

Parents and Caregivers' Information Sheet

Grade 9 - 2024-25

MY TOOLS

WHAT IS JLRS ?

It is a program that aims to promote healthy and respectful relationships among French speaking young people (from grades 9 to 12) living in a linguistic minority in four schools of British Columbia, with the goal to reduce violence in interpersonal relationships.

Disciplinary skills targeted by the JLRS program:

- Healthy choices contribute to our physical, emotional and mental well-being.
- Healthy relationships can help us live fulfilling lives.
- Fostering the health and well-being of others allows us to connect with our community.

Learn more on JLRS: <https://www.jlrs.ca/>



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION?

We all navigate different types of interpersonal relationships throughout our lives. During adolescence, youth continue to discover interpersonal relationships outside the family: their friendships intensify, and their family relationships evolve when they discover their independence. It can be the beginning of professional relationships through volunteer experiences or even their first job. Some also set out to discover romantic or intimate relationships. As a parent or an adult that is close to a young adolescent, this transition can be a difficult step. Adolescents tend to distance themselves from their parents or family, and they do not share their feelings and information about their relationships as much as they did before.

Some youth have their first romantic, intimate, or sexual relationships during adolescence. According to the 2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey which assessed the health of young adolescents in the province, 42% of youth have been in a romantic relationship at one point in the last year. These experiences are often positive, but abuse and violence (psychological, physical, and sexual) between romantic partners are frequent. It is therefore important to equip young people to recognize the characteristics of a healthy relationship, as well as to identify and prevent abusive and violent behaviour. And this, even if they are not yet in an intimate relationship.



STATS FROM THE BC ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY (2023)

- 28% of boys, 51% of girls and 58% of non-binary youth have experienced verbal sexual harassment.
- 18% of boys, 32% of girls and 40% of non-binary youth have experienced physical sexual harassment.
- 35% of young people said they had experienced discrimination in the past year, most often at school and online.

MY TEEN SEEMS TO BE VERY ANXIOUS, IS THAT NORMAL?

Stress is a normal physiological reaction. In the face of danger, the body releases hormones of adrenaline and the stress allows us to mobilize the necessary resources to fight it. This reaction is a form of protection that has become more and more present in today's society which can transform into anxiety. Anxiety is a permanent state of stress.

WHY ARE THEY STRESSED?

The most common stressors in adolescence are school (pressure to succeed, social integration), family (conflicts with parents / guardians, conflicts between parents, conflicts with siblings), in love (pressure to please, abuse from partner) and friendships (pressure to integrate, fear of isolation).

IMMEDIATE STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES:

- Mindful breathing (e.g., breathe in and breathe out 10 times)
- Focus on your environment (identify 5 things I can see, 4 things I can touch, 3 things I can smell, 2 things I can hear, 1 thing I can taste)
- Focus on what you feel physically (e.g., feet on the ground, hands on the table, etc.)

LONG-TERM STRESS PREVENTION / MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

- Develop time management and active planning including finding time to take care of yourself
- Eat healthily
- Get regular physical activity
- Spend time in nature
- Do an artistic activity
- Participate in cultural activities
- Establish good sleep habits
- Avoid drinking too much caffeine
- Limit the time spent in front of a screen, especially before sleeping
- Spend time with friends and family



HOW CAN I EQUIP AND SUPPORT MY TEENAGER TO MANAGE ANXIETY AND STRESS?


- Listen and try not to rush to a solution. Be empathetic to their feelings of stress and the perceived causes, try not to trivialize.
- Normalize the feeling of stress by explaining to them that:
 - Stress is a part of life and can, for example, motivate us to improve and get things done.
 - Times of high, short-term stress are not always unhealthy.
- Pay particular attention to acute stress or panic attacks. They can be caused by something else, such as an anxiety disorder (if this worries you, see a professional).



QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK TO BETTER UNDERSTANDS THE IMPACTS ON YOUR TEEN:

- On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is no stress and 10 is maximum stress), what is your stress level right now?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is no control and 10 is full control), how much control do you have over your stress?
- How do you feel stress physically? (Note symptoms such as trouble sleeping, headaches, stomach aches, and muscle tension).
- How long have you been feeling this stress? How often does it appear?
- How much stress affects your daily life?
- How do you try to cope with stress? (Listen and watch for signs of negative coping strategies like task avoidance, substance use, isolation, etc.)

Resources

 **Important!** If you are concerned about your adolescent's health, ask a professional for help, or call the helplines mentioned below.

Do not hesitate to communicate with the school staff: the counselor, the teacher or the principal. Your family doctor can also help, as can the following resources:

- **Kids Help Phone:** to confide in somebody, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anonymous and bilingual. Toll-free number: 1-800-668-6868. kidshelpphone.ca
- **Phobies-Zéro (French only):** support and self-help group for people with anxiety, panic disorders, phobias and agoraphobia. 514-276-3105 or toll-free 1-866-922-0002.



RESOURCES IN FRENCH

* Les troubles anxieux expliqués aux parents, par Chantal Baron, Collection du CHU Sainte-Justine pour les parents, 2001.

* Alex : Surmonter l'anxiété à l'adolescence, par Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi trente, 2014 (pour les 12 ans et plus). Disponible à la bibliothèque du BC Children's and Women's Hospital.



RESOURCES IN ENGLISH

* The mindful teen: Powerful skills to help you handle stress one moment at a time, by Dzung Vo, Instant Help Book, 2015. Available at the BC Children's and Women's Hospital library.

* The Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens, by Gina M. Biegel, Instant Help Book, 2009. Available at the BC Children's and Women's Hospital library.

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