



## **Compass Program: Best Practices and Concrete Tools to Prevent Sexual Violence, aimed at children aged 6 to 12**

---

By Jessica Martin, Project Manager and Trainer and  
Mélanie Murphy, Prevention Lead 0-12 years  
Marie-Vincent

*Contribution financière :*



Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

Public Health  
Agency of Canada





*presents:*

# Innovations in Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Trauma- and Violence-Informed Health Promotion

## *A NATIONAL CONFERENCE*

Oct 1–2, 2025



The background of the slide is a solid teal color with a wavy, undulating line running horizontally across the upper portion, creating a sense of movement or a horizon line.

Participants and their organizations are committed to respecting  
intellectual property and copyright.

# Marie-Vincent: all services under one roof!

**Without** a Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC)



**With** a Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC)



Marie-Vincent: all services under one roof

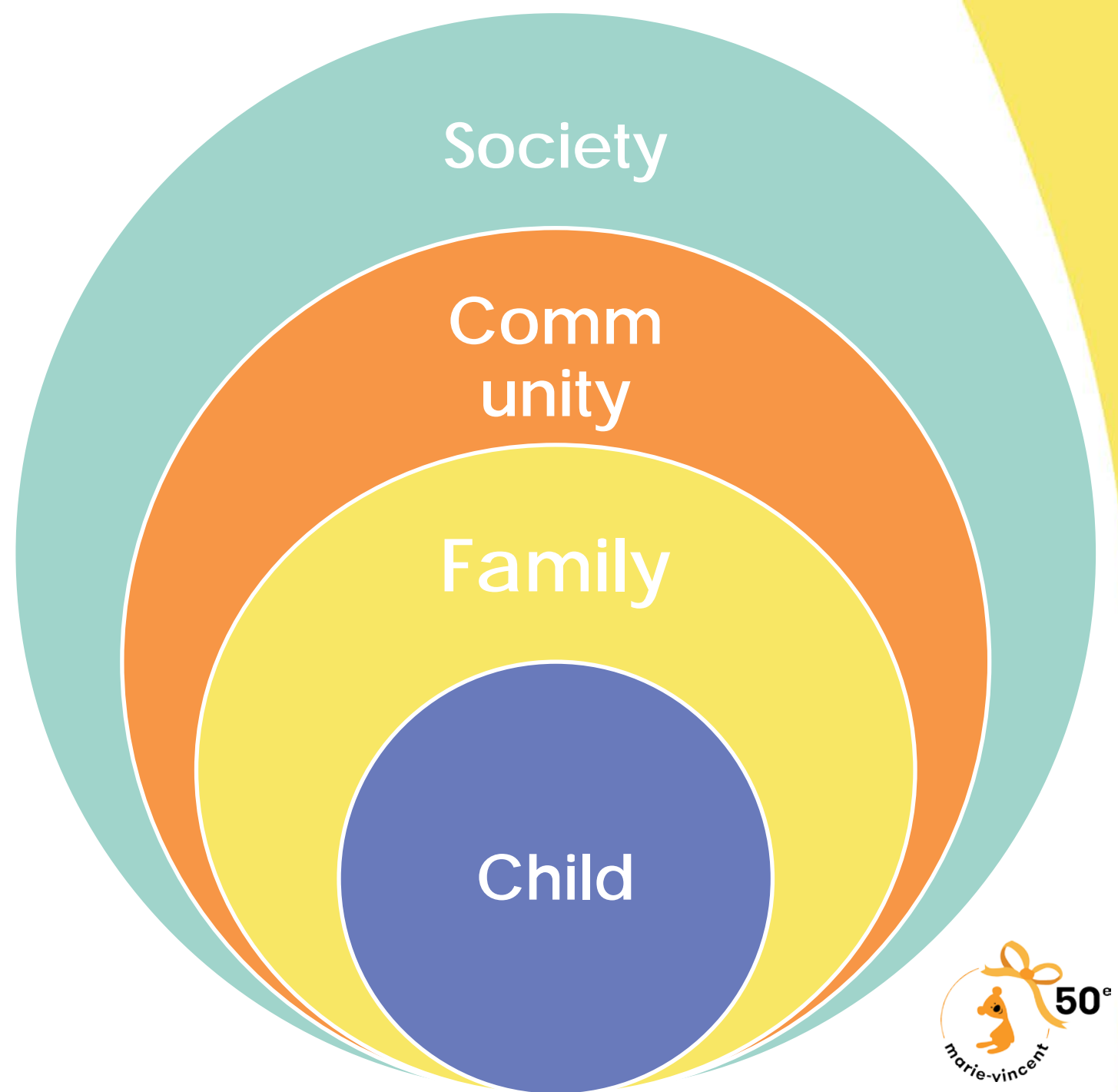


## Development of prevention programs in Marie-Vincent

1. Needs analysis in the field and literature review
2. Development of an action plan
3. Development of tools and training
4. Pilot implementation
5. Evaluation by the Marie-Vincent Interuniversity Research Chair in Child Sexual Abuse

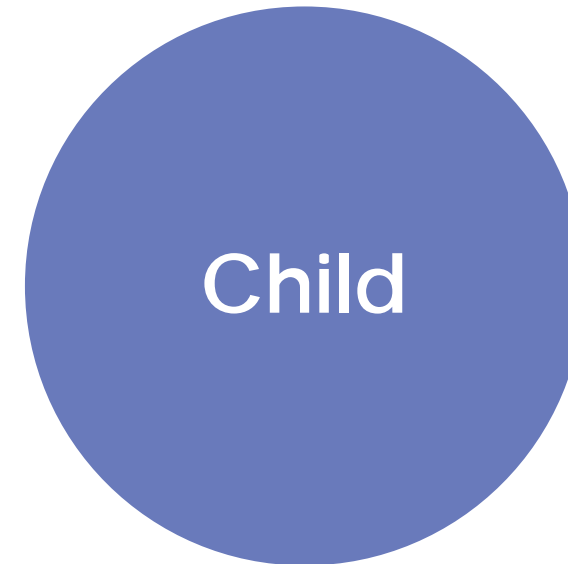
Two essential pillars:  
sex education and  
the promotion of  
healthy, egalitarian  
relationships

