" and Consent

To clarify, it's illegal to have or send sexual photos or videos of anyone who is or appears to be under the age of 18. If you are a minor, this includes taking or sending sexual photos/videos of yourself. It's important to know your rights.

1. Know that NOBODY has the right to force you to take or send a picture of a sexual nature.
2. Sending or receiving unsolicited pictures or videos of sexual nature is considered a sexual assault and is punishable by law.
3. Possession or distribution of sexual pictures or videos of a minor is child pornography and it's illegal.
 - Possession: saving child pornography on any kind of device, phone, computer etc.
 - Distribution: selling or sharing child pornography, including showing people on your phone or computer, forwarding it through text (or other means) or posting it on the internet.

(<https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/sexting-privacy-and-law>)

cyberviolence of a sexual

Cyberviolence is the umbrella term used to describe a wide range of online behaviours which are intentionally done to hurt others. Including, but not limited to cyberbullying, cyber harassment, cyber sexual harassment, sextortion, luring and non-consensual distribution of intimate images. (<https://www.cpco.on.ca/>)

Obviously, written like this, it isn't very clear, and it may be difficult to know if you're a victim. Here are some examples:

You receive unsolicited pictures of a sexual nature.

You receive threats coercing you into sending compromising pictures of yourself.

A person posts rumours about you on internet.

A person threatens to sexually assault you.

Someone is keeping track your conversations and your private life.

An adult attempts to enter into contact with a minor for sexual purposes.

Someone uses your identity in order to make others believe that you are sending compromising pictures of yourself.

Message from the Point à'Appui

Influencers

We live in a society where the virtual world is very present and that brings many advantages. For example, being in contact with our friends and family, learning new things, staying updated on news, breaking isolation, having a sense of belonging in diverse groups, etc.

However, it's important to develop a critical view on what you see or post on social media. Stop scrolling and take a moment to think about how you're feeling. Ask yourself if these images or statements have an impact on your mood or self-esteem. Is the information true? Think about the emotional consequences or the impact it has on your brain. While you can't control everything you see on social media, you can be highly selective about who and what you subscribe to. The Mental Health Commission of Canada's website suggests this simple rule: Don't follow anyone or anything that doesn't serve you.

The phenomenon that is social media and influencers shouldn't represent 100% of your life. Your personal value isn't calculated by the number of 'likes' and 'shares' you get; you are more than your feed. Furthermore, if your favourite influencer says something is good for you, that's not necessarily the case. You are not a virtual person but a human being who has emotions, qualities, values and opinions. Social media can be a part of your life but shouldn't be your whole life. You can develop interests, hobbies, passions that don't involve screens. This will allow you to find balance in your life.

If you have questions or concerns, it's important to talk to friends, parents, a social worker or someone from a youth organization such as Tel-Jeunes or Kids Help Phone offering 24/7 confidential mental health support.



Cybersexuality

Online sexual exploitation and abuse is very common on social media. It's often trivialized and not reported. It's important to remember that adults as well as adolescents can be accused of possessing, distributing or producing juvenile pornography. It's not trivial, it's illegal. Here are some common terms for online sexual exploitation and abuse:

Sexting: this behavior is generally defined as the sending and/or receiving sexual messages through internet and technology such as a phone, app, webcam, etc.

Sextortion: when someone uses a sexual photo/video to blackmail or coerce someone into doing what they want. They may threaten to share or distribute those sexual images in order to obtain more sexual photos/videos, money or even meeting in person.

Luring or grooming: when an exploiter uses online communication to contact a minor. They may use grooming tactics in order to gain their trust to make it easier for them to commit a sexual offence against them.

Online exploiter tactics:

- They often create a false identity.
- They develop a trusting relationship with a minor by using specific strategies. Excessive complimenting, attention, affection and offering gifts.
- They do their research. Searching for personal information about a minor such as their likes and dislikes, their friends and their school.
- They are overly persistent or use guilt tactics;
- They manipulate the minor into distrusting or pulling away from their parents.
- Their conversations slowly become more sexually oriented. Asking sexual questions, making sexual comments.
- They send or request sexual images and/or encourage the minor to watch or do sexual things.

**** The process may be quick or take it can several months.

For the victims of online sexual exploitation, the consequences can sometimes be unimaginable. Shame, guilt, isolation, self mutilation, anxiety, depression and even suicide. This is why it's important to talk about it, to be aware and to see what security measures can be put in place. Here are some examples:

- Secure your social media accounts and make sure your posts are private;
- Add people that you really know. If you have doubts about a person, delete them from your contacts;
- Limit publication of personal information like your address, phone number, birth date, school, etc.

