

**ConnectED Parents:  
Supporting parents and  
caregivers to prevent  
adolescent dating violence  
through texts, peers, &  
environments**

**CONNECTED PARENTS**  
POWERED BY SHIFT

**sh!ft**  
THE PROJECT TO END  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

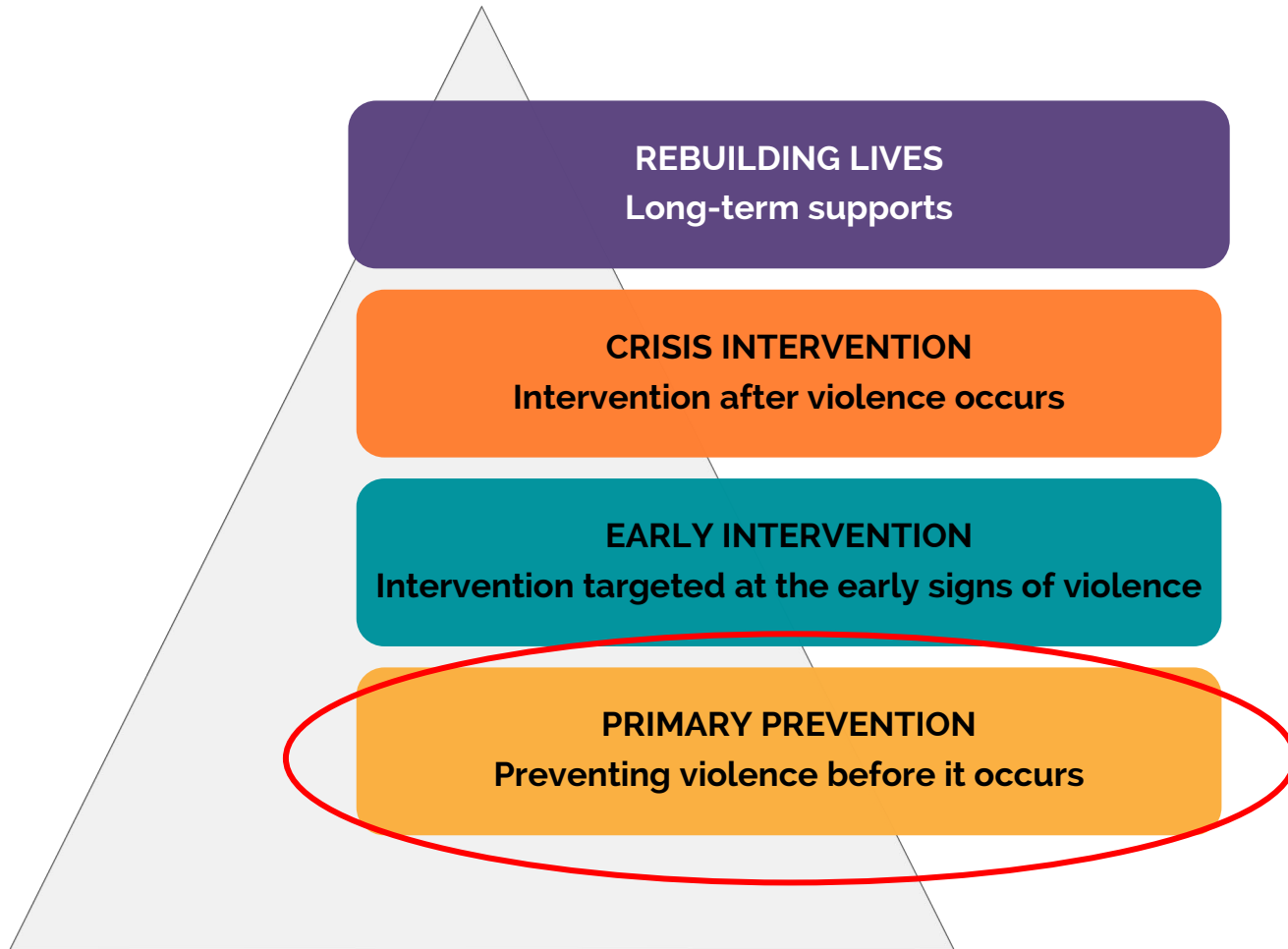
2024.03.07



# Land Acknowledgement

# Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence

<https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/>




# What is Adolescent Dating Violence (ADV)?



Aggressive, threatening, and/or manipulative behaviour occurring in adolescent romantic and sexual relationships.

Source: PREVNet

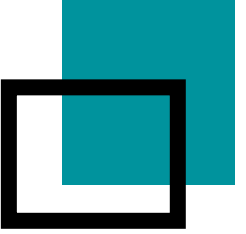