**Ecosystem-based  
approach to preventing  
sexual violence**



# Increase children's personal safety and equip them to intervene with their peers

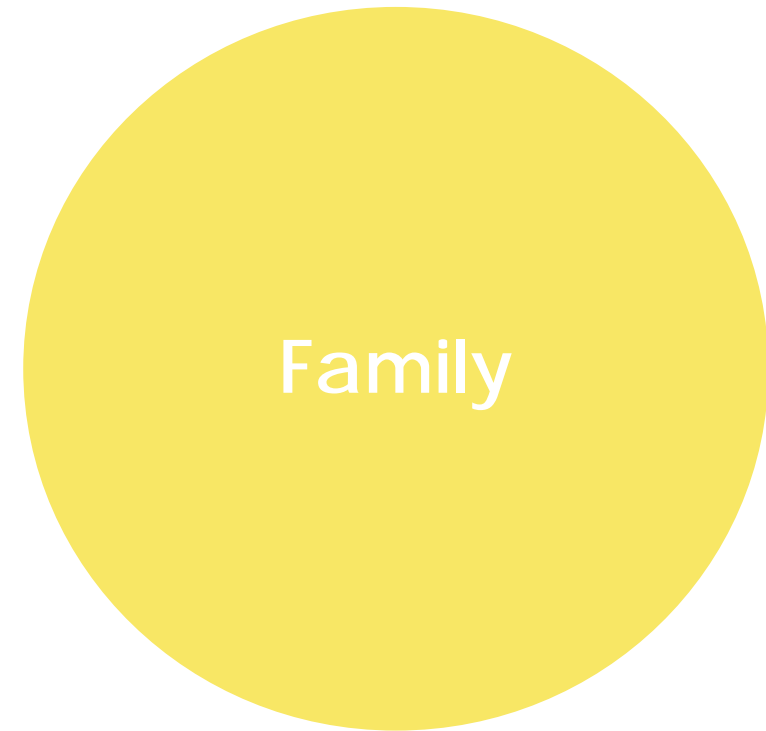
- Teach protective skills
- Help children recognize risk situations and perpetrators' tactics
- Emphasize the importance of disclosure
- Remove responsibility from the child
- Inform children of their rights



(Fernet, 2018; Bergeron and Hébert, 2011)

# Raise awareness among family members about the importance of their role in preventing sexual violence

- Inform family members about the issue of sexual violence against children
- Engage family members in sex education and the promotion of healthy, egalitarian relationships
- Build their capacity to support their child in situations of sexual violence or problematic sexual behaviours (PSB)



(Kaufman et al., 2019; Rudolph and Zimmer-Gembeck, 2018)



# Training for professionals working with children

- Strengthen knowledge about the issue of sexual violence against children
- Raise awareness of the important role they play in prevention, through sex education and the promotion of healthy and egalitarian relationships
- Build capacity to identify risk situations and respond to disclosures

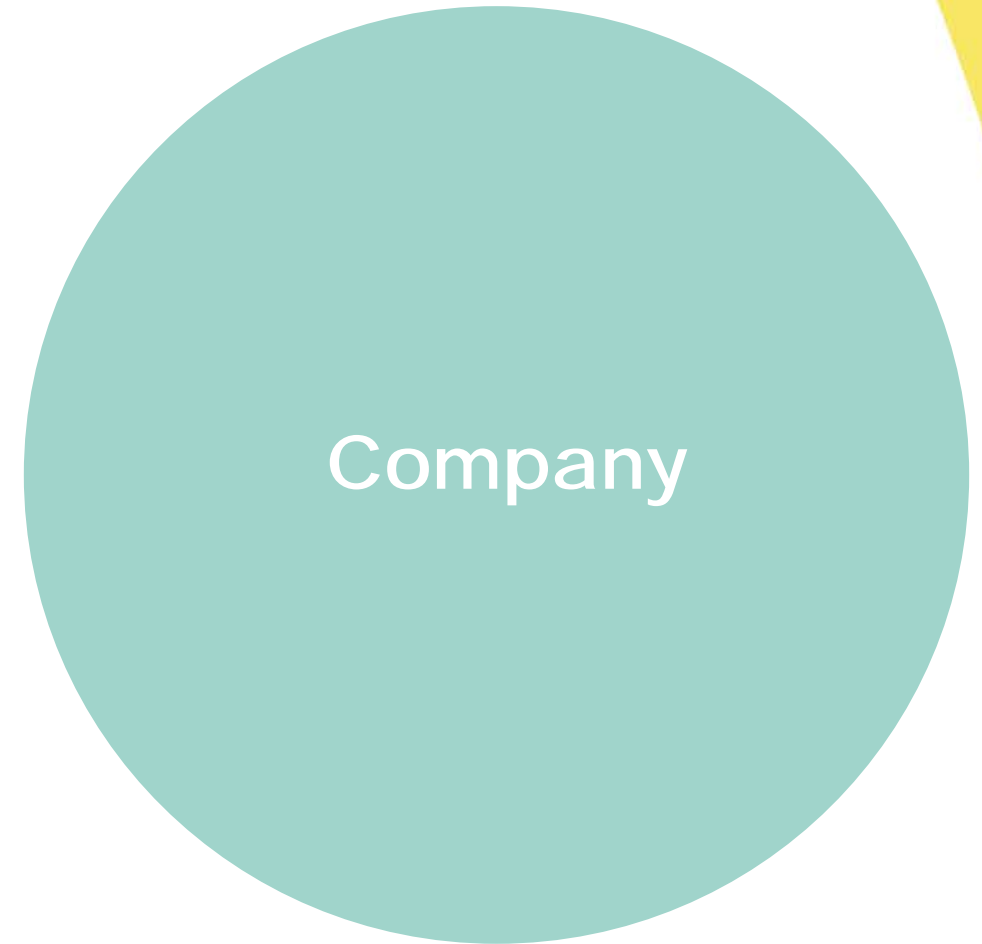


Community

(Reinhgold et al. 2015; Topping and Barron 2009)

