



CREATIVE ACTION FOR EQUALITY

a toolkit for change

www.tcfv.org

Download this toolkit at: www.tcfv.org/pdf/cafeproject/cafe_toolkit.pdf

A project of the Texas Council on Family Violence

If you or someone you know needs help, the following organizations can offer resources, advice and a listening ear:

The National Domestic Violence Hotline:

call 1.800.799.SAFE (7233) or visit www.thehotline.org

Loveisrespect: chat online at loveisrespect.org,
text “loveis” to 77054, or call 1.866.331.9474

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN):
www.rainn.org

National Runaway Switchboard:
1.800.RUNAWAY (786.2929)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1.800.273.TALK (8255)

The Trevor Lifeline for LGBTQ Youth: 1.866.488.7386

GLBT National Youth Talkline: 1.800.246.PRIDE (7743)

Thank You

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Women and Children (METRAC)
National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence
We Can Stop It, Scotland

Please contact Abe Louise Young at ayoung@tcfv.org
for more information or copies of this guide.

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Invitation

Creative Action for Equality (CAfE)
is for any person who wants to bring positive
change to human relationships.

*Choose one project here
and share your voice.*

You can help create a world of equality
and freedom. Even a conversation can be art
if you approach it with an open heart.



The Issue

Some of us have happy relationships, made slowly out of trust, affection, honesty and caring.

But sometimes, we have unhappy relationships. We hurt each other or get hurt. Pain is a natural part of learning to love, but when control or abuse start being used, there's a problem.

Did you know that teens experience abuse and violence in their relationships as much as adults do? Nobody is born wanting to hurt someone they love. But 1 in 3 teens experiences abuse in a dating relationship. One in four women experiences domestic violence by a male partner. These numbers are not okay.

We need change now. Your voice can help. Join others and make a statement that can turn the tide!

Want to share?

We want to see your artwork, and share it with other youth. Please send photos, scans, videos, writing, and music our way.

Email us: prevention@tcfv.org

Facebook us: @Texas Council on Family Violence

Snail mail us: Texas Council on Family Violence
P.O. Box 161810, Austin, TX 78716



The creative actions in this guide stem from three ideas:

- Gender equality
- Healthy relationships
- Nonviolence

Creative Action Plans:

Choose one and do a project

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“Ending domestic violence is the key to world peace, because the home is the place where we learn violence first. If we didn’t learn it there, we wouldn’t learn it anywhere.”

– Gloria Steinem

Creative Action #1: Make Equality Clear

Goal

Show what gender equality, healthy love, or nonviolence look like to you.

Action

- Sketch some ideas
- Create a graphic design, a sculpture, or stage a photograph to share an idea in a visually fresh way
- Give it a title that will make people think
- Put it in a public place and post it online to start a conversation

Inspiration




Logos pack big ideas into small spaces. This symbol combines the signs for man and woman with an equal sign in the middle.



This sculpture of a gun tied in a knot is a statement on nonviolence. It was made in metal by C.F. Reutersvard in Sweden.



This symbol of women's equality was created by combining the raised fist with the Venus symbol. The raised fist represents solidarity and was also used to signify Black Power. The Venus symbol represents women. The two together express resistance, solidarity, and strength.

WOMEN ARE **HALF** 
THE WORLD'S POPULATION, WORK-
ING **TWO THIRDS** 
OF THE WORLD'S WORKING HOURS,
RECEIVING **10%** 
OF THE WORLD'S INCOME, OWNING
LESS THAN **1%** 
OF THE WORLD'S PROPERTY.

Colors in this bar graph show the poverty of women worldwide.



This rainbow Oreo was created by Kraft Foods to show their support of equal rights.



This image of diversity and equality for all races, men and women, disabled people, and elderly people comes from an equal rights group in Spain, Colectivo Gentes, at www.colectivogentes.org.


Creative Action #2: Expand Gender

Goal

Relationships are much more fun when they are based in equality and roles can shift and change. Expand the conversation around gender.

Action

- Read the poem “For Every Girl / For Every Boy” by Nancy Smith out loud
- Think about how you learned the “rules” about masculinity and femininity



POR CADA NIÑA CANSADA DE ACTUAR DÉBIL CUANDO ES FUERTE, HAY UN NIÑO CANSADO DE APARENTAR SER FUERTE CUANDO SE SIENTE VULNERABLE. POR CADA NIÑO QUE ESTÁ HARTO DE LA EXPECTATIVA CONSTANTE DE QUE SEPA TODO, HAY UNA NIÑA CANSADA DE QUE LA GENTE NO CONFÍA EN SU INTELIGENCIA. POR CADA NIÑA QUE ESTÁ CANSADA DE SER CONSIDERADA SÚPER SENSIBLE, HAY UN NIÑO TEMEROSO DE SER GENTIL Y DE LLORAR. POR CADA NIÑO EL CUAL LA ÚNICA FORMA DE MOSTRAR SU MASCULINIDAD ES COMPETIR, HAY UNA NIÑA A LA QUE SE LE ACUSA DE NO SER FEMENINA CUANDO COMPITE. POR CADA NIÑA QUE TIRA SU MUÑECA, HAY UN NIÑO QUE DESEA ENCONTRAR UNA. POR CADA NIÑO LUCHANDO POR QUE LA PUBLICIDAD NO LE DICTE SUS DESEOS, HAY UNA NIÑA CUYA AUTOESTIMA ESTÁ SIENDO ATACADA POR LA PUBLICIDAD. POR CADA NIÑA QUE DA UN PASO A SU LIBERACIÓN, HAY UN NIÑO QUE ENCUENTRA MÁS FÁCILMENTE EL CAMINO HACIA LA LIBERTAD.

