FACILITATION GUIDE
CINEMA FORUM
EQUALS
Promoting Equal Relationships Between Women and Men
The ModÉgalité project was made possible thanks to the financial support of the Secrétariat à la condition féminine and the Forum jeunesse de l’Île de Montréal.
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IN BRIEF...

What is the *Equals* Cinema Forum Facilitation Guide?

- The following guide promotes equal relationships between women and men through cinema forum;
- It includes three (3) seventy-five (75) minute workshops: Preparing for the Cinema Forum; The Cinema Forum and Wrap-up of the Cinema Forum.

What is *Equals* Cinema Forum?

- **First and foremost**, it is a film portraying real-life scenarios experienced by youth, each of which highlight a challenge related to gender equality.
- **Above all**, it is a participatory intervention tool. Youth are invited to examine significant moments in the film through which to express their point of view, reflect, and propose solutions to the issues that emerge.

Who is it for?

- The workshops are designed for youth aged 16 to 22.
- The facilitation guide is designed to support all those working with this demographic in schools and community organizations on the island of Montreal.
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INTRODUCTION

An action-research project examining equal relationships

The ModÉgalité project came from the observation that there is a lack of research findings, documentation, and intervention tools related to young Montrealers’ perceptions and lived experiences regarding equality between women and men.

Youth aged 16 to 22 - the target group for these interventions - are transitioning out of adolescence. They are preparing themselves for adulthood, to actively pursue their goals with regard to their professional, social, romantic, and family lives. Gender equality impacts all of these areas of life; it is therefore particularly relevant to examine how youth envision gender equality, and how they will experience it in their adult lives.

The Equals Cinema Forum Facilitation Guide is a result of the ModÉgalité project (see Appendix 1 for an introduction to the project). It is grounded in research (see Appendix 2 for a research summary), primarily via a series of forum-theatre presentations that took place between winter 2012 and spring 2013. These presentations allowed the research team to collect young Montrealers’ perceptions and opinions regarding gender equality.

It is intended as a creative way to pique youths’ interest and sensitize them to the issues. It has proved to be an essential tool for responding to the needs of schools and community groups with regard to these important themes.

A Project Grounded in Partnerships

The project ModÉgalité is an initiative of the Forum jeunesse de l’Île de Montréal, realized in partnership with YWCA Montreal and the participatory theatre organization Mise au jeu (see Appendix 3 for a detailed introduction to the project partners). It was made possible thanks to financial support from the Secrétariat à la condition féminine du Québec and the Forum jeunesse de l’Île de Montréal. It is part of a wider action plan on equality that was put into place in 2004 by the Conseil du statut de la femme (Québec, 2004).

The extensive information assembled in this guide is intended to support facilitators throughout the workshops and interventions with youth on the issue of gender equality. In addition, the Appendices section may be consulted as needed for additional information on the subject of equal relationships amongst youth.
THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE THE WORKSHOP...
For Whom?

The *Equals* Cinema Forum Facilitation Guide was created for all those working with youth aged 16-22 in schools and in the community sector on the island of Montreal. Designed to support them in facilitating the cinema forum, it also proposes workshops on the issue of gender equality.

Workshop Breakdown

This guide includes **three (3) seventy-five (75) minutes** workshops, which are organized in the following way:

- **Preparing for the Cinema Forum** creates a space for youth to examine their views on equality and to better determine their levels of knowledge or understanding of the subject. Activities proposed at this level allow youth to gain self-confidence and become comfortable acting out scenarios related to equality;

- **The Cinema Forum** comprises a group screening of the film *Equals*, which portrays problematic situations and conflicts related to gender equality. Following the film, the forum encourages participants to express their points of view and to propose solutions to the issues that emerge;

- **The Cinema Forum Wrap-up** further harnesses participants’ knowledge acquisition, reflection, and learning following the cinema-forum.

**In a situation where time is limited**, the cinema forum workshop should be prioritized. However, the entire intervention (three (3) workshops) is preferable whenever possible in order to make the most significant impact on participants and to effectively deconstruct certain perceptions or false assumptions related to gender equality.

The duration of each workshop is flexible and can be adapted to sixty (60) minutes by targeting key elements that speak directly to the needs of the group.

Each workshop presented in this document follows the same format:

- A first page briefly describing the workshop, its objectives, and duration;

- A second page explaining in detail the proposed structure and content (including materials required for the workshops).

The workshops included in the facilitation guide may be applied to the *Québec Education Program (QEP)*. To this end, **Appendix 5** provides more information on the Broad Areas of Learning, Cross-Curricular Competencies, and Subject Areas to which the workshops’ activities are relevant.
WHAT IS CINEMA FORUM?
(Conseil central du Montréal Métropolitain-CSN and Mise au jeu, 2012)

Cinema Forum is a film that illustrates social problems or conflicts through stories based on real-life situations, in order to encourage discussion or debate. The discussion that follows the screening of the film is the ‘forum’ part of cinema forum, where the audience is invited to express themselves in relation to specific scenes in the film and to propose solutions.

Participants can identify with the proposed story through characters’ reactions within the story, and through their own opinions and emotions. Since they are not being spoken about directly, participants can take a step back with regards to a similar situation experienced in their own lives in the past or at the present time.

The interactive part of the cinema forum allows participants the opportunity to express their points of view and also propose their own solutions to the issues addressed in the film. Role-playing is used, providing an opportunity to take risks that might not otherwise be taken in real life. The role of the facilitator is to encourage youth to participate and actively intervene in the role-plays, expressing their points of view and proposing solutions to the discussion questions proposed during the workshop.

More specifically, cinema forum:

- Offers a more dynamic and engaging workshop;
- Sensitizes participants to a subject in a friendly, sensitive, and humorous way;
- Brings participants together around a common challenge to collectively reflect, mobilize, and move into action.

Cinema forum allows participants to:

- Recognize themselves in situations portrayed in a film and thus maintain a certain distance from a similar situation they may be going through;
- Push their reflections further;
- Speak up and have their opinion heard;
- Try out solutions and take risks that they may not ordinarily take in real life.
**Summary of the Film Equals**

*Synopsis of the film Equals (Mise au jeu, 2013)*

Alex invites his friend Milan to the family cottage for the weekend. For two days, the two young men will be alone and relaxing in the country, finishing up school assignments. For Alex, these two days allow him to avoid his girlfriend who pressures him. For Milan, who comes from an immigrant family, it is a chance to get away from his parents from whom he is feeling increasingly more distant.

At the cottage, everything is peaceful until Saturday evening, when a young woman in distress knocks on the door, asking for help. Alex and Milan react differently to this unexpected meeting. Despite the prejudices of one, and the interpretations of the other, the young woman does not hold back from sharing her own opinions. She provokes a debate on the differences between men and women: unequal or complementary…

**Objectives of the Cinema Forum Equals**

The *Equals* cinema forum is part of a prevention strategy that aims to:

- Give voice to young people’s perceptions on gender equality;
- Spark reflection on ways to express one’s identity, and ensure one’s values are respected;
- Encourage healthy models of communication based on openness, expression of feelings, and respect for equal relationships;
- Engage youth in a joint process of reflection and action that allows them to identify ways to better live together with all our similarities and differences.