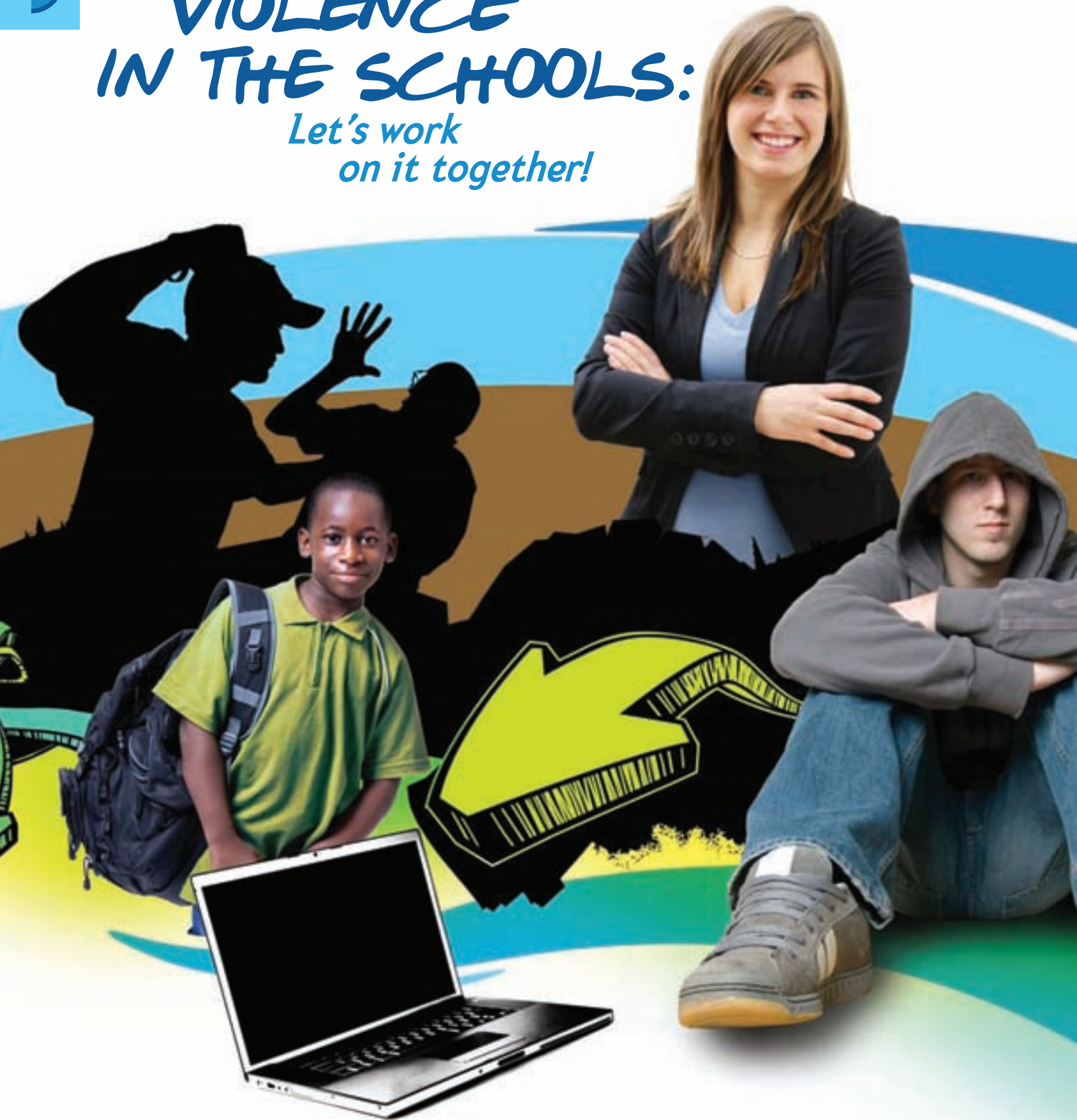




VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS:

*Let's work
on it together!*



Action plan to prevent and deal with violence in the schools 2008-2011
For public schools and private schools, from preschool to secondary education

Violence at school is a concern for educators, parents and the school's partners. While schools are already taking various measures to prevent or deal with situations involving violence, they have been asking for more support in doing so.

