

A B R I D G E D V E R S I O N



CONSEIL SUPÉRIEUR
DE L'ÉDUCATION

**STUDENTS WITH
BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
Understanding, Prevention, Action

BRIEF TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

February 2001

Québec 

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Graphics and layout:

Axiome communication

It's September; the children enter the school and make their way to their classroom. Walking through the halls, they see photographs of cute little tykes like themselves illustrating group activities that took place last year: working with friends, playing in the gym... photos that remind them that schools exist for them and that their mission is to impart knowledge to students, foster their social development and give them qualification, as adults would put it.

The school as a social institution accepts all students and its mandate, as suggested, is to impart knowledge, to foster social development and to give qualifications. Most children adapt well to school life, and learning experiences at the elementary level are relatively pleasant for both boys and girls. What adult does not remember the shining eyes of a child beaming proudly at his new schoolbag and books filled with fascinating pictures? However, there are children who, from the very outset, lack interest in school. It is clear that these children are likely to have problems at school; already, they manifest inappropriate behaviour: one young boy constantly hits the other children, another finds it virtually impossible to pay attention, another silently refuses to learn, and an older child is suspected of taxing or bullying...

Recent data from Québec, the United States and Europe show that the number of young people with behavioural problems has increased significantly in the past fifteen years. In Québec schools alone, the proportion of students with behavioural difficulties has tripled over this time frame. Some authors cite as probable, or at least partial causes of this phenomenon changes in family structure, the tendency to provide inadequate guidance for young children and repeated exposure to violent role models portrayed by the media¹. Other factors, such as poverty, ineffective parenting practices and the stress children experience in certain family situations are also singled out to explain growing antisocial behaviour. Blame is even directed at schools, which may play a role in the upswing of behavioural difficulties.

¹ Laurier Fortin and Égide Royer, "Comment enseigner à des élèves ayant de troubles de comportement?" *Bulletin CRIRÉS*, Québec, March-April 1997, 4 pages.

GIVE PRIORITY

to the implementation of prevention programs for students with behavioural difficulties during the first few years of school.

They are starting their first school year. Whatever their ethnic origin, religion, language, family, social and economic resources, all children come to school with the same dream. They look forward to experiencing a variety of exciting adventures. Some of these children have physical, emotional and social problems that may not be apparent. Already, the road is bumpier for them and the adventures ahead seem a greater cause for concern.

For a school that aims to meet the needs of every single student, behavioural problems in young children represent a particularly difficult challenge.

2 See Ministère de l'Éducation, *Adapting Our Schools to the Needs of All Students. Policy on Special Education*, (Québec, 1999), p. 6.

3 Laurier Fortin and F. Francis Strayer, "Caractéristiques de l'élève", *Revue des sciences de l'éducation*, Numéro thématique : Les troubles de comportement à l'école, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, 2000, p. 8.

4 Initiation: type of aggressive behaviour through which an individual, who holds a dominant position in an interactive group process, causes, through deliberate or collective acts, mental and/or physical suffering in other members of the group (translation). Morita Yohji, "La brimade comme problème de comportement liée à une privatisation de la société japonaise contemporaine", *Perspectives*, Vol. 26, No. 2, June 1996, p. 336.

WE KNOW:

- that not only has the number of children with behavioural difficulties grown, but children are disturbing school activities at an increasingly young age;
- that if these problems continue into adolescence, these students will leave school sooner than their peers;
- that the proportion of such students who neither continue their education nor work is greater than that of other non-graduates;
- that they are more likely to be unemployed or non-participants in the labour force;
- that they are less likely to have a network to rely on,² i.e. they are socially isolated, with few friends and few social activities;
- that behavioural problems have serious repercussions on young people's academic and social future.

BUT DO WE KNOW:

- that antisocial behaviour is one of the most complex problems confronting modern societies;
- that the very concept of a behavioural problem is difficult to define because we all have different definitions of disturbing behaviour and because we all react to these signs in a very personal manner;
- that behaviour problems do not occur alone but are generally associated with other adaptive difficulties such as oppositional defiant disorder, attention deficit disorders and hyperactivity, as well as problems of anxiety and depression;³
- that schools and researchers are paying more attention to the phenomenon of student harassment (bullying),⁴ which affects more and more students, as bullies or victims. Once again, the victims are often the youngest members of the student population.

