Speak Up

An Action Plan To Address Bullying and Cyberbullying Behaviour

NOVA SCOTIA

Speak Up

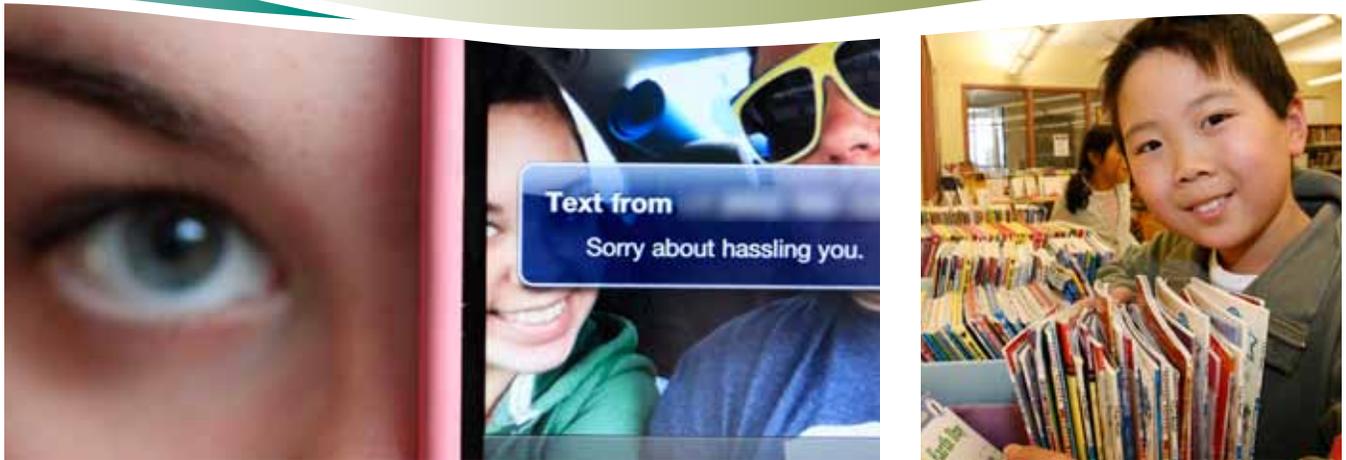An Action Plan To
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Introduction and Background

Bullying and cyberbullying are serious social issues and we all have a role to play in dealing with them and helping each of us understand how our behaviour affects others.

In Kids and Learning First, the province's plan to help every student succeed, government committed to act on the issues of bullying and cyberbullying in partnership with families and community partners. The goal is to create supportive school and community environments where all Nova Scotians can feel accepted and safe.

Speak Up: An Action Plan To Address Bullying and Cyberbullying Behaviour will bring together the groups and supports needed to address this complex issue. The plan will help Nova Scotia to establish a culture where

• respectful and responsible relationships are promoted

• bullying behaviour is neither accepted nor tolerated

• government and community continue to work together on this issue

Government acknowledges the tremendous input and energy of Nova Scotians who actively engaged and contributed to the work of the Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying, as well as the effort and expertise of the working group who supported the process. The task force's work has been recognized nationally and internationally for how it has contributed to our understanding of bullying and cyberbullying. According to Carswell's *Education and Law Journal*, the task force has made many valuable recommendations for next steps in Nova Scotia's bullying/cyberbullying prevention efforts.[1]

Nova Scotia Has Taken Significant Steps in Addressing Bullying and Cyberbullying

• We created a cyberbullying task force to examine the scope and prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying in Nova Scotia.

• We defined bullying and cyberbullying in the *Education Act* as severely disruptive behaviours.

• We have hired an anti-bullying coordinator.

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[1] Education and Law Journal Volume 22 #1 December, 2012 p.103

The task force's report, *Respectful and Responsible Relationships: There's No App for That*, has guided the creation of this action plan, which has been developed by the departments of Education, Justice, Community Services, Health and Wellness, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, as well as the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission.

What Is Bullying and Cyberbullying?

In order to address bullying, we first need to fully understand the circumstances and surroundings in which it happens. Children, youth, families, and communities today interact with each other in many different ways, on many different levels—it's a complex web of relationships. Getting along with others requires that we all have critical life skills and behaviours, including the ability to be respectful, empathic, and supportive of each other.

Bullying is a learned behaviour developed over time and carried out through relationships. It can emerge within traditional settings or within social media settings. It is important to note that while social media may become the setting for bullying behaviour, it is not the reason for the bullying—it is the medium.

Bullying behaviour is also a relational issue; it can arise from problems within personal relationships. Therefore, resolving it is best done through a process that addresses social and emotional learning. Bullying behaviours must never be ignored and our responses to them must be united and consistent.

The digital environment (social media) allows people to remain anonymous and unidentified. This sense of "no one knows it's me" can increase bullying actions, and that can make it difficult to influence behaviour and build ways to hold people accountable for their behaviour. It is important that Nova Scotians learn how to be good digital citizens who understand and take responsibility for how their decisions and behaviours affect others in the digital world. Social media creates serious, long-term implications for the victims of cyberbullying. We are aware that cyberbullying includes a wide spectrum of harms including sexualized violence, which will require a specialized response.

Building Digital Citizenship

- Give cell phone customers information on responsible cell phone use at the point of sale.

- Develop and maintain an anti-bullying website and social media platforms.

