



GET TO THE POINTE COLLABORATION
GENDER-BASED CYBERVIOLENCE STRATEGY DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document describes one of the strategies used by the Atwater Library and Computer Centre's project, *Preventing and Eliminating Cyberviolence Against Young Women and Girls*, funded by Status of Women Canada (April 2014-April 2017). In making this strategy document publicly available, we hope to offer other organisations and communities a tool that can be adapted and used in order to develop definitions of and policies around gender-based cyberviolence. In establishing clear definitions and policies, we believe that organisations and communities will be better equipped to understand, prevent, respond to and eliminate gendered cyberviolence in their respective settings.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Atwater Library and Computer Centre's *Preventing and Eliminating Cyberviolence Against Young Women and Girls* project was a 3-year project funded by Status of Women Canada. The project sought to develop strategies, in collaboration with stakeholders, that would mobilize participants to work towards the goal of preventing cyberviolence directed at girls, women, LGBTQQI2S¹, and gender non-conforming people. The strategy to develop definitions, policy solutions and responses to prevent and eliminate gender-based cyberviolence emerged directly from the needs assessment we conducted during the first year of the project. Stakeholders overwhelmingly articulated that there was a need to 'name cyberviolence' through defining cyberviolence. Without clear definitions, there was no way for people who were experiencing cyberviolence to point to a definition and seek help.

¹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Two-Spirit

WHAT IS GET TO THE POINTE! (GTTP!)?

Get to the Pointe! is an annual community-based sexual health education initiative for high school students in the South-West of Montreal that works from a youth engagement, sex-positive, and anti-oppressive lens. Organised by Saint-Columba House, in collaboration with the YMCA and AIDS Community Montreal (ACCM), and, this year, with the Atwater Library's Preventing Cyberviolence Project, GTTP! aims to support youth to make informed choices and to be active participants in their own development and education.

JUSTIFICATION & OBJECTIVE OF COLLABORATION

Gendered cyberviolence is a salient reality in young people's lives. The abolishment of sexual health education in Quebec's schools in 2005 has limited young people's access to opportunities to learn about and openly discuss issues around consent, sexual and cyberviolence, healthy relationships and communication, sexual health, sexuality, and gender. Nowadays, many young people search for this information online. However, sexual health and healthy relationship information found on the Internet, including on pornographic sites, can be inaccurate, inconsistent, and may reinforce violent, sexist, misogynistic, homophobic, racist, and transphobic ways of being and relating. This has significant implications for how young people interact online and offline. In response to this reality, community organisations and projects have taken it upon themselves to carve out safer spaces, in educational and community settings, where young people can openly discuss important issues that affect them, including gendered cyberviolence.

GTTP! is an initiative that forges strong relationships with approximately 100 adolescents aged 14 to 17 years old and the spaces they frequent, including alternative high schools and community organisations, such as the Pointe-St-Charles YMCA and ACCM. In collaborating with this initiative and the organisations involved, the Preventing Cyberviolence Project sought to equip community partners, including three high schools, an elementary school, and four community organisations, with the skills, knowledge and tools necessary to engage young people and community members in critical discussions on gendered cyberviolence, to counter cyberviolence within their communities, and, ultimately, to foster sociocultural change.

STAKEHOLDERS

The following is a list of organisations that the Preventing Cyberviolence Project reached through its collaboration with the GTTP! initiative:

- ◆ Saint-Columba House
- ◆ AIDS Community Care Montreal (ACCM)
- ◆ The Pointe-St-Charles YMCA
- ◆ Dawson Community Centre
- ◆ James Lyng High School
- ◆ Venture High School
- ◆ Vezina High School
- ◆ St. Gabriel's Elementary School

OVERALL IMPACT OF COLLABORATION ON STAKEHOLDERS

The Preventing Cyberviolence Project's collaboration with GTTP! was significant in many respects. Although it is difficult to gauge its full effect, the collaboration was paramount in impacting stakeholders in the four following areas:

- ◆ Policy and definition development and integration
- ◆ Consciousness-raising
- ◆ Relationship-building
- ◆ Capacity-building

POLICY AND DEFINITION DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION

Policies and definitions can be developed, adopted and implemented in a variety of ways. Within grassroots community organizations, our definition and policy resources are effectively used through awareness building activities, in workshop materials, and even in the form of a poster or sticker on an organisation's wall. In the case of Saint Columba House, our cyberviolence definition was adopted and integrated into the "Saint Columba House Youth Programs Bullying & Violence Policy". This is the organisation's official policy for addressing violence of all forms among their staff and volunteers. ACCM, another important stakeholder in our collaboration with GTTP!, will be considering whether our definitions and policy, as they stand, are appropriate for their setting. Although they have yet to adapt and integrate a clear anti-cyberviolence policy, they intend to come together as an organisation to begin discussing this possibility and will consult with us as need be.

