



Since the pandemic was declared,  
eating disorders have been on the rise.

You're not alone.  
Together let's break the isolation

## ACTIVITIES GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND YOUTH WORKERS

National Eating Disorder  
Awareness Week

February 1st -7th 2021

aneb

Anorexie et boulimie Québec

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# **NATIONAL EATING DISORDER AWARENESS WEEK**

FEBRUARY 1st - 7th 2021

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## **ACTIVITIES GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND YOUTH WORKERS**

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# ACTIVITY 1 : Let's Talk

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Covid 19: We are aware that due to the pandemic, some restrictions may apply for group gatherings. If it is not possible to do this activity with a larger group, the questions may be asked in smaller group gatherings, by telephone or by video.

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## TARGET PARTICIPANTS

12 years and older

Please note that this activity was intended for smaller groups where a relationship of trust is established between participants and their teacher or counselor.

## MATERIALS

- Scissors
- Bowl or box
- Appendix to the activity « Let's talk » (Activity Sheet 1.1)

## HOW IT WORKS

The teacher or counselor cuts the questions from the activity sheet 1.1 and places them into a bowl. The participants are invited to sit in a circle in a warm environment, fit for discussion. The counselor or teacher explains the following rules to the participants.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Alternately, participants choose a question.
2. Read the question to the group. Each participant answers aloud to the question.
3. Proceed with another question.
4. Start again.

The group does not need to answer all the questions if time is limited. It is important to determine, at the beginning of the activity, the number of questions that will be asked or to set a time of duration for the activity.

## ACTIVITY 2 : Quiz

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### What do you know about eating disorders?

This activity helps increase knowledge of eating disorders and awareness of how to respond and how not to respond.

#### TARGET PARTICIPANTS

12 years and over

#### MATERIALS

- Pencil
- Appendix: Quiz – What do you know about eating disorders? (Activity Sheet 2.1)

#### HOW IT WORKS

1. Each participant completes the quiz individually.

The teacher/activity leader asks participants to answer the questions to the best of their ability.

2. Group discussion

When the quizzes have been individually completed, the teacher/activity leader goes over the answers in a group with everyone together, with the help of the Answer Guide (Activity Sheet 2.2).

To prepare for the discussion, the teacher/activity leader can check out the Eating Disorders Awareness Week website for more information

[www.semainetroublesalimentaires.com](http://www.semainetroublesalimentaires.com)

## ACTIVITY 3

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### Christopher's Story

#### TARGET PARTICIPANTS

10 to 14 year olds

#### MATERIALS

- Appendix for activity 3: Christopher's Story (Activity Sheet 3.1)

#### HOW IT WORKS

1. Each child reads the story alone.
2. After the reading, there is a group discussion about the options selected while reading.

The teacher/activity leader can use Activity Sheet 3.2 to introduce topics for discussion.

## ACTIVITY 4 : Art Project

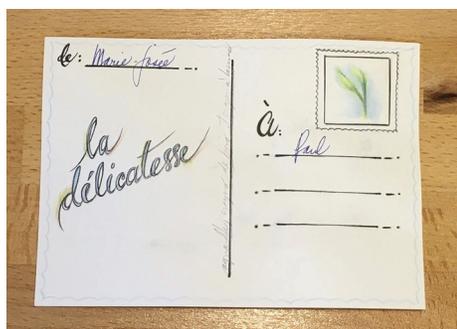
### Feeling the love

#### TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Part 1: Elementary school students

Part 2: High school students/teens (for teachers and youth workers)

#### 1. Elementary school : Feeling the love ... for others (postcards)



In this February week of eating disorders awareness, with St. Valentine's day around the corner, we suggest a painting/drawing and writing activity to celebrate the two events.

It's been a very unusual year, with many challenges and obstacles. In these more difficult times, it is important to remember to offer kindness and caring whenever we can.

We forget that sometimes it doesn't take much to bring a little joy and love to others, and to ourselves.

Eating Disorders Awareness Week is an opportunity to underline the importance of loving our neighbours and ourselves. Here's an opportunity to encourage kindness and caring in your classroom.

## ACTIVITY 4 : Art Project

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### Feeling the love... for others

The purpose of the activity is to demonstrate to students the importance of recognizing our own worth and good qualities, and those of our neighbours, learning to see the beauty in each and every one of us. A person with an eating disorder can forget their own worth, their strengths and qualities. This activity provides an opportunity to appreciate oneself and others and to build a better self-image.

