



# Anxiety prevention program for high school students

## HORS-PISTE program

THE HORS-PISTE program (secondary component) is an anxiety prevention program for high school students initiated by the *Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale* and developed in partnership by more than a hundred stakeholders from the school, health and social services, community, and university sectors. A group of parents and students also had input in its development.

### Secondary cycle one

The program for secondary cycle one students is made up of two separate components: the universal prevention (Exploration) component and the early intervention (Expedition) component.

## HORS-PISTE - Exploration

This component, offered to all secondary 1 and 2 students, is generally led by school staff members (teachers and guidance counsellors).

### What is it?

- 10 workshops each lasting 60 minutes, usually carried out over two school years starting in secondary cycle one
- During autumn
- During class time



### What's the goal?

- Develop and promote **psychosocial skills**, which are determinants of **health and well-being**
- Prevent **anxiety disorders** and other adjustment disorders

### What's it about?

#### Workshops 1-5

1. Stress
2. Anxiety
3. Social comparison
4. Emotions
5. Peer pressure

#### Workshops 6-10

6. Self-esteem
7. Compassion
8. Communication
9. Prosocial behaviour
10. Critical thinking



## HORS-PISTE

### Expedition

This component is offered to vulnerable students, who still have certain risk factors and/or anxiety symptoms even after participating in the universal prevention component. It is jointly led by a school guidance counsellor and a professional from the CI(U)SSS.

### What is it?

- 5 workshops for students (8 per group) and 3 workshops for their parents
- During winter or spring
- Outside of class time

### What's the goal?

- For the students: expand their comfort zone
- For the parents: better understand and recognize anxiety and develop tools to better support their adolescent.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre has put together a support team to help the schools get the program up and running. Want to offer the HORS-PISTE program at your school? Email the team at [programme.horspiste.ci:sssmc16@sss.gov.qc.ca](mailto:programme.horspiste.ci:sssmc16@sss.gov.qc.ca).

**HORS-PISTE doesn't mean out in left field!**

# HORS-PISTE program

Secondary cycle two

The HORS-PISTE - Exploration program for secondary cycle two students is an opportunity for them to apply what they learned during the HORS-PISTE - Exploration program in cycle one.

This component, led by school staff members, is based on an innovative approach that encourages schools to think outside the box.

## 3 proposed activities

1. **Non-academic activities** that provide students with unique experiences.
2. **In-class activities** that allow teachers to achieve their learning objectives while addressing topics related to psychosocial development.
3. **“Community-based” activities** that support the development of a school environment conducive to overall wellness.

## A few examples...

- A nature connection activity, developed with the *Université dans la nature* ([www.unature.org/en/](http://www.unature.org/en/))
- A theme week on healthy lifestyle habits
- A gym class activity on the benefits of exercise on well-being
- An art class activity that has students draw or paint the various psychosocial skills
- A philosophical discussion about happiness in English
- A group awareness-building activity on the calming and anxiety-provoking elements at school using the photovoice method
- The incorporation of breathing exercises into daily life



An interdisciplinary team of researchers from several universities is currently working on assessing the implementation and outcomes of this program!