Although representatives from participating high schools and other community organisations (i.e. Dawson Community Centre and the Pointe-Saint-Charles YMCA) did not explicitly state that they will adopt our definitions and policy, teachers and youth workers from these settings understood the importance of considering to do so. Many were unaware of whether they had anti-cyberviolence policies already in place and recognised the need to assess the state of anti-violence policies at their respective organisations. Nonetheless, these stakeholders acknowledged the need for clear definitions and policies around cyberviolence at their institutions and intend to consider adopting and integrating our definitions and policy framework. Similar to ACCM, they will consult us for support as needed.

CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

The collaboration successfully supported all stakeholders in developing a more nuanced and critical understanding of gendered cyberviolence and how it plays out in their institutions and communities. Although some teachers and youth workers within these settings already understood cyberviolence to be an issue faced by the youth they work with, our collaboration broadened their appreciation of the gendered nature of cyberviolence. Significantly, stakeholders are more conscious of how young people's understanding of gender roles, sexuality, sex and identity are greatly shaped by the content they are exposed to online. Stakeholders are more aware of the ways this content can reinforce

existing systems of gendered oppression, including patriarchy, sexism, misogyny, rape culture, heterosexism, homophobia, cissexism, and transphobia.

Moreover, in equipping our stakeholders with a more critical and gendered lens, their capacity to identify and reflect on instances of cyberviolence that specifically targeted an individual's gender was enhanced. Relatedly, stakeholders came to understand that these instances were not isolated or “just drama”, but rather part of a broader, insidious system of oppression that seeks to dehumanize, degrade, divide, and ostracize young womyn. “Slut shaming”, for instance, seemed to be commonplace among the youth our stakeholders worked with and was used as a violent tool by both young men and womyn. Addressing isolated incidents of “slut shaming” will not curb this practice. However, by locating “slut shaming” in the wider context of gendered oppression, stakeholders are now in a better position to address this oppressive practice in a more holistic and systemic way.

The need to move beyond a dichotomous understanding of online and offline worlds was also recognised among teachers and youth workers. Online and offline cultures are complexly and intrinsically entangled, thereby blurring the line between these two realities. A violent incident that transpires offline in a school can quickly make its way online where information is more freely distributed and difficult to control. In more clearly seeing and connecting to this reality, stakeholders acknowledged the importance of not minimizing young people's experiences of violence and hurt online. Furthermore, stakeholders recognised the need to enhance their digital literacy skills in order to meaningfully support youth in navigating the Internet in ethical and safer ways.

Relatedly, stakeholders understood the need to critically reflect on the generational factors that may make trusting and honest relationships more difficult to forge with young people. The “social rift” between adults and young people in schools and organisations can run deep and wide. The youth workers and teachers we worked with acknowledged the importance of addressing this disconnect in order to facilitate trust building and to develop meaningful and effective intervention strategies.

Community organizations we partnered with throughout the process also benefitted from this collaboration. Significantly, organizations like ACCM and Saint Columba House are more critically conscious of the significance of cyberviolence in the lives of young people, and specifically young womyn, queer and trans people. These are populations that the two organisations work directly with. In moving forward, the organisations aim to integrate content on gendered cyberviolence into their programming and to be more intentional in creating spaces for young people to explore and understand the effects cyberviolence in their lives.

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

The collaboration was paramount in fostering relationships among stakeholders and between stakeholders and the Preventing Cyberviolence Project. For instance, important connections were made between the Preventing Cyberviolence Project and James Lyng, Vezina and Venture high schools, as well as St. Gabriel's Elementary, along with teachers, behavioural technicians, youth workers, and young people in all these settings. Our efforts also strengthened connections between ACCM and these schools.

ACCM and the Atwater Library worked closely together throughout the collaboration. These organisations were in constant dialogue about cyberviolence and exchanged numerous ideas, tools, and perspectives. In moving forward, our stakeholders are aware that the Preventing Cyberviolence Project is an initiative that they can rely on for additional support when integrating gendered cyberviolence content into their curricula, figuring out effective pedagogical approaches to engage young people in conversations around cyberviolence, and in developing and implementing anti-cyberviolence policies and strategies at their institutions.

CAPACITY-BUILDING

One of the most notable “legacies” of this collaboration is the increased capacity of stakeholders to address cyberviolence at their institutions autonomously. Teachers and youth workers alike now have at their disposal a diverse set of tools to use in order to understand and respond to instances of gendered cyberviolence among their staff and the young people they serve. Importantly, stakeholders recognise the essentiality of a survivor-centered approach when supporting young people affected by cyberviolence and the need to move away from intervention strategies that risk shaming, silencing, and blaming young people. Stakeholders gained a greater appreciation of the power language has in such situations. Simply expressing to a young person being targeted by cyberviolence that “it is not your fault” and telling them “I believe you” have huge implications in terms of building a trusting and meaningfully supportive helping relationship with that young person. Being more sensitive about using gender-neutral language (e.g. pronouns) in order to make spaces feel safer, more comfortable and accessible for queer and trans youth to seek support was also recognised as fundamental.