5 Comments made by school staff during interviews describing the classroom on a daily basis when there are students with behavioural difficulties.

6 Richard E. Tremblay, "When Children's Social Development Fails", in Daniel P. Keating and Clide Hertzman, eds, *Developmental Health and the Wealth of Nations*, (New York, The Guilford Press, 1999), p. 67. Human Resources Development Canada, *Growing Up in Canada. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth*, (Ottawa, 1996), p. 148.

"From kindergarten on, children fight and argue, using physical and verbal violence"; "It becomes normal for a young child to hit a classmate who looks at him in a strange way"; "I was assaulted while supervising in the schoolyard at recess"; "There is a lot of stealing in the classroom"; "the older students harass the younger ones".⁵ Some children develop aggressive behaviour that jeopardizes their school adjustment. Contrary to the popular belief that physical aggressiveness increase with age, this type of behaviour is common in young children. It is seen in children aged 4 to 7 and even in babies, and should decrease with age as the child socializes.⁶ The nature of the violent acts as well as the tender age of the perpetrators also have educators worried. Bullying, which we are discovering more and more, often entails a loss of self-esteem and significant moral suffering, which may have serious consequences for the children's academic and social future. Others develop under-reactive behaviour, manifested by such traits as passivity, dependence and depression. All of these behaviours become precursors to dropping out, unemployment and social isolation. **Unless these problems are dealt with in childhood, they may become permanent.**

To deal with these problems, there seems to be a consensus in favor of implementing prevention programs. The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation fully agrees that the school system should take the prevention route. It urges the entire school system to give precedence, as of the early years, to setting up prevention programs for students with behavioural difficulties.

PAY MORE ATTENTION

to the factors that make some boys less open to school learning

“They are on the street corner at 7:30 in the morning; they have to be good. They have to be good in the school bus, in the schoolyard, in class, at lunchtime. I was allowed to be a nuisance because I went home. Then, they have to be good all afternoon, and they have to behave in day care. That means they have to be good from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. That’s hard, you know!” (Interview with a teacher)

School is a strategic environment that gives most children opportunities for a wide range of social interaction. It is understandable, then, that this institution, which plays a role in developing the child’s autonomy and in socialization, witnesses social and developmental behaviour problems.

- 7 Kaj Björkqvist and Pirkko Niemelä, “New trends in the study of female aggression”, in Kaj Björkqvist and Pirkko Niemelä, eds, *Of Mice and Women – Aspects of Female Aggression*, (San Diego: Academic Press, 1992), p. 3-16. Human resources Development Canada, *Growing Up in Canada. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth*, (Ottawa, 1996). Richard E. Tremblay, “Les enfants violents à l’école primaire: qui sont-ils et que deviennent-ils?”, *Violence chez les jeunes*, (Montréal, Éditions Sciences et Cultures, 1995).
- 8 Anne-Marie Julien and Heidi Erti, “Le vécu scolaire des enfants: résultats tirés de l’Enquête longitudinale nationale sur les enfants et les jeunes de 1994-1995”, *Revue trimestrielle de l’éducation*, 2000, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 24-40.

WE KNOW:

- that it is primarily boys that are identified as having behavioural difficulties at schools (in elementary school, the behaviour problem ratio is 5.5 boys to 1 girl);
- that some boys are disruptive. They have trouble controlling their emotions and show a great many associated problems;
- that some boys have few social skills and sometimes manifest physical violence;
- that some boys constantly interfere with classroom management, defy teacher authority and have trouble respecting school standards.

BUT DO WE KNOW:

- that aggressiveness is not limited to physical or direct violence. For instance, indirect aggressiveness consists in manipulating in order to make things difficult for others while avoiding direct confrontation;⁷
- that while girls are more likely to employ this form of aggressiveness, boys also use it as they grow older;
- that, according to a recent study, there is no significant difference between boys’ and girls’ behaviour.⁸ There is little difference in the overall profile of boys and girls with emotional and behavioural problems;
- that, from an early age on, boys and girls interact very differently;

9 Conseil supérieur de l’éducation, *Pour une meilleure réussite scolaire des garçons et des filles*, 1999, p. 41.

10 Pierre Potvin, Louise Paradis and Benoit Pouliot, “Attitudes des enseignants de maternelle selon le sexe des élèves”, *Revue des sciences de l’éducation*, Numéro thématique: Les troubles de comportement à l’école, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, 2000, p. 42-43.

