

GENDER EQUITY

# LIVING TOGETHER AS EQUALS



# Living together as equals

It was terribly cold. How different to the climate of my village! The city was nice, but I couldn't get used to the weather... when I arrived, my parents had booked a shared room for me in a residence hall so that I could study in town. That's where I stayed during the first week. It was freezing cold in there!

Two days later I met Paola at the cafeteria. She was Italian and she was looking for a room where she could stay, but her parents could not afford the residence hall. So we decided to look for a shared flat, something cheaper where we could also share expenses.

We got down to it and found a flat near the center of the city. It was a bit shabby, but not too expensive. Moreover, it had four bedrooms so if we managed to find two more people to come live with us, it would be even cheaper!

Some of Paola's friends gave us furniture, so we had all we needed: a sofa, four beds, two closets and a cupboard. Luckily, the kitchen was already equipped when we hired the flat so it had a fridge and a washing machine, which were rather old, but worked.

Two days after settling in our new flat, Paola brought in her friend Lucas and he agreed to share the flat with us. He had great big eyes and short straw-colored hair. He had studied marketing and advertising with Paola, but he dropped out of university because he couldn't afford it. He was now working and trying to save up some money. Lucas is probably no more than two or three years older than we are.



It was me who found the last flat mate. He's a guy from Syria called Hicham. He's very tall, has dark-colored skin and his hair is shoulder-length. Understanding each other was not easy, because I don't speak his language and he hardly speaks mine – although he's really fast at learning. I wish learning languages came as easy to me!

Hicham works in a cake shop near the park where I used to buy my breakfast every morning before going to class. I saw him every day and we often sat down to chat when there were no clients in the shop. He was kind and quiet. I loved staying there, chatting with him. One of those days he told me that speaking with me was helping him a lot to improve his English so, little by little, we became friends and started meeting when he finished work. One afternoon I went to fetch him at the cake shop and noticed he was concerned about something. When I asked him about it, he told me he was looking for a flat because the place where he was living with his aunt and uncle was far too small now that his cousins had arrived. So I told him about our flat and invited him to come meet Paola and Lucas. They liked each other instantly and Hicham came to live with us.



## ACTIVITY\*

Most of you are probably still living with your families, but imagine you were living like the four friends in the story.

