

- [Home](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [Français](#)

The French-language school boards became school service centres on June 15, 2020.

## Fighting Bullying and Violence in the Schools

### Violence in the schools: Let's work on it together!

Violence at school can take various forms such as bullying, cyberbullying, discrimination, homophobia, physical assault, sexual assault, indirect aggression, taxing and criminal acts by street gangs. MEES wants to better equip the public and the schools to understand the phenomenon of violence, to detect its signs and to intervene effectively.

Young people, parents and educators must become aware of their roles and take action against bullying and violence in schools. An action plan has been developed and is being implemented with stakeholders in the school system; and a campaign to raise awareness about bullying is underway.

### What is violence?

In the Education Act and the Act Respecting Private Education, the word "violence" means any intentional demonstration of verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual force which causes distress and injures, hurts or oppresses a person by attacking their psychological or physical integrity or well-being, or their rights or property.

While violence may take many forms, it is present in all social, cultural and economic contexts.

Violence is the use of force with the intent to hurt someone.

### The various forms of violence are as follows:

- Verbal violence (insults, yelling)
- *Violence in written form (text messages and other written messages)*
- Psychological violence (threats, putdowns, gossip, exclusion)
- Material violence (theft or breaking of objects)
- Sexual violence (inappropriate, embarrassing, humiliating or other unacceptable types of language or behaviour)

Acts of violence can traumatize not only the victims, but witnesses and peers as well. Violence can be experienced as outright aggression or threats, or as actions intended to dominate, oppress or even cause physical harm. There are also different degrees of violence, each of which can harm an individual physically, socially, materially and psychologically, or undermine his or her rights and freedoms.

Violence, when it occurs, is no accident. Someone can be attacked for many reasons: the perpetrator may want to make his or her friends laugh, gain social status, or frighten, threaten or dominate another person.

Unlike aggressiveness, anger or frustration, violence is not a primary reaction. It is part of a process that builds over time according to the personality traits of the individual and under the influence of various events in his or her environment.

Violence involves an interaction between at least two people, the perpetrator and the person against whom the perpetrator's actions, words, attitudes or violent acts are directed.

- We must act to stop violence.

leads, among other things, to mistrust, insecurity, a diminished sense of belonging to the school, low self-esteem, anxiety and withdrawal. And this is without factoring in absenteeism, academic failure, dropping out on the part of students and lack of involvement on the part of adults.

- Violence must not be tolerated; it must be denounced.

## What is bullying?

In the Education Act and the Act Respecting Private Education, the word “bullying” means any repeated direct or indirect behaviour, comment, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not, including in cyberspace, which occurs in a context where there is a power imbalance between the persons concerned and which causes distress and injures, hurts, oppresses, intimidates or ostracizes.

Bullying takes place in all types of environments: in school corridors, in the classroom, on the playground, in the streets and shopping centres, and even at home (between brothers and sisters). Bullying is an action or remark that threatens, hurts, humiliates or frustrates another person. Bullying creates a feeling of distress in the person who is subjected to it.

Bullying victims are dominated by another person or group and find it hard to defend themselves. Bullying is not a simple argument between friends; nor is it a single, unrepeatable event, or teasing that everybody involved can enjoy.

Bullying can turn daily activities such as going to school or eating in the cafeteria into a nightmare, and can even make its victims sick.

Bullying is a form of violence. It must not be tolerated, but denounced. We must act to stop it.



### **Bullying can be indirect, that is, it can involve:**

- excluding someone from a group
- isolating someone, or making them less popular by spreading rumours about them
- revealing secrets, speaking behind someone’s back or using graffiti to make disparaging remarks about them

While such behaviours can be hard to pin down, they can still be very damaging.

Bullying can also take place in the virtual world (through the use of cell phones, text messages, instant messages, e-mail, the Internet, and so on). These are cases of cyberaggression.

## Links

- [Healthy Schools approach](#) (French only)
- [Action Strategy on Student Retention and Student Success](#)
- ["New Approaches, New Solutions" intervention strategy](#)
- [Plan d'intervention québécois sur les gangs de rue](#)  (French only)
- [Police presence in educational institutions](#) 
- [Québec policy against homophobia](#) 