In addition to challenging and changing stakeholders' views, ideologies, and language when responding to instances of cyberviolence, the collaboration provided stakeholders with a range of tools to help them implement a more sustainable anti-cyberviolence strategy in their respective settings. Teachers at all participating high schools will integrate the workshops and knowledge we offered into their curricula. Youth workers and teachers, alike, are now equipped with a list of numerous strategies and techniques to consult when addressing cyberviolence among the young people they work with. Furthermore, all stakeholders now recognise the importance of having an anti-cyberviolence policy at their institutions and have a policy toolkit that will facilitate that process.

Overall, the lasting impact of the collaboration is significant. Not only are stakeholders more aware of the need to understand and address gendered cyber violence in their schools and organisations, but now have the tools, language, skills, knowledge and relationships necessary to do just that.

NATURE OF COLLABORATION

As the GTTP! initiative is participant-focused and centers youth voices at each step of its development, we collaborated in a very iterative and flexible manner. Members of the Preventing Cyber violence Project team volunteered to be on GTTP!'s workshop development, fundraising and planning committees, in order to have direct contact and develop relationships with all the stakeholders involved. We offered resources and time to projects and organizations contributing to the GTTP! initiative whenever those projects, and the work of organizations, overlapped coherently with our project's mandate. We played leading as well as supportive roles in a number of specific events and workshops. Significantly, we co-presented a symposium designed by the youth participants. For this final event, the youth invited us to carry out an interactive workshop entitled, **“Cyber violence & Young People: Understanding & Responding to Online Violence Together”**, catered to a group of youth workers, high school teachers, and administrative representatives. We were also invited to lead an interactive workshop for young people from all 3 participating high schools entitled **“Crossing the Line, Online”**. Moreover, the event featured a screening of a documentary made by students at Vezina High School on gender with support from GTTP! Facilitator and the Atwater Library's cyber violence project. Additional details on these three key initiatives are provided below.

In all, the Preventing Cyber violence Project collaborated with GTTP! through 7 initiatives:

1. An interactive workshop entitled “Cyber violence & Young People: Understanding & Responding to Online Violence Together” with a group of youth workers, high school teachers and administrative representatives at the GTTP! Symposium (and basketball tournament).
2. An interactive workshop entitled “Crossing the Line, Online” with 25 young people from all 3 participating high schools at the GTTP Symposium (and basketball tournament).
3. A “Gender Tropes & Representation” workshop for 25 grade 6 students at an elementary school.
4. A two-session “Technology & Healthy Relationships” workshop for a group of 5 students participating in their high school's leadership class.
5. A “Pornography” workshop with a group of 12 students in a secondary 3 high school class.
6. A two-session “Creating Better and Healthier Online Relationships” workshop with a group of 25 grade 6 students at an elementary school.
7. Support to a youth-led gender documentary at Vezina High School and screening at the GTTP! Symposium (and basketball tournament)

1. CYBERVIOLENCE & YOUNG PEOPLE: UNDERSTANDING & RESPONDING TO ONLINE VIOLENCE TOGETHER

Context

Youth participants conceptualised and coordinated two events to mark the end of the GTTP! initiative. One such event took place on April 26th, 2017 at the Pointe-Saint-Charles YMCA: GTTP! Symposium (and basketball tournament). Based on the expressed needs of the young people, participating high schools and community organisations, one activity at the event was a cyberviolence workshop for teachers from all three high schools and youth workers from different community organisations in the South-West borough of Montreal. In total, there were 16 participants at this workshop:

- ◆ 6 teachers from James Lyng, Vezina and Venture high schools
- ◆ 2 behavioural technicians from the participating high schools
- ◆ 1 YMCA coordinator
- ◆ 4 youth workers from the Pathways to Education program at the YMCA
- ◆ 1 youth worker (name of organisation not disclosed)
- ◆ 1 youth worker from the English Montreal School Board (EMSB)
- ◆ 1 youth worker from Dawson Community Centre

The 3-hour interactive workshop represented a collaboration between the Atwater Library's Preventing Cyberviolence Project and AIDS Community Care Montreal's (ACCM) Education for Prevention department. The workshop sought to:

- ◆ Provide an overview of cyberviolence and the ways in which it exists within school environments and how it affects young peoples' wellbeing
- ◆ Share strategies used at the participants' schools or organizations to address online violence in order to inspire the development of new, and/or adaptation of existing, anti-cyberviolence policies
- ◆ Brainstorm and discuss strategies to respond to online forms of violence while meaningfully supporting survivors and victims
- ◆ Provide helpful resources for teachers and youth workers when responding to instances of cyberviolence in their environments with cyberviolence
- ◆ Equip teachers, youth workers, and the organizations they work for with the skills, knowledge, and tools required to address cyberviolence in their communities

The first part of the workshop involved sharing knowledge and experiences on how cyberviolence manifests among young people in different settings. Best practices, in terms of intervening in these situations, were also discussed and exchanged by participants. Following a short break, the group collectively deconstructed a case scenario involving the non-consensual distribution of a nude image of a student. Subsequently, participants were split into 2 groups: teachers in one group, youth workers in the other. Each group was then assigned a case scenario relevant to their respective work

settings. The groups were asked to deconstruct the case scenarios and report back to the larger group.