Online sexual exploitation and abuse is illegal, whether you're communicating with someone older than you or someone your own age.

It's never OK for someone to make you uncomfortable. If someone is doing things that make you feel uncomfortable, scare you or if someone tries to force you to do something, you may be a victim. You are not alone. There are people and resources available to help you.

You can report online sexual exploitation and abuse to [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca) or [protectchildren.ca](https://www.protectchildren.ca)

You can contact Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 to speak with a counselor if you're not sure who to talk to or how to tell them.

If a photo/video of you has been shared without your permission, it's important to know that the longer you wait to act, the longer the photo/video is out there the harder it is to remove. To limit the spread of the photo/video, you can visit [NeedHelpNow.ca](https://www.needhelpnow.ca) for steps you can take to get the photos/videos taken off websites or for instructions on how to make a complaint to a website. Remember, it's not your fault if someone shares a photo/video of you without your permission. No one deserves to have their trust and privacy violated.

([kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/what-online-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/what-online-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/))

If you witness intimidation on social media or if you receive unwanted photos/videos, it's possible to act and make a difference in these situations.

Here are a few approaches to be a reliable witness:

- Delete the photos/videos that you've received;
- Block the person who forwarded the photo/video, remove yourself from groups and pages that support these images, and report them;
- Inform your parents or the school;
- Notify the police;
- Use any resources available to report the situation and stop the abuse cycle;
- If you feel threatened or in imminent danger, you should call 911. The police are able to act immediately to make sure you're safe.

If a victim of online sexual exploitation and abuse confides in you, it's important to believe them and to listen without judgment. You need to respect their pace; don't get upset if they're not ready to talk about it. Try to guide them towards the helpful resources mentioned above, or offer to help them speak to a safe adult (a teacher, principal, parent, counsellor etc.) when they're ready. A little gesture can have a big impact in these situations, letting them know that you care and that they're not alone can make a huge difference.

([kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/help-friend-online-sexual-exploitation-abuse/](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/help-friend-online-sexual-exploitation-abuse/))

Conclusion

The objective of this booklet is to inform, to create awareness, to promote positive sexuality and healthy relationships. This project was conceived by Maude Nadeau who felt the need to provide young people with the information she saw was lacking during her adolescence. She also wanted to share her life experience in this booklet in case any young women identify with her story.

Bravo Maude for your accomplishments, your authenticity, your implication and your courage to share your personal experiences with us throughout this project! You are an inspiring young woman and it was a privilege for the Point d'appui to support you.

The Point d'appui is a helpful resource in Rouyn-Noranda for all women who are in a sexually violent situation. We offer individual and group meetings as well as legal and medical support. We also offer workshops on awareness and prevention that are available to everyone and we are constantly demanding that officials do everything possible to eliminate sexual violence.

For more information, you can visit our website 'www.pointdappui.org', you can follow us on social media or contact us at 819-797-0101.

We hope that this booklet has answered many of your questions and that it's been able to provide you with information as well as create awareness.

The next few pages contain a variety of resources on different subjects that may help or interest you. Don't hesitate to consult them.



Resources

➤ Helplines available 24/7

- Kids Help Phone 24/7 e-mental health service offering free, multilingual and confidential support to help all young people "Feel Out Loud".
Call: 1-800-668-6868, text: 686868 or chat: <https://kidshelpphone.ca>



- Sexual Violence Helpline is here for you, providing a safe space where no one will judge you.
Call: 1-888-933-9007 or chat: <https://sexualviolencehelpline.ca>



- SOS Violence Conjugale mission is to help ensure the safety of victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) and that of their children throughout Quebec, by offering free, bilingual, anonymous and confidential referral services.

Email: sos@sosviolenceconjugale.ca, chat: <https://sosviolenceconjugale.ca/>, text or call:



GET HELP

1 800 363-9010 — 24/7

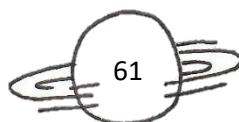
1 438-601-1211 — TEXT

- Info-Social / Info-Santé psychosocial workers are available 24/7 to offers advice for a psychosocial or mental health issues. Call: 811 (option 2)

NEED HELP?

Do not wait... Call

8-1-1 option 2



- 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline A safe space to talk, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
<https://988.ca/>



24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

- Besoin d'Aide suicide prevention helpline in Abitibi-Témiscamingue



➤ Local Sexual Assault Help Centers

- The RQCALACS (Quebec Coalition of Sexual Assault Help Centers) brings together Sexual Assault Help Centers across Quebec.