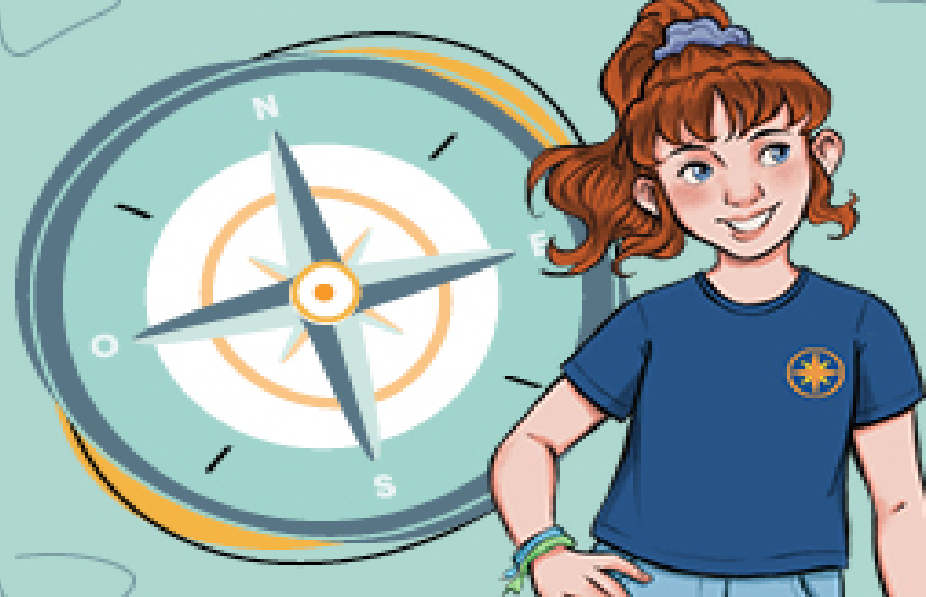
# Raising public awareness and promoting social change

- Promote social norms to foster zero tolerance for sexual violence
- Promote gender-equitable relationships
- Create safe living environments
- Invest in developing young people's social skills



(Laforest, Maurice & Bouchard, 2018)

# Compass Program Preventing sexual violence against children aged 6-12



## Project Objective

Equip practitioners working in community, recreation and camp settings with the tools to prevent sexual violence through sex education and the promotion of healthy and egalitarian relationships among children aged 6-12 and the people around them.

Three 3-hour synchronous training modules (for a total of 9 hours of training) for practitioners in community and recreation settings and camp managers

A 90-minute asynchronous e-learning training (two 45-minute modules) for camp facilitators (access granted following training of the person responsible for the group)

A comprehensive toolkit:

- [Compass Guide](#)
- [Compass Atlas](#)
- [Compass Words activity booklets for children aged 6-9 and 10-12](#)
- [The "7 Families" game](#)
- [Marvin, Snakes and Ladders game](#)
- [Facilitator's guide for preventing sexual cyberviolence](#)
- [5 capsules for parents](#)

