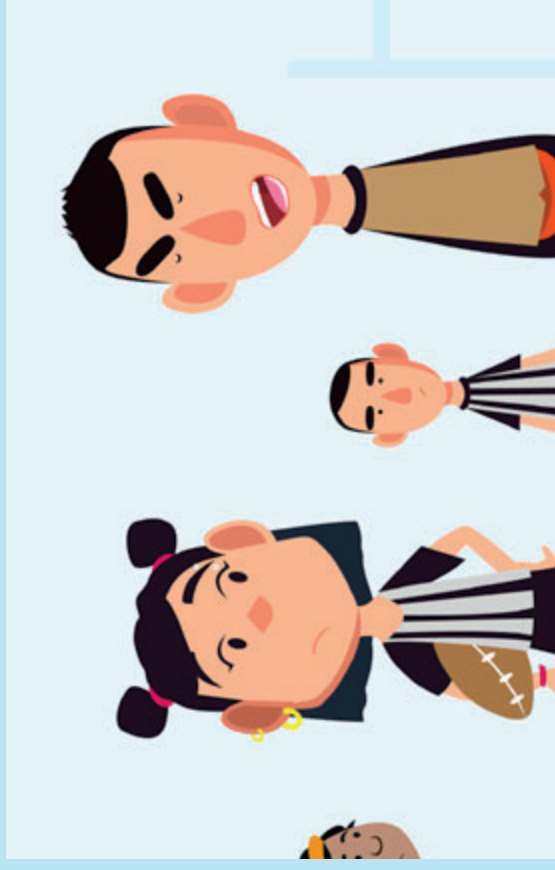


GENDER VIOLENCE AND DEALING WITH FEAR



"Move Nonviolence" is an educational commitment to initiate a process of personal transformation before the conflicts we face in our times, creating nonviolent strategies that free up situations that are at an impasse. This tool consists of a series of videos accompanied by the corresponding educational units so that the teaching guides have the material and direction for their work. The dynamics of this document are classified into sections and their topics in accordance with their appearance in the video. In some sections we suggest suitable options for each end-user profile. This proposal is intended for groups who can be accompanied by someone with a capacity for in-depth reflection on each subject.

Acquire all the material

www.movenonviolence.net

Each unit plan incorporates a series of associated material accessible from the project website: www.movenonviolence.net. The material of this specific unit is found in: <https://movenonviolence.net/U12>.

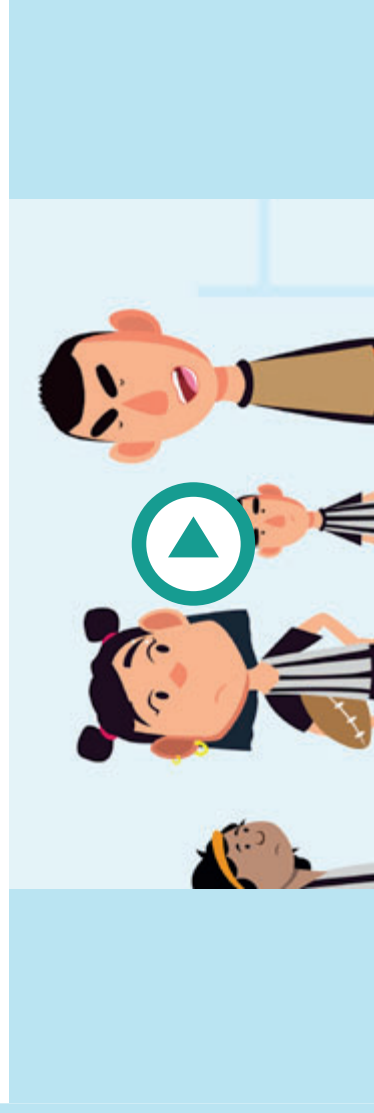
www.movenonviolence.net
movenonviolence@fespinal.com

A project of

CJ Centre d'études
Cristianisme i Justícia



With the support of



Introduction to Fear and Gender-Based Violence

■ CHILDREN

Will you dare to watch the video and identify which fears are yours? Try to realise that you can try to see the positive side of fear or rather consider it an enemy. From this video, which is your positive fear?