<https://rqcalacs.qc.ca/en/>
Tel: 1-877-717-5252
Email: info@rqcalacs.qc.ca

- Point d'appui Rouyn-Noranda



**POINT
D'APPUI**

<https://pointdappui.org/> (French only site)
Tel: 819-797-0101
Email: info@pointdappui.org

- CALACS du Témiscamingue



<https://calacstemis.ca/> (French only site)
Tel: 819-629-4666
Email: calacstemis@outlook.com

- CALACS ABITIBI in Amos



<https://calacsabitibi.com/> (French only site)
 Tel: 819-732-7889
 Email: info@calacsabitibi.com

- CALACS L'Étoile du Nord in Val-d'Or



<https://calacsletoiledunord.com/> (French only site)
 Tel: 819-825-6968
 Email: info@calacsletoiledunord.com

- CAPACS Abitibi-Ouest à La Sarre



<https://capacsao.ca/> (French only site)
 Tel: 819-333-3773
 Email: capacsabitibiouest@gmail.com

➤ Local Youth Centers

- La Soupape Maison des Jeunes of Rouyn-Noranda



<https://lasoupape.ca/> (French only site)
 Tel: 819-762-3682
 Email: coordonnatrice@lasoupape.ca

- Maison des Jeunes Desjardins d'Amos



<https://maisondesjeunesdesjardinsamos.com/> (French only site)
 Tel: 819-732-0584
 Email: maisondesjeunesamos@gmail.com

- Maison des Jeunes La Sarre Inc.



[Facebook.com/mdj.lasarre](https://facebook.com/mdj.lasarre)
 Tel: 819-333-2757
 Email: mdjlasarre@hotmail.com

- Maison des Jeunes of Témiscamingue



<https://mjtdutemiscamingue.org/> (French only site)

Tel: 819-625-2525

Email: coordo@mdjtemiscamingue.org

- Maison des Jeunes Énergiteck of Val-d'Or



Tel: 819-825-7240

Email: energiteck@tlb.sympatico.ca

- Interlocal de jeunes in the Rural Districts of Rouyn-Noranda



<https://linterlocal.ca/> (French only site)

Tel: 819-797-5750

Email: coordo@linterlocal.ca

➤ Local Women's Shelters

[Sheltersafe.ca](https://sheltersafe.ca) is an online resource for women and their children seeking safety from violence and abuse. A clickable map serves as a quick resource to connect women with the nearest shelter that can offer safety, hope, and support. <https://sheltersafe.ca/>



WOMEN'S SHELTERS CANADA | Shelters and Transition Houses United to End Violence Against Women

- Alternatives pour Elles Shelter of Rouyn-Noranda mission is to provide services to women who are victims of domestic violence and to their children, whether accommodation is provided or not. <http://alternativepourelles.com/en/>



24H, 7 DAYS ☎ 1 819 797-1754

- Maison d'Hébergement l'Équinoxe in Témiscamingue



<https://maisonequinoxe.ca/> (French only site)

Call: 819-622-7001

Text: 819-629-7756

- Maison Mikana in Amos



<https://www.maisonmikana.com/> (French only site)

Call: 819-732-9161

Text: 819-443-3443

- Maison d'Hébergement Le Nid in Val-d'Or



Call : 819-825-3865

➤ Crime Victims Assistance Centers

- (CAVAC) Crime Victims Assistance offer front-line services to any crime victim or witness. The CAVACs work in collaboration with experts from the legal community, health and social services networks and community organizations.



<https://cavac.qc.ca/en/>

Call: 1-866-532-2822

- The CAVAC of Abitibi-Témiscamingue:

- Rouyn-Noranda: Court House (office RC10)

819-797-5599 or 1-866-335-5599

- Amos: Court House (office RC30)

819-444-5281 or 1-866-335-5599 (toll-free)

- Val d'Or: Court House (office 112)

819-825-6000 or 1-877-825-6099 (toll-free)

- La Sarre: Court House

819-339-7509 or 1-866-335-5599 (toll-free)

- Val-d'Or, Senneterre and First Nation communities:

819-825-6000 or 1-877-825-6099 (toll-free)

- Ville-Marie: Court House and First Nation communities (office RC03)

819-629-6015 or 1-866-335-5599 (toll-free)

819-629-6206 (First Nation communities)

- (IVAC) Crime Victims Compensation the IVAC program provides a wide range of benefits and services to victims of crime and their families, as well as rescuers. All benefits payable by the IVAC are tax-free.