Outcomes

The participants were engaged throughout the workshop. Main discussion points during the first part of the workshop included:

- ◆ The lack of “digital empathy” online. How does empathy look online versus offline?
- ◆ The various social media platforms that encourage and/or facilitate cyberviolence including Askfm and The Dirty. On the latter website, content cannot be taken down.
- ◆ Slut shaming, intimidation, threats, harassment, and non-consensual distribution of images online. These are common ways young people in the participants’ organizations experienced cyberviolence.
- ◆ There are various other apps and websites that young people in high schools tend to use, such as video and image sharing apps like Snapchat and Monkey, and websites including Younow and Omegle. Online games, such as Cards Against Humanity, are also common forums young people use on the Internet. Yellow is an app, similar to the popular dating app Tinder, but, unlike Tinder, there is no age limit to sign up. GPS technologies and apps that are used to track people were also discussed.

Responses to cyberviolence among young people were thoroughly discussed. The following is a list of key strategies:

- ◆ Lower the stakes. For instance, if a naked picture of a youth is being widely distributed, it is important to support that youth in understanding that the consequences of this are not as severe as the youth may think. It is understandably easy for young people to get overwhelmed with humiliation, shame, and the idea that their life is “over”.
- ◆ Education about cyberviolence needs to start at a young age. We need to focus on and enhance young people’s critical thinking skills.
- ◆ Focus on and promote positive self-image among youth in order to counteract the negative online environments they may be navigating.
- ◆ The need to address the hypersexualisation of, especially, girls and young women.
- ◆ When intervening with an instigator/perpetrator, it is important to really break down the reasons why their actions are harmful. Some simple questions you can pose to a young person in this situation: Why are you saying/doing this? Is that an effective thing to do/say? Would you do those same things offline? What are the consequences? It is important to have an open and honest conversation and to create an environment for this person that will make it easier for them to listen and to express themselves.
- ◆ Make sure to consult coworkers that have experience and skills in dealing with such situations. Be humble and know your limitations. Minimize the number of people involved in the situation.

- ◆ Be encouraging and validating to young people who come to you with an incident of cyberviolence.
- ◆ Do not suggest to youth to go offline as means to address the issue. The violence is already happening and will continue to happen regardless of whether they are online or offline. Making a young person go offline punishes them, could isolate them, and prevents them from defending themselves.
- ◆ Evidence-based interventions in conjunction with emotional support are needed.
- ◆ Currently, there is no information on the ethics of online interactions.
- ◆ It is hard to intervene on things that are not concrete.
- ◆ There is a need to open up a larger conversation on the implications of communicating and using language in different ways and through different mediums. For instance, there needs to be more education and discussion about the nuances of written text, including issues related to tone and meaning.
- ◆ Believe their experience and do not use language that can make the victim or survivor feel as though it is their fault.
- ◆ Provide consistent support to the youth regardless of the decisions they choose to make.

Participants' responses to Case Scenario #2 – This scenario involved the non-consensual distribution of nude images of a student. This scenario was examined as a large group during the second part of the workshop.

- ◆ Help youth find support within their social networks. However, sometimes people within a youth's support network may interrogate the target and blame them.
- ◆ Address the comfort level of the school or organization, more generally, in terms of intervening in situations involving cyberviolence.
- ◆ There is a need to also provide just as much support to the instigator/perpetrator.
- ◆ Reflect emotionally on what the experience must feel like.
- ◆ There are important generational differences to be conscious of when intervening from an adult position. The taking and distribution of nude images is, more or less, common in youth culture. It is unreasonable to expect that this practice will cease to happen among youth. It is important to learn about the norms of younger generations (e.g. hypersexualisation, transactional practices, etc.).
- ◆ Communicate with young people in a way that makes sense for them and makes them feel safer in disclosing (e.g. texting). They may feel embarrassed by what has happened to them and may prefer less face-to-face modes of interaction.

Participants' responses to Case Scenario #1 – This scenario involved a student being lured into human trafficking and was examined by the group of teachers during the second part of the workshop.

- ◆ The centrality of forging a strong, trusting, honest and transparent relationship with students.
- ◆ Tread lightly, ask clarifying questions, and do not pry too strongly.
- ◆ If you are confronted with a student experiencing human trafficking and they seem to be dependent on a particular person (e.g. boyfriend), do not insult the boyfriend too much – this might compromise the young person's trust in you and they may stop seeking support from you.
- ◆ Seek outside support if school is not equipped to intervene in a situation of human trafficking.
- ◆ Contact Youth Protection, however, this may place the youth in a more dangerous situation, especially if the trafficker finds out that the youth reported the situation and where they are now living (e.g. group home).
- ◆ There needs to be a third choice besides home and Youth Protection. There is a need for more “safe houses” for youth and minors.
- ◆ Assess whether the youth is in immediate danger.
- ◆ Stay connected to your students and check in with particularly marginalized youth and youth being bullied.