#### MATERIALS

- Names of students written on strips of paper and placed in a bowl, hat, box or other container
- Cardstock or watercolour paper cut to postcard size, 4 x 6 in
- Pencils
- Paint (water colours or gouache), small and medium brushes, bowls of water or
- Coloured pencils and markers
- or
- Mixed media (water colours and coloured pencils)

#### HOW IT WORKS

**Duration of activity: approximately 1h30**

1. Begin by introducing the Eating Disorders Awareness Week and the theme for this year. You can talk a little about what an eating disorder is (check websites such as that of ANEB Québec at <https://anebquebec.com/troubles-alimentaires> for definitions).

What's important is to increase student awareness of eating disorders, focusing on the fact that people with eating disorders have difficulty loving themselves and being loved. People with eating disorders experience much sadness and suffering, and it is important to give them the help they need.

2. Briefly introduce the creative project before starting the brainstorming session, so the students will understand the connection between Eating Disorders Awareness Week and the Feeling the love project.

## ACTIVITY 4 : Art Project

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### Feeling the love... for others

#### HOW IT WORKS

3. The next step is a brainstorming session, students and teacher together. The goal is to discover all the qualities and strengths of the students in the class, or that people in general may have.

Some examples are thoughtfulness, kindness, resourcefulness, perseverance, courage, a good sense of humour, creativity, generosity, patience, strength of character, etc.

4. The teacher randomly pairs up the students, with one group of three if there is an odd number of students (this can be done by choosing names from a hat or a bowl).

5. The students then each create a friendship/happiness card for the partner they have been assigned. Taking time to select a quality they see in their partner, they use this quality as the basis for a drawing or painting on a postcard that they will then share with their partner.

Students have a number of ways they can share their postcard with their partner: virtually, by mail, by delivering it in the classroom if possible or by posting it on a classroom wall designated for this purpose.



## ACTIVITY 4 : Art Project

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### Feeling the love... for myself

To tune in to our internal messages. To learn to let go in writing of the harmful, negative messages we tell ourselves and see them more objectively. To choose a positive word to describe ourselves that highlights our worth, our strength and what makes us beautiful and that sends us a little love.

#### MATERIALS

- A square piece of white, beige, black or grey cardstock, 8 x 8 in. or 10 x 10 in. is recommended
- A black pencil (for light coloured cardstock) or a white one (for dark coloured cardstock)
- A second piece of cardstock (smaller than the first piece) to create a stencil
- A scissors for the stencil, possibly an exacto knife and cutting mat, at the teacher's discretion
- Masking tape to hold the stencil in place
- Acrylic paint or gouache (varied colours including golds if possible)
- Brushes, preferably foam brushes, for the stencil
- If possible, letter templates of various styles

#### HOW IT WORKS

**Duration of activity: approximately 2h00**

1. Before starting the creative part of this workshop, spend a little time talking about Eating Disorders Awareness Week. You can talk about the different types of eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia, binge-eating and the other less well-known emerging disorders such as orthorexia and bigorexia (check websites such as the ANEB Québec website at <https://anebquebec.com/troubles-alimentaires> for definitions).

## ACTIVITY 4 : Art Project

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### Feeling the love... for myself

#### HOW IT WORKS

2. Next, start a discussion about what might make someone develop an eating disorder.

There are four types of predisposing factors that can lead a person to develop an eating disorder:

#### Predisposing factors

1. Personal factors,
2. Family factors,
3. Genetic factors
4. Cultural factors.

In this activity, we focus on personal factors.

Personal factors that contribute to the development of an eating disorder include the following:

- A negative body image,
- Low self-esteem,
- Mood intolerance or overcontrol of emotions,
- Poor control of compulsive behaviours,
- A tendency to dramatize,
- Difficulty forging an identity (wanting to please others, meet their expectations),
- Denial of aging,
- Perfectionism, a need to perform..

3. Each student chooses one of the personal factors listed above: low self-esteem, for example.

4. The students then each work individually on their creative project.

# ACTIVITY SHEET 1 : « Let's talk »

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## Questions for discussion

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**Who were the people that were part of my social network pre-pandemic ?**

**Who are the people that are part of my social network during the pandemic ?**

**What are the resources that I can turn to when I am feeling lonely ?**

**What emotions do I feel in the present social context ?**

**What are my favorite hobbies and with whom do I share them with ?**

# ACTIVITY SHEET 2

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## Quiz

What do you know about eating disorders?