BUT DO WE KNOW:

- that children are not only subject to socialization through contact with adults, but that they also socialize each other, and that this latter process is also critical;
- that boys form their male identity by reacting to elements of the ambient culture identified as female, while girls are not overly concerned if their femininity is contaminated by masculine elements;⁹
- that boys are more interested in the interactions within the boys’ group while girls are more open to the adult world and are interested in what the teacher is saying or doing.

This boy/girl group dynamic influences the interpersonal attitudes that the children display towards the teacher, school learning and the group context in the classroom. This phenomenon also affects educators’ perception of boys’ and girls’ behaviour.

Numerous studies show that teachers’ attitudes differ depending on whether they are addressing boys or girls. For example, researchers report that boys receive much more praise and/or criticism than girls do. Teachers react more strongly to boys’ behaviour than they do to that of girls. They often attribute boys’ errors to a lack of effort whereas they tend to think that girls probably fail due to a lack of intellectual capacity. Many studies conducted at the pre-school and elementary school levels show that kindergarten teachers are more affectionate with girls than with boys and that they find girls more likeable.¹⁰

In their daily lives, some children, both boys and girls, develop aggressive behaviour that makes it harder for them to adapt to school life. Generally, girls use interactive styles in which violence is overwhelmingly covert, whereas boys use more turbulent styles which may include physical aggressiveness because they are often competing with one another to ensure their predominance and maintain their status.

Educators are concerned about the rise in the number of students with behavioural difficulties, particularly boys, who constitute the majority in this category. **It seems that school, with its teaching methods, physical**

organization and type of supervision, is unable to offer a context that works well with boys' style of interaction.

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation is concerned about the success of boys with behavioural difficulties, since we all know the negative repercussions of these problems on children's school experience and social life. It encourages schools to pay closer attention to the factors that make some boys less open to learning in school.

ACTING

to help boys and girls at risk who display externalized and internalized behavioural difficulties

“ *In my view, a child with a behavioural difficulty is a child with a big problem. His heart and soul are troubled; his entire being is unhappy. On entering school, this child needs assistance. He opens the door wide to call for help and we try to inch open windows to try to solve small problems. It's not easy.*” (Teacher's comments).

It is difficult being a student. As soon as the child enters kindergarten or elementary school, he comes up against new socialization requirements which, to various degrees, differ from what he has experienced in his home environment. To be a good student, it is not enough to have the intellectual skills needed to acquire knowledge, the child must also have the aptitude for decoding and internalizing the meaning of the expectations expressed by this new environment. For some children, there is quite a difference in socialization at school and socialization at home, due to the child's socioeconomic origin, sexual category, the parenting practices he has been subject to and the happy, sad, traumatic or poignant experiences that have marked his short life.

WE KNOW:

- that academic success is the goal for all children attending Québec schools;
- that each child, boy or girl, should receive special attention;
- that each student must also cooperate in the educational task;
- that certain students, despite the ongoing efforts of the family, school and society are likely to “take dead-end streets”.

BUT DO WE KNOW:

- that, some children are exposed to a highly stressful life from a very tender age. Poverty, for instance, is a stress factor that is recognized quite easily;
- that some boys and some girls in distress develop behaviour problems and emotional disorders that create social maladjustments;
- that other boys and girls, who develop under-reactive behaviour, such as dependence, withdrawal and fear, succeed in going unnoticed and also have social maladjustments.

If academic success is the goal for each child, it is important to identify children at risk, that is, those that are likely to take roads paved with hardship. It is also essential to target not only those children who disturb activities at school but also certain girls who, while they might disrupt the class less and control their emotions more, may display problematic behaviour. We must also single out those children who prefer that we ignore their fear, dependence, and depression – children who require less attention precisely because they make sure they go unnoticed.

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation is worried not only about children who manifest aggressive behaviour but also about those who, for whatever reason, do not attract attention, do not ask for special services and seem to go “unnoticed” throughout elementary school. In a context that targets universal academic success, it is critical that they be identified and offered educational services that meet their needs.

The Conseil asks schools to take action to help boys and girls at risk, who display externalized or internalized behavioural difficulties.