 Adapted from a poem by Nancy R. Smith. Crimethinc. Gender Subversion Kit #69-B. Copies of this poster are available individually and in bulk quantities from Crimethinc. Genders Anonymous / PO Box 13998 / Salem OR 97309 or if waiting ain't your thing, go to www.crimethinc.com

- Write your own poem that starts with the same words
- Try it collaboratively - everyone in your group can write a line or two and put them all together for a group statement
- Read your poems out loud, xerox and tape them in bathrooms, post them online

Inspiration

I'm a girl who...

I'm a boy who...

I'm different because...



FOR EVERY GIRL WHO IS TIRED OF ACTING WEAK WHEN SHE IS STRONG, THERE IS A BOY TIRED OF APPEARING STRONG WHEN HE FEELS VULNERABLE. FOR EVERY BOY WHO IS BURDENED WITH THE CONSTANT EXPECTATION OF KNOWING EVERYTHING, THERE IS A GIRL TIRED OF PEOPLE NOT TRUSTING HER INTELLIGENCE. FOR EVERY GIRL WHO IS TIRED OF BEING CALLED OVER-SENSITIVE, THERE IS A BOY WHO FEARS TO BE GENTLE, TO WEEP. FOR EVERY BOY FOR WHOM COMPETITION IS THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE HIS MASCULINITY, THERE IS A GIRL WHO IS CALLED UNFEMINE WHEN SHE COMPETES. FOR EVERY GIRL WHO THROWS OUT HER E-Z-BAKE OVEN, THERE IS A BOY WHO WISHES TO FIND ONE. FOR EVERY BOY STRUGGLING NOT TO LET ADVERTISING DICTATE HIS DESIRES, THERE IS A GIRL FACING THE AD INDUSTRY'S ATTACKS ON HER SELF-ESTEEM. FOR EVERY GIRL WHO TAKES A STEP TOWARD HER LIBERATION, THERE IS A BOY WHO FINDS THE WAY TO FREEDOM A LITTLE EASIER.



Adapted from a poem by Nancy R. Smith. Crimethinc. Gender Subversion Kit #69-B. Copies of this poster are available individually and in bulk quantities from Crimethinc. Genders Anonymous / PO Box 13998 / Salem OR 97309 or if waiting ain't your thing, go to www.crimethinc.com

Posters available at crimethinc.com

Creative Action Plan #3: Write Lyrics

Goal

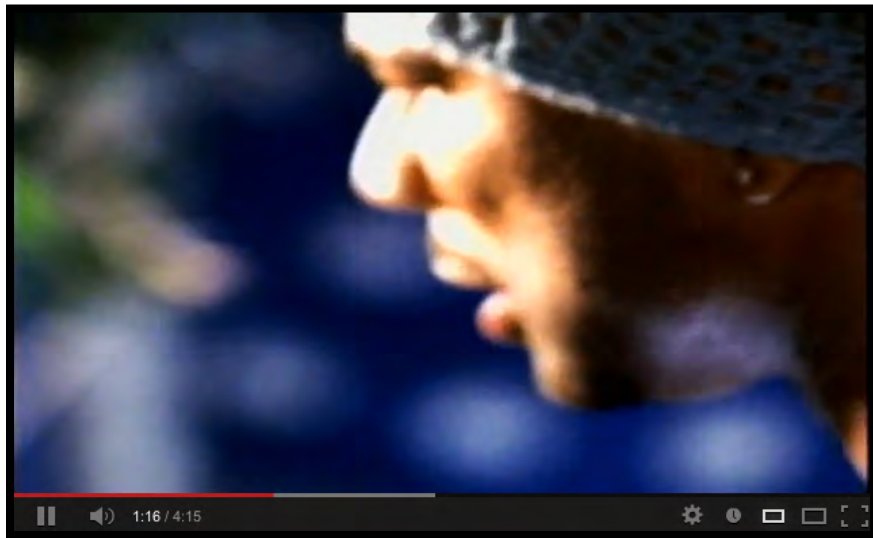
Write a rap, song, or poem that expresses your feelings about what healthy relationships look like.

This can be friendship, family, or romantic relationships.

Action

- Think about how you've learned what you know
- Remember someone who you admire for being a strong woman or wise man
- Get inspired by these verses, then write your own!
- Share the songs below with your friends and discuss them
- Practice and perform your own song or poem at an open mic
- Post your lyrics, poem or video to social media

Inspiration



youtu.be/W_-qRcHAhzk

In “The Light” by Common, is a message in the form of a love letter to his partner, over drum sample and piano.