The Québec Auditor General's Annual Report for 2004-2005 discussed violence in secondary schools and formulated the following recommendations: to analyze and document the situation, take effective action and evaluate the effects of this action.

This action plan demonstrates the Ministère's intention to pursue its efforts to support the school system in preventing and dealing with violence in the schools, in accordance with the Auditor General's recommendations. Through this plan, the Ministère wants to **establish a safe and healthy climate for students and other members of the school community.**

Through the measures in this plan, schools and school boards will be able to take more effective action against manifestations of violence (bullying, teasing, racism, homophobia, sexual violence, physical violence, street gangs, etc.) and the various contexts in which it occurs (cyberbullying, classroom, schoolyard, among peers, between young people and adults, school bus, video games, etc.). These measures will target aggressors and victims as well as witnesses, and some of them will allow parents to get involved and receive support. Specific problems will be considered, such as violence in

young people's couple relationships, patterns specific to boys and to girls, and the situation of Native and cultural communities. A number of actions will be carried out between 2008 and 2011:

- resource groups and support officers with the 11 regional officers in the province
- regional training and support sessions
- reference tool on different problems involving violence and distribution of a list of existing resources
- intervention strategy for each school
- emergency intervention plan for each school board and school
- semiannual newsletter, inventory of effective practices and programs, Web site, provincial forum
- recurrent financial support for carrying out effective actions in schools
- recurrent financial support for establishing a guidance and support service for students who have been suspended or expelled

The Ministère would like to thank all the organizations and the other ministries that participated in the various consultations that took place during the development of this plan and urges the schools and their partners to make it a tool that fosters students' development and educational success and improves the quality of life at school.

FOCUS 1: PREVENTING AND DEALING WITH VIOLENCE

Objective 1.1: Consolidate and reinforce actions by schools and school boards to prevent and deal with violence in the schools.

Report on violence in the schools	Each school will provide a report on manifestations of violence and the actions it is taking to prevent and deal with violence. <i>Report on actions carried out: fall 2008</i> <i>Report on manifestations: spring 2009</i>
Regional support officers	The support officers will monitor the action plan in their region. They will set up and coordinate resource groups. They will act as resource persons to people involved in preventing and dealing with violence, in particular, school principals. <i>Support officers: fall 2008</i>
Regional resource groups	These groups will bring together representatives of the schools and school boards, their partners and parents. They will provide opportunities for sharing information, experiences and expertise in order to equip the school boards and schools to prevent and deal with violence; they will be places where everyone works together and they will make it possible to avoid isolated actions. These groups will focus on victims as well as aggressors and witnesses. They will take into account the specific realities of their region, such as street gangs or Native communities. <i>Resource groups: fall 2008</i>
Training and support sessions	These sessions will familiarize the participants with recent research, structured approaches, effective tools, methods for evaluating actions, etc., with regard to preventing and dealing with violence. <i>Sessions: beginning in winter 2009</i>
Reference tool	The reference tool will cover characteristics, consequences (victimization, social phobia, isolation, suicide, etc.) and appropriate actions with regard to various forms of violence: taxing, racism, cyberbullying, homophobia, violence on school buses, violence among young people and between young people and adults, violence in young people's couple relationships, etc. This will make it possible to propose solutions to students' specific needs according to their age, sex, ethnic or cultural origin and other characteristics. Examples of existing resources will be provided (Sûreté du Québec, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, provincial organizations, research groups, etc.). <i>Reference tool: winter 2009</i> <i>Existing resources: fall 2008</i>
Carrying out effective early intervention	An annual allocation of \$2.3 million will be given to the school boards to enable the schools to develop effective actions to prevent and deal with violence or to implement tested programs, mainly at the preschool and elementary levels, including measures for students who are victims or witnesses. Expertise such as that provided by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec will be extremely useful. <i>Allocation: fall 2008</i>
Intervention strategy in the schools, including support measures for victims and witnesses	Each school will adopt a strategy for preventing and dealing with violence, which will take into account the characteristics of the school population and will cover the following: physical, verbal, psychological and sexual violence; violence among students and between students and adults; violence in young people's couple relationships; safety measures and emergency measures; measures to help students and staff members who are victims of violence; violence on the school bus; roles of people involved; codes of conduct; information on rights and responsibilities and the legal framework; reporting on incidents; protection of students and staff who are victims of violence; handling of complaints; etc.). <i>Development of the strategy: spring 2009</i>
Guidance and support service for students suspended or expelled from school	A recurrent annual allocation of \$1.75 million will be given to the school boards to enable them to organize a pedagogical and psychosocial support service to help students who have been suspended or expelled reintegrate into the school. This service will make it possible to avoid placing students in specialized classes for those with behavioural problems and could prevent them from developing delinquent behaviour. <i>Allocation: fall 2008</i> <i>Guidance and support service: beginning in winter 2009</i>

Objective 1.2: Intervene effectively and ensure safety during exceptional situations in the schools.

