



An innovative youth-driven classroom program with an app that propels art and digital media to educate students on how to build healthy relationships online and off.

What is portraitX?

portraitX is a modern sexual health education program that propels art & digital media to educate students on how to build healthy relationships. Trained moderators work with youth in grades 6-12 directly in a classroom to guide them through activities, group discussions, and collaborative media making. With a trauma-informed lens, we teach students the facts about sexuality and the essential skills necessary to navigate relationships online and off.

How does the program work?

The portraitX team delivers up to 6 workshops through their custom app and iPads with inclusive educational content and digital media to disrupt stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes that can lead to violence.

Program goals

App

portraitX is an application designed for iPads that delivers essential content developed for/by youth and supports the Sexual Health Education curriculum. Our app features 6 interactive workshops, a safe chat space, robust resources, unique collaborative creation tools, and much more!

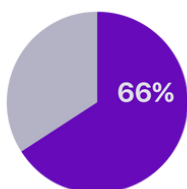
Impact

portraitX believes it is imperative to teach youth the skills that build healthy relationships. Through our innovative intervention, we educate to empower youth and to support school communities to harness the power of digital media to shift culture towards healthier ways of connecting.

Research

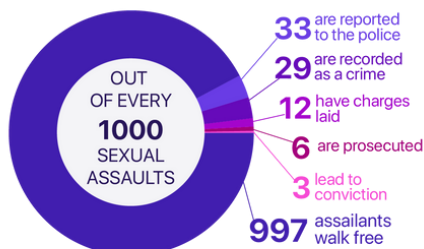
Today's youth communicate with technology at their fingertips. This experience is integral to how they build relationships - healthy or not. Our participatory research focused on how we can help our youth find ways to prevent relational violence both online and in person.

Are teens at risk of sexual violence?



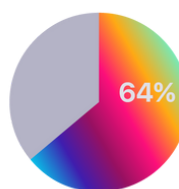
About **66%** of the victims were under the age of 18, and the majority were girls.¹

Is sexual assault common?



There are around **460,000 sexual assaults** in Canada every year.²

Who are vulnerable populations?



Women and children, and particularly, people who are **disabled, Aboriginal peoples, refugees, immigrants, visible minorities, LGBT individuals**.³

In Canada, teen dating violence is a public health problem, with one in three youth reporting an experience of relational violence. Statistics show that youth today are experiencing violence at alarming rates both online and in person and the impacts are real and long-lasting.

In response, portraitX:

Educates youth about various aspects of dating, relationships and sexual violence. portraitX curriculum addresses the essential themes of sexuality, gender, and relationships in up to six workshops that support the Quebec requirements for sexual education in high schools.

Equips youth with the skills to be critical of discrimination and gender stereotypes in their lives. portraitX is an innovative youth-driven classroom program with an app that propels art and digital media to educate students on how to build healthy relationships online and off. Designed and built by youth for youth, portraitX reaches students in a manner that will resonate with them and reflect their diverse experiences and identities.

Effects positive change through collaborative art and media-making. Our unique program is arts-based and digitally fuelled. We use art and digital media to disrupt gender-based stereotypes and attitudes that can lead to violence, while teaching adolescents how to navigate the emotions that arise within relationships.

Lens of practice

Trauma-informed

A trauma-informed approach recognizes the signs and impacts of trauma and seeks to provide education in a manner that is caring, empathetic while prioritizing survivor's well-being.

Arts-based

The arts-based approach in portraitX mobilizes digital media-making as "a way of knowing" with unique interactive, empathic and collaborative qualities.

Inclusive

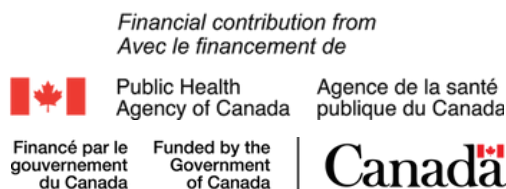
An inclusive approach recognizes and promotes diversity (this includes race, gender, socioeconomic background, sexual identity, disabilities, etc).

Ethical

Our ethics are evaluated in concert with our research partners at McGill University. We follow the Tri-Council Policy regarding the protection of individuals and human rights.

"Educating young Canadians about how to identify unhealthy relationships and ways to prevent dating violence is at the core of the Government of Canada's efforts to promote gender equality and to end gender-based violence. I am proud to announce our Government's support for this project, which is developing new ways to #InnovateforChange and to reach youth in a manner that will resonate with them and reflect their experiences and identities."

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health Canada, 2019



References

1. The 2016-2021 Government Strategy to Prevent and Counteract Sexual Violence, Gouvernement du Québec, 2016.
2. Johnson, "Limits of a Criminal Justice Response: Trends in Police and Court Processing of Sexual Assault," in Sheehy, Sexual Assault in Canada: Law, Legal Practice and Women's Activism, 2012.
3. The 2016-2021 Government Strategy to Prevent and Counteract Sexual Violence, Gouvernement du Québec, 2016.