**1. You can recover from an eating disorder.**

- a) True
- b) False

**2. Which of the following can trigger an eating disorder?**

- a) A positive comment about one's weight loss
- b) Values and practices promoted by society
- c) A negative comment about one's appearance
- d) Body diversity

**3. People who have eating disorders are extremely thin.**

- a) True
- b) False

**4. There are different types of eating disorders.**

- a) True
- b) False

## ACTIVITY SHEET 2

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### Quiz

What do you know about eating disorders?

**5. Boys can also have eating disorders.**

- a) True
- b) False

**6. What can I do to help a friend who is living with an eating disorder?**

- a) Encourage your friend to eat.
- b) Contact an organization that specializes in helping people with eating disorders, such as ANEB or the Maison l'Éclaircie.
- c) Avoid talking about food and weight.

**7. An eating disorder can lead to isolation.**

- a) True
- b) False

## ACTIVITY SHEET 2.2

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### Answer Guide

#### Question 1

**TRUE.**

You can recover from an eating disorder. Though it's not a simple process, and there are ups and downs, everyone has the inner strength to recover. With expert help, such as that offered by ANEB and the Maison l'Éclaircie, a full recovery is possible.

#### Question 2

**A, B and C.**

Additional information: Remarks about a person's weight or body (positive or negative) and the constructs promoted by society can be factors that trigger an eating disorder.

#### Question 3

**FALSE.**

Weight is not an indicator of an eating disorder. The body can adapt by fighting weight loss, even in cases of restrictive or compensatory behaviours. No matter what a person's weight, he or she could be having difficulties related to eating and require help.

#### Question 4

**TRUE.**

Eating disorders are mental illnesses. They are complex disorders characterized mainly by problematic eating behaviours, an intense fear of weight gain and an overwhelming preoccupation with body image. Eating disorders are caused by biological, psychological and social factors. Untreated, they can have serious social, psychological and physical consequences (such as isolation, guilt, depressive symptoms and inadequate nutrition).

## ACTIVITY SHEET 2.2

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### Answer Guide

#### Question 4, Additional information

##### **ANOREXIA**

- Restriction of food intake leading to very low body weight relative to age, sex, development stage and physical health;
- An intense fear of gaining weight that is not relieved by weight loss (weight loss can sometimes even increase preoccupation with body image and food) ;
- A distorted body image;
- Use of risky methods to control weight, such as drastic diets, fasting, purging, laxatives and excessive exercising;
- Possible consequences: extreme tiredness, slowing of metabolism, intense preoccupation with food and weight, isolation, etc.

##### **BULIMIA**

- Compulsive eating involving rapid ingestion of large amounts of food, far more than most people would eat in similar circumstances over a similar period of time, often occurring in secret and accompanied by shame and guilt;
- A sense of loss of control over eating behaviour during these episodes;
- Compensatory behaviours (self-induced vomiting, misuse of diuretics and/or laxatives, excessive exercise and fasting) following the compulsive eating ;
- Self-esteem unduly affected by body weight and shape;
- Possible consequences: shame, guilt, dental problems, edema, gastrointestinal problems, etc.

## ACTIVITY SHEET 2.2

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### Answer Guide

#### Question 4, Additional information

##### **BINGE-EATING**

- Episodes of compulsive eating involving rapid ingestion of large amounts of food, far more than most people would eat in similar circumstances over a similar period of time, often occurring regularly;
- No compensatory behaviours ;
- Great suffering, shame and a feeling of loss of control over eating behavior;
- Obsession with food;
- Possible consequences: isolation, feelings of guilt and shame, obesity, high cholesterol, etc.

##### **Eating disorders not otherwise specified (EDNOS)**

This category was developed to encompass those individuals who do not meet strict diagnostic criteria for anorexia, bulimia or binge-eating but still have symptoms of a major eating disorder and clinically significant distress. Examples of EDNOS include atypical anorexia, binge-eating disorder or bulimia of low frequency and/or limited duration, and purging disorder.

## ACTIVITY SHEET 2.2

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### Answer Guide

#### Question 4, Additional information

Other disorders :

##### **ORTHOREXIA**

Obsession with the quality not quantity of food ingested. The preoccupation with “healthy” eating is **obsessive and restrictive**, with little to no flexibility as to what foods are allowed to be eaten, and tremendous anxiety about eating and about food “cleanliness.”