- Revise curriculum to strengthen responsible digital citizenship.

- Provide resources to support teachers' professional development in digital citizenship and anti-bullying.

In order for government and community to work together on this issue, it is important that we have a shared understanding, vision, and approach. Government has accepted the definitions of bullying and cyberbullying as recommended by the task force in their report and amended the *Education Act* and Regulations accordingly. Those definitions are as follows:

> **Bullying** means behaviour, typically repeated, that is intended to cause or should be known to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress, or other harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation, or property, and can be direct or indirect, and includes assisting or encouraging the behaviour in any way.

> **Cyberbullying** means bullying by electronic means that occurs through the use of technology, including computers or other electronic devices, social networks, text messaging, instant messaging, websites, or e-mail.

The frequency of bullying and cyberbullying is striking—and so are its consequences, both emotional and educational. A 2010 Canadian Teachers' Federation survey revealed that 85 per cent of Canadians feel bullying and violence are very serious problems.[2] Canadian teachers ranked cyberbullying as their highest issue of concern from six listed options, with 89 per cent suggesting bullying and violence are serious problems in our public schools.

In the Nova Scotia Cyberbullying Task Force Online Survey, 75 per cent of respondents say they believe bullying is a problem in Nova Scotia, and 60 per cent of Nova Scotia student respondents indicate that they have been bullied.[3]

The Progress in International Literacy Study (PIRLS) identified that

- internationally, more than half of grade 4 students (53 per cent) reported experiencing bullying behaviour about weekly or about monthly

- in Canada, the percentage of bullied students is even higher at 56 per cent, with 20 per cent of students reporting experiencing bullying behaviour weekly, and 36 per cent reporting experiencing bullying behaviour monthly

- in Nova Scotia, students reported experiencing bullying behaviour about weekly at 18 per cent and experiencing bullying behaviour about monthly at 32 per cent.[4]

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[2] N.S.T.U. Cyberbullying Statistics, "National Issues in Education Poll" Canadian Teachers' Federation (2010).

[3] Nova Scotia Cyberbullying Task Force Online Survey, Nova Scotia Department of Education (2011). (Appendix B)

[4] "PIRLS 2011 International Results in Reading," Ina V.S.Mullis, Michael O. Martin, Pierre Foy, and Kathleen T. Drucker.

A 2009 issue of *Juristat* (the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics' periodical), which focused on self-reported Internet victimization, showed that certain people are more at risk of being bullied. These included younger adults (those aged 18 to 24 years) (17 per cent), those who are single (15 per cent), those who self-reported being bisexual (24 per cent) or homosexual (18 per cent), and those who accessed social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace (11 per cent). In addition, those with an activity limitation (i.e., limited in the amount or kind of activity because of a long-term physical or mental condition or health problem) were more likely than those with no limitation to report having been cyberbullied. It has also been reported that slightly less than 1 in 10 adults (9 per cent) reported cyberbullying against at least one child in their household, and 2 per cent reported a case of child luring. Most adults (71 per cent) indicated that the child who had been cyberbullied was female.[5]

These statistics clearly indicate a need for a coordinated approach that promotes awareness, establishes partnerships, and leads to a system-wide response, while at the same time ensuring people are held responsible and accountable for their behaviour.

What We Have Learned

We have learned about bullying and cyberbullying from many sources, including the Nova Scotia Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying, the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights, and Nova Scotians who responded to our focus groups and surveys.

We have learned that bullying and cyberbullying have a negative effect on our engagement, productivity, and quality of life as Nova Scotians.

We have learned that bullying and cyberbullying behaviours happen for complex reasons, and that means we need to provide extensive and ongoing support.

We have learned that we need solid data and evidence in order to make effective decisions on these issues.

We have learned that we need to take a coordinated and collaborative approach to this issue, one that promotes awareness of and response to bullying and cyberbullying behaviours, enhances our ability to relate to one another, and creates change.

Most importantly, we have learned that a broader societal change is necessary. It is our hope that our children and youth will be leaders in bringing about this cultural shift where bullying is not acceptable in any environment.

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[5] Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics *Juristat* article "Self-reported Internet Victimization in Canada, 2009."

What Parents Can Do

- Be alert to signs of bullying. Many instances of bullying behaviour go unreported. Report it!

- Connect with services and supports in your community to help youth build healthy relationships through the Speak Up action plan.

- Stay informed. Bullying is a societal issue and everyone can help to prevent it.

As this action plan is implemented, we will work closely with strategies and initiatives that support children, youth, and families, including but not limited to

- Kids and Learning First
  http://novascotia.ca/kidsandlearning/pub/KL-en.pdf

- Crime Prevention Framework
  http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/cp/ncps-eng.aspx

- Cybersafe Girl: Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women
  http://www.cybersafegirl.ca/

- SchoolsPlus
  https://schoolsplus.ednet.ns.ca/

- Child and Youth Strategy
  http://novascotia.ca/coms/families/ChildandYouthStrategy.html

- Mental Health and Addictions Strategy
  http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/mhs/mental-health-addiction-strategy.asp

- Health Promoting Schools
  https://nshps.ca/

- Early Years Project
  http://novascotia.ca/earlyyears/

- Thrive!
  https://thrive.novascotia.ca/

- **Sexual Violence Strategic Framework** (under development)

- Domestic Violence Action Plan
  http://novascotia.ca/news/smr/2010-12-03-domestic-violence-plan/media
  Domestic-Violence-Action-Plan.pdf