02 Fears

■ YOUTH

Which image comes to mind when you say “sexual violence”? Imagine it, give it faces and sounds. Now watch the video:

03 Find Your Voice Against Gender Violence

We suggest that you have a think about this and wonder how and since when you have fed your image of “sexual violence”.

Fear, rage... are feelings that can help or block us. The panic we do not know how to deal with can drive us to react violently. The commitment to nonviolence as a cause often places us in situations of great personal and collective risk, which can frighten us and need us to be considerably discerning, free of panic. Self-restraint is a key element to ensure that fear does not seize hold of us. In this first part of the unit we will work on the positive use of fear and on how we can free ourselves from negative fear.

In the second part, we suggest we explore gender-based violence further. The statistics on feminicides reflect an explicit violence, but there is a great amount of subtle violence which is even more dangerous because of the social devastation it produces: structural and cultural violence which oppress, discriminate against women and justify physical or sexual assault.

[01 Triangle of violence by Johan Galtung](#)


■ ADULTS

Imagine three different situations: one in which you felt intimidated, one in which you felt frightened, and another in which you felt morally weakened. Now watch the following video. In which of these situations have you felt overcome by fear?

[04 Fighting With nonviolence](#)

We suggest you spend a while sitting down with your fear, as Scilla Elworthy does, and having a chat with it as she suggests.



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1

Strategies for changing fear

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Paco Cascón points out three key elements for working on fear:

- Distinguish between negative fear, which paralyses (panic) from positive fear (which helps us to take cautious decisions).
- Do not deny the feeling or censure it. Fears are necessary! The important thing is that the negative fear does not control or block us in the decisive moment.
- Educating ourselves in fear consists of living with our different fears, identifying those which paralyse us and those which build us up, and go on converting negative fear (panic) into positive fear (caution).

The biggest fear is what we feel about something unknown: if we can gradually train our sensations so that whatever frightens us begins to feel familiar, panic ceases to control us.

■ CHILDREN

Begin by tying a string to the foot of a chair where there is a sign that says FEAR. Everyone has fears (the chair), and these are necessary for us to be able to sit down on it, to see how we can see the world from fear's perspective (caution) and then get up and compare the situation from another perspective. But at times fears are not enough for us and they paralyse us (we tie the other end of the string to our belt). What should we do? We accompany their replies and show that the chair (positive fear) does not help when it turns into a string (negative fear). We now invite them to sketch fear like the string, a fear they have experienced. Then we put the chair in the middle of the ring, with a bin on

top of it. Every child will need to come to the middle as the others sing their name. Once in front of the bin, they will screw up their drawing and toss it into the bin saying: "You have no power over me!" and they will add whatever they wish to feel stronger and prevent fear from gripping them. In the end we all of us wind up singing a happy song to make it disappear.

■ YOUTH

We suggest they sketch the shape of their own bare feet on a postcard. Form four pairs of footprints. Put them on the ground and stand on the middle ones. As you watch this video [05 Miedos, by Saga Falabella](#) tread on the steps that move forward or backward according to the image that you see. To wind up, in each footprint write a list of the fears that paralyse us and a list of those that build us up to enable us to move on.

■ ADULTS

The guide will explain to the others the introduction to this chapter. Then you will watch this video: [06 Top 4 Ways to Overcome Fear](#).

Now share what helped you more than what you felt, together with your experience facing the fears. Do you believe what they suggest is possible? Is it based more on working on reasons and experiences, or is it a combination of the two?

Let's explore resources for working on fear

As we transform negative into positive fear, it is important to free ourselves from phobias about objects or situations, negative fears that alter us physiologically (sweating, our heart beating, our breathing speeding up or feeling blocked...) and under whose influence we can no longer control our behaviour. Phobias can develop because of traumas we have lived through, or they can be learnt from those around us. In whichever case, in response to a nonviolent action with a certain pressure, we can discover a phobia that can make us lose control, and because of this it is essential for us to train beforehand. We introduce an adaptation of the five phases that Cascón proposes for us to work on negative fears as a group.