##### **BIGOREXIA (or MUSCLE DYSMORPHIA)**

Obsession with physical exercise for the purpose of developing a lean and muscular body (source: Clinique St-Amour website)

- Impression that one is too thin or not muscular enough;
- Affects men in particular, especially those involved in sports;
- Strict regimen for diet, supplements and workouts (overtraining) ;
- Feelings of guilt and shame when a workout is missed.

#### Question 5

**TRUE.**

Boys can also be obsessed with having the perfect body. Ten percent of those living with eating disorders are men. Because men rarely ask for help, the real numbers are probably much higher than the statistics suggest.

## ACTIVITY SHEET 2.2

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### Answer Guide

#### Question 6

**B and C**

Additional information: It is not advisable to encourage a friend with an eating disorder to eat. This may increase feelings of powerlessness and anxiety at meals. Remarks about your friend's weight, no matter what his or her body size or shape, are to be avoided. Not only do these types of remarks reinforce standards of beauty and appearance-related pressure, they may provoke problematic behaviour in a person with an eating disorder. You can find out more about eating disorders and the most helpful attitudes to take on the websites of ANEB and the Maison l'Éclaircie.

#### Question 7

**TRUE.**

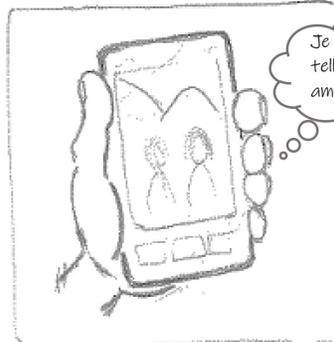
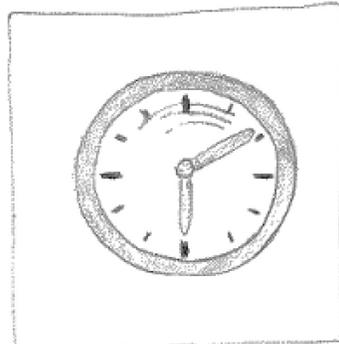
An eating disorder can lead to isolation.

Additional information. For people living with eating disorders, mealtimes are a source of stress. As a result, people with eating disorders may find excuses to avoid meals with other people. This avoidance behaviour can lead to isolation. In addition, people with eating disorders often feel their friends and family don't understand them. This alone will make them turn inward and keep their thoughts and feeling to themselves. The result is isolation.

# ACTIVITY SHEET 3.1

## Christopher's Story

Please note that these comic strips were originally written in French, therefore the comics have not been translated. Thankyou.



Je m'ennuie tellement de mes amis...

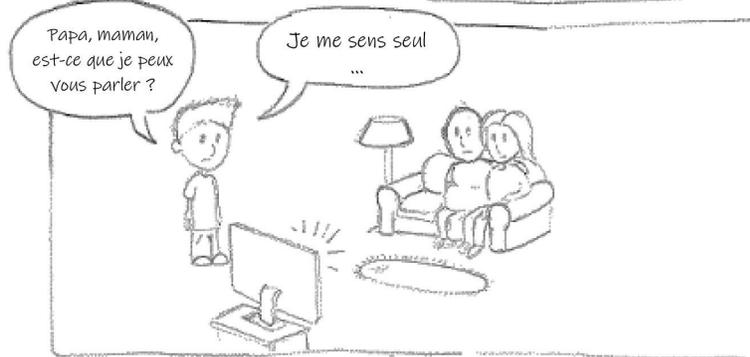
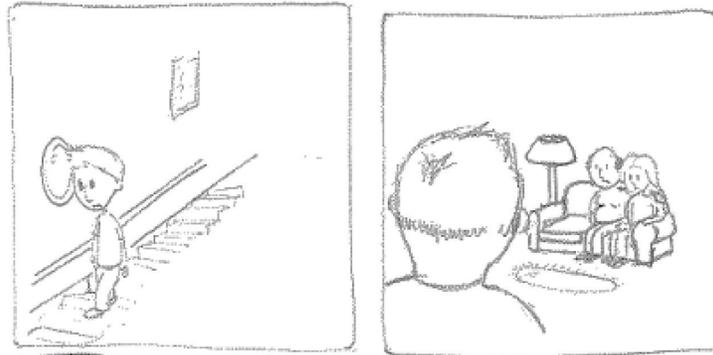


If you were Christopher, which following scenario would you choose?