“I never call you my bitch or even my boo / There’s so much in a name and even more in you--”



youtu.be/f8cHxydDb7o

In “U.N.I.T.Y.,” an old-school tune, Queen Latifah sings about giving and demanding respect when she walks on the street.

“I don’t want my kids to see me getting beat down / By daddy smacking mommy all around / You say I’m nothing without ya, but I’m nothing with ya / A man don’t really love you if he hits ya”



youtu.be/hIVBg7_08n0

In “Same Love” by Mackelmore, a straight artist sings about becoming a man, becoming aware of the effects of bullying, and his support for same-sex marriage.

“No law’s gonna change us / We have to change us / Whatever God you believe in / We all come from the same one / Strip away the fear / Underneath it’s all the same love / About time that we raised up”

Creative Action Plan #3: Write Lyrics, Continued.



youtu.be/ELEGrRDM9gM

“Ella” by Bebe, unfolds the story of a woman that has been able to overcome the tragedy of her life to later become a strong, liberated woman: the woman of her dreams. (En “Ella” de Bebe, se desenvuelve la historia de una mujer que ha logrado superar la tragedia de su vida, para luego convertirse en una mujer fuerte y libre: en la mujer de sus sueños.)

“Hoy vas a ser la mujer / que te dé la gana de ser / hoy te vas a querer / como nadie te ha sabido querer...”

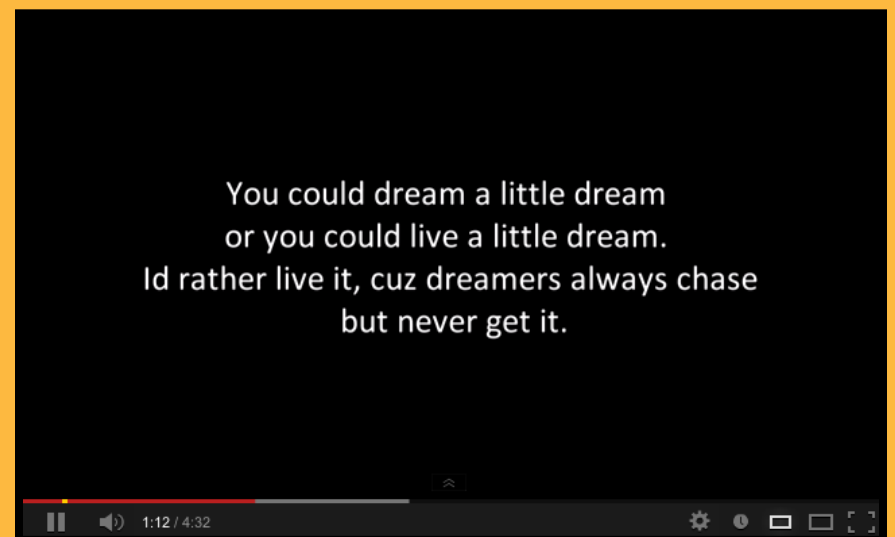
“Today you will be the woman you want to be. Today you will love yourself like nobody has been able to love you.”



youtu.be/9uEJi0x-49E

“The Last to Say” by Atmosphere, focuses on the story of a family and how the cycle of domestic violence that lives on from one generation to the next.

“Let me be the last to say, Please don't stay. / Please put your shoes on and step into that warm weather, Go get yourself a more better forever. / Gotta put it down, you gotta leave it, And don't ever come back again, you gotta mean it.”



youtu.be/sClhmDN5Fcs

“No Regrets” by Aesop Rock tells the life story of a little girl who became an artist and lived life her own way.

“City born, into this world with no knowledge and no regrets / Had a piece of yellow chalk with which she'd draw upon the street / The many faces of the various locals that she would meet.”

Creative Action Plan #4: Stand Behind Your Message

Goal

Make a statement about equality, love, or about your personal values!

Action

- Imagine a message of change that you want to say to the world
- Get a few pieces of posterboard and markers, or a t-shirt and fabric paint
- Measure out your words in pencil to get the spacing right
- Write your message, big enough to read online
- Ask a friend to take a picture of yourself holding it
- Upload it to social media and tag Texas Council on Family Violence

Inspiration

If you need a starting place, try starting with the words:

I'll teach my children...

Treat me like...

I believe in...

I'm a good friend/boyfriend/girlfriend because...

A healthy relationship is...

I say No to violence because...

En mi mundo ideal, la violencia entre pareja....

Mi familia me enseña...

This boy declares himself as an ally to his sister and claims feminism — the movement and belief in women's equality — as part of him.



Photo via everydayfeminism.com

This girl makes a statement about her freedom to dress as she wishes without being harassed on the street or sexually assaulted. Photo via hollaback.org



“Yo me quiero” or “I love myself” is a powerful social statement in a world that can often tell us that we are not enough.

Creative Action Plan #5: Record a Video

Goal

Make a video that expresses the power, love and positive potential of yourself and your friends. How do you defy stereotypes? How do you take care of yourselves and each another?

Action

- Choose your message and watch some examples.
- Before you hit “record,” make decisions together about what you want to portray.
- Create a shot list: a list of shots and images you want to include
- Shoot your video. Keep it under 2 minutes and try a variety of shots, angles, and pose perspectives.
- Edit your video and add text – title, names, and any other words you need.
- Upload your video to social media, show it to friends, and start a conversation!