GIVING PRIORITY

to “Citizenship Education” to offset violence in the schools

In one corner of the schoolyard, a young student is alone, not playing with the others. A small group of “older kids” come up. The “leader” talks to the younger child, harassing him. He seems to be enjoying himself, especially because he has an audience. The youngster remains silent and anxious because he knows the older ones will start again... during the next recess.

Violence is despicable. No one likes to think about youngsters assaulting others, older kids picking on children that are younger or weaker than themselves, or the fact that many children are mistreated here and elsewhere. Violence among youngsters is attributable to various factors: individual personality traits, family, peers, school, neighbourhood, society and immediate situations.

11 UNESCO, *The Media and the Challenge of the New Technologies*, (1997), p. 269.

12 UNESCO, *Ibid.*, p. 271.

10

WE KNOW:

- that violence as a phenomenon is of significant concern to educators and government leaders;
- that many countries, such as France, England, the Netherlands and closer to home, Ontario and New Brunswick, have set up various programs to fight violence in the schools;
- that most action programs have three components: responsibility-sharing within the school community, parent participation and teacher training;
- that in Québec schools, a number of programs have been set up in conjunction with social services and police departments to teach youngsters conflict management skills.

BUT DO WE KNOW:

- that the onset of violent behaviour occurs far before the teen years and that the most violent teens were probably already among the most violent children;
- that, although it is easy to link violence to increasing exposure to TV and its increasingly violent contents on children's lives, we still have no specific, scientifically proven data on the effects of violent programs on children;¹¹
- that, at best, we know that this influence apparently differs according to the child's age, sex, social environment and the nature of the show¹² and that it is more a question of the intensity of the exposure to violence;
- that it is difficult to affirm that violence at school is on the rise, since we have no scientific studies that are comparable and that cover several years.

13 Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Éduquer à la citoyenneté*, Rapport annuel 1997-1998 sur l'état et les besoins de l'éducation, 110 p.

11

Not all children identified as experiencing behavioural difficulties are necessarily violent. However, when violence rears its ugly head in the schools, we are quick to react and develop programs to deal with it. These initiatives mobilize not only the school staff but often also community partners, who act jointly to solve conflicts. While we have the utmost respect for the work of those involved in these situations, we note that they react primarily to emergency situations. Yet, **violence is not an instantaneous phenomenon. It is insidiously present far before it surfaces.**

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation feels that we require a more preventive tool that can be used to rally young people around common projects based on responsibility-sharing and development of a feeling of belonging, since children need to learn to “live together”, and this is a lesson that cannot be learned alone.¹³ The Conseil believes that we should make “citizenship education” a priority for dealing with violence in the schools.

PROMOTING

the development of parenting skills so that parents can offer their child with behavioural difficulties effective support on the road to success

It's the first parent-teacher meeting of the school year. The parents have been invited to meet the person who will be working with their child. How do we make contact with the teacher? What do we say about our child? More importantly, how do we say it? What is expected of us? What do we expect of the school? Will our child succeed? Will our relation with the school be marked by complicity and cooperation or worry and misunderstanding?

All of these questions and many others go through the heads of parents who have a “difficult” child and often they solve this problem by not attending these meetings. Yet, they do want their child to succeed and are considered essential in achieving this success. Often, they are uncomfortable at school and, as a result, prefer to stay away from it.

WE KNOW:

- that the family is the individual's first and primary living environment, influencing him most decisively throughout his life;
- that the way parents play their role affects the child's cognitive development and is associated favourably or unfavourably with the child's academic success;
- that rapid changes in family structure have led many people to hypothesize that these changes might be the cause of children's behaviour problems;
- that the early school years are critical for success in elementary school and for later academic achievement, and that one of the factors associated with children's academic success is family-school cooperation and parents' involvement in their child's school life.

BUT DO WE KNOW:

- that it is not the single-parent situation – the type of family headed primarily by the mother – that may cause significant behaviour problems in children. Besides, close to 60% of all children whose parents separated before they were 10 already live in a blended family before reaching this age.¹⁴
- that it is above all the suffering that these children experience as a result of the separation or forming of a new family that may find expression in aggressiveness or internalized problems;
- that even if we cannot determine which aspect of parenting practices contributes most to the development of externalized problems,¹⁶ we know that ineffective parenting practices appear to be a key factor since the probability that a child raised using such practices would have behavioural problems is very high;
- that if children's academic success is affected by family-school contacts, it is not the frequency of these contacts that is important but the quality of each mother's or father's involvement when the time comes to help their child succeed.