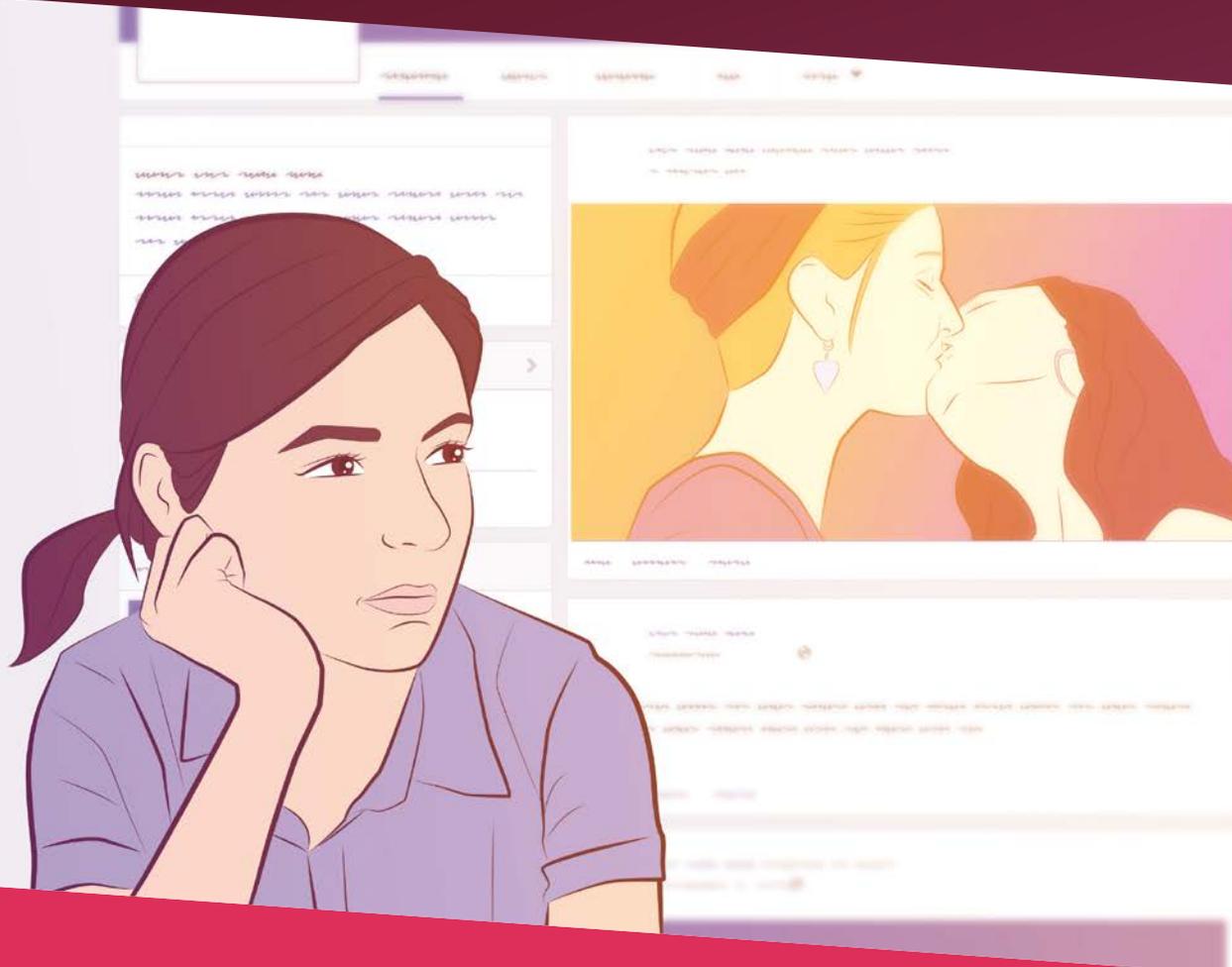
**Would you share a flat with two boys and two girls? Would you study far from home? Would your parents pay for it? Would you work? How would you organize, for example, the distribution of household chores?**

Discuss in groups and then share your opinions with the rest of the class.

Let's continue with our story. I already told you how Paola, Hicham, Lucas and I met. The best thing about it is that we sat down every night in the dining room to talk about the things that had happened to us during the day and the night before, at a party or whatever. One day, however, we started talking about things that had happened to us in high school, years before... we actually started talking about our lives.

One night, Paola told us her story. She is a dark-skinned, short girl. She usually wears a ponytail and has a tattoo with swallows on her nape. She told us that her last year at high school had been very difficult and she had had problems with her classmates. That year Paola had met Leah, a girl who lived near her house. The girls discovered that they had many hobbies in common and soon began studying together, going to the cinema... and eventually they began dating. One day, Paola and Leah were in the park and they kissed, just like any other couple. They took a picture of their kiss, with the park in the background, and Leah uploaded it later on Facebook. The next day everyone at high school had seen the photograph and when Paola came into her classroom, someone had written "shitty lesbian" on the blackboard. She turned to look at her classmates - some were roaring with laughter, others stared at the floor to avoid making eye contact ... when the teacher came into the classroom and saw the writing on the blackboard she wanted to know who had written it, and although they all knew, no one said a word. Paola told us how the story ended, but...

\* You will find guidelines to develop all the activities in the Educational Guide.



 **ACTIVITAT**

**How do you think the story ends? How would you feel if this happened to you? What do you think would have happened if the couple kissing had been two boys?**

Paola told us she finally changed school in mid-term and had a really bad time. But she didn't know how to tackle the situation so she decided to leave. Lucas told her that it was not the best decision – she should have faced them and defended herself.