Participants' responses to Case Scenario #4 – This scenario involved a youth worker experiencing racism, sexism and Islamophobia in a community organization they work for. This scenario was examined by the group of youth workers during the second part of the workshop.

- ◆ Everyone working for and accessing the services of the organization must all come together in solidarity.
- ◆ There is an immediate need to address safety issues within the organization.
- ◆ Address the immediate ramifications of the violence and then address the larger, more systemic issues.
- ◆ The entire staff must first get “on board” and support the worker being targeted by cyberviolence.
- ◆ There is a need to address any “us” versus “them” binaries between staff and service users. Everyone involved in the organization, regardless of position, must be involved in an organization-wide conversation about cyberviolence. Through collaboration, the organization will find the right answers and responses.
- ◆ The importance of active listening and guidance. Offer different options rather than giving advice.

- ◆ The services users (i.e. youth in this scenario), may be dissatisfied with many things going on at the organization. They may feel that the workers are “out of touch” with their reality.

Participants had the opportunity to fill out an evaluation form at the end of the workshop. The following is a summary of their feedback:

Evaluation Criteria	Percentage of Total Participants n = 16	Percentage Breakdown: Participant job title	
		Teachers and behavior technicians n = 8	Youth workers n = 8
Found the workshop informative	100% (16/16)	100% (8/8)	100% (8/8)
Relevance of workshop content	100% (16/16)	100% (8/8)	100% (8/8)
Increased knowledge on cyberviolence	50% (8/16)	37.5% (3/8)	62.5% (5/8)
Increased capacity to discuss the implementation of cyberviolence policy with administration at place of employment	31.25% (5/16)	25% (2/8)	37.5% (3/8)
Increased comfort in addressing a cyberbullying incident with a young person	62.5% (10/16)	75% (6/8)	50% (4/8)

In addition to the knowledge and skills gained through their participation, teachers and youth workers took away with them the following tools:

- ◆ An educational PowerPoint on cyberviolence among young people
- ◆ A “Policy Toolkit” that provides clear, practical, step-by-step instructions on how to develop school and organizational anti-cyberviolence policies
- ◆ Copies of all the case scenarios used in the second half of the workshop

2. CROSSING THE LINE, ONLINE WORKSHOP

Context

Youth participants conceptualised and coordinated two events to mark the end of the GTTP! initiative. One such event, GTTP! Symposium (and basketball tournament), took place on April 26th, 2017 at the Pointe-Saint-Charles YMCA. One activity at the event was a cyberviolence workshop for a group of 25 students from the three participating high schools in the South-West borough of Montreal. The schools and students expressed a need to gain a more nuanced understanding of cyberviolence, including how best to address its myriad manifestations.

The workshop presented the group of youth with a variety of cyberviolence scenarios. Initially, we had an open discussion to define safer space and cyberviolence. Proceeding the discussion, three “Draw the Line” scenarios were discussed that dealt with privacy, gender-based violence, cyberbullying and revenge porn. Collaboratively, the youth and workshop facilitators deconstructed and reflected on the scenarios and their relevance to the participants’ lives.

Outcomes

All the participants were highly engaged. The scenarios resonated with many of the youth. The participants walked away from the workshop with a clearer idea of what cyberviolence means and looks like, along with a variety of strategies they could use in reducing the harm that can come from certain interactions and experiences they have online.

The scenario workshop revealed that there is a tremendous amount of work to be done. Students demonstrated a lack of knowledge about how technologically facilitated cyberviolence occurs. For instance, some students were shocked to discover that when they share intimate pictures or controversial content on snapchat their content can be screen captured and shared. They were convinced that the app is a completely secure way to share private information and visuals. They were unaware that information is stored on servers. It's important for young people to be aware of how their information can be transmitted, shared and stored in order to make informed decisions about their use of digital technology.

Additionally, there is work to be done in helping students learn to discuss sensitive issues around gender and violence. When engaging in a group discussion defining cyberviolence at the start of the workshop, a student expressed that cyberbullies are “pussies”. The students overwhelmingly agreed and laughed. The use of this word demonstrated a gendered and sexist language, while also positioning themselves as tougher than the cyberbully. The suggested use of physical violence in response to cyberviolence was a theme that emerged throughout the workshop.

When asked about strategies for responding to incidents of cyberviolence the young people were unaware of any of the coping mechanisms that we recommend utilizing. In the group discussion, they did not consider asking an adult for help, neither did they consider bystander intervention or being an upstander. Additionally, some of the students exhibited a lack of sensitivity when discussing cyberviolence. Most of the students expressed that cyberbullying was “a joke”, and it would not affect them negatively. When the facilitator asked how they would respond if they themselves were experiencing cyberviolence or if a friend was a target of cyberviolence the response was that they would either ignore the situation or they would respond with physical offline violence.