There are many online resources that can help you create your video. YouTube’s free video editor, which can be found at: [youtube.com/editor](https://www.youtube.com/editor), provides a robust way to edit your video online and publish with just a few steps.

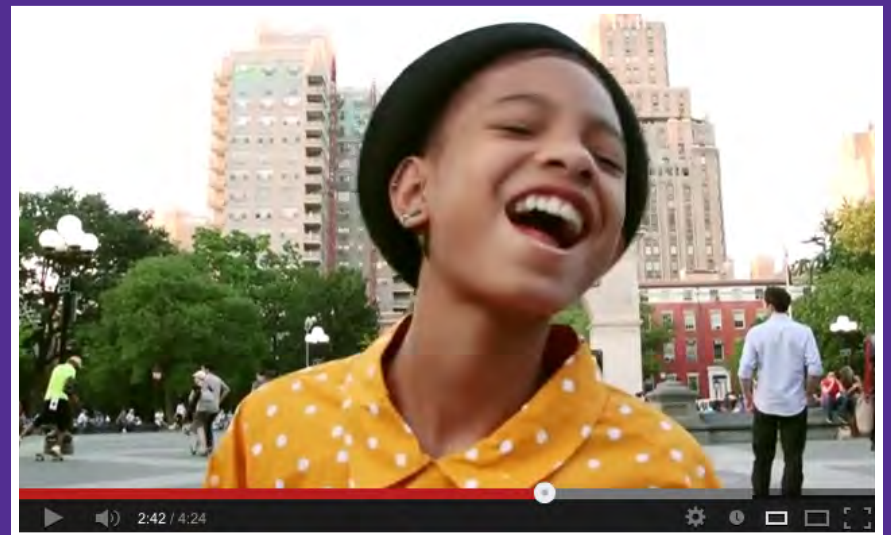
You can also do a search for free music and images to use in your videos at: creativecommons.org. Be sure to check the usage guidelines to make sure you are not infringing on the requests of the author, and give credit where credit is due!

Inspiration

“More than that...” In this video, Native American youth in North Dakota express their strengths and positive power after TV news programs and newspaper articles portrayed their community as plagued by violence and substance abuse. Learn more at: bit.ly/weXFfn.



youtu.be/FhribaNXr7A



youtu.be/VUMK4Da9Avg

Willow Smith sings “I Am Me” and shows how much she loves her uniqueness.

“I am me, and I am free, and that’s all I can be. I am me, and I’m free, and you can’t stop me.”

Creative Action Plan #6: Talk Back to Ads

Many ads promote an image of men as hyper-masculine (big muscles! aggressive! sweaty! rich!) and of women as helpless sex objects (skinny! sexy! dumb!). This makes things tough for both boys and girls to be themselves and relate to each other as whole people.

Goal

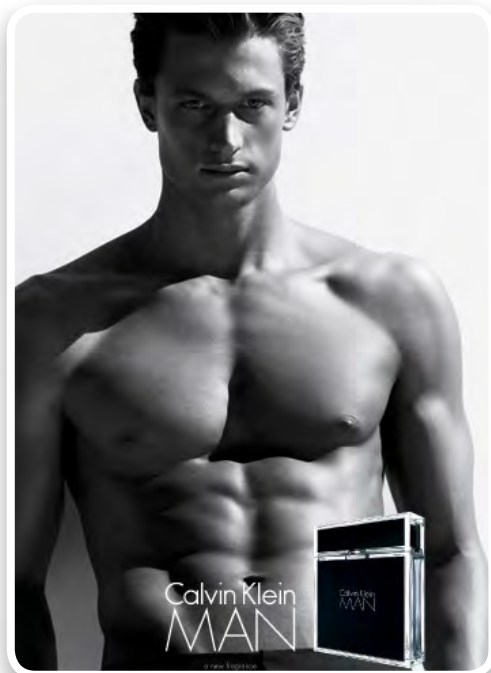
Use your voice to add a different message to ads that promote sexism or violence.

Action

- Get a pile of magazines, or Google the words “sexism and racism in advertising”
- Choose an ad that makes you mad
- Think of a good comeback
- Alter the ad by adding words or images
- Take a picture of your altered version of the ad and share it
- As an alternative, find an ad someone has intelligently altered out in the world (bus stop, billboard, etc.), take a photo of it and share it's message with others

Inspiration

Men are targeted by sexist ads that idealize muscular, powerful physiques, the capacity to be violent, and to have women serving them. But most men don't look like — or act — like this at all. What does this image exclude from the definition of man?



Does the ability to be violent in a game really mean “being a man”?