Parents of a “problem” child often feel powerless as far as school is concerned. **The daily problems linked to raising this child, the personal and social problems and the parents lack of educational skills sometimes make the school environment seem completely foreign to them.** This makes it difficult to work effectively hand-in-hand with school staff.

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation believes that the skills parents require in order to be able to help their child succeed are not necessarily self-evident. This is why the Conseil is asking the schools to work with their social partners, who

14 Sylvie Normandeau and Isabelle Nadon, “La participation des parents à la vie scolaire d'enfants de deuxième année”, *Revue des sciences de l'éducation*, Numéro thématique : Les troubles de comportement, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, 2000, p. 151.

15 Nicole Marci-Gratton, “Grandir avec maman et papa ?”, *Le Magazine Transition*, Spring 1999, Vol. 29, No. 1, www.vifamily.ca/vif/tm/291/1.htm.

16 Rollande Deslandes et Égide Royer, “Style parental, participation parentale dans le suivi scolaire et la réussite scolaire”, *Service social*, Vol. 43, No. 2, 1994, p. 63-80.

are already setting up programs to promote the development of parenting skills so that all parents can help their children with behavioural difficulties succeed academically.

GIVING TOP PRIORITY

to supporting teachers of students with behavioural difficulties

It's back-to-school time. The bell rings. The students go to their home classroom. Some push each other, others drag their feet, some are talking with friends, two or three are silent, many are happy; all are on the road that should lead them to discover reading, writing, mathematics, the sciences...

But right from the start, some of them behave in a way that already leads us to doubt their capacity to construct their school experience and give it meaning in order to succeed. Already, the adults supporting these students are worried, not only about their behaviour, but also about the skills they will have to use to adjust their behaviour to what is expected of them at school.

WE KNOW:

- that in the case of some children with behavioural difficulties, the only thing that is stable in their daily lives is their relation with their teacher;
- that a stimulating teacher-student relationship can result in a positive school experience;
- that a child with problems generally displays aggressive behaviour that forces those around him to react. Consequently, it is not surprising that the teacher-student relationship becomes rather negative.

BUT DO WE KNOW:

- that some children who seem to have every reason to develop behaviour problems do not. They show an ability to succeed and strengthen their personality despite adverse conditions. This is called “resilience”;
- that if, along the way, these children find an adult who cares about them and gives them support, they can develop harmoniously. At school it is realistic to think that the teacher is often best-placed to play this role;
- that teachers sometimes feel powerless faced with the distress these children experience and often feel alone in trying to reach them.

Children with behavioural problems are often difficult and disruptive, requiring much of the teacher's attention. Helping them succeed academically and socially is a huge job. It is quite natural for the teacher to feel overwhelmed when faced with an anguished child who, to protect or defend himself, wreaks havoc in the classroom. The teacher's job is a solitary one, and although specialized professional services are sometimes available to the student, **teaching remains a relationship between the teacher and the student that needs to be developed for both to succeed.**

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation feels that, given the importance of a positive teacher-student link, particularly for students with behavioural difficulties, and given the energy the teacher must expend to create such a link, our top priority must be to support teachers of such students.

CONCLUSION

Having resolved to take a new direction for success together, Québec schools cannot ignore children with behavioural difficulties. Despite the considerable efforts made over the years by often-overwhelmed school staff and administrators to respond to these children's distress and despite the significant number of pedagogical, administrative and financial measures which have been taken, success has eluded us: the number of students with behavioural difficulties continues to grow every year.

Given the concern over the growing number of students with behavioural difficulties, given the anxiety generated by the academic and social consequences for these youngsters if we are unable to help them succeed, we must lose no time in finding out more about behaviour problems, reviewing our practices and working together to help students with behavioural difficulties escape being marginalized in the school context.

After presenting a series of phenomena, the Conseil lists the challenges it would set for those responsible for student education at the preschool and elementary levels and makes recommendations designed to guide their actions.

CHALLENGES

Implementing the aims described above presents challenges for all of those responsible for preschool and elementary education.

The first challenge concerns prevention. It requires promoting "citizenship education" in all schools and setting up prevention programs: diversified programs to reflect the heterogeneity of groups of youngsters experiencing difficulties; programs that run throughout elementary school; programs that involve the parents; programs that, from the outset, define the evaluation criteria, allowing findings to be monitored; programs that, once they have achieved meaningful results, can be disseminated to the system as a whole.