Throughout the discussions humour was used as a defence mechanism, particularly to avoid further analysis of the scenarios, or their comments. They justified their comments about using violence, by often closing-off their responses with “just kidding but not really”. This was meant to convey that their suggestions for strategies were not serious (in order to not be held accountable) but then qualifying the comments with the suggestion of “not really” (suggesting that they were not really kidding but actually serious in suggesting physical violence as a strategy). It appeared that the young people believed that if they finished off each suggestion with ‘just kidding’ they would not be held accountable or responsible for their behaviour or viewpoint, which then allows them to say or justify comments or suggestions that they would otherwise be challenged on by teachers or adults in

authority. This created a bit of a circular discussion where often adults might back off to avoid “going down that rabbit hole” as one youth counselor who worked in the community has previously explained.

Positive outcomes from the workshop were significant. The students came away with a greater understanding of how to protect their information online, the consequences of sharing potentially sensitive information through snapchat and they were presented with a number of potential strategies to cope with cyberviolence beyond resorting to offline violence. It was very evident that the students were very engaged in the topic and were eager to engage in further discussions and acquire additional information about cyberviolence. While the facilitator was heartened by the high level of participant engagement it was very clear that there is a serious need for more education about gender issues and cyberviolence going forward.

3. GENDER TROPES & REPRESENTATION WORKSHOP

Context

St. Gabriel's Elementary School expressed the need for external support in understanding how to best address cyberviolence among their students, and particularly gendered cyberviolence. The school invited the Preventing Cyberviolence Project to develop and facilitate a workshop for a group of twenty-five grade 6 students. In so doing, the school hoped to gain the necessary tools, knowledge and strategies to meaningfully combat cyberviolence in their institution. Given that young people's understanding that gender roles and gender relations are greatly influenced by the media they access online, the Preventing Cyberviolence Project developed and animated an interactive workshop on gender tropes and representation online and in the media, catered to an elementary school setting. The workshop took place on November 29, 2016 and the design of the workshop will remain with the school moving forward. The workshop aimed to:

- ◆ Support students in understanding the place of feminism in all young people's lives, regardless of gender and sexuality, and its role in combatting gendered cyberviolence
- ◆ Enhance young people's capacity to critically think about the advertisements they are exposed to online and in the media
- ◆ Support students in understanding how online advertisements impact their self-image and their views of and relationships with their peers
- ◆ Create a safer space for young people to reflect on the ways the internet and media affects their understanding of gender roles, sexuality, as well as gender and sexual identity

Outcomes

Overall, the workshop was a success. The participants were highly engaged with the issues of gender roles, tropes, stereotypes and representation in advertising and online. There was a high level of participation of both the female and male students in class. The responses and reflections provided by the students as the workshop progressed were right on target: it was clear that they grasped the concepts being discussed and could relate them to specific examples of media (e.g. images, videos, and advertisements) they came across online.

The students demonstrated a strong understanding of the term and phenomenon of sexism and how it contributes to the perpetuation of gendered cyberviolence. For instance, at the end of the workshop, participants were asked to fill in the blank in the following 2 statements:

- ◆ “If I could change the world, I would ____.” All participants, of all genders, answered with the following:
 - End sexism
 - End violence
 - Make people kinder
 - End poverty
- ◆ “Media, including media online, needs more of/I want to see more of ____.” All participants, of all genders, answered with the following:
 - Women heroes in video games
 - Diversity (e.g. black women, trans people, etc.)
 - More women with speaking roles in films
 - More women in action films
 - More realistic advertisements

Not only did the workshop enhance the youth participants’ awareness of and sensitivity to issues related to gendered cyberviolence, but also equipped the grade 6 teachers and 2 behavioural technicians with useful tools and strategies of how to approach the issue of gendered cyberviolence in an engaging and accessible way among the youth they work with.

4. TECHNOLOGY & HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WORKSHOP

Context

James Lyng High School expressed the need for external support in understanding how to best address cyberviolence among their students, and gendered cyberviolence, in particular. The Preventing Cyberviolence Project was invited to facilitate a two-day workshop with 5 students enrolled in a leadership class at one of the participating high schools on December 13th and 20th, 2016.

In so doing, the school hoped to gain the necessary tools, knowledge and strategies to meaningfully combat cyberviolence in their institution.

Students enrolled in the leadership class were central to the GTTP! initiative. These students were responsible for conceptualising much of the initiative and in coordinating end-of-year events. These students also act as role models for peers and younger youth at their high school. By engaging the young people enrolled in the leadership class in an open dialogue about cyberviolence in their lives, the Preventing Cyberviolence Project aimed to:

- ◆ Enhance these students’ capacity to critically reflect on how cyberviolence affects them and other young people
- ◆ Equip these students with practical strategies they can use and share with peers, and other people throughout their social networks, in addressing cyberviolence in their communities

- ◆ Ensure that strategies to combat cyberviolence are disseminated among youth throughout the school

Outcomes

The 2-day workshop successfully created a safer, non-judgmental space for the participants to engage in honest and important discussions about cyberviolence in their and other youths' lives. Some key discussion points included:

- ◆ The need for teachers, parents, guardians and other adults in youths' lives to improve their digital literacy in order to meaningfully support youth who are contending with cyberviolence. This is equally important in order for adults to understand the central role the internet and other forms of technology play in young people's lives (i.e. what happens online is real and can be just as significant as violence that happens offline).
- ◆ The reality that the violence that transpires online is not new from what is happening offline (i.e. sexual, racial, homophobic, and transphobic violence have always existed offline. The internet simply provides a new medium through which such violence can be enacted and amplified).
- ◆ The importance of enhancing young people's empathy and ability to resolve interpersonal conflicts.

