

PortraitX



Preventing gender based violence with cybernetic adolescents in schools

What is PortraitX?

The first youth-driven classroom program that expands the scope of sexual education by including the building of healthy relationships both online and off. *PortraitX* goes across Canada to bring an educational platform to schools that integrates technology, social emotional learning, and creativity.

How does the program work?

PortraitX consists of 6 engaging sessions that integrate technology and artistic expression. *PortraitX* uses art and media to disrupt gender-based stereotypes and attitudes that can lead to violence, while teaching adolescents how to navigate the emotions that arise during dating.

WHAT

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), *PortraitX* is bringing six innovative workshops to classrooms, led by qualified *PortraitX* team members. With a customized application for mobile devices, students will participate in collaborative portrait creation, which integrates research and art therapy tools approved by the Tri-Council Ethics Board through McGill University.

WHO

Adolescents ages 14+ in high schools in Quebec and expanding across the country.

PROGRAM GOALS

HOW

PortraitX is youth-tested, youth-approved and digitally fueled. A curated collection of museum artworks allows students to explore emotions, identity, relationships and gender norms. Springboarding from this experience, students create their own collection of self-portraits, which gives voice to their personal affective experience. Then digitally combining their collection with others, students collaborate to create a new artistic expression, comprised of both imagery and messages (memes). The project's impact is represented by a collective assemblage of the portraits to be exhibited on the school walls and on social media.

WHY

Technology has become an integral part of how we communicate, how we build relationships and how we educate ourselves. Today, youth communicate without the benefit of understanding the reach of the technology at their fingertips. They exchange images and messages that often lead to unhealthy relationships. *PortraitX* shifts this paradigm by using the very same tools to educate for positive change for the next generation: to promote empathy and self-awareness, respectful communication and critical thinking both in the real and virtual worlds.

Necessity by the Numbers

2 IN 3 victims of sexual assault are under the age of 18 (Public Safety, 2013)

1 IN 5 reported offenders are under the age of 18 (Public Safety, 2013)

1 IN 5

girls are victims of sexual violence perpetrated by their partner (Public Safety, 2013)

ALMOST 9 IN 10 minors who have been sexually assaulted know their assailant (Public Safety, 2013)

Students in urban settings own a device and use it daily for about on average from as young as 8 years-old. (MediaSmarts, 2018)

TWO HOURS

FROM 2010-2015 research has found a generational increase in mental health issues for adolescents ages 13 to 18 (Twenge et al., 2018)

REFERENCES

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Nathalie Hazan

Founder and President, Raison d'art

(514) 995.9454

nhazan@raisondart.org

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