- Mental Health Commission of Canada
  http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/Pages/default.aspx

The Early Years

Young children need environments that are caring and responsive and include support and positive reinforcement from parents and other adults so that they have opportunities to explore their world, to play, and to learn how to speak and listen to others. Programming and intervention needs to begin early and be tailored to children's age, gender, diverse needs, and competencies. Studies show that the most sensitive period in brain development occurs from the prenatal period to 5 years. This means that by the time children reach school age (5–7), they have already formed habits in the ways they interact with peers and respond emotionally—and these habits influence the children's abilities to form healthy relationships. [6]

Children need to learn how to develop positive relationships with their peers at an early age; this learning cannot not wait until they enter school. They need to learn early on how to adjust and adapt to new environments and to trust the people in them. They need to learn how to communicate and regulate their own behaviour so they can form healthy, positive relationships and build a sense of attachment and belonging.

It is important to recognize that children need to learn to think socially before they can begin to act socially. Social skills are used throughout everyone's day—whether the child is at play, at school, on the bus, participating in extracurricular activities, engaged in classroom work, or enjoying lunch. There is no place or situation in which children do not apply their social thinking and related skills.

Being able to relate to others in a positive way—including those we get along with as well and those that present challenges—is at the core of social thinking and the use of social skills. Fostering those skills from an early age is key.

Key Settings

Relationships are central in the lives of children and youth at home, in school, and in the community. These relationships can be healthy and supportive of a young person's well-being, but can also have a negative impact. These relationships can be affected by peers and adults. It is in these settings where we need to create supportive environments to help promote the development of positive interactions that result in healthy relationships.

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[6] Nash 1997; Early Years Study 1999; Shonkoff 2000.

SchoolsPlus is part of the *Our Kids Are Worth It: Strategy for Children and Youth*. It promotes family friendly schools and provides access to services within the school setting and beyond the school day. The services provided at each SchoolsPlus site respect and address the unique needs of each community and may include mentoring programs, youth health centres, outreach, youth groups, and mental health clinicians. These services are provided through partnerships among the following government departments: Community Services, Education, Justice, Health and Wellness, and other community organizations.

The vision of SchoolsPlus is for schools to become centres of service delivery, making it easier for professionals to collaborate with each other to help children, youth, and families. The Department of Education is planning to continue to expand the SchoolsPlus model to every county and have a total of 28 hub sites across the province by 2017.

Students and families benefit from SchoolsPlus. In fact, recent evaluation has found that the delivery of programs and services through SchoolsPlus has been successful; students reported improvement in their academics, attendance, discipline, and social life.

SchoolsPlus

- Brings professionals and programs together
- Benefits students and families through improved academics, attendance, discipline, and social life
- Will expand to every county with 28 hub sites by 2017

Behavioural management is only effective if the approach used is organized and consistent. There needs to be school-wide support for proactive strategies that define, teach, and model appropriate student behaviours and create positive school environments.

Positive, effective behaviour support is comprehensive and planned. It works in collaboration with the school, home, and community to provide opportunities for each student to develop socially, emotionally, and cognitively. The goal is to create safe and positive learning environments that maximize time on task and improve academic achievement for all students. Students are also encouraged to carry this behaviour into their homes and the larger community.

Nova Scotia's School Code of Conduct identifies behaviour standards for all school members as well as consequences for not following those standards. Severely disruptive behaviour, which includes bullying and cyberbullying, is never ignored. Appropriate action is always taken. The provincial School Code of Conduct strengthens and supports positive social relationships as a school-wide goal, endorses using a restorative approach to strengthen safe and secure school communities, and, in the process, holds all school members accountable to address bullying and cyberbullying.

Nova Scotia School Code of Conduct

- Identifies behaviour standards and consequences for non-compliance

- Never ignores severely disruptive behaviour, which includes bullying and cyberbullying

- Always takes appropriate action to ensure personal accountability

A restorative approach will provide a basis for schools to better understand and respond to bullying. It does so by building positive and healthy relationships in schools between students, staff, administration, parents, and the community. It shifts the culture of the school so that when conflicts do develop, everyone is better equipped to resolve issues together.

A restorative approach provides a foundation for building strong and healthy relationships and addressing harmful patterns of relationships, without being limited to a process or a response to bullying in particular. Evidence has shown that bullying is addressed and reduced in schools that adopt a restorative approach. This is because a restorative approach is broadly engaged in practical and positive ways of modelling healthy relationships and supporting school and community attachment.

Taking a restorative approach in schools encourages, promotes, and enables leadership by

- enhancing students' capacity for positive relationships

- ensuring personal accountability

- building community

The restorative approach helps us pay more attention to the web of relationships going on in the schools. It shows students ways of thinking about their own problems and experiences in relationship to other situations, and other people. It invites students to know more about each other and to think

about themselves in connection to others. That helps students develop and participate in safe and healthy relationships, and secure attachments to school communities.

Schools in Nova Scotia that are already implementing a restorative approach report positive results. Principals are reporting fewer suspensions, in some cases as high as an 80 per cent reduction; and fewer discipline issues, in some cases a reduction from 65 to 14 lost teaching days due to a decrease in disruptive behaviours. Overall, schools report a much more positive school environment.[7]

Restorative Approaches in Schools

- Schools using the restorative approach report positive results with fewer bullying and school discipline issues and fewer suspensions.