“Telling others what they should do is easier said than done!” Paola shouted angrily. “Being different is not easy. We are constantly told that women must be beautiful, elegant, feminine, that we must find a boyfriend, have children...”

“And you think it's easier for boys?” Lucas answered. “They are constantly telling us we must be strong, muscular and handsome. That we must find good jobs and be manly... that boys don't cry!”

# Stereotypes

Stereotypes are preconceived and generally mistaken ideas we hold regarding groups of people. We make them up by taking some common traits in a simplistic or exaggerated - and sometimes grotesque - way and extrapolating them to all the people in the group.

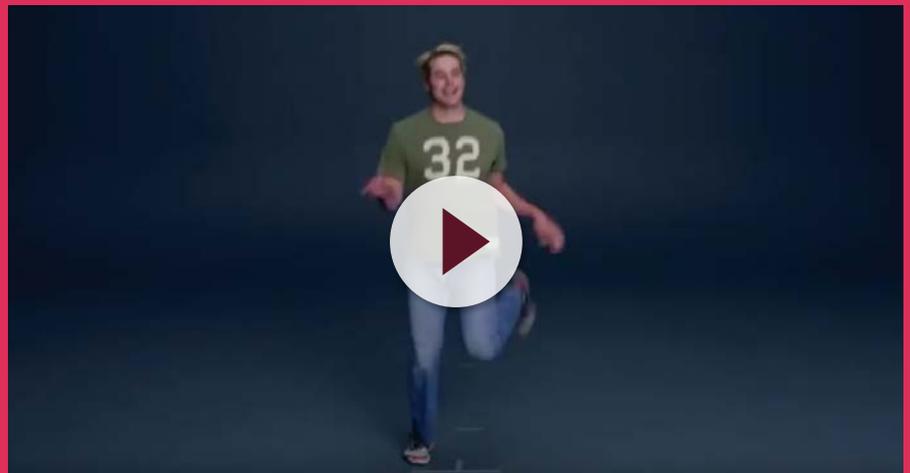
These ideas - which are transmitted to us from an early age - are usually deeply rooted in our way of thinking and consequently, end up influencing our decisions positively or negatively.



We suggest you watch the following videos. Then, divide the class into small groups and analyze them.

## Run like a girl

<https://youtu.be/WyraPuCkltA>



## Be a man

<https://youtu.be/Uzhd4F5ZpVA>



What conclusions do you draw?

# When love becomes control

The weekend came, Hicham had night shift at the cake shop and Paola had a one-night job in an event and would be coming home late. So Lucas and I were alone and I suggested we went out for supper - something good, tasty and cheap! So we went to a kebab restaurant. While we were having supper, the television at the restaurant was showing a short-documentary:

**Short film by Paco Caballero,  
that participated in the 10th  
Notodofilmfest.**

[https://youtu.be/4zsKB\\_8BRdg](https://youtu.be/4zsKB_8BRdg)



The situation was rather funny because just the night before, Lucas had told Paola and me that he had split up with his girlfriend because he believed she was being unfaithful to him. We tried to find out why he suspected this, but the only thing we finally discovered was that it was actually not him, but her, who had wanted to split up. Why? Because she was tired of having Lucas obsessing all day long about what she was doing, with whom, what clothes she was wearing, etc. – in other words, she was tired of having Lucas control her. When the short film ended I looked at Lucas with a grin on my face. “Yeah... I know. I’ve been a bit stupid...,” he said. “Just a bit?”, I replied.



**Have you been through a similar situation?**

Comment on this with your classmates.



## The barometer game

The barometer game is an activity where you must take your stance. The teacher will read a statement and you must place yourselves either on the right or the left side of the line, depending on whether you agree or disagree with the statement. ATTENTION: you will have to provide reasons for your choice.