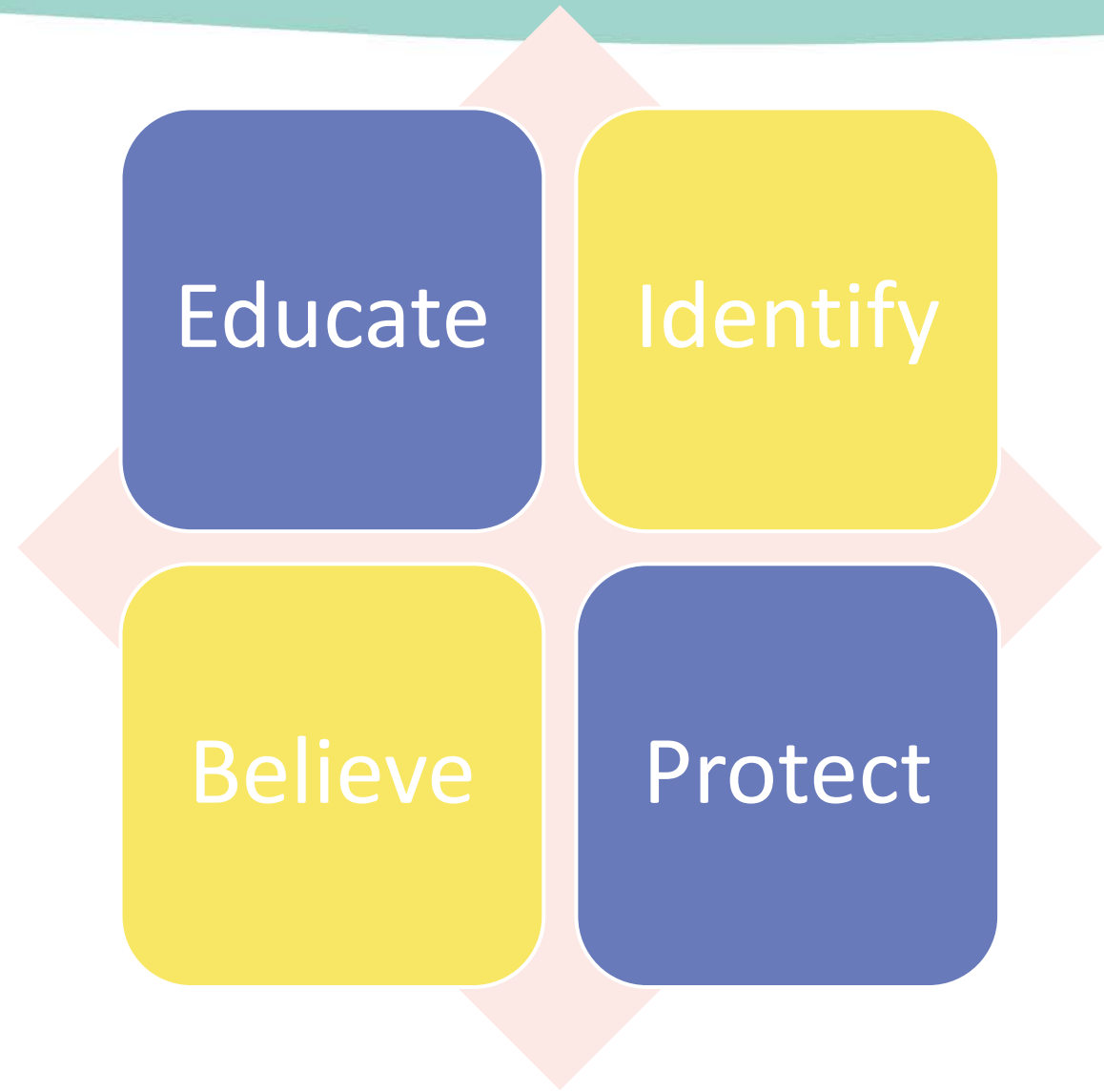
*Contribution financière :*



Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Roles of adults  
working with  
children in the  
Compass project:





**What actions do you identify as part of YOUR role in sex education? -- Quelles actions identifiez-vous comme faisant partie de VOTRE rôle d'éducation à la sexualité?**



## Educate

---

Sexuality and healthy,  
egalitarian relationships

# Sex education

## Main challenges encountered



- Responding to children's questions
- Working in a multicultural context
- Limited knowledge among practitioners and parents
- Intervening in situations involving PSB
- Fear of causing harm



# Sex education

## Camp-specific situations

\*

### Needs analysis

- Minors in positions of responsibility
- Small age gap between children and camp facilitators
- Limited knowledge
- Group-based setting

"... Sex education, I don't really know how much time we have for it, there's no one in day camps who is trained enough to really start providing education. It feels more like situational learning is what can realistically be done."

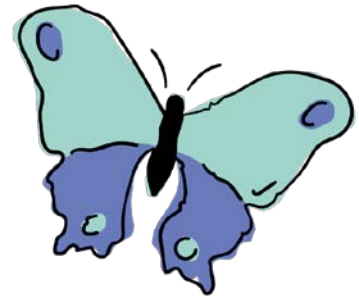
# Educating about healthy and egalitarian relationships

## Main challenges encountered

\*

Needs analysis

- Parent-practitioner interactions
- Navigating tensions with family values, particularly in multicultural contexts



## **Educating about sexuality and healthy, egalitarian relationships is...**

**Acting as a role model in our relationships with others**

**Celebrating diversity**

**Fostering open communication with children, parents, and loved ones**

**Addressing sexuality in a holistic, healthy and positive way**

**Answering children's questions about sexuality**

**Feeling free to respond when someone around you is stereotyping**

**Teaching children protective skills**

# Compass Toolkit Tools



- Bilingual
- Developmentally appropriate, accessible, and representative of diversity
- Encourage the development of critical thinking and reflection
- Address all areas of child development
- Easily integrated into daily interactions with children, and promote learning through play and active participation
- Designed for children, practitioners and parents alike
- Provide clear guidance on situations of concern and on procedures to follow in cases of concern or emergency

# Compass Toolkit

## Compass Atlas



## Marvin, Snakes and Ladders



# Compass Toolkit

## Activity booklets

For children aged 6-9



For children aged 10-12



## The "7 Families" Game





# Compass Toolkit

## Parent Information Brochure


### Programme Boussole


Prévention de la violence sexuelle auprès des 6 à 12 ans

Tout-e-s les enfants méritent de vivre une vie heureuse, de se développer sainement, de s'épanouir et de réaliser leur plein potentiel. Aucun-e enfant ne devrait subir de violence. Aucun-e enfant ne devrait vivre avec les graves conséquences psychologiques, physiques, familiales, scolaires et sociales qu'elle engendre.

Savez-vous quelles habiletés enseigner à votre enfant pour la-le protéger de la violence sexuelle? Avez-vous des questions par rapport à l'éducation à la sexualité des enfants?

Si ces questions vous interpellent, sachez que le programme Boussole sera implanté sous peu dans le milieu que fréquente votre enfant. Il vous permettra de trouver les réponses, outils et conseils qui vous aideront à faire de l'éducation à la sexualité avec votre enfant et ainsi à mieux la-le protéger de la violence sexuelle.





### Qu'est-ce que le programme Boussole?

Le programme Boussole est un programme de prévention de la violence sexuelle auprès des enfants de 6 à 12 ans et de leur entourage développé par Marie-Vincent. Il s'adresse aux intervenant-e-s du milieu communautaire, du loisir, ainsi qu'aux personnes travaillant dans les camps de jour et camps de vacances (gestionnaires, responsables, coordonnateurs-rices, intervenant-e-s psychosociaux et animateurs-rices). Les formations du programme Boussole visent à outiller les adultes qui côtoient les enfants au quotidien à faire la prévention de la violence sexuelle par l'éducation à la sexualité ainsi que la promotion des relations saines et égalitaires.

Les enfants sont particulièrement vulnérables à ce type de violence et c'est pourquoi elles et ils sont une priorité en matière de prévention.

Le programme Boussole a été développé suite à une analyse des besoins réalisée dans 5 régions du Québec auprès d'intervenant-e-s et de parents, ainsi qu'une rigoureuse analyse des meilleures pratiques en matière de prévention.



Quelques outils du programme Boussole

### L'éducation à la sexualité\*, c'est quoi?

L'éducation à la sexualité fait partie du quotidien de chaque famille et elle aide à prévenir la violence sexuelle chez les enfants.

Saviez-vous que tous les jours, en tant que parent, vous éduquez votre enfant à une sexualité saine?