- The initiative is expanding to more schools; all the tools and resources educators need to accomplish this are being developed.

The community is a setting where children, youth, and families come together to interact. Recreation organizations need funding to develop programming for children and youth that helps them develop self-esteem and build resiliency. This programming should also provide positive mentoring experiences that will increase opportunities for children and youth to have positive and satisfying interactions with peers.

Why Do We Need an Action Plan?

Research and the feedback from the task force show us the devastating impact that bullying behaviour has on families. We recognize that parents are seeking answers and ways to help their children; this action plan creates the pathways to address these concerns. By taking this issue seriously through legislation, regulation, policy, and programming, we are building our capacity to create safe, sustainable, responsive environments where children and youth can thrive. We need to work together to build a community-wide approach to help children and youth make, maintain, and repair relationships, and ensure they develop a deeper awareness and understanding of a shared responsibility for each other.

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[7] Halpern,E. 2011; Building School Communities of Attachment and Relationship: A Restorative Approach to Schools in Nova Scotia.

Parents care deeply about their children and want the best for them. Parents want to know how they can be both proactive and supportive, so that they can prevent their child's or youth's involvement in bullying behaviour before it starts, and know how to respond if their child is engaging in bullying behaviours, or is being harmed by an individual who is bullying.

Seeking help can be confusing and challenging. Comprehensive and accessible information for parents, children, youth, and the community is needed, and will help parents both understand and advocate for their children on this issue.

The Action Plan Supports Children, Parents, and Families

This support includes

- mental health supports, suicide-risk identification and assessment, co-location of mental health clinicians in schools

- community mentoring programs to promote self-esteem and build resiliency with children and youth

- support for the development of Gay Straight Alliances in schools

- positive after-school programs including *Lighthouses* and *After the Bell*

The action plan will bring together information and services that help parents become more informed and empowered to seek opportunities, programs, or resources to support their children or youth.

What Is the Action Plan?

Nova Scotia has already been working to create safe and secure learning environments and physical spaces that enhance engagement, improve learning, and build school and community attachment. This action plan recognizes and builds on those efforts.

The goal of this action plan is to provide a framework to address bullying behaviours that will help us achieve the following outcomes for Nova Scotians:

- Healthy families and safe communities

- Respectful and responsible relationships

- A culture where healthy interpersonal relationships are promoted and supported, and bullying behaviour is neither accepted nor tolerated

- Ongoing dialogue and network between government and community

What Are Government's Focus Areas?

This action plan focuses on four key areas:

1. Interpersonal Relationships
   To develop social thinking skills that enable our children and youth to successfully navigate lifelong challenges associated with their ever-changing world.

2. Public Awareness and Education
   To work with youth and communities to raise awareness and change attitudes towards bullying behaviours.

3. Partnerships
   To establish and expand partnerships that will support system-wide change in bullying and cyberbullying behaviours.

4. System Response: Accountability and Responsibility
   To ensure that laws and regulations governing system response reflect our core values and provide a way to effectively change attitudes toward bullying behaviours.

Developing Community Awareness

- unlikecyberbullying.ca public awareness campaign

- Annual conference to address the issues and impacts of bullying and cyberbullying

- Strengthening of school curriculum resources

- Sharing of point of sale information for cellular telephones

- Community information workshops for not-for-profit sectors who work with youth

Speak Up:
An Action Plan To Address Bullying and Cyberbullying Behaviour

This action plan will outline the new actions government will undertake. The logic model for the plan appears at the end of this document. A listing of all current actions across government that relate to the four focus areas of this plan follows the logic model in Appendix A.

► Interpersonal Relationships

Government's new actions:

- **Promote the Restorative Approaches in Schools initiative:** Support this three-year plan to work collaboratively to build the tools and resources educators need to transform their schools into restorative schools.

- **Support the expansion of SchoolsPlus:** Fund a five-year plan to expand from 12 SchoolsPlus hub sites with over 95 schools to a total of 28 hub sites across the province.

- **Provide "go to" training:** Deliver training for school staff in the implementation of the "go-to" educator training that helps to identify mental health problems and mental disorders in the secondary school setting.

- **Create supportive environments as per the Thrive! strategy for a healthier Nova Scotia:** Support the provincial strategy to create supportive environments for healthy eating and physical activity through

  - **After-school programming for youth:** Provide new after-school physical activity–based programs for junior high–aged youth, with a priority on girls, in community-based settings that will reduce transportation barriers for families and youth.

  - **Free access to sport and recreation facilities:** Develop a program in partnership with municipalities so that children, youth, and families have free access to sport and recreation facilities that encourage physical activity, and foster respect, healthy relationships, and self-esteem.

  - **The Municipal Physical Activity Leadership Program (MPAL) to support all municipalities and First Nations communities:** Provide funding to municipalities and First Nations communities to develop and implement comprehensive physical activity plans in co-operation with partners, tailored to the individual needs, strengths, and resources of the community.

- **Expand the Strongest Families program:** Ensure families across the province have access to telephone coaching services that help children with behavioural or anxiety issues and their families to manage these issues.

► Public Awareness and Education

Government's new actions:

- **Launch the Unlike Cyberbullying campaign (unlikecyberbullying.ca)**: Promote this broad-based public awareness campaign about the problems of bullying and cyberbullying.