**You can practice a little by answering individually to this test:**

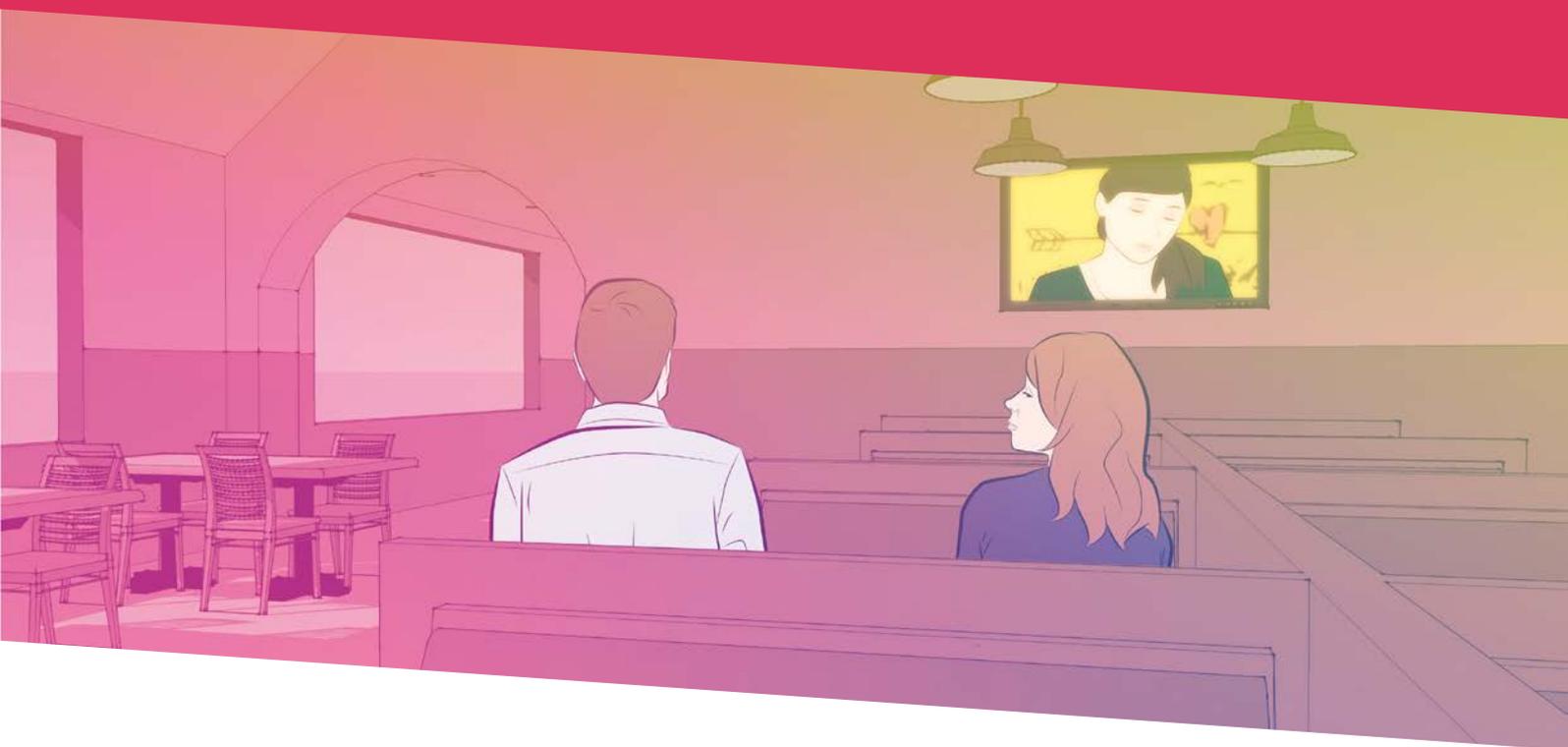
	I agree	I disagree
Jealousy is not proof of love; it is a sign of insecurity and possessiveness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Love is something magical.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Love will find a way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To love is to suffer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual relationships are not the expression of love towards the other person, but rather a personal and consented desire.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Love is not about unconditional devotion. This is called submission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nobody changes for love. People change or evolve due to their own desire to do so; not to satisfy another person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my boy/girlfriend doesn't feel jealous, s/he doesn't love me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being with me will make him/her change.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My boy/girlfriend wears those clothes to be provocative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Girls and boys are different.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My boy/girlfriend is beginning to answer me rudely, s/he even yells at me, but then s/he says s/he is sorry.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My boy/girlfriend tells me s/he cannot go a week without seeing me and asks me to skip my end-of-year trip or my summer camp holidays.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## The red line