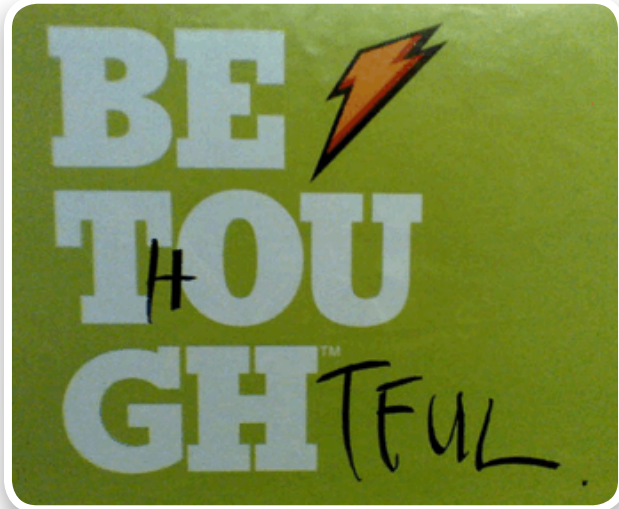


Image via www.mi-web.org

What does this relationship say about their different roles in a household, and why?

Creative Action Plan #6: Talk Back to Ads, Continued.

Photo via altadz.com



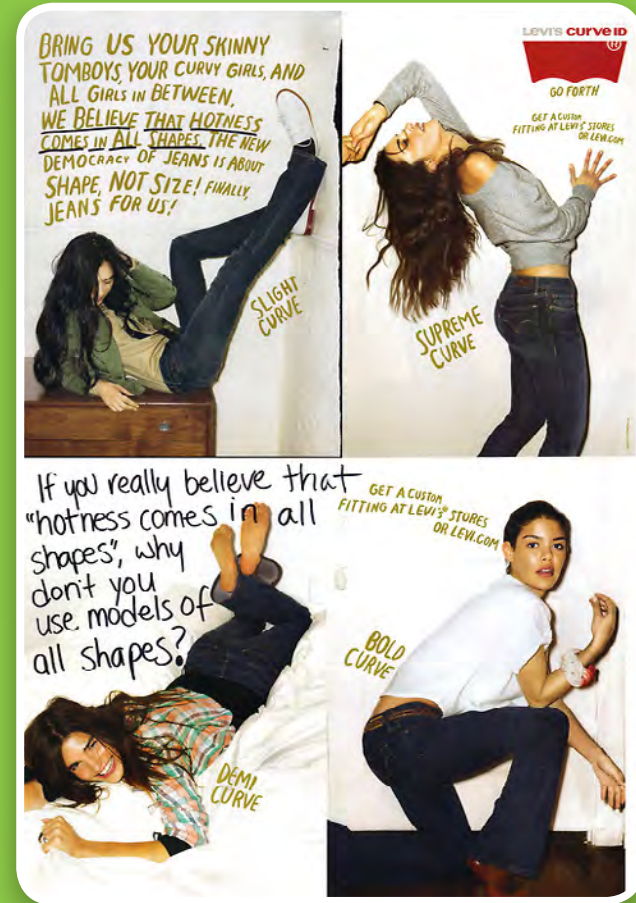
Adding just five letters to this Gatorade ad brings a totally different message about competition and manliness.



Photo ©Jill Posener

A graffiti artist talked back to this ad, and feminist photographer Jill Posener memorialized it forever.

The black marker writing is a viewer talking back to this jeans ad. A student submitted this altered ad via thatsnotcool.org.



Girls protest outside the offices of Seventeen magazine, demanding that Seventeen magazine stop airbrushing models.

Photo by Ann Shoket, Huffington Post News.

Creative Action Plan #7: Play a Video Game

Sometimes you just want to relax your mind or have downtime with friends. You can still do good and inspire positive change, even while playing games on the computer. Invite friends to play these games with you, and use that chance to talk about the issues that come up. Treat it as a social experiment!

Replay: Finding Zoe

www.metrac.org/replay/index.html



Replay: Finding Zoe is an online video game with amazing graphics that tells the story of a group of kids searching for their good friend Zoe. They've heard rumors that lead them to believe

she is in an abusive dating relationship. They have to make choices all along the way to find her and help her get out.



What It Is: Challenge Sexual Violence

www.challengesexualviolence.org

With your arrows, your character moves through parties, streets, and school having conversations with people, answering questions, and getting secret messages. You get to know what's cool and not cool when dealing with consent; myths and realities about sexual assault, harassment, abuse and consent; needs, rights and common concerns of survivors; and how you can support a friend.

A screenshot of the website for the video game 'What It Is: Challenge Sexual Violence'. The website has a purple and pink color scheme. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'THE QUIZ GAME', 'ABOUT', 'MYTHS & REALITIES', 'RESOURCES', 'ACTION', and 'MEDIA & FREE STUFF'. The main content area features a large graphic with the title 'CHALLENGE SEXUAL VIOLENCE' and a quote: 'Many of us are affected by sexual violence but hardly anyone talks about it. Maybe they don't know what it is. Do you?'. Below this is a section titled 'THE GAME' with a video player showing a character in a blue dress and a character in a wheelchair. To the right of the video player is a social media section with a 'DONATE' button, a 'COVER YOUR TRACKS' button, and a tweet from @whatitgame. The tweet reads: 'Toronto Crime by Neighbourhood' by @CBCNews: http://t.co/PgcvKsB9 (about 4 hours ago). Below the tweet is another quote: 'Are per-incident rape-pregnancy rates higher than per-incident consensual pregnancy rates?' in Human Nature journal: http://t.co/KQPgNoCD.