The school and youth participants expressed their satisfaction with the workshops and decided that it would be important to include information on cyberviolence in the Youth Zine that the leadership class was in the process of creating. The Zine is a project proposed and developed by the students in the leadership class for their peers. Hundreds of copies of the Zine were distributed to young people at all three participating high schools and other youth living in the South-West borough of Montreal. The Zine is comprised of art related to sexual health, consent, healthy relationships, and gendered and racialized violence, along with information and resources on sexual health, gender, sexuality, and cyberviolence. Moreover, the design of the workshop will remain with the school's curriculum in moving forward.

5. PORNOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

Context

James Lyng High School expressed the need for external support in engaging adolescents in critical discussions about how online pornography influences their understanding of gender, sexuality, and gender relations. Some online pornography can paint a picture of sex and sexuality as something that is inherently violent and misogynistic. Consuming large amounts of this type of pornography may have implications for young people's understanding of what is "normal" and "acceptable" in sex. Particularly in 'normalizing' violent sexual behaviors. Consent is rarely, if ever, represented in pornographic videos. Moreover, rape is often presented as a "normal" and even desirable form of sexual interaction. As such, the Preventing Cyberviolence Project was invited to develop and animate a workshop on online pornography with a group of twelve secondary 3 students at the school on Tuesday, February 21st, 2017. The Preventing Cyberviolence Project deemed it crucial to equip the school with the necessary knowledge and skills to address dangerous misconceptions

about sex and gender among their students that reinforce online and offline forms of gendered violence.

The workshop sought to support youth in developing a critical lens when watching online pornography and tackled the following questions:

- ◆ Is it ok to watch porn?
- ◆ What if I watch porn that people say is “weird”?
- ◆ Is porn how real sex looks like?

Outcomes

The teacher who attended the workshop expressed her intention to continue the discussion by incorporating the topics of ethics, porn and sexuality into her curriculum going forward. She particularly expressed interest in the chosen approach and wanted to continue conversations around ethics and consent around porn use, porn culture, and the porn industry. Some specific topics covered include; porn versus real sex, attitudes, behaviors and expectations, revenge porn, developing a critical lens by which to analyze porn, mainstreaming of porn and the pornography industry and finally, the ethics surrounding the production of pornography. Workshop activities included group discussions exploring realistic scenarios that allow youth to discuss and negotiate situations in a safer space and learning environment. An example of a scenario prompt based on revenge porn posed to the groups:

Robin found out their partner was cheating. Is it ok for Robin to post an intimate photo that was sent to them of their partner? What if Robin did it because they were hurt or humiliated? Or, if they let Robin take the picture? What would this be called? What should they do when a relationship ends and they have an intimate picture of their partner?

In the scenario-based discussions, one of the male students, expressed in a quiet tone that Robin (fictional gender-neutral character in the scenario) “was a *bitch* and *she deserved it*”. They continued by saying that “their online community would agree”. The student expressed the opinion that sending the photo was okay if it was to him, for him. However, as soon as the ‘female’ was engaged in other relationships, cheating or a bad break up it was her fault for taking the photo and sending it, and it then became his right to distribute it. When the class was asked what they thought about this comment the student’s opinion was challenged. Some male students called-out this student, laughing and saying, “*no man*”. This opened up a discussion around revenge porn and consent. This would have been a good opportunity to discuss Planned Parenthood’s tips for how to sext safely. This comment revealed that an online community or platforms that share explicit photos without consent normalized and strengthened a macho culture around revenge porn contributing to the mainstreaming of non-consensual pornography (NCP), which is the distribution of explicit photos without the individual’s consent. It seemed peer pressure had a role to play in revenge porn, but that the bystander/upstander approach had enormous potential to challenge behaviors and attitudes that support revenge porn.

The second discussion activity was facilitated collectively as a class. In this activity we used a critical lens to examine the mainstreaming of pornography. For this exercise, we analyzed American Apparel’s Lookbook, *Schools Out*. The male students particularly remarked on how the Ads sexualized young girls in school skirts (often covering their faces and focusing on their body). They also noted that the advertisements which showed the faces chose really young girls as models, but

the poses made them seem more mature than they were. A male student commented on how an American Apparel ad of a young girl posing on her bed was fine because it just looked like a selfie taken on her bed. We later discussed how this is a marketing strategy purposefully used by American Apparel to simulate young girls' images when sexting. While the skirt shots ("up the skirt shots") were directly referencing and stylistically mimicking porn shots. It was evident that some American Apparel advertisements the students said were ridiculous (like the "up the skirt" shots), and others were subtle in their manipulation of adolescent sexuality and culture (i.e. advertisements based on teen sexting) and normalized. The porn aesthetic and imagery employed by American Apparel was carefully crafted and reflected the availability and diversity of online pornography (Media Smarts). The company even posted ads online on their website that were deemed too explicit for print and 'banned ads' were available for customers to find online. The teacher expressed an intention to use the content in the future and to continue to analyze the mainstreaming of porn in advertisements incorporating this topic and study in future teachings. We were able to share our materials and refer her to additional materials through Media Smarts.