Now, draw a red line dividing the blackboard in two. On one side, write down the positive aspects of love; on the other, the negative ones (i.e., the things one must never allow to happen in an emotional relationship). Once we have listed approximately ten aspects for each side, analyze the ideas that have emerged.

**Why do we frequently mistake love with an absolute devotion and total loss of identity by the members who form the couple? How is love addressed in popular songs?**



# A world upside down?



The other day I found a script which had been published by France de Lagarde in the French newspaper Le Monde, on September 28-29, 1975. It was titled "A World Upside Down". I showed it to Paola, Hicham and Lucas and they loved it.

**Bernardo Delgado:** Hello madam, I'm coming in reference to the ad you published.

**Personnel Manager:** Sit down please. What's your name?

**BD:** Bernardo...

**PM:** Married or single

**BD:** Married.

**PM:** Your full name, please.

**BD:** Bernardo Delgado, Perez.

**PM:** First of all, let me tell you Mr. Perez that we don't like employing married men in this company. In Ms. Moreno's Department – for whom we hire employees - there are several people on paternity leave. While it's legitimate for young people to

have children and our company as a manufacturer of baby clothes encourages having them, absence from work of future fathers and young fathers is a great cause of concern for the good performance of the company.

**BD:** I understand, madam. But we already have two children and we won't be having any more.... Besides – says Mr. Perez, lowering his voice and blushing at the same time - I am on the pill.

**PM:** Well, in this case... what studies do you have?

**BD:** I completed my compulsory education and have a vocational training degree in administration. I would have liked to have finished high school, but I have two sisters and my parents, as is only normal, prioritized their education. One of my sisters is a colonel and the other is a mechanic.

**PM:** Where have you been working lately?

**BD:** I've basically done substitutions. That's the only way I could take care of the children while they were little.

**PM:** Where does your wife work?

**BD:** She's site manager for a steel fabrication company, but she's currently studying engineering. Her mother founded the business and my wife will take over it the future.

**PM:** Let's get back to you. What are your aspirations?

**BD:** Well...

**PM:** Obviously, considering your wife's job and her future prospects, I understand you're looking for a complementary wage. Some money for personal expenses – in line with a man's expectations: to satisfy your whims, for your suits, etc. We offer you €600 to begin with, an extra pay and a bonus for regularity. Pay close attention to this, Mr. Perez, for regularity. Regularity is absolutely essential in all jobs. Since the company's executive created this bonus to prevent staff from not coming to work for trivial little things, we've managed to cut male absence from work by half. However, there are still some men who give silly excuses for being off work - their child has a cough, a strike at school... How old are your children?

**BD:** My daughter is six and my son, four. Both of them attend school and I pick them up in the afternoon after work, before doing the shopping.

**PM:** And if they get sick... what do you do then?

**BD:** Their grandfather can take care of them. He lives nearby.

**PM:** Very well. Thank you, Mr. Perez. We'll contact you in a few days time to let you know what we've decided.

Mr. Perez walked out of the office with hopes he would be given the job. The personnel manager looked him up and down as he walked out. He had short legs, his back was slightly curved and he barely had any hair. "Ms. Moreno hates bald men", she remembered. And besides, she said she'd rather have "a tall, blonde, good-looking man... and single". Ms. Moreno will be taking over the managing director post next year.

Three days later, Bernardo Delgado Perez, received a letter which began with: "We regret to tell you that..."



**What do you think? Why do you think it is titled "A World Upside Down"? This dialogue was written in 1975, what aspects do you think are still valid today and what aspects are not? Why?**



 ACTIVITY

## When I grow up I want to be ...

I suggest you play a game. You must act out the role of a vocational counselor who is counseling a student. We provide you with the character's traits and you must act out your role\*.