These two video games are made in Canada. The phone numbers and websites they offer as places to get help are Canadian. To complete the extra credit of this creative action, find out what resources for people experiencing dating violence or sexual assault are available in the United States, and share that with your friends. Tip: Google for the word "Hotline."

Creative Action Plan #8: Send a Letter

Goal

Use your political voice! Tell lawmakers that dating abuse and family violence are real problems—and get their attention.

Action

- In the month of February, people send valentines to their politicians to raise awareness about dating and domestic violence.
- Look up your senator or representative by your zip code, or choose another influential person to write to.
- Make a valentine/write a letter and decorate it with your message.
- Put a stamp on it and put it in the mailbox. Be sure to add your return address so they can write you back.

Inspiration

If you just want to write a short note, you could use messages like:

- I'll be voting soon, and I care about domestic violence!
- Love shouldn't hurt – please fund dating violence prevention!

You could also...

- Tell them how abuse or violence has affected your life.
- Ask them what they will do to protect and educate the community
- Find out what your town needs, and request it



Artwork
by Riitta Ikonen

Sample Letter to Senator/Representative

Adding a personal story or writing by hand
will make your message stand out.

[Date]

Dear Representative [Name] OR Dear Senator [Name],

Did you know that one in three teens experiences some type of abuse in their dating relationships – and one in ten experiences physical violence? This is not okay, and I want schools to do more about it.

Abuse in teen relationships is not just unhealthy; it can be scary and very dangerous. It is important to teach young people about our rights to healthy relationships, and how to have them, in our classes. We want resources to protect ourselves and help our friends stay safe. Giving that support in middle schools and high schools will help us grow up.

I ask for your help to stop dating abuse early by making sure students learn about it before they start dating. Please write me back to let me know what you think about this issue and what your plans are.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Name of your school]

Who Represents Me?

Find out who represents you in Congress here: www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml. Your Senator or Representative makes decisions that affect everyone you know. They also listen to you – because you are in their district!

Creative Action Plan #9: Collage a Change

Goal

Express the truth about the pain of discrimination — or the beauty of a world without it.

Action

- Gather magazines, newspapers, scissors, paint, paintbrushes, and big paper.
- Make a collage about violence in the world that you've known, and that you want to leave behind, or
- Make a collage about what the world can look like when love and nonviolence are protected, or
- Make a collage about healing from abuse.
- Take photos of your collage and share them on social media. Xerox your collage and post it on telephone poles or public bulletin boards.

Inspiration

Tegan of the band Tegan and Sara created a collage of a map of the U.S. with the statement “UNITE THE STATES” and “Love Unites” to show her desire for a country standing in solidarity for equality and human rights for all.

Here are a few of the universal human rights as established by the United Nations:

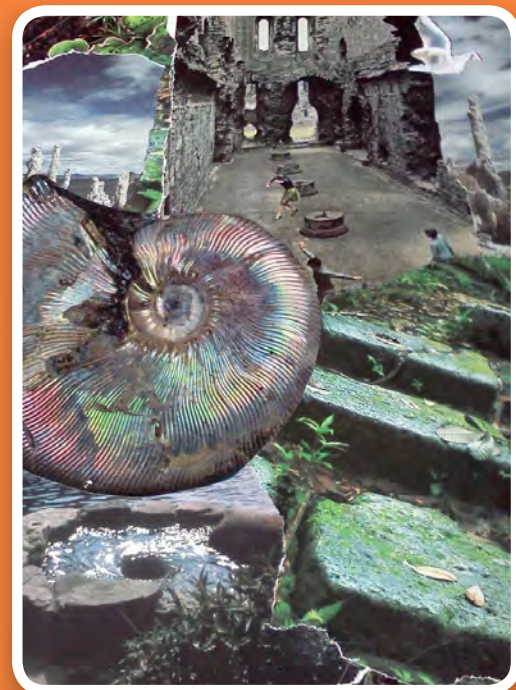
- Everyone is born free and has dignity because they are human.
- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.



This collage image via human-rights-for-all.org



What do a girl reading a book, a heart, and wings have in common? Teacher Laurie Ann Guerrero in San Antonio, TX collaged them together to represent the freedom that comes with writing her truths.



What moments of change in your life have been powerful enough to seem like a poem?

Artist Sumitra D'Aragon made this collage to show the place of healing peace she found after being abused.

Creative Action Plan #10: Vox Pop Your World

The phrase “vox pop” comes from the Latin term vox populi, which means “voice of the people.” It’s a way to get a snapshot of what a community feels about a subject — or to open up a conversation by hearing lots of different perspectives. A vox pop is an exciting and fun project to do with a group.

Goal

Find out what people in your area think — and create a conversation about something that really matters.