1. Build up an atmosphere of trust between the members of the group through games.
2. Introduce fears in small doses in interactions so that you can gradually explore how they react to them.
3. Share with the whole group the fears that everyone has in real life. What have I felt inside?
4. Pinpoint real and personal fears. We need to create a distance with whatever it is exactly that makes us afraid, and transform negative thoughts into positive and realistic ones.
5. Explore individual and collective resources (tools, strategies, ideas...) so as to grow familiar with negative fears.

CHILDREN

For phase 1, we propose a variation on the game on *blind trains*. The players line up with

their eyes blindfolded, everyone behind the other with their hands on the shoulders of the person in front. The last has their eyes open and has to steer the whole train from the back. They cannot stop walking at any moment. This is about trusting in the orders of whoever sees, while we keep our eyes closed.

YOUTH

We propose the game "the wall",¹ to work on phase 2. A row of people a little distant one from the other stands with their back against the wall, at a distance of about two metres. A volunteer will stand at about fifty metres distance, and after bandaging their eyes, will have to run as fast as they can towards the wall. The group will have to catch him before he arrives, and to do so they will have to have trained beforehand on how to catch a person running at a certain speed safely and without harming them. In the end we weigh up: what happened? How did everyone feel?

ADULTS

We suggest you pinpoint and transform your own fears (phase 4). Watch this video about snake phobia [07 Strategy to Overcome a Phobia With Gary Cox](#).

In spite of the abusive therapy show, analyse the progress of the woman compared to the 5 phases stated by Paco Cascón. Then share your own fears, and think together how each one could gradually be exposed to them and with some help, as a therapy to overcome fear and gain control.

1. CASCÓN, P. I BERSTAIN, C. M. (1996). *La alternativa del juego I*. Madrid: Catarata, p. 85.

Gender-based violence... sexual

feel uncomfortable or wounded by some word or verse in the songs that have been sung? If this is not the case, is there any element that might cause them to feel ill at ease? b) Would you say anything or joke about things that might hurt, linked to the body or to prejudices about boys and girls, to someone you love? Now explain the iceberg quite simply: if we do not wish to live in a world where there is visible violence, how can we come to begin to melt the ice of invisible violence?



YOUTH AND ADULTS

You can begin the session with this introductory video: [23 Online Sexual Abuse Can Happen](#)

"How come you speak such good English? Have you already been to your country? Where does such an exotic beauty as you come from? Is it true what they tell me about black women being wild in bed?" These are some of the same old questions that Desirée Bela-Lobedde¹ is still being asked forty years after she was born in Catalonia. What kind of sexual questions have you been asked, or which have put you off at times? What questions have you asked others?

Now do a roleplaying game where half of you are members of a jury, and the other half are those accused for various acts of sexual abuse. Try to put yourself in the place of the other, and, rather than going into details, search the arguments that each person might have. How have we felt about it? What have we learnt from it?

Men and women have a body which also expresses itself sexually. The way in which we express our own sexuality forms part of the basic needs of each person. Overall, sexuality does not only express a physical urge, but also expresses an attachment connected to feelings of love. Try to make sure that body and heart can come together and express themselves, which helps us to grow in an wholesome way.

CHILDREN

We suggest that in groups you invent the words to a song where you need to express the love you feel for a person. What will you say to them to express your love for them? What praise will you give them? Will you use a lovely word? Will you mention the clothes they wear, their beauty, their body? How will you refer to them? Let each group sing the song they have made up. Now together with the new lyrics you will work out the following: a) do you think that the person who is loved might

1. BELA-LOBEDDE, D. (2018). *Ser mujer negra en España*. Madrid: Plan B.

Gender-based violence...in physical attacks

Faced with situations of humiliation, assault or aggression, in questions of gender the non-violent response needs to respect a time between action and reaction, to avoid getting caught up in the spiral of violence. In all, physical violence between genders requires empowerment of the weaker or assaulted person and a reinforcement of their own self-esteem. Posing limits and knowing how to say "NO" is difficult to put into practice when we depend on external value-judgments. This implies knowing how to be clear about our own dignity, and that this does not depend on anything external to its own worth. To keep up our own firm "NO" requires inner strength. In all, at times we need to know how to ask for outside help from services in administrations that oppose gender-based violence. Taking into account the limit between what can occur in private or in public is also relevant to enable victims to dare to accuse their aggressor.