The vocational counseling team (two counselors) must interview each student individually (Mariana, Danny, Nathan and Saray). They must ask questions which allow them to provide guidance regarding the profession that these students can choose.

If you have not been assigned a character role, watch the interviews and take notes on the questions and the answers that the characters give. You will be assigned character roles by your teacher (see the Educational Guide).

**What do you think about the counselors? How did you feel acting out your role? Do you know people who have similar doubts?**

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\* For details on each of the characters, see the Educational Guide.

# The wonderful world of advertising

After all the conversations we held during those days, the videos we had watched and our past and present experiences, we reached the conclusion that we should look for more information about the issues and do something more. And that is what we did!

We looked for advertisements, films and songs which were sexist and informed ourselves about women's rights and campaigns which had been carried out in this regard. And we decided to elaborate a subvertising exhibition with Paola's help. We chose ads from magazines and changed them; we also looked for TV ads and turned them upside down, and we finally set up an exhibition in the city's square. Hicham and I looked for information and statistics on women's rights and analyzed songs - by the way, this was how Hicham discovered the wonderful lyrics used in reggaeton music! Lucas and Paola analyzed films and ads.





ACTIVITY

We suggest you elaborate a subvertisement reflecting what we have analyzed and debated in the classroom. It can be a video, a poster, a video clip, an advertisement exhibition... whatever you come up with!

Why don't you start by watching the following examples of subvertising campaigns and analyzing them. You can choose only one video or divide the class into groups and watch them all.

## Multiópticas

Action by Yolanda Dominguez aimed at asking Multiópticas (a Spanish eyewear store) to remove the ad which shows a man entering a bar full of women wearing only underwear, while a female voice on off says "Feel the incredible sensation of first time as many times as you want". For this action, Dominguez asked several women to dress themselves as the women in the ad and act it out at different Multiópticas stores.

**Original ad:**

<https://youtu.be/YloIBNLTXpY>



**Subvertising campaign:**

<https://youtu.be/3RvqZHGHWGw>



**Further information at:**

<http://www.yolandadominguez.com>

## Women and chocolate

For decades, women have been the main image of chocolate ads. But how do major international chocolate companies treat the women who grow their cocoa? Hunger, inequality, unfair wages, etc. Let the chocolate companies know that you are concerned about the situation of these women.

### The truth is not so sweet

Behind the Brand

Oxfam Intermón

<https://youtu.be/yhcH1UV7ocM>



### Further information at:

<http://www.behindthe-brands.org/>

## Poses

“Poses” is a living lab aimed at criticizing the absurd and artificial world of glamour and fashion which magazines try to sell us, specifically, the highly-distorted image of women which they convey through models who do not represent real women. A group of women uses the impossible poses portrayed in fashion magazines and transfers them to daily scenes (at the queue of a museum, in the supermarket or next to a traffic light), sparking off the reaction of the spectators.

### Poses

<https://youtu.be/GPEcdcmnAA0>



### Further information at:

<http://www.yolandadominguez.com/>



 ACTIVITAT

## Through the magnifying glass...

Let's continue working on our task, analyzing some of the latest advertisements. Divide the class into groups and look for TV, press and internet ads which have to do with any of the following issues:

1. **Household chores**
2. **Soft violence**
3. **Women as objects**

The following videos can help you get inspired:

**Soft violence**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNwAl1Fvtjg&feature=youtu.be>



**House-husbands**

[https://youtu.be/rUliL\\_Kh-io](https://youtu.be/rUliL_Kh-io)



**Treating women as objects**

<https://youtu.be/8oS8b3Cj46A>



Use the following analysis card to analyze the ads:

## Card for analyzing ads

**Who is the campaign targeted at?**

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**What does the campaign say? What messages does it convey? What does it suggest?**

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**How is it conveyed?**

- > Through spoken/written language: analyze tone and voice cadence, the message conveyed through the text and how it is expressed.