Action

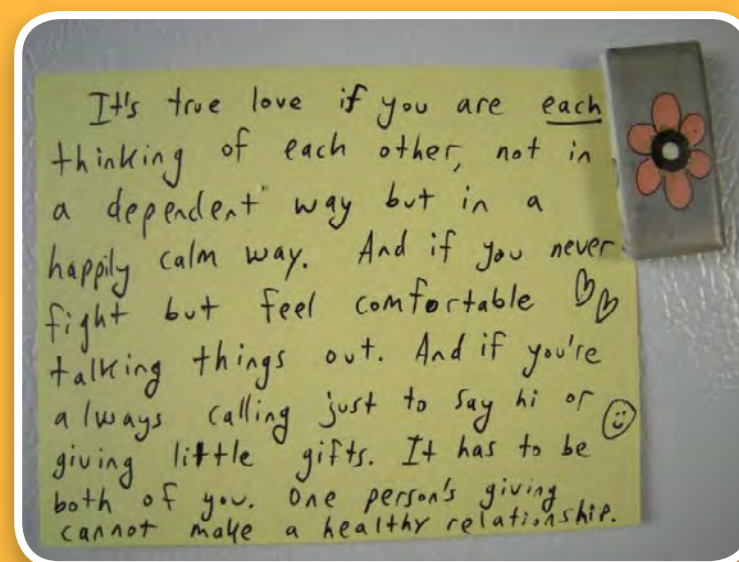
- **Choose one of these four questions (or create your own):**
 - *What's true, healthy love?*
 - *What's the best thing your mother/father taught you?*
 - *What's the first step to ending violence?*
 - *What world issue concerns you the most, and why?*
- **Decide who to interview**
 - Men/women/all genders
 - Adults/teens/kids/all ages
 - Strangers
 - Friends or family
 - Yourself
- **Decide how to collect answers**
 - Record with a voice recorder or phone camera
 - Write answers down by hand
 - Set up two chairs and a video camera in a public place
 - Take photos of people holding signs of their written answers
- **Ask the question**
- **Share the voice of the people!**

Inspiration

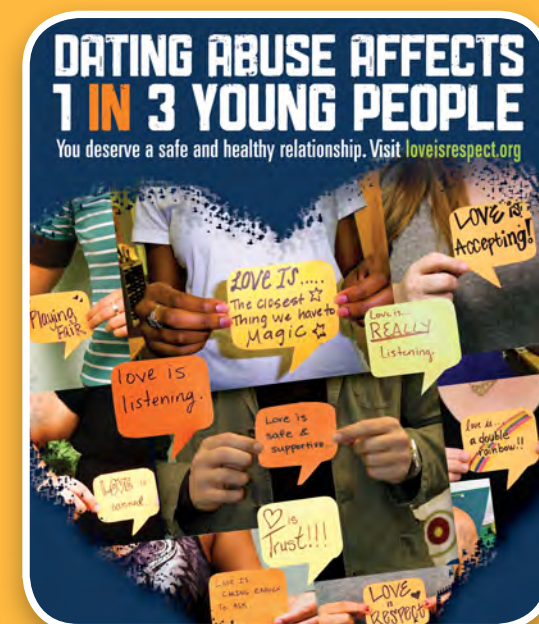
This website presents a different vox pop each week:
topofthevox pops.tumblr.com

Asking people to participate is best done fast — don't give them time to worry about their hair or what their boss will think. You can start off with, “Would you mind answering a quick question for a class project?” Be sure to thank them sincerely when they are done and tell them the name of the program you are with.

This vox pop asked the question, “What’s true, healthy love?” The question was posed on a bulletin board, and hundreds of people wrote responses back and tacked them to the bulletin board as well. Image via wheelquestions.org, curated by Johnny Monsarrat.



Youth answer the phone lines, chat and text messages, 24/7 at loveisrespect.org. They talk to peers and share help about healthy dating and dealing with abuse or violence. These peer advocates answered the question “Love is...” for this photo.



Creative Action Plan #10: Vox Pop Your World, Continued.

Students in Texas wrote about true, healthy love in a writing workshop, and collaged their responses together into a poem:

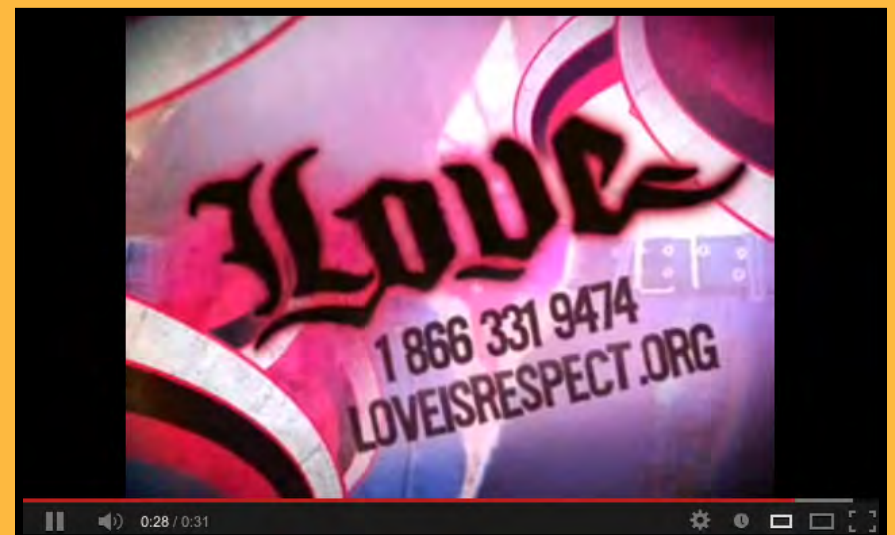
I can't talk about the true, healthy love without talking about the anti-loves. The anti-loves are the ones who no one loves, therefore that is all they know. They are the ones with no belief in themselves. I've never told anyone how easily I fall for the anti-love. I don't know why, but we always meet. I will learn one day to tell the difference between real love and anti-love.