- **Organize and deliver an annual conference on bullying and cyberbullying:** Promote awareness of issues such as homophobia, sexual violence, poverty, race, gender, disabilities, and mental health.

- **Develop and maintain an anti-bullying website and social media platforms**: Create an information hub for students, educators, parents, and community members. Build further partnerships to develop content for educators, parents, and the public about new human rights legislation, online safety, and the positive use of social media.

- **Establish a Nova Scotia standard for evidence-based school curriculum resources:** Develop social/emotional learning skills that promote healthy, positive relationships, and safe learning environments.

- **Provide program grants to schools so they can access and implement approved curriculum resources:** Support professional development related to social/emotional learning that addresses bullying and cyberbullying.

- **Promote cultural competency:** Provide professional development opportunities for teachers on meeting the educational needs of African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and immigrant learners.

- **Develop a mental health unit for the Healthy Living–9 curriculum, and support teacher training:** Provide intensive provincial training for Healthy Living–9 teachers.

- **Revise the Health Education Primary–6 and Healthy Living 7–9 curricula:** Develop and implement new curriculum components that address social and emotional learning.

- **Create and identify curriculum resources:** Support implementation of the new Health Education Primary–6 and Healthy Living 7–9 curricula.

- **Provide learning opportunities for educators, community leaders, and youth:** Deliver workshops and training, including highlighting the topic of bullying as part of the province's annual Crime Prevention Symposium.

- **Update the *Guide for Girls* publication:** Include information about online safety for girls; explore development of a *Guide for Girls* smart phone application (an app).

► Partnerships

Government's new actions:

Mean Girls Dialogue

- Bring girls and youth, with an emphasis on diversity, together to talk about girls and bullying on and offline in an arts-based workshop
- Cultivate government-community-youth partnerships
- Develop online videos to be posted on social media sites to raise awareness about the issue of bullying and cyberbullying from the perspective of girls

- **Establish an interdepartmental working committee:** Maintain this interdepartmental committee to track, monitor, and report annually on the action plan progress.

- **Expand SchoolsPlus service:** Partner with District Health Authorities to co-locate mental health clinicians in schools, as part of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy to collaborate with guidance counsellors and other educational personnel who work with children and youth.

- **Re-establish the Nova Scotia Youth Advisory Council:** Provide a mechanism for engaging youth in government decisions on matters relating to the needs and concerns of youth, including bullying and cyberbullying.

- **Expand existing partnerships and explore new ones with universities, community colleges and private career colleges, professional associations, community, and service organizations:** Work together to implement the government's action plan on bullying and cyberbullying.

- **Develop partnerships with African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and immigrant community-based organizations:** Collect data to address diversity of learning.

- **Strengthen partnership with the Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women:** Align work from the Atlantic Ministerial Forum to Nova Scotia initiatives.

- **Collaborate to build provincial capacity to respond to human trafficking:** Partner with government, community, and law enforcement agencies to raise awareness about victim-centred approaches regarding the sexual exploitation of youth and children.

- Facilitate the exchange of knowledge about online child sexual exploitation within the Atlantic Ministerial Forum: Partner with the Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women to receive presentations from the RCMP regarding online child pornography and child luring.

- Support a youth-community-government partnership to develop an arts-based workshop regarding the diverse experiences of girls with bullying and cyberbullying: Mean Girl Monologues.

► System Response: Accountability and Responsibility

Government's new actions:

- **Establish an anti-bullying coordinator position**: Coordinate, facilitate, and develop partnerships, programming, and strategic responses to bullying and cyberbullying behaviours.

- **Amend the *Education Act:*** Ensure school staff have a duty to report to the principal all known incidents of severely disruptive behaviour and require the principal or a member of the school administration to investigate all incidents of severely disruptive behaviour.

- **Amend the *Education Act* and Regulations:** Include bullying and cyberbullying definitions in the act and regulations.

- **Revise the Nova Scotia School Code of Conduct:** Identify bullying and cyberbullying behaviours as severely disruptive behaviours and align the code with the changes to the act and regulations.

- **Amend the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*:** Adapt all Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission programs and initiatives to recognize the amendments to the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act* as of 2012 on transgender issues.

- **Legislate point-of-sale intervention:** Require cell phone companies to distribute educational materials on responsible cell phone use to customers entering a new contract. This should include information on how to help stop cyberbullying.

- **Expand iNSchool:** Identify scope and prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying and correlations between bullying and other factors through behaviour incident tracking.

- **Require all school boards to report annually on incidents of severely disruptive behaviour including bullying and cyberbullying:** Use data-driven and evidence-based decision making to determine actions related to the establishment of safe and equitable learning environments.

- **Promote data collection through Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission:** Assist in identifying the scope of bullying and cyberbullying.

- **Improve suicide risk identification:** Provide training in suicide risk identification to mental health, justice, and community services providers working with youth.

- **Support the development of Gay Straight Alliance forums in schools:** Respond to student requests for school groups that support safety and inclusion.

- **Host a symposium for police leaders:** Explore the challenges and best practices in the police role in community responses to bullying/cyberbullying, including prevention strategies, investigative methods, and incident tracking protocols. This symposium will act as the first step towards framing Nova Scotia best practice approaches.

- **Implement Adoption Project:** Improve overall outcomes for children and youth in care by increasing rates of adoption. Recommendations include enhancing staff training on preparing children for adoption, improving information sharing about children in care waiting for adoption, streamlining processes for training and assessing prospective adoptive families, and actively tracking both children waiting in care and prospective families.