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- > Through visual/ auditory language: analyze the environment in which the ad is set (family, work, etc.), the image composition (color, light, contrast, etc.), the type of music, etc.

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**Female characters:**

- > Role they play.

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- > Physical characteristics (age, clothes they wear, physical appearance, accessories, make up, etc.).

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- > Feelings or emotions they express (joy, sadness, boredom, happiness, concern, kindness, anger, seduction, provocation, etc.).

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- > Activity they carry out.

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**Male characters:**

> Role they play.

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> Physical characteristics (age, clothes they wear, physical appearance, accessories, make up, etc.).

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> Feelings or emotions they express (joy, sadness, boredom, happiness, concern, kindness, anger, seduction, provocation, etc.).

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> Activity they carry out.

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**Which gender stereotypes is the ad conveying?**

> Masculine stereotypes:

- Emotional stability
- Self-control mechanisms
- Dynamism
- Aggressiveness
- With a tendency for dominance
- Self-affirmation
- Objectivity
- Rationality
- Poorly defined emotional aspect
- Bravery
- Intellectual qualities and skills
- Frankness
- Scientific aptitudes
- Efficiency
- Love for risk
- Greater physical capacity

> Feminine stereotypes:

- Emotional instability
- Intuition
- Lack of control
- Very marked emotional aspect
- Passiveness
- Irrationality
- Frivolity
- Tenderness
- Submission
- Fear
- Dependence
- Weakness
- Subjectivity
- Inconsistency
- Artistic aptitudes
- Poor intellectual development
- Manual skills

Does the image of women conveyed match your image and/or the image of women you know?

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Does the image of men conveyed match your image and/or the image of men you know?

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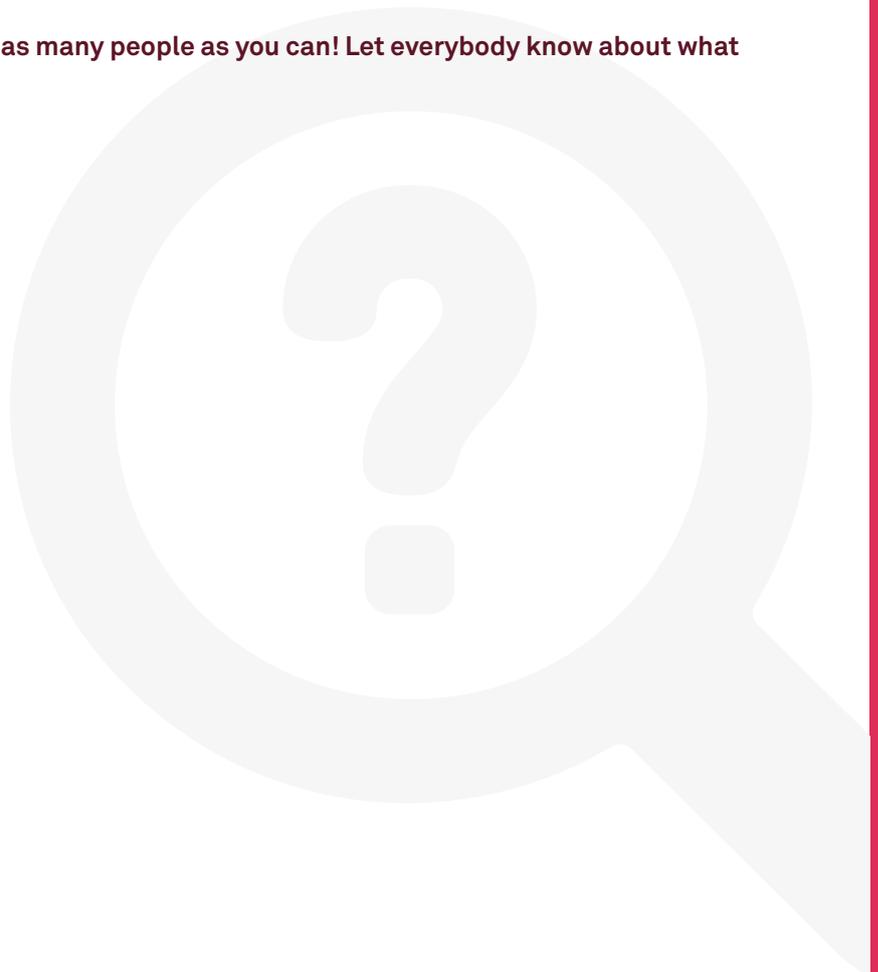
Do you agree with the ads you see? Why?