# ACTIVITY SHEET 3.1

## Christopher's Story

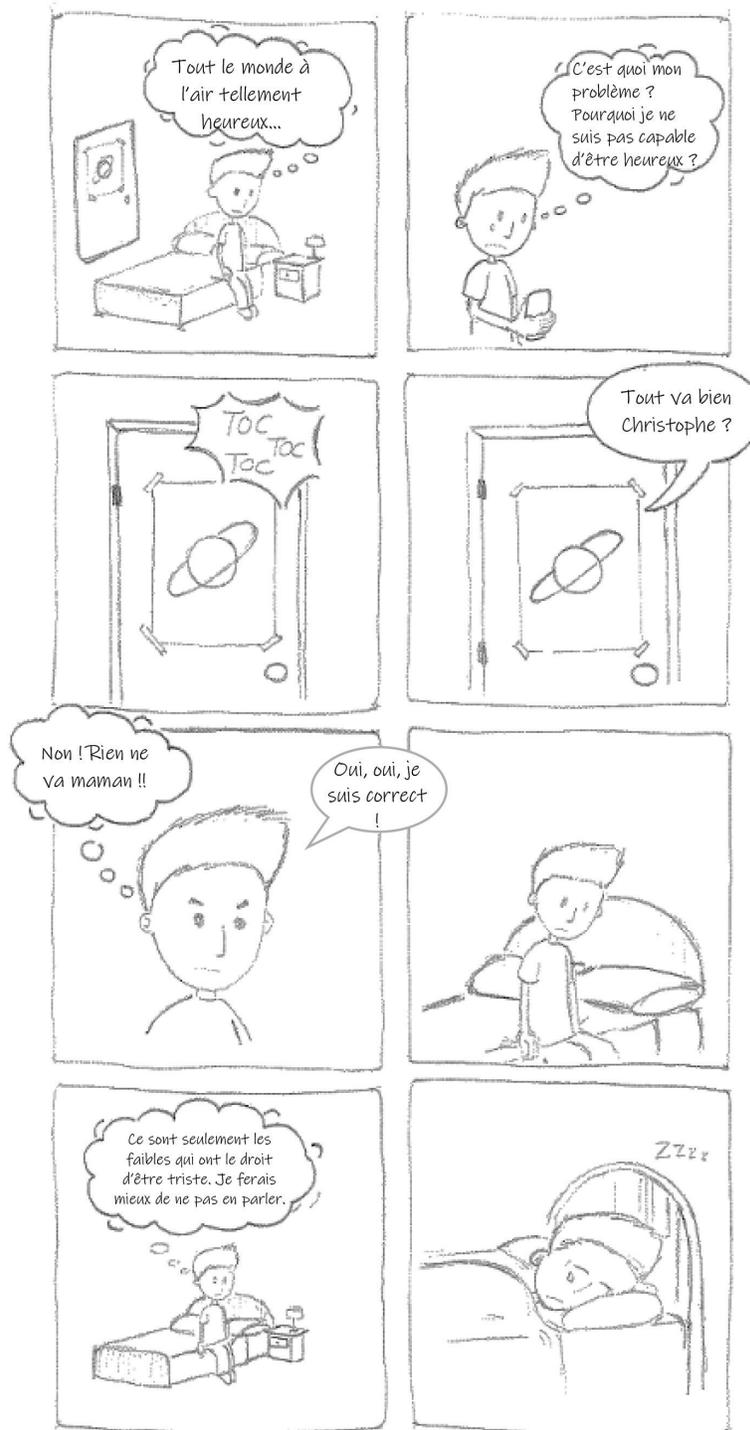
### Scenario 1



# ACTIVITY SHEET 3.1

## Christopher's Story

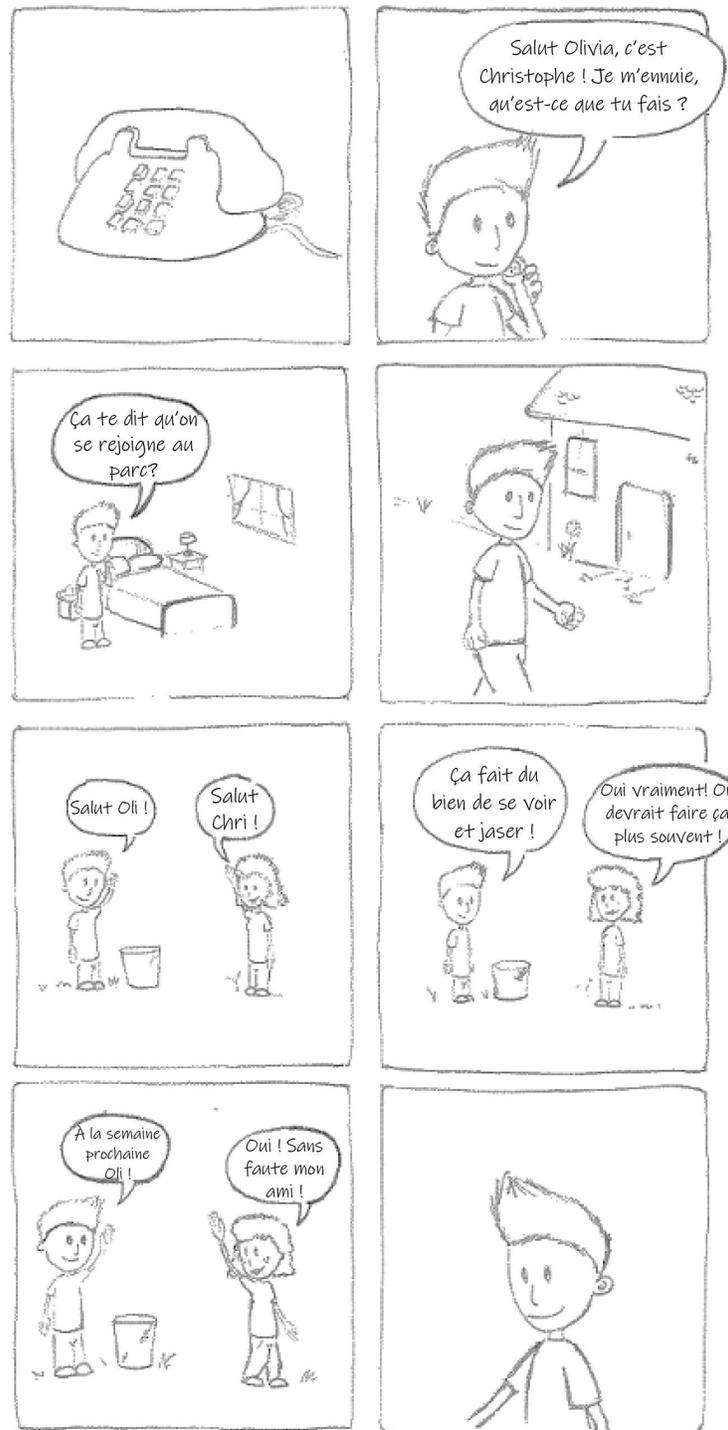
### Scenario 2



# ACTIVITY SHEET 3.1

## Christopher's Story

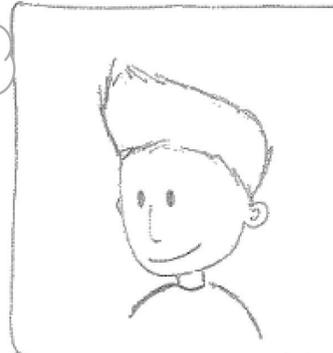
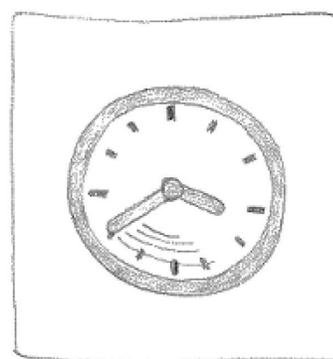
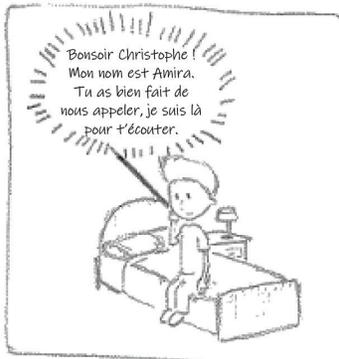
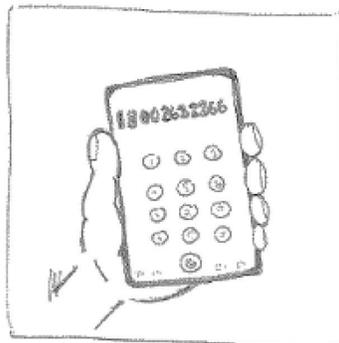
### Scenario 3



# ACTIVITY SHEET 3.1

## Christopher's Story

### Scenario 4



# Activity Sheet 3.2

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## Discussion Questions

**1. Which scenario did you choose for Christopher? Why?**

**2. What do scenarios 1, 3 and 4 have in common?**

Christopher decides to confide in someone.