Outcomes

All youth participants were highly engaged throughout the workshop. The following are examples of key reflections and realisations shared by the participants:

- ◆ That pornography can be empowering and provide young people the opportunity to explore their sexuality, body and gender.
- ◆ At the same time, however, pornography can be disempowering and can reinforce sexism, transphobia, racism and ableism. It can make young people develop a negative self-image by comparing their bodies to unrealistic body standards that are widely represented in online pornography.
- ◆ Most heteronormative pornography does not show reciprocity between womyn and men. Men's pleasure is usually the focus. This impacts how young men treat young womyn offline in sexual contexts. Young womyn may have a hard time knowing what is good, pleasurable, and respectful for them in sex.
- ◆ That "revenge porn" can be a devastating experience and can have legal consequences.
- ◆ Much of pornography is "made up" and scripted does not show real, offline sex. Even when the participants are amateur video makers the sex is a performance for the camera.
- ◆ Communication and consent are important in every relationship as well as in every sexual and intimate interaction. Online pornography often does not portray or role-model consent and open communication.

The workshop design will remain with the school's curriculum in moving forward.

6. CREATING BETTER AND HEALTHIER ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS WORKSHOP

Context

St. Gabriel's Elementary expressed the need for external support in understanding how to best address cyberviolence among their students, and gendered cyberviolence, in particular. The school invited the Preventing Cyberviolence Project to develop and facilitate two workshops for a group of twenty-five grade 6 students. In so doing, the school hoped to gain the necessary tools, knowledge and strategies to meaningfully combat cyberviolence in their institution. The workshops took place on March 28th and April 4th, 2017. The purpose of these workshops was to:

- ◆ To brainstorm strategies young people can use when experiencing cyberviolence using case scenarios
- ◆ To brainstorm strategies young people can use when witnessing someone else experiencing cyberviolence using case scenarios
- ◆ Create a safer space for young people to reflect on the ways the Internet affects their relationships to themselves and the people in their lives, for better or for worse
- ◆ To instil a sense of responsibility to others through ally-ship

The design of the workshop will remain with the curriculum moving forward.

Outcomes

The students in the class were highly engaged during both workshop days. Important points of discussion included:

- ◆ How cyberviolence manifests in spaces such as Xbox Live and Youtube.
- ◆ The importance of never sharing personal information and other media (e.g. photographs and videos) online, particularly with strangers.
- ◆ The risks involved in meeting someone online offline. Girls, in particular, shared their fears of being sexually assaulted.
- ◆ The importance of consent when distributing information and media online.
- ◆ Strategies gamers can use on Xbox Live if they, or their peers, are targeted by cyberviolence: blocking users, changing Gamer Tag (GT), reporting incidents, only playing with trusted online and offline friends, not engaging with the perpetrator by insulting them, strict privacy settings, understanding one's worth and reaching out to trusted friends and/or adults for support.
- ◆ The important role of online gaming in young people's social lives.
- ◆ How anonymity and physical disconnection online create an environment where people online may feel more free to hurt and bully others.
- ◆ Resources that young people can consult online in order to learn more about cyberviolence and how to be an "upstander", as well as to access online support for those experiencing cyberviolence (e.g. Media Smarts, Crash Override, Bully Bust, etc.).

7. SUPPORT TO YOUTH IN DEVELOPING GENDER CONTINUUM DOCUMENTARY

Context

Vezeina High School expressed a need for external support in order to support a group of 4 students in conceptualising and developing a documentary film on the gender continuum and on diverse experiences of gender. The youth were supported in developing interviewing skills that they then used to interview 7 community members about their own self-definitions of gender, including community workers and a psychologist. The young people developed the following questions that were then used to interview the community members:

- ◆ What gender do you describe yourself as?
- ◆ What gender stereotypes do you feel are applied to you?
- ◆ What gender stereotypes cause you problems?

Outcome

The documentary explored gender as a continuum and presented diverse self-definitions of gender shared by the 7 community members. This 24-minute video was screened for all the youth and adult participants at the GTTP! Symposium (and basketball tournament) event and served to establish a common vocabulary around talking about gender. The documentary process also gave us a platform to discuss important digital literacy issues such as the ethical responsibilities of media producers in the context of online violence. Significantly, the project put a group of young people, as interviewers, in contact with various leaders in the community who work on issues related to gender and sexual health. Overall, the project was important in stimulating important discussions about the complexity of gender beyond the binary. It also raised the young people's and symposium participants' sensitivity to the range of gender identities and realities that exist in our society, and how gendered