- **Track and monitor guidance counsellor ratios:** Conduct a gap analysis of the guidance counsellor ratio from P–12.

Outcomes

This logic model outlines how our activities will lead to the achievement of our identified outcomes and guide annual reporting.

We have set out immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes that will be the basis for an evaluation framework to monitor and track progress in the four focus areas.

	Interpersonal Relationships	Public Awareness and Education	Partnerships	System Response: Accountability and Responsibility
	To develop social thinking skills that enable our children and youth to successfully navigate lifelong challenges associated with their ever-changing world	To work with youth and communities to raise awareness and change attitudes towards bullying behaviours	To establish and expand partnerships that will support system-wide change in bullying and cyberbullying behaviours	To ensure that laws and regulations governing system response reflect our core values and provide a way to effectively change attitudes toward bullying behaviours
Activities	Develop and expand programs that include a focus on the root causes of bullying — Fund community groups that work with youth and families	Create and deliver training materials and tool kits — Create communication campaigns	Facilitate, participate, and support interdepartmental, cross-jurisdictional, and government-community collaborative work	Develop and expand strategies and tools for children and youth — Make legislative, regulatory, and policy changes that empower government to address bullying behaviour
Outputs	Positive effective behaviour supports, restorative approaches in schools and communities, early childhood education, etc. — Community programs: Boys and Girls Clubs, Family Resource Programs, Parenting Journey, etc.	Deliver training to key stakeholders (resources for educators) — Launch communications campaigns (Unlike Cyberbullying, Cybersafe Girl, and publications)	Educators, community groups, families, and policing agencies working together to address bullying behaviours (policing symposium, Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women)	Strategies and tools (Child and Youth Strategy, THRIVE!, etc.) — Improved legislation, regulations, and policy (*Education Act*, School Code of Conduct, *Human Rights Act*, and Racial Equity Policy) — Data collection and availability
Immediate Outcome	Stronger relationships exist between youth/parents/educators/peers and community	Teachers, parents, students, and community members have access to resources that will help them address bullying — Heightened awareness of bullying behaviour, its root causes, and how it can be addressed	Students learn the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in positive relationships	Educators, policing agencies, and community groups have the authority and tools to address bullying behaviour — Data provides better information on bullying and allows for an improved government response
Intermediate Outcome	Bullying behaviour is identified, understood, and addressed	There is a meaningful community response to bullying	The number of youth who develop long-term problems with aggression, anti-social behaviour, and substance abuse is reduced	
Long-term Outcome	A culture where healthy interpersonal relationships are promoted and supported, and bullying behaviour is neither accepted nor tolerated	Ongoing dialogue and networking between government and community	Healthy families and safe communities	Respectful and responsible human relations

Appendix A
Government's Current Actions in the Four Focus Areas

Interpersonal Relationships

School-wide positive effective behaviours supports: Establishing and promoting positive healthy relationships and safe school environments using a school-wide approach.

Youth Health Centres: Providing a supportive peer environment to help youth develop assets to build resiliency and healthy relationships.

Lighthouses Program: Partnering with communities to provide after-school recreational programming for youth that build connections to community.

Community-use of Schools Grants: Providing a positive after-school experience that promotes students' personal, social, and emotional development. These programs provide an adult-supervised environment for children and youth where they can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships, and develop confidence and skills for life.

Strongest Families Program: Supporting children with behavioural or anxiety issues and their families to manage their children's mental health issues.

Home visiting programs (Healthy Beginnings, Enhanced Home Visiting, and Parenting Journey): Identifying and working with families facing challenges to improve child and family health outcomes and overall resiliency.

SchoolsPlus: Supporting children and families with the school as the centre of service delivery.

Girls Run the World workshop: Focusing on creative expressions of being a girl through a one-day workshop for girls ages 10–18.

Girls Run the World video: Created using events at the one-day workshop (www.women.gov.ns.ca).

Leaders of Today youth network: Bringing young people and government together to learn about and respond to issues of concern to youth.

International Human Rights Day: Engaging with schools across the province to celebrate on December 10th each year. The celebrations reflect human rights issues through visual images, such as bullying and cyberbullying, and transgender issues for youth.

Human rights booklets for students: Promoting understanding of human rights and inclusion for all.

Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program for youth: Expanding this program that supports youth to stand accountable, gives victims a voice, and offers a meaningful role for community.

Child and Youth Strategy: Supporting more than 20 community, regional, and provincial forums that use relationship-based and youth-centric principles to facilitate cross sectoral action for children, youth, and their families.

Professional development: Meeting the educational needs of African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and immigrant learners by addressing systemic racism and discrimination, and by facilitating implementation of the Provincial Racial Equity Policy.

Promote spaces for girls' voices: Supporting a one-day workshop and video to explore girls' identity, creative expressions, and healthy relationships.

Student Support Worker Program: Supporting academic success and improving learners through positive role modelling and collaboration with administrators, teachers, parents/guardians, and the community.

MAP S.T.A.R.S.™: Mental and Physical Safe Training Awareness Response System: Offering youth skills and insights on how to cope with conflict in their lives through this conflict and anti-bullying education program.

Early childhood education training: Including information and skill development for those who work with and model behaviour for young children, as well as course work and professional development relating to behaviour, guidance, mental health, and best practices in maintaining communication with families.