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And now you have enough information to design your own subvertising ad, poster, video or campaign.

When you finish it, share it with as many people as you can! Let everybody know about what you are doing and why!



# The task starts right now: living together as equals

That year, thanks to the long talks and unforgettable moments I shared with Paola, Hicham and Lucas, my life changed. I became aware of gender stereotypes and of how they prevent us from being free as persons. Moreover, I became aware of how our culture and the media reinforce these mistaken ideas we hold about people. So I decided to work to change this: I started a blog and I made small subvertising campaigns. And we also founded a boys and girls association for equality. And here is where I am now, raising awareness on this issue wherever I go!

Big hugs... and farewell!

Signed: Tania Lamira



**I want to ask you for one last – and probably bigger – effort. I would like you to write a letter about your commitment to equality. Each and every one of you - including your teacher – can sign it.**

In the first place, read the questionnaire below carefully and reflect on each of the aspects included. Mark the indicators which are not fulfilled in your classroom or school.

Then, with the indicators you have marked as “not fulfilled” you can elaborate a commitment letter. This letter marks the beginning of a task which starts right now and commits you to a series of changes you should undertake during the school year. You may assess your progress in the counseling sessions, assemblies or class meetings.

Print the letter and place it somewhere visible in the classroom. It should remind us all about the fact that equality is built day by day, through small details; and also, that the collective commitment - our group commitment - can make things shift towards a greater equality among men and women.





## Questionnaire for equality

Indicators of equality	Fulfilled	Not fulfilled
The relationships between girls and boys are respectful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boys and girls are treated equally by teachers (they are addressed by their teachers the same number of times, their achievements are equally praised, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The language used is inclusive, referring to both girls and boys.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boys and girls alike are selected for tasks such as class representatives, school-council members, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No one is attacked or insulted – boy or girl.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The spaces for boys and for girls (toilettes, locker room, etc.) are respected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women's knowledge and experience is incorporated into the classroom contents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender equality relationships within professional, personal and family life are addressed in the classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No sexist, homophobic or racist jokes are told in the classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nobody makes girls or boys feel awkward through provocative or sexual behaviors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If a boy or a girl is struggling with a subject, in sports or in their personal relationships, both are encouraged equally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Every boy and girl is encouraged to develop all their skills and abilities and feels valued.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The class-group is a safe space where boys and girls feel protected and accepted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boys and girls who feel more insecure are given support.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cooperative and supportive relationships among boys and girls are fostered.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The atmosphere in the classroom encourages listening to others and favors bringing up boys' and girls' personal issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boys and girls feel that their image is respected: no one will pick on them for the way they dress, their physical appearance or the way they behave or speak.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The class-group values the ideas and contributions of girls and boys alike.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The material of girls and boys alike is respected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Girls and boys have equal access to spaces (e.g., playground, corridors, library or cafeteria).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Male and female teachers are equally respected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Girls and boys are listened to without interruptions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Girls and boys are equally encouraged to achieve their objectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom tasks (e.g. – fetching photocopies, coordinating works, etc.) are equally shared among girls and boys.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feminine and masculine behaviors are respected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal and family situations of boys and girls are taken into consideration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issues which are of interest for girls and boys are addressed informally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When there is an unfair situation against a girl or a boy, the class-group comes to his/her defense.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## Letter of our commitment to equality

We, the undersigned, commit ourselves to guarantee that:

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Signature of all the class  
and the teacher