■ CHILDREN

Let's form a ring. Let them imagine that they have been told NO about something they wanted, and that they are angry. One by one they mimic how they tend to react. Then, they go back to representing the same feeling by starting with the minimum reaction possible, and gradually increasing to the maximum reaction that they would be capable of. How do they feel? Have they become physically violent? Why did it reach this extreme? Have we got here, at times, to let a YES happen? Instead of imposing ourselves, are there alternatives? Let volunteers speak up for these alternatives by using dialogue. We can close by noticing that we have been silent about

what we don't like (mimicking) and that we have given voice to an alternative in dialogue.

■ YOUTH AND ADULTS

Elsa, a young married woman abandoned by a husband too engrossed in his business, lets herself be seduced and spends the night in a house on the other side of the river.

In the morning, before her husband comes back from a trip, Elsa crosses the bridge, but a madman bars her way, threatening her. She runs to look for a boatman, but he asks her to pay for the crossing. She has no money, and asks for some from her lover, but he says no. She goes to see a single friend who lives there, who professes his undying unrequited love for her. She explains him everything and asks him for money but he also refuses her. After a renewed attempt with the boatman, Elsa decides to cross the bridge. The madman kills her.

Who of these characters (Elsa, her husband, her lover, the madman, the boatman, the friend) is responsible for her death? Place them more or less according to their responsibility, and defend your position. Are there other people responsible who do not figure in the story? Watch the videos: [20 «48 frases que los hombres escuchan a lo largo de su vida»](#) and [21 «48 Cosas que las mujeres escuchan a lo largo de su vida»](#)

Let men and women identify in what moments they resorted to any of the expressions in the videos. What drove you to it? Was it justified? How can you defend it? Now put yourself in the shoes of those in the video: [22 Ending Violence Against Women and Girls](#) and in a group discussion consider which violence to subject women have become a norm in the world.

Dealing with an intense state of fear: before explicit aggression

If we cannot make the most impatient parts of us aware of the patience necessary in nonviolent proceedings, faced with an aggression it will be easy to break out into violence which will make us lose not only credibility but also the advantage of being able to change the rules of the game. Feeling fear and rage but acting in the heat of the moment with a clear head requires training. You can read witness accounts like those of this psychiatrist,¹ or these two women² assaulted on the street and at home, to understand examples of how to manage fear in the heat of the moment. We need to train ourselves in third ways, and be clear that in the face of fear the nonviolent way is always based on humanising the relationship. Fear is the cause of preventative violence: if we master it with humanity, it loses its power and capacity for violence.

■ CHILDREN

First, let them share experiences in which they were afraid of darkness. This video can help: [08 The Dark by Lemony Snicket](#).

Then, in a space that is physically safe but dark, we can play traditional games (hide and seek, tag...) or get down to group work (reading a fairy tale, find the ball...). This way the centre of attention changes place: the experience is no longer about fear, but rather enjoyment. This way positive mental associations are created that help to tolerate fear.

■ YOUTH AND ADULTS

Proposal for those over 18: the guide prepares a list of situations of immediate fear, mixed up with others that are not: they grab you by the neck and demand money; a riot policeman beats protestors, comes up to you and hits your head; a group of people yell at you, disapproving of what you are doing; in the midst of an uproar, they push you and you fall on your back (provide the mattress); a policeman immobilises and handcuffs you; a group of fanatics insults you and breaks your personal things; a person runs up to you and asks you where a street is... In turns, each person plays the part of those who experience these situations. They put a motor helmet on and drape a black cloth over it so you cannot see out. They take the cloth away and the others recreate one of the scenes by playing with the protagonist in a realistic way (better to have costume, objects...). All of sudden, they put the cloth back on and begin again: creating as many scenes as possible for the same person. That way the different members of the group pass from one to the other, repeating the disorderly cycle and with new elements, to keep up the surprise effect. The goal is to try out new and creative responses to situations of fear that are already known.