Youth outreach: Supporting vulnerable youth from ages 16–19 in their neighbourhoods and communities. Youth outreach workers reach out to and engage youth and provide mentoring, counselling, support, advocacy, and other service providers and agencies to ensure the needs of youth are met in a holistic, seamless, timely, and youth-centred manner.

Professional development for service providers and government staff: Increasing the capacity to address the issue of bullying and cyberbullying by providing workshops, training, and consultation to enhance cultural competency and to teach providers and staff how to take a holistic perspective.

Halifax Youth Attendance Centre (HYAC): Addressing the needs of moderate–high risk youth under court ordered community supervision in Halifax Regional Municipality, by providing access to a number of services, including forensic youth mental health, education, employment support, and addictions intervention. HYAC is administered by the Department of Justice, in a collaborative partnership with the departments of Education, Community Services, Health and Wellness, and their service providers.

Maintain Youth Health Centres to meet the provincial standards and guidelines: Providing supportive peer environments to help youth develop assets to build resiliency and to develop healthy relationships (self-confidence, problem-solving, emotional regulation, and empathy).

Public Awareness and Education

Digital resources to support teacher professional development in digital citizenship and anti-bullying: Providing films and other online resources for teacher professional development on how to be a good digital citizen and how to stop bullying. Provides one-stop access to online resources via EduPortal.

Commercial resources (videos) and software that support Nova Scotia's anti-bullying strategies: Purchasing videos and software that communicate an anti-bullying message.

School Network Access and Use Policy: Providing guidelines so students and teachers recognize the consequences of misuse of technology and online environments.

Secure online environments for teachers and students: Promoting safe and responsible online environments for teacher and student interaction.

Teacher training: Providing professional development about best practices with social media and digital citizenship so teachers can help children use social media responsibly.

Atlantic Canada's Cybersafe Girl campaign: Developing and implementing a bilingual website with tip sheets for parents and girls on safe Internet use (www.cybersafegirl.ca) in partnership with the Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women.

Positive engagement in social media: Managing Facebook and Twitter accounts to raise awareness about issues related to girls and young women and cyber safety, healthy relationships, positive use of social media, hypersexualization, and diversity.

Guide for Girls: Continuing to maintain and distribute this publication, which includes information about self-esteem, being a girl, healthy relationships and bullying, cultural awareness, and discrimination.

Evidence-based digital citizenship and online safety resources: Improving, creating, or adopting resources for elementary and junior high students.

Information and technology within curriculum: Enhancing current curriculum to reflect the evolving understanding of digital citizenship and anti-bullying.

Hypersexualization project: Examining the phenomenon of hypersexualization in Nova Scotia and developing ways to counter the harmful effects and build resiliency in children, youth, and community.

Curriculum resources: Promoting understanding of African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and immigrant people along with their history, heritage, culture, traditions, and contributions to society.

Family and youth services programs: Providing programs that foster empathy in young children, support parents to promote respectful communication and positive behaviour guidance, and create opportunities for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers to have positive interactions with peers.

Boys and Girls Clubs and Family Resource Programs: Supporting programs that play an important role within their respective communities in building awareness of significant issues that children, youth, and families face today.

Family and Youth Services: Providing funding to community-based programs that work with children and families in supporting positive parenting practices that use respectful communication, empathy, and positive behaviour guidance, while creating opportunities for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers to have positive interactions with peers in their respective neighbourhoods and communities.

Partnerships

Violence against women: Facilitating, participating in, and supporting interdepartmental, cross-jurisdictional, and government-community collaborative work and approaches to address violence against women and girls.

Keeping Girls Cybersafe initiative: Supporting the partnership with the Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, which includes the joint five-year work plan, Keeping Girls Cybersafe.

High Five®: Funding the implementation of standardized training, innovative tools and resources to help recreation organizations keep healthy child development at the forefront.

Regional development grants: Providing financial assistance to sport and recreation organizations that provide programming to children and youth at the community level that supports the development of self-esteem and builds resiliency (e.g., Dirt Divas, Real Girls).

Child and Youth Strategy: Supporting a network of community, regional, and provincial tables that encourage and facilitate collaborative action on child and youth issues across the education, health and wellness, justice, and community/ social services sectors.

Leaders of Today youth network: Supporting this network to bring young people, their supportive adults/youth agencies, and government together to learn about and respond to issues of concern to youth.

The first International Day of the Girl Child: Partnering with the Federal Provincial-Territorial Forum Responsible for the Status of Women to celebrate girls.

Regional Educators Program: Providing funding to the Black Educators Association of Nova Scotia to support African Nova Scotian learners, parents, and communities.

Family and Youth Services: Supporting service provider training through the Red Cross RespectED: Violence & Abuse Prevention programs, allowing service providers to offer formal workshops to children and youth and to develop their own capacity in dealing with issues.

Nova Scotia Health Promoting Schools: Encouraging a safe environment for students through a comprehensive school health approach that includes the promotion of physical, social, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being of all students and staff through the development of productive and satisfying relationships.

System Response: Accountability and Responsibility

Racial Equity Policy: Providing a framework for the development and review of school board policies on race relations and related equity issues.

Child Abuse Training Protocol to the Child Care Sector: Requiring training for child care workers about the province's regulations as part of the Day Care Act, as detailed in *Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Abuse and Neglect: A Protocol and Handbook for Licensees, Child Care Staff, and Care Providers in Regulated Child Care Settings.*

Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*: Addressing accountability and responsibility, enabling the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission to collect data to identify areas of concern.