Emergency intervention plan for the school board

Each school board will draw up or update an emergency intervention plan that will allow it to intervene effectively and ensure safety in exceptional situations. The plan, which will apply to the school board and its schools, will include the formation of a local committee to apply the measures adopted, a communication plan and a kit containing the intervention plan and specific information for the individuals concerned.

The school board should also have an agreement with the police to determine the situations, purposes and terms and conditions of police presence in the schools with regard to intervention and emergencies as well as the prevention of violence.

Drawing up of the intervention plan: winter 2009

Agreement with the police: spring 2009

FOCUS 2: JOINT ACTION AND TRAINING

Objective 2.1: Increase collaboration and joint action among the various bodies concerned at the provincial level.

Provincial mechanism for joint action

To ensure that the actions undertaken are consistent and mutually complementary, an interministerial joint action committee will be set up with the ministries that are already involved in preventing and dealing with violence in the schools.

Formation of the committee: fall 2008

Objective 2.2: Provide better preparation for school personnel to deal with the problem of violence in the schools.

Basic preparation for future school personnel

Actions will be undertaken with the universities to determine and apply the most appropriate ways of addressing the problem of violence in the schools in initial training for school personnel (teachers and other professional staff).

Actions undertaken: beginning in spring 2008

FOCUS 3: RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

Objective 3.1: Ensure that the schools and school boards and the Ministère have a better understanding of violence in Québec schools.

Report on the provincial situation, monitoring system and literature review

The provincial report will provide an accurate picture of actual and perceived violence in the schools, and the monitoring system will regularly provide data (facts, aggressors, victims, witnesses, age, girls, boys, ethnic or cultural origin, etc.). A review of the literature will be the basis of all actions under the plan.

Provincial report: fall 2008

Monitoring system: spring 2009

Objective 3.2: Ensure that the schools and school boards are familiar with programs and activities for preventing and dealing with violence in the schools.

Semiannual newsletter, provincial forum, Web site and inventory of effective practices and programs

The newsletter will provide up-to-date information on the most appropriate ways of preventing and dealing with violence and will take into account the diversity of the school population and its specific characteristics. The forum will give school administrators and experts an opportunity to share their expertise and experiences. The Web site will highlight effective practices, programs recognized by experts from both health institutions and the education system, initiatives of other ministries and organizations concerned with youth violence, etc.

First newsletter and Web site: fall 2008

Forum: fall 2009

Inventory of practices and programs: ongoing

FOCUS 4: FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION

Objective 4.1: Ensure that the measures in the action plan are properly implemented and evaluate their repercussions on young people and schools.

The Ministère will form a committee of experts to validate certain actions based on the implementation of the action plan and a follow-up committee. It will establish mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the plan and its effects.

Support for parents

The Ministère will ensure that parents are considered in the implementation of all measures previously announced. For example:

- parent representatives will be invited to participate in the resource groups
- the reference tool will include ways for parents to take part in solving problems involving violence (recognition of signs of victimization or behaviours of children who are aggressors, ways of intervening, etc.)
- participation of parents in the support service for students suspended or expelled from school
- special sections for parents in the Web site and semiannual newsletter

A total investment of \$16 880 000 over three years

Training and support

(support officers, resource groups, training sessions)

\$4 145 000

Carrying out effective interventions

\$6 900 000

Guidance and support service for suspended or expelled students

\$5 250 000

Information and exchange mechanisms

(semiannual newsletter, Web site, provincial forum, reference tool)

\$120 000

Provincewide actions

(report on the situation, monitoring system, committee of experts and follow-up)

\$465 000

For each year of the action plan, funds will be allotted as follows: \$5 783 000 for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, \$5 574 000 for 2009-2010 and \$5 523 000 for 2010-2011.

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Direction générale de la formation des jeunes
Coordination des services complémentaires