Vous le faites notamment en :


- répondant à ses questions, incluant celles sur la sexualité;
- favorisant l'égalité entre les genres;
- lui apprenant à faire respecter son espace personnel et à respecter celui des autres;
- lui apprenant les notions d'intimité, par exemple lorsqu'elle/il va à la toilette ou au moment de se changer;
- lui enseignant les bases d'une relation saine et en l'aidant à gérer ses conflits;
- l'aidant à identifier et à exprimer ses émotions.

Comme parent, vous jouez un rôle de premier plan dans l'éducation de votre enfant. Vous agissez comme modèle en lui transmettant vos valeurs et en partageant son quotidien.

En plus de ce que vous faites déjà au quotidien, il est possible d'intégrer quelques notions supplémentaires d'éducation à la sexualité en utilisant un vocabulaire simple, concret et adapté au niveau de développement de votre enfant.

\* Il est possible que ce vocabulaire vous soit peu familier ou inquiétant. C'est normal. Ce terme est souvent utilisé, mais peu expliqué. Notez vos questions et posez-les à la personne qui vous a remis ce pamphlet. Elle pourra vous guider.

Notes :



### Quels sont les thèmes abordés dans le programme Boussole ?

Tous les thèmes prévus dans le programme Boussole sont adaptés au niveau de développement des enfants et évolutifs en fonction de l'âge. Ils visent le renforcement des habiletés de protection des enfants, tout en s'assurant de promouvoir une vision saine et positive de la sexualité.

À l'aide de différents outils, tels que des cahiers d'activités et des jeux, mais aussi à travers différentes activités créatives, votre enfant apprendra à reconnaître quelles sont les composantes d'une relation saine. Elle/il développera son esprit critique en réfléchissant sur les stéréotypes présents autour d'elle-de lui, et apprendra à mieux se connaître et s'affirmer. Elle-il trouvera des réponses à ses questions concernant la puberté, l'image corporelle, l'amour et développera des habiletés pour détecter et réagir lorsqu'elle-il se trouve dans une situation à risque. Votre enfant comprendra aussi que tout-e-s les enfants sont égaux, qu'elles et ils peuvent aspirer aux mêmes rêves et doivent développer des relations harmonieuses et respectueuses.

C'est en éduquant le plus tôt possible les enfants aux différents aspects de la sexualité que nous les aidons à se protéger de la violence sexuelle et à dévoiler les situations dont elles et ils pourraient être potentiellement victimes.

### Pour continuer la discussion

Savez-vous que le programme Boussole a prévu des outils qui vous permettent de poursuivre la discussion avec votre enfant à la maison? Renseignez-vous auprès du milieu que fréquente votre enfant ou consultez le site [marie-vincent.org](http://marie-vincent.org).

La diffusion du programme Boussole a été rendue possible grâce à l'appui d'enfants et l'Agence de la santé publique du Canada. Les opinions exprimées ici ne reflètent pas nécessairement celles de l'Agence de la santé publique du Canada.

Avec le financement de

Agence de la santé publique du Canada / Public Health Agency of Canada









**What knowledge is needed to detect sexual violence? --Quelles sont les connaissances nécessaires pour arriver à détecter la violence sexuelle?**



## Identify

---

To be able to fulfill this role,  
you need to know what to look for!

# Identify

Recognize the signs of sexual violence

\*

Needs analysis

One concern raised among practitioners was the **fear of not recognizing the signs** of possible sexual victimization in children.

Among the signs of sexual violence identified, only two (2) individuals reported **disclosure** of sexual violence as a sign.

# Identify

## Understanding the different forms of sexual violence and their prevalence



Sexual cyberviolence was identified as a low concern in the needs analysis. However, in 2025, children aged 6 to 12 are exposed to sexual cyberviolence.