Police officer funding: Providing funding for over 150 police officers throughout the province who focus on defined provincial priorities, including enforcement of crimes involving organized illegal activity; intelligence-led law enforcement initiatives; targeted crimes involving sexual exploitation or assault; drugs and safety in schools; and street crime initiatives.

Child Care Subsidy: Enabling access to regulated child care settings for families who might otherwise not have access.

Supported Child Care Grant: Supporting the capacity for regulated child care facilities to offer inclusive early childhood environments for all children, regardless of their diverse abilities, to participate in natural settings within their communities.

Building Blocks: Strategies for Inclusion Training Program: Supporting early childhood educators in the inclusion of young children with special needs in child care programs.

Appendix B
Timeline for the Action Plan

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Checklist Legend: New Action: ● Expanding Action: ○			
Interpersonal Relationships			
Support the Restorative Approaches in Schools initiative to build the tools and resources educators need to transform their schools into restorative schools	●	○	○
Support the expansion of SchoolsPlus from 12 hub sites to 28 hub sites across the province	○	○	○
Provide training for school staff in the implementation of the "go-to" educator training that helps to identify mental health problems and mental disorders in the secondary school setting	●		
Create Supportive Environments as set out in the Thrive! strategy for a healthier Nova Scotia:			
• Provide after-school programming for youth	●	○	○
• Provide free access to sport and recreation facilities	●	○	○
• Expand the Municipal Physical Activity Leadership Program	○	○	○
Expand the Strongest Families program to ensure families across the province have access to telephone coaching services that help children with behavioural or anxiety issues and their families to manage these issues	○		
Public Awareness and Education			
Launch the Unlike Cyberbullying campaign—unlikecyberbullying.ca	●		
Deliver an annual conference on bullying and cyberbullying		●	○
Develop and maintain an anti-bullying website and social media platforms	●	○	○
Establish a Nova Scotia standard for evidence-based curriculum resources	●		
Provide program grants to allow schools to access and implement approved curriculum resources	●		
Promote cultural competency by providing professional development opportunities for teachers on meeting the educational needs of African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and immigrant learners	○	○	○

Checklist Legend: New Action: ● Expanding Action: ○	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Develop a mental health unit for Healthy Living–9 curriculum and support teacher training		●	
Revise curriculum for Health Education Primary–6 and Healthy Living 7–9		●	
Create and identify resources to support the implementation of curriculum changes		●	
Provide learning opportunities for educators, community leaders, and youth, including highlighting the topic of bullying as part of the province's annual Crime Prevention Symposium	●		
Update the *Guide for Girls* publication to include online safety for girls		●	
Partnerships			
Establish an interdepartmental working committee to track, monitor, and report annually on the action plan's progress	●		
Expand the SchoolsPlus service to co-locate mental health clinicians in schools	○		
Re-establish the Nova Scotia Youth Advisory Council	●	○	○
Expand existing partnerships and explore new ones with universities, community colleges, and private career colleges, and with professional associations, and community and service organizations	○	○	○
Strengthen partnerships with African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and immigrant community-based organizations to support diversity of learning	●		
Strengthen partnership with the Atlantic Ministers Forum Responsible for the Status of Women	○	○	○
Collaborate to build provincial capacity to respond to human trafficking to raise awareness about victim-centred approaches regarding the sexual exploitation of youth and children	●	○	○
Facilitate the exchange of knowledge about online child sexual exploitation within the Atlantic Ministers Forum Responsible for the Status of Women	○	○	○
Support a youth-community-government partnership in an arts-based workshop about girls and bullying with an emphasis on diversity *(Mean Girl Monologues)*	●		

* Solid green circles indicate when new actions will start. Open blue circles indicate the expansion of existing actions. This is a multi-year action plan and actions are on-going throughout.

Checklist Legend:	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
New Action: ●			
Expanding Action: ○			
System Response: Accountability & Responsibility			
Hire an anti-bullying coordinator	●		
Amend the *Education Act* to ensure all school staff have a duty to report known incidents of severely disruptive behaviour	●		
These amendments also require principals to investigate and respond to all known incidents of severely disruptive behaviour, including bullying and cyberbullying	●		
Amend the *Education Act* and Regulations to include bullying and cyberbullying definitions	●		
Revise the Nova Scotia School Code of Conduct to align with changes to the act and regulations	●		
Adapt all Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission programs and initiatives to recognize the amendments to the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act* on transgender issues	●		
Legislate point-of-sale intervention to require cell phone companies to distribute educational materials on responsible cell phone use to customers entering a new contract	●		
Expand iNSchool to identify scope and prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying through behaviour incident tracking	○		
Require all school boards to report annually on incidents of severely disruptive behaviour, including bullying and cyberbullying	●	○	○
Promote data collection through Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission to help identify the scope of bullying and cyberbullying			●
Improve suicide risk identification	○		
Support the development of Gay Straight Alliance Forums in schools	○		
Host a symposium for police leaders	●		
Implement Adoption Project to improve overall outcomes for children and youth in care by increasing rates of adoption	●		
Conduct a gap analysis of the guidance counsellor ratio from P–12	●		

* Solid green circles indicate when new actions will start. Open blue circles indicate the expansion of existing actions. This is a multi-year action plan and actions are on-going throughout.