Indemnisation
des victimes
d'actes criminels

<https://www.ivac.qc.ca/en/>
Call: 514-906-3019 or 1-800-561-4822 (toll-free)

➤ Other Specialised Resources

- Tel-Jeune (TJ) is a safe and confidential space for teenagers from Quebec, providing non-judgmental guidance and support. It's a free resource that helps teens navigate life's difficult questions and first-time experiences.



Chat: <https://www.teljeunes.com/en>
Call: 1-800-263-2266
Text: 514-600-1002

- Hope For Wellness is available to all Indigenous people across Canada. Experienced and culturally competent counsellors are reachable by telephone and online 'chat' 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Chat: <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/>
Call: 1-855-242-3310

- NeedHelpNow.ca If you are worried a nude of you under the age of 18 is being shared online, we are here to help. There are steps you can take to regain control, and people to support you.



- The Canadian Centre for Child Protection goal is to reduce the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, assist in the location of missing children, and prevent child victimization.

<https://protectchildren.ca/en/>



CANADIAN CENTRE *for* CHILD PROTECTION®

Helping families. Protecting children.

- Cybertip.ca is Canada's tipline for reporting the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children.



<https://cybertip.ca/>
Call: 1-866-658-9022

- Anorexia and Bulimia Québec (ANEB) is a non-profit organization that guarantees free, immediate and specialized help to people with an eating disorder and to their loved ones.



Anorexie et boulimie Québec

<https://anebquebec.com/en>
 Call: 514-630-0907 or 1-800-630-0907 (toll-free)

- Sexual Diversity Coalition of Abitibi-Témiscamingue is a grouping of people wanting to make a difference for LGBT people in A.T. providing support and training for all those who want to learn more.



<https://coalitionat.qc.ca/en/>
 Call: 819-762-2299
 Email: info@coalitionat.qc.ca

- Pride Val-d'Or OBNL aiming to stop and prevent isolation in the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities of the Val-d'Or region.



<https://fiertemontreal.com/en/artists/fierte-val-dor-2023>
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fiertevaldor/>
 Call: 819-860-3536
 Email: fiertevaldor@hotmail.com

Pride Val-d'Or

- Interlignes offer support to LGBTQ+ people, their loved ones and staff from a variety of backgrounds. Through our training and awareness-raising activities, we encourage society to be more open to LGBTQ+ realities.



<https://interligne.co/en/>
 Call or text: 514-866-0103 or 1-800-505-1010 (toll-free)
 Email: aide@interligne.co

- Neighbours Regional Association of Abitibi-Témiscamingue is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the English-speaking community.



<https://neighboursat.ca/>
 Call: 819-762-0882
 Email: info@neighboursat.ca

➤ Street Workers / Outreach Workers

- (ROCQTR) The Quebec Coalition of Community Organizations for Street Work Representing over 50 different organizations across Quebec supporting at risk youths.



<https://rocqtr.org/> (French only site)
<https://travailderueduquebec.org/> (French only site)
Call: 514-575-0300
Email: info@rocqtr.org

- Arrimage Jeunesse Rouyn-Noranda Two street workers offering support to youths from 12 to 30 years of age in the Rouyn-Noranda area.



<https://arrimagejeunesse.org/> (French only site)
Call or text: 819-277-4775 or 819-277-0836

- Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi of Abitibi-Est mission is to help young adults and immigrants believe in themselves and support them in finding their place in the Val-d'Or area.



CARREFOUR
DE LA VALLÉE-DE-L'OR

<https://carrefourvo.ca/> (French only site)
Call: 819-825-5627

- (MRAR) Mouvement de la Relève (succession movement) of the Amos Region helping youths prevent, reduce and eliminate behaviors that may put them at risk mentally or physically.



<https://www.mrar.qc.ca/> (French only site)
Call: 819-732-8739
Email: accueil@mrar.qc.ca

- Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi of Témiscamingue believes that all youths can create their own path to meet the height of their expectations.



<https://cjet.qc.ca/>
Call: 1-888-662-2538
Email: accueil@cjet.qc.ca

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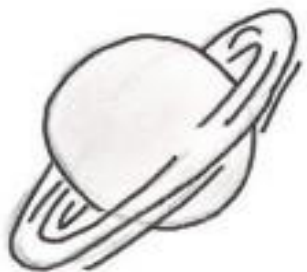
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The Chronicles of a Survivor is a booklet that touches on many different subjects. We openly talk about sexuality, body image, mental and physical health issues, and much more. I talk about my personal experiences to help educate readers and break down social prejudices relating to a variety of issues. I wrote this chronicle with help from Point d'Appui with the goal of increasing awareness and explaining important subjects that we don't talk enough about.