1. JAWPOLSKY, G.G. (1979). Love is letting go of fear. Berkeley: Celestial Arts. JAWPOLSKY, G.G. (1998). Amar es liberarse del miedo. Madrid: Los libros del comienzo.

2. WINK, W. (1998). The Powers that be: Theology for a New Millennium. Danvers: p. 147-150.

Terrorism and nonviolence

In situations of terrorism and of any type of repression, the amygdala – the cerebral centre of fear – blocks the mind. In military training they use four key points to deal in a personal way with this fear, which disables:

- Fix a goal. Be clear about what you need to do.
- Mental rehearsal. Recreate similar situations to train them beforehand.
- Self-discourse. A positive and repetitive discourse to drown out negative thoughts.
- Excitement control. Relax the mind with slow and deep breathing.

In addition to individual work, history provides eight nonviolent ways of collectively fighting terrorism,¹ which can be combined according to the context:

- Develop the area economically,
- Reduce cultural marginalisation,
- Foster nonviolent protest among civilians,
- Educate people to express conflicts instead of suppressing them,
- Accompany people to depolarise the effects of the terror,
- Transform the police in a body of peace officials for the people,
- Drive out behaviour seeking to provoke the terrorists,
- Negotiate, a productive action often overlooked.

■ CHILDREN

Draw up into two parallel rows so that each of you stand facing a partner. Each child has to try and make sure that the opposite person laughs first. You are not allowed to touch each other, but you can grimace any way you like with your eyes, nose, tongue... In the end you check how each of you felt, and which strategies you used so as not to laugh. Compare these with the four points described above. Can we use these strategies when we are afraid?

■ YOUTH AND ADULTS

Introduce the theme with this video on terrorism and nonviolence:

[09 Terrorism and Nonviolence: An Animation](#)

Choose a country where the presence of terrorism is strong. Look for documentary source material to find out more about the socio-political reality in question and the impact that terrorism is having. Imagining that you are an advisor to the country's president, trace a nonviolent realistic route to drive the terrorists out without weapons and drawing on the eight ways described in this chapter, and share the resulting reports.

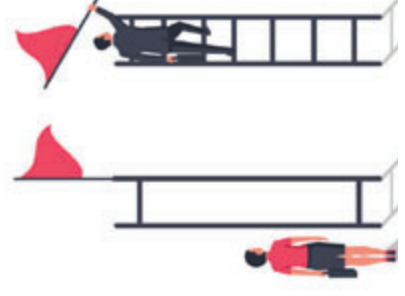
archs, the professors, had endless difficulties, terrible drawbacks to contend with. Their education had been in some ways as faulty as my own. It had bred in them defects as great. True, they had money and power, but only at the cost of harboring in their breasts an eagle, a vulture, forever tearing the liver out and plucking at the lungs—the instinct for possession, the rage for acquisition which drives them to desire other people's fields and goods perpetually, to make frontiers and flags, battleships and poison gas, to offer up their own lives and their children's lives." (Woolf, V. (1929). *A Room of One's Own*).

Now, look up the term "sorority" and comment on what this has to do with the quotation. How would you apply any of the seven points we looked at earlier to this passage?

■ ADULTS

We introduce cases of women who were rejected by different institutions "for being women." We suggest you look into what happened to the following women:

- Angela Davis (problems with her university for being a woman)
- Edith Stein (problems with her university for being a woman)
- Virginia Woolf (creativity and a doubtful pen for being a woman)
- Simone Weil (doubtful of being a mystic because of being a woman)
- Etty Hillesum (doubtful of being a mystic because of being a woman)
- Dorothy Vaughan (mathematician discriminated against for being a woman and Afro-American)
- Katsuko Saruhashi (geo-chemist breaking down male barriers in the workplace)



