

# Parents and Caregivers' Information Sheet

Grade 9 – 2024-25

## FRIENDSHIPS, LIMITS AND PEER PRESSURES

### WHY TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE?

It is important to equip your teen in understanding the ways in which their friends and partners influence them. The situations where your teen lives with peer pressure is not necessarily obvious to them, you have a great opportunity to talk to them about it. You can help them recognize these pressures by asking open questions. Your teen may not be so receptive initially, but these discussions will have an impact with time.

Remember that you do not want it to feel judged or that you do not trust them, but you want to respect their freedom and that they simply reflect on how their relationships have an influence on their decisions, their mood, and even their well-being.



### HOW DO I MAKE SURE MY CHILD UNDERSTANDS THE INFLUENCE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS?

Our program is largely based on the idea that it is crucial to openly speak about healthy relationships to prevent violence in interpersonal relationships. We believe that this conversation must resonate in all the spheres of the teenager's life, including in their home! The parents and guardians have a vital role to play when their teen learns to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships and to seize the impact that their relationships have on them!

It is therefore important to talk about the influence of peers with your teenager. Keep in mind that for your teenager setting up limits and enforcing them can be a real challenge in a period of one's life where the approval and influence of others are very important. The influence of friendships can have positive effects, but also may impose significant pressures. Teens are not always aware of this influence, and may feel that their parents are "against" their friends.

### 4 CONCEPTS FOR A HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS



## HOW TO COMMUNICATE THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSENT IN RELATIONSHIPS?

We often talk about consent in sexual relationships but not very often in the context of friendships, despite its importance in these relationships too! If you feel that this is not well understood by your teen, especially in the context of friendships, remind them that putting pressure on people is equivalent to disrespecting consent.

Adults have the responsibility of leading by example. When we respect the limits of our teen (such as not touching their belongings without asking them, knocking on the door before entering their room, or asking them for their agreement before giving them a hug), we communicate very clearly that their consent is respected.

In short, remind your teen that everyone must learn to communicate their limits, preferences, and values in their relationships and listen to those of others. By doing so we learn to respect ourselves and others, which contributes to a culture in which consent is valued in all its dimensions.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Identifying their own boundaries helps your teens to:

- feel good about themselves;
- to discern whether they want to engage in a relationship/situation or not;
- to recognize when they are not respected by others.

Boundaries often require that we have confidence in our own opinions, wants, and needs. You can also emphasize that their boundaries are their own, and are affected by a variety of things: culture, age, religious beliefs, mood, personality, etc. Understanding this will help your teen better understand why their boundaries may be different from others around them!

## ENSURING THE RESPECT OF PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Parents can help teens develop reasoning through honest and open discussions. Encourage your teen to verbalize their limits. Use your judgment and decide if you should share your opinion on the limits established by your teen:

- It is crucial to verbalize your concerns if you feel that your teen's limits are unhealthy and/or put them in danger.

## UNDERSTANDING BOUNDARIES

Personal boundaries are a guide or a set of rules that a person creates to identify reasonable, safe, and permissible ways in which others can interact with them. We have several different types of limits:

- Physical limits (who touches me, how and where)
- Emotional boundaries (what I share, what I am comfortable hearing)
- Digital limits (who has access to my information online, who I interact with online, password sharing, etc.)

It is important to define these limits for yourself and to support your teen in the development of their own boundaries and decipher what is acceptable and what is not for them.



## QUESTIONS TO ASK TO BETTER UNDERSTAND YOUR TEEN'S BOUNDARIES:


It is important to understand that your teen's boundaries may be different from yours. Here are some questions to get to know them:

- **Physical boundaries:** Is it still okay for me to hug you? Would you rather something else?
- **Emotional boundaries:** Are you comfortable when I ask you questions about your friends?
- **Digital boundaries:** How do you feel after spending the entire evening on TikTok or Instagram? Does it bother you?
  - Do you share your passwords with your friends?

## ! IMPORTANT

If someone goes beyond their boundaries, teens must feel that they have the power, authority and the right to express their discomfort and reaffirm their boundaries.

## 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](http://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

- [Sur la pression des amis.es](#)
- [Parler ouvertement avec ses jeunes](#)
- Livre: On ne se comprend plus ! : traverse sans dommage la période des portes qui claquent entre 12 et 17ans, par Isabelle Filliozat, Marabout, DL: Vanves, 2019



### RESOURCES IN ENGLISH

- [Teaching teens to set emotional boundaries](#)
- [5 ways to teach your teens healthy boundaries](#)
- Book: Raising kids to thrive: Balancing love with expectations and protection with trust, by Ginsburg et al.IL: American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015.

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