The second challenge involves action adapted to all students with behavioural difficulties. All students must receive the support they need to succeed in elementary school and to graduate to the secondary level. This challenge entails identifying children whose behaviour puts them in the risk category and ensuring that they receive the educational services that meet their needs: boys who disturb class, boys and girls who, without resorting to physical violence to get attention, also fail short of school expectations, those who suffer from internalized behaviour, bullying in the schoolyard, etc.

The third challenge involves cooperation. We must develop mechanisms to promote cooperation between the school and the families of children with social maladjustments, and enlist the help of the health/social services and family/early childhood networks to support the parents in their accompanying role.

The fourth challenge involves the sharing of educational responsibility. To reduce teacher isolation, the whole school team must play an active role in developing the social skills of students with social maladjustments. Arrangements must be made to set up forums for discussion enabling teachers to help one another and to promote group training for professionals and technicians who also work with students with behavioural difficulties.

The studies and consultations that the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation has conducted to develop this brief have enabled it to define certain avenues for action that merit the attention of those involved and that address aspects of this issue that the new departmental policy on children with difficulties and impairments does not discuss or mentions only in passing, more specifically, children whose behaviour is internalized, victims of bullying, those headed for behaviour

problems, and the large number of boys who are disruptive and who are not terribly interested in doing well at school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To promote success for as many students as possible, the Conseil recommends:

THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION:

- ask the schools to include in their plan for success a prevention program, with measures for monitoring and evaluating the program's effectiveness;
- endorse and disseminate the results of studies on children with behavioural difficulties permitting, among other things:
 - the evaluation of pedagogical and current organizational measures encouraging boys with social maladjustments to take responsibility for their own learning;
 - a better understanding of the "bullying" phenomenon and the effects of harassment on child development, along with problems such as depression, dependence and withdrawal, and behavioural problems in girls;
- develop indicators to identify students whose behaviour borders on problematic (students at risk);
- arrange for sufficient funding to enable the school system to offer more appropriate services, notably to girls with behavioural difficulties and to students who are depressed and dependent;
- step up opportunities to make parents aware of the need for their participation in the school's action plan designed to promote the success of their child with behavioural difficulties.

THAT SCHOOL BOARDS:

- allocate financial resources on the basis of each school's prevention program, for both the "citizenship education" and "action" components;
- set up a forum in which teachers, professionals, technicians and the other individuals working with students with behavioural difficulties can discuss these children, upgrade their knowledge on the subject, review their practices, become aware of projects implemented elsewhere within the school board, etc.;

- ensure that school staff receive professional development in managing diversity, alternative teaching methods and the factors that place students at risk;
- ensure that the approach implemented for a child with behavioural difficulties can be pursued when the child changes schools;
- facilitate the development of partnerships with the health/social services and family/ early childhood networks;
- call on regional resource persons specialized in special education to support school teams in their educational practices.

THAT SCHOOLS:

- expand their educational project to include a prevention program based on promoting "citizenship education", complete with a process for adopting guidelines (indicators) designed for early identification of children manifesting difficult, depressive or dependent behaviour, and evaluation criteria to ensure that the action taken is rigorous and effective;
- promote active parent involvement in the prevention programs set up for their child;
- define teacher support measures that:
 - provide for discussion and mutual help periods involving teachers and other educators;
 - promote the dissemination and adoption of initiatives designed to have the school and the family define their respective roles in the education of children with difficulties, through the action plan, among other things;
 - use information, training and discussion to enhance an awareness of internalized behaviour and problems linked to success.

THAT GOVERNING BOARDS:

- ensure that the policy governing student supervision includes means for promoting the success of boys and girls with behavioural difficulties;
- envisage rules of conduct and safety measures that reflect boys' and girls' different interactive styles.

THAT UNIVERSITIES:

- conduct research into the “bullying” phenomenon and its potential impact on boys' and girls' behavioural development;
- evaluate student teachers' practicums to ensure that they can take part in developing and implementing action plans for students with behavioural difficulties.

THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THIS BRIEF IS AVAILABLE (IN FRENCH):

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Published by the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation
1200, route de l'Église, porte 3.20
Sainte-Foy (Québec) G1V 4Z4
Tél. : (418) 643-3850
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50-0434-01A