1. See the entire article: [8 ways to defend against terror nonviolently](#).

Gender-based violence... in professional life and institutions

We have tended to try to solve the problem of gender by introducing the principle of parity in those who represent the institutions. In all, equal numbers do not imply equal treatment when it comes to gender. At the same time, we fall into the subtle trap of reproducing sexist power structures, when we seem to propose feminist power structures and yet cultivate unfairness under a cloak of quantitative equity that does not take into account qualitative criteria. To get out of this power spiral means investing in training that recognises the value of the ethical wealth of otherness and break with the topics which prevent women from gaining access to positions of responsibility and leadership.¹ In this research we can suggest we go beyond the theme of gender as power struggle:

- New masculinities and femininities.
- Learn to live together in our own individuality.
- A course on invisibility.
- A course on the use of space and time which can adjust family conciliation.
- A course in responsibility in care.
- Autonomy beyond victimisation.
- A course on disinterestedness, beyond duty.

CHILDREN

Stand in a ring. We shall watch the following video: [18 The Effects Of Sexism On Children](#). Then we'll close our eyes and picture our dreams for a world without gender discrimination. I dream what family life would be like

1. BUXARRÀIS, M.R.; BURGUET, M. (2014). *La conciliación familiar, laboral, social y personal: una cuestión ética*. Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona.

Fear and humour

Fear subjects us, and the victim obeys through fear. If we incorporate the ingredient of humour, this relaxes us, frees us from anguish and allows us to express control of the situation, revitalising it. *S/he* who laughs liberates him or herself and channels anger. In all, any use of humour always has to respect the person's dignity. Humiliation and mockery go beyond these limits. In contrast, it would be worthwhile to examine the kind of humour that invites everyone to laugh not by attacking the person, but rather whatever feels absolute in order to dethrone it. The great thing about humour is our capacity to laugh at ourselves, because whoever lives in fear is incapable of laughing at him or herself, and cannot bear swallowing this antidote.

YOUTH

Do you know what sorority means? In a group one of you reads the following text out loud whilst the others, with their eyes closed, image the scene. To close, write down on a piece of paper the feelings that the reading arouses in you. Use colours to express this and drawings if need be.

"It is remarkable, remembering the bitterness of those days, what a change of temper a fixed income will bring about. No force in the world can take from me my five hundred pounds. Food, house and clothing are mine forever. Therefore not merely do effort and labour cease, but also hatred and bitterness. I need not hate any man; he cannot hurt me. I need not flatter any man; he has nothing to give me. So imperceptibly I found myself adopting a new attitude towards the other half of the human race. It was absurd to blame any class or any sex, as a whole. Great bodies of people are never responsible for what they do. They are driven by instincts which are not within their control. They too, the patri-

YOUTH AND ADULTS

Explain the introduction to the chapter, and watch the scene of *Harry Potter and the prisoner from Azkaban* (2004) around minute 40:14, when a boggart appears.

10 Remus Lupin's "Boggart" Class

Comment in a group: what kind of fear does a boggart represent? Why is the spell "ridiculous"? Why is it that the funny form should contain the part that frightens us? Now close your eyes and relax for a moment. Then, imagine someone real or fantastic whom you find quite lovely. It doesn't matter if you laugh and this is contagious. Later, imagine what shape your biggest fear has (boggart). Then, place your palms in parallel, and with one hand imagine a boggart, and in the other the lovely person. We draw our hands together as we slowly get the two to talk to each other: what would they say? After a while, the two people fuse: what kind of new lovely person has my boggart become? At the end, everyone shapes in clay their own funny and unarmed boggart, who will help him to cast a "Ridiculous" spell in real life.

CHILDREN

After an introduction on the importance of laughing, read the fairy tale "The Emperor's New Clothes" by Hans Christian Andersen (1837) and discuss it in a group, with the help of sketches if need be. Now create a scenario pretending to be the people with jackets, until the moment when one calls out: "The Emperor has no clothes!" After having a laugh, sit down again. Define notions such as vanity and hypocrisy. Where do we find them today? How can we laugh about the situation without making personal jibes?