\*

**Needs analysis**

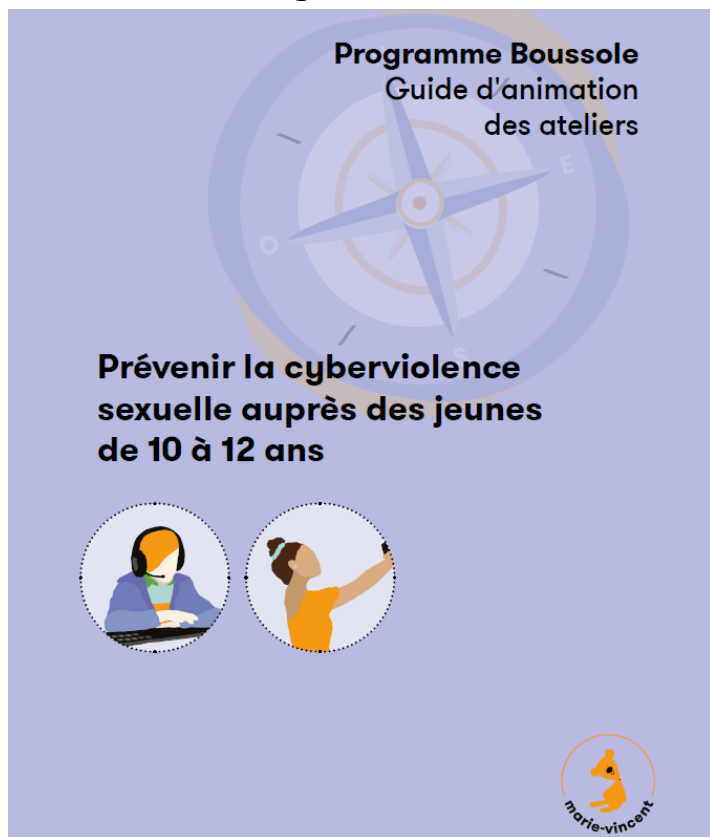
# Identify

Understanding the tactics used by individuals  
who sexually abuse children

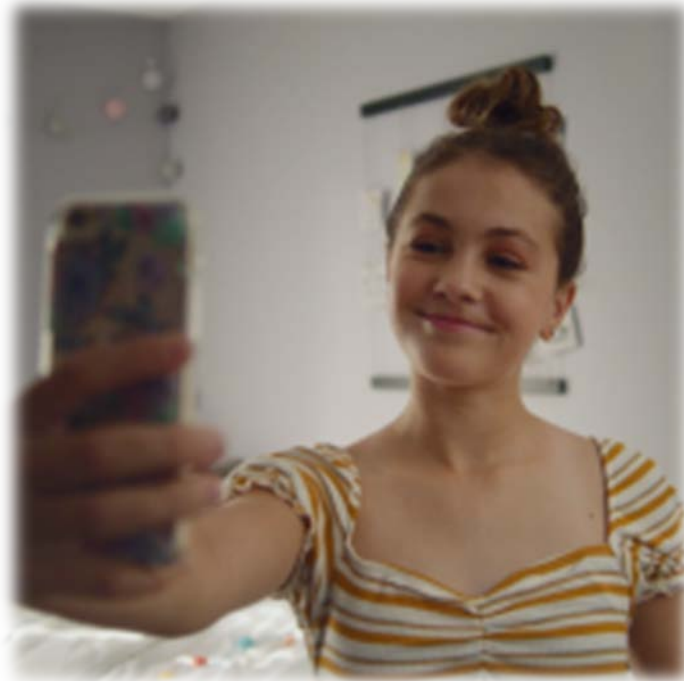
- Grooming
- Online manipulation tactics

# Compass Toolkit

## Workshops on sexual cyberviolence



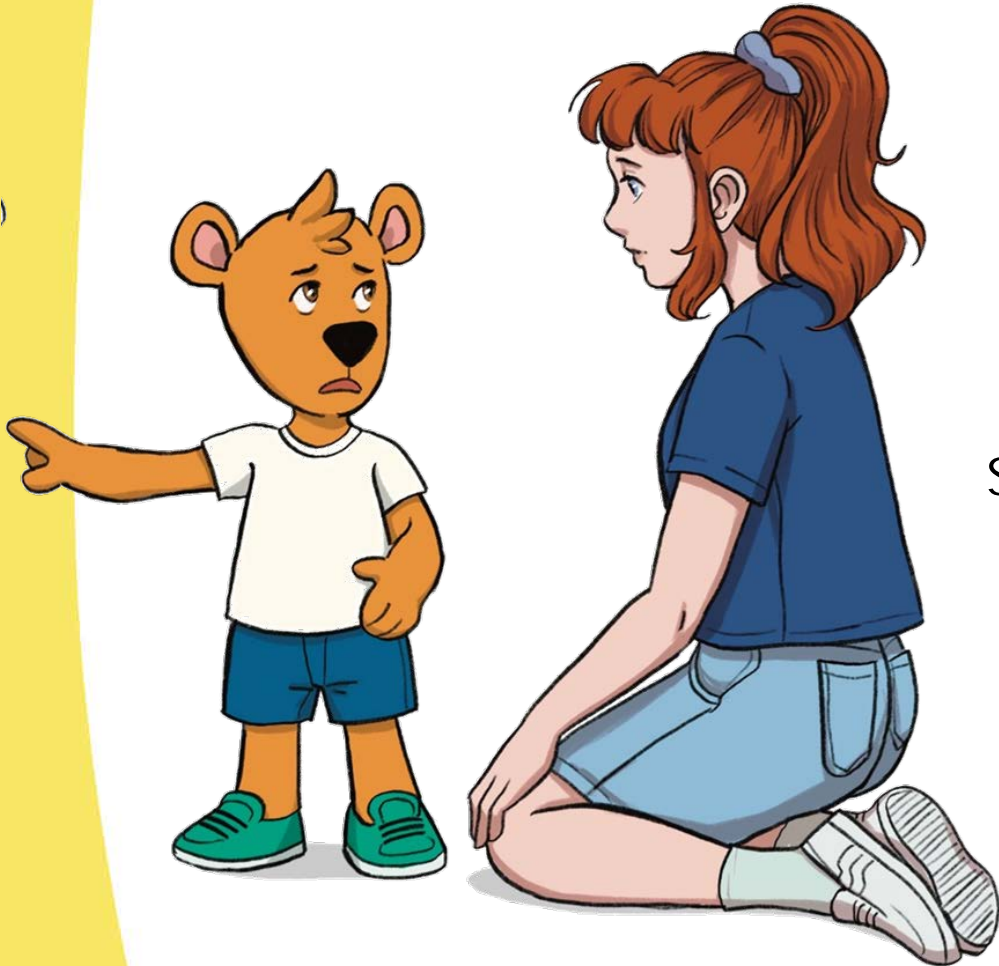
Are you online yourself?



Do you know the people you interact with online?







## **Believe and protect**

---

For a child who has experienced sexual violence, the way the adults around them carry out these roles makes a significant difference in their journey.



**What are your main concerns or challenges related to the roles of believing and protecting? --Quelles sont vos principales préoccupations ou défis en lien avec les rôles de croire et de protéger?**

# **Believe and protect**

## **Disclosure, a major concern**

- Lack of clear guidelines for receiving a disclosure
- Concerns about preserving the relationship of trust
- Limited knowledge of confidentiality rules
- Challenges related to managing emotions

**\***

**Needs analysis**

# Believe and protect

## Reporting and the youth protection process

### Reporting the situation to the Director of Youth Protection, a major concern:

- Fear that the child's disclosures may not be considered credible
- Concerns about the youth protection process
- Post-reporting support and follow-up
- Isolated and vulnerable families, and multicultural context
- Managing emotions throughout the process

\*

**Needs analysis**

# Believe and Protect

## Key considerations for the Camp Facilitator role

- Responsibilities
- Crisis situations, vicarious trauma and support systems
- Responding to concerning and problematic sexual behaviours.

\*

**Needs analysis**

## Compass Guide

**Guide Boussole**

Balises pour l'analyse,  
l'intervention et le signalement

**Trouver ses repères  
face à la violence  
sexuelle et aux  
comportements  
sexuels des enfants**



## Compass Toolkit

## Interventions à la suite d'un comportement sexuel



**Sain ou pas ?**

(voir les indices à considérer)

**Oui**

- Je recadre.
- Je renforce positivement.
- Je réponds aux questions de l'enfant / je fais de l'éducation à la sexualité.



**...mais inadéquat en  
raison du contexte :**

- Je normalise le comportement, la curiosité, envers le corps et les sensations ressenties, etc.
- Je recadre par rapport aux notions de frontières, d'intimité ou au code de vie.
- J'offre des stratégies alternatives.

**Non**

**Intervention immédiate**

- Je fais cesser le comportement avec une intervention complète et claire.
- J'utilise un ton neutre et encadrant.
- J'évite de culpabiliser l'enfant.
- J'assure la sécurité et la prise en charge des victimes par un-e adulte de confiance.



**Intervention subséquente**

Je communique rapidement toutes les informations concernant le comportement sexuel à ma personne responsable afin qu'elle détermine...

- Le type d'intervention à mettre en place.
- S'il faut aviser le-les parent-s et de quelle façon.
- S'il est nécessaire ou pas de faire un signalement à la DPJ (automatique si le comportement implique de la force, de la coercition ou la menace, des gestes sexuels adultes ou qu'il persiste dans le temps malgré du soutien clinique).



# Intervention protocol – Problematic sexual behaviours (PSB)

## Compass Toolkit

Workshop 1:  
The 7 Families  
Game - Compass

Workshop 2:  
Marvin, Snakes  
and Ladders  
Game

Workshop 3:  
"My emotions in  
my body" from the  
Compass Atlas

Let's test the  
Compass  
tools





## For community and recreation settings, and camp managers

### Training Pathway

Three 3-hour synchronous training modules (for a total of 9 hours of training)

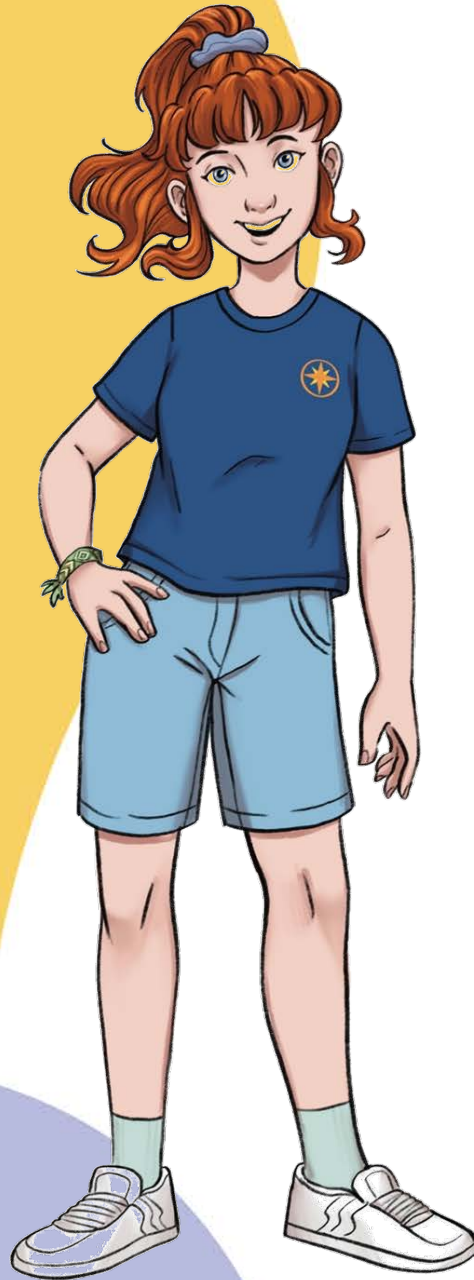
- Why and how to prevent sexual violence among children aged 6-12
- Adapted prevention strategies
- Clear intervention guidelines for situations involving disclosures of SV and concerning or problematic sexual behaviours

## For day camp and vacation camp facilitators

- Asynchronous e-learning training
- Training duration: 90 minutes (two 45-minute modules)
- Access granted following training of the person responsible for the facilitator group (manager or coordinator)



**Preliminary  
results of the  
Compass  
evaluation**



## **Synchronous Compass Training**

---

Community and recreation  
settings, and camp managers

# Questionnaires

Pre-training and post-training questionnaires,  
with a follow-up 4 months later

- Used to measure training outcomes as well as the retention of learning over time

Current number of participants

Pre-test and post-test:  $n = 99$

Pre-test, post-test and relaunch:  $n = 17$

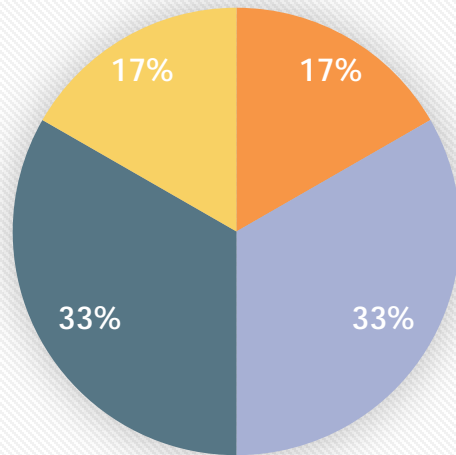
End of data collection:

December 2025



# Individual interviews: some preliminary data

## 12 Professionals



- Organisme communautaire autre
- Maison de la famille
- Centre de VC
- Maison de VC

Other community organization

de VC

Professionals better equipped  
in their daily practice

*"It really opened my eyes to talking more about sex education with young people—talking a bit about body differences, about equality between boys and girls. It also led me to talk more often, and more openly, about consent—about respecting our bubble, our personal space. So yes, it definitely raised my awareness. It feels like every time I take a training, it helps me reflect and ask myself: OK, what can I change in my practice?"*

*"I have colleagues who work more closely with mothers and who have questions about disclosures the moms have made, or other situations. And I think now I'm more able to say, 'Oh, wait, I'll go get something for you,' you know? I'm better able to answer those questions, or at least have some ideas in mind—possible responses or interventions to use with the mother. I think it's easier now, it's clearer for me, because of everything Compass has given me in terms of information and materials. And honestly, there's a lot of material—it's really great."*

## Children's appreciation of tangible materials

*"It was a workshop that really worked. The children were interested—they were genuinely engaged—and everything was presented really, really well. The discussion topics were introduced well, the themes were handled well. (...) And the fact that they got to leave with materials—the children were very, very happy to go home with their little booklet that they had worked in throughout the entire series of activities."*

*"When I tell them it's their notebook, they still find it exciting—because it's not a school notebook. Many of these children haven't had much of their own. A lot of their families have moved frequently, experienced difficult migration journeys, and in some cases, because money was controlled by a parent, the children didn't really have personal belongings at home. So the idea that it's their notebook—that they can write their name in it—is something they really value."*

## Recommendations

- **Avoid redundancy for professionals who have completed multiple MV trainings (Lantern, PSB, etc.).**
- **Use this time to allow participants to become familiar with and fully appropriate the Compass tools during the training**
- **Provide more tools and dedicate more time to parents awareness**

*"In our settings, we're all a bit overloaded, so we don't always have the time to really go through each tool and break it down. When that time isn't built into the training, it means that each person then has to find time in their own workplace to get familiar with the tools. And that ends up taking more time before they can actually start using them."*

Thank you for  
attending this  
presentation!

Questions?  
Comments?



## Bibliography!

- Bergeron, M. et Hébert, M. (2011). La prévention et la formation en matière d'agression sexuelle contre les enfants. Dans Hébert, M., Cyr M. et Tourigny, M. (dir.), *L'agression sexuelle envers les enfants*, Tome 1 (p.445-494). Montréal : Les Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Bustamante, G., Andrade, M. S., Mikesell, C., Cullen, C., Endara, P., Burneo, V., Yépez, P., Avila Saavedra, S., Ponce, P. et Grunauer, M. (2019). "I have the right to feel safe": Evaluation of a school-based child sexual abuse prevention program in Ecuador. *Child abuse & neglect*, 91, 31–40. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.02.009>
- Chen, Y. C., Fortson, B. L. et Tseng, K. W. (2012). Pilot evaluation of a sexual abuse prevention program for Taiwanese children. *Journal of child sexual abuse*, 21(6), 621–645. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2012.726699>
- Daigneault, I., Hébert, M., McDuff, P. et Frappier, J. Y. (2012). Evaluation of a sexual abuse prevention workshop in a multicultural, impoverished urban area. *Journal of child sexual abuse*, 21(5), 521–542. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2012.703291>
- Fernet, M. (2018). Les stratégies de prévention auprès des enfants et des adolescents : Une clé de la lutte contre les violences à caractère sexuel. Dans M. Fernet et S. Bergueul (dir.), *Les violences à caractère sexuel* (p. 285-289). Montréal : Les Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Fryda, C. M. et Hulme, P. A. (2015). School-Based Childhood Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs: An Integrative Review. *The Journal of School Nursing*, 31(3), 167–182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059840514544125>
- Gouvernement du Québec. (2015). *Planifier et implanter des actions concrètes auprès des parents*. [https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/fichiers/mosaik/15-314-11W\\_Guide\\_soutien\\_AC.pdf](https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/fichiers/mosaik/15-314-11W_Guide_soutien_AC.pdf)
- Jin, Y., Chen, J., Jiang, Y et Yu, B. (2017). Evaluation of a sexual abuse prevention education program for school-age children in China: a comparison of teachers and parents as instructors, *Health Education Research*, 32(4). 364–373. <https://doi.org/10.1093/her/cyx047>
- Jones, C.M., Scholes, L., Rolfe, B. et Stieler-Hunt, C. (2020). A serious-game for child sexual abuse prevention: An evaluation of orbit. *Child abuse & neglect*, 107, 104569. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104569>
- Kaufman, K. L., Erooga, M., Mathews, B. et McConnell, E. (2019). Recommendations for Preventing Child Sexual Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations: Implications From an Australian Royal Commission Review of the Literature. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 34 (20), 4199–4224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519869239>
- Laforest, J., Maurice, P. et Bouchard, L M. (dir.). (2018). *Rapport québécois sur la violence et la santé*. Montréal : Institut national de santé publique du Québec. <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/rapport-quebecois-sur-la-violence-et-la-sante>
- Morin, G. (2022). *L'éducation à la sexualité à l'école : Je m'informe!* [https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/446966b3-6dd7-4fb9-b08a-e58e8237731a/downloads/%C3%89ducation%20%C3%A0%20la%20sexualit%C3%A9\\_Guide%20pour%20les%20parent.pdf?ver=1663628821074](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/446966b3-6dd7-4fb9-b08a-e58e8237731a/downloads/%C3%89ducation%20%C3%A0%20la%20sexualit%C3%A9_Guide%20pour%20les%20parent.pdf?ver=1663628821074)

## Bibliography!

- Rheingold, A. A., Zajac, K., Chapman, J. E., Patton, M., de Arellano, M., Saunders, B., & Kilpatrick, D. (2015). Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training for Childcare Professionals: An Independent Multi-Site Randomized Controlled Trial of Stewards of Children. *Prevention Science*, 16 (3), 374–385. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-014-0499-6>
- Rudolph, J. et Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J. (2018). Parents as protectors: A qualitative study of parents' views on child sexual abuse prevention. *Child abuse & neglect*, 85, 28–38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.08.016>
- Topping, K. J. et Barron, I. G. (2009). School-Based Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs: A Review of Effectiveness. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 431–463. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40071171>
- Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture [UNESCO]. (2018). Principes directeurs internationaux sur l'éducation à la sexualité: une approche factuelle. Édition révisée. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000266214>
- Weatherley, R., Hajar, A.B., Noralina, O., John, M., Preusser, N. et Yong, M. (2012). Evaluation of a school-based sexual abuse prevention curriculum in Malaysia. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34 (1). 119-125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chidyouth.2011.09.009>