*Real love
=
equality
=
freedom
=
safety
=
relaxation.*

Love is Respect Videos: LOVE should be exciting. Check out www.loveisrespect.org for more of our LOVE campaign.



youtu.be/YWL9gu7erlc



youtu.be/V2bRR3yrJ-0

Creative Action #11: Living Sculptures

Goal

Show what equality looks like in any relationship using bodies only, and no words. It's exciting to do this in public because it will attract a lot of attention and interest! This can be silent theater, mime, dance, or voguing.

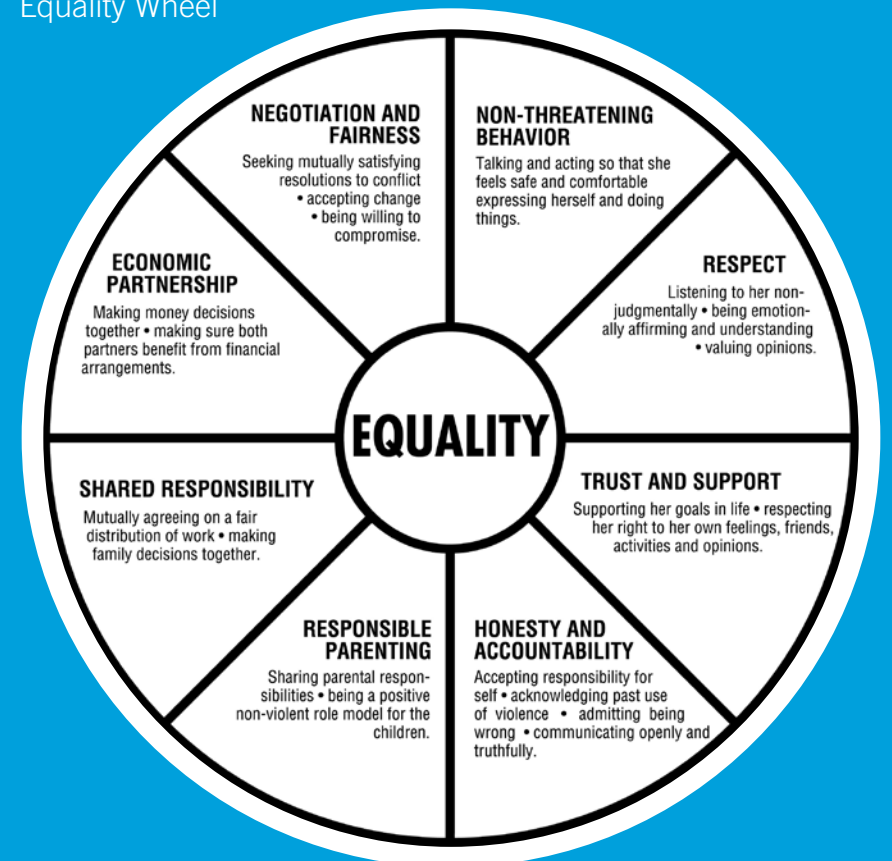
Action

- Get a group of two or more people together to look at the Equality Wheel
- Play around with some theater warm-ups and physical stretches
- Choose a person to say “Start” “Stop” or “Switch” as you move through the wheel
- Choose a slice of the pie to act out with your bodies, using no words
- Take shapes together that embody that form of equality — and it's opposite
- Perform your living sculptures in public or at school
- Hand out copies of the equality wheel to people who stop to watch

“While I dance I cannot judge, I cannot hate, I cannot separate myself from life. I can only be joyful and whole. That is why I dance.”

- Hans Bos

Inspiration Equality Wheel



Spanish Equality Wheel from the **Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board**

Creative Action #12: Thank a Friend

Goal

We learn almost everything from our friends — and friendship is the best ground to build romantic relationships on, too. Use your favorite form of art to honor someone you care about, thank them, or give them props.

Action

- Choose your favorite form of creative action
- Think of a friend who has taught you something important about love, nonviolence, equality, kindness (A friend can also be, of course, yourself).
- Appreciate them and express what you've learned from them
- Share it and enjoy the good feeling of showing gratitude.

Inspiration

"It's been five years since my parents got divorced and I stood crying my eyes out on the sidewalk even though it was so freezing there were icicles hanging off of the trees. You saw me and came out of your apartment with a cup of hot chocolate for me and told me your name. We had never met before but I knew we were the same on the inside. Thank you."

- Louisa Sugar

*"Listen
with the night falling we are saying thank you
we are stopping on the bridges to bow from the railings
we are running out of the glass rooms
with our mouths full of food to look at the sky
and say thank you"*

--W.S. Merwin, "Thanks"



Artwork by Yumi Sakugawa - www.yumisakugawa.com