6

Gender-based violence... psychologically and in relationships

Dominant relationships¹ do not only apply to people of different sexes, but when this is the case the dominance often tends to sink to another level. Psychologically, the relationship between different sexes perpetuates subtle forms of dominance that some cultural patterns have chosen to sustain. A love misunderstood, known as romantic, imagines a woman afraid of not being loved and seeking a masculine saviour – a kind of Prince Charming – even though this might on the contrary mean that she is treated badly, that her capacity to be independent and her personal feminine leadership qualities are dismantled. We need to be aware that there is a patriarchal system that has supported structural violence, which permeates men and women who foster distorted, subordinate and top-down relationships.

■ CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS

Someone arrives home, and no-one is there. This person discovers there is washing to be ironed, the fridge is empty, there is no paper in the toilets, and the washing needs to be hung out. Then what do you think they do? Do they: 1) sit down on the sofa and watch telly; 2) sit down in the study and go on working; 3) put their gym shoes on and head for the gym; 4) call their partner and ask what needs to be done; 5) pick up the broom, clean the windows and the sinks?

Who is who in your home? Who has each of these reactions when they arrive home? When do they happen and when do they

not happen? What do the adults have to say about their own home unit when they need to delegate housework? Where do you find people who help you and where do you find co-responsibility? Do you know how to tell the difference?

Have a talk about this video: [11 Sexism](#)

For the children: we suggest you also draw up a list of household chores to see if they are aware of the responsibility of who does what at home. Are there any differences between boys and girls, in their lists? Then you will take note of the hours spent on each task by each member of the family. Wind up by watching the tale of Prince Cinderella to contrast and comment on what they experience:

[12 Prince Cinderella](#)

For adolescents and adults, we open up the invitation by proposing they watch this video:

[13 Sexual Abuse in the Family](#)

Before quite a big piece of paper and with music in the background, in a group we express in symbolic language what the gradual stages of abuse produce. Begin with a dialogue to show agreements or disagreements indicating the type of relationships they produce. We invite them to detect everyday sexism: [14 You Can Do Better - Everyday Sexism](#) in behaviour between adolescents today, as much as in partnerships as friendships.



7

Gender-based violence... in culture

A subtle form of gender-based violence is what we reproduce in cultural forms that were taught us but which generate stereotypes. It is embedded in each culture in distinct ways. Some have belittled characteristics associated with femininity: frailness, goodness, self-help, vulnerability, tenderness, care for those in need or weakness, and have opposed these to leadership ability, disobedience to injustice and a demand for human rights and duties. In all, new femininities and new masculinities are emerging which seek to integrate these polarities.

■ CHILDREN

We suggest they work on the fairy-tale of the Princess and the Pea. You can find the traditional version and an altered version depending on gender language.¹ Apply the customary "compare and contrast" which concentrates on the following points:

- How are they alike?
- How are they different?
- Which main ideas can we draw from this, about similarities and differences that we have seen together?
- What conclusion or interpretation does this lead us to?

[15 Original: The Princess and the Pea](#)

[16 Fixed: The Princess and the Pea](#)

■ YOUTH
Track down 10 adverts in your country where the woman is used as an object (objectified – made an object). This can be because of sexist aesthetic canons for example: shaving, painting nails, putting on make-up, losing weight... Share this in a group. Widen the activity by detecting ways in which women are treated differently (for example, with cabins to change babies in women's toilets but not in men's, or free entrance for women to some gatherings). Can you continue the list?

■ ADULTS

After watching the video, detect which new femininities require the situations that are related here: [17 Dreams Have No Gender](#)

Indicate which new masculine roles we need to empower so that these women can overcome the situation they find themselves in. At the same time, also consider which cultural changes will be necessary for these specific women to build their lives.



1. CARRILLO, I. (ed.) (2017). *Destruir la telaraña de género desde la educación*. Vic: Eumo.

1. You can find fairy tales adapted according to gender language at CAVALLIO, F., FAVILLI, E. (2017). *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls. 100 tales of extraordinary women*. Londres: Penguin Books.