**3. What are some solutions if you found yourself in a situation like Christopher's?**

Some possible answers: speak to someone I trust (a parent, friend, teacher, brother, sister, etc.); contact an organization such as Tel-jeune, the Maison l'Éclaircie or ANEB via their hotline.

**4. What's going on in the second scenario?**

Christopher has a poor attitude towards himself. He puts himself down, comparing himself with what he perceives on social media. He doesn't accept the feelings he is experiencing.

Open the discussion about our perceptions based on social media vs reality.

**5. What could Christopher say to himself instead?**

He could tell himself that it's normal to feel this way. He could make a list of all the people he could speak to about how he's feeling. He could make a list of things he enjoys doing and find solutions to adapt to the situation he faces. He could list all the positive things he does and figure out why he does them.

**6. What did you learn from this activity?**

# ACTIVITY SHEET 4.1

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## Instructions for elementary school activity

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose the quality in your partner you want to highlight (e.g. thoughtfulness).\*
2. On one side of the card, write your partner's name, the quality you have selected and your own name (see example).
3. Turn the card over and begin working on the visual side of the card.
4. Select your medium (from among those the teacher suggests), either paint or coloured pencils and markers.
5. Make a figurative or abstract drawing or painting inspired by the quality you see in your partner.
6. Share the card with your partner, either virtually with photos taken of both sides, by mailing it to him or her, by personally giving it to him or her, if possible, or by posting it on a wall in the classroom set aside for this purpose (check with your teacher).

Congratulations! You've just offered some kindness and caring. We hope you enjoyed this postcard activity, Feeling the love. We would be delighted if you felt like sharing your creation with us on your social media using the hashtag

**#SEMTA2021** Thank you!

### \* How do you create a visual image, abstract or figurative, that depicts a quality?

Once you've decided on the quality you want to depict in a painting or drawing, the first thing to do is to select the colours, lines and shapes that suggest the quality you have in mind. For example, if you've selected thoughtfulness, you will probably want to use pastel or pale colours, fine lines and rounded shapes (a thoughtful person is gentle, soft and careful in how they approach people).

If you want to depict a quality such as strength, on the other hand, bright colours, a warm palette and thick, bold lines would probably be more suitable. How fast you work can also be a factor. For example, if you're depicting thoughtfulness, you will probably work more slowly and calmly than if you're trying to depict strength.

## ACTIVITY SHEET 4.2

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### Instructions for high school project

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Externalize negative thoughts: Spontaneously and without thinking, write down the negative words you tell yourself or you've heard said about you and that fit one of the selected themes—low self-esteem, for example. It's important not to think too much at this stage and to just write spontaneously, filling up your card (use a black pencil on white and a white one on black).\* You can keep repeating the same words if you need to.
2. After you've finished writing, take some time to look at what you've written.
3. Send yourself a little love: think of one of your qualities or strengths (courageous, for example). Write this word on the second piece of cardstock, from which you will make your stencil. Write it out in large letters, print or cursive. You can check out different fonts if you like to help you decide how you want to write it.
4. Using your scissors, cut out the letters of your word. Don't forget, you want the negative part of the stencil to remain intact (see image).
5. Next, place the stencil on the piece of cardstock with your spontaneous writing on it. If needed, use masking tape to hold it in place.
6. Pick a bright colour that you like (fuchsia is good on white, for example, or bright yellow on black). Using your foam brush, apply paint in the negative space of the stencil, to paint your word on top of your spontaneous writing.
7. Take a moment alone to look at your creation.
8. You can now share what you've made with the class, or put it up on a wall in the classroom with the work of the other students, and talk about the project. To end the activity, each student can read out loud, one after the other, the quality or strength they have highlighted in themselves.

Thank you for taking part in this creative workshop.  
We hope you enjoyed it.

We would be delighted if you felt like sharing your  
creation with us on your social media using the hashtag  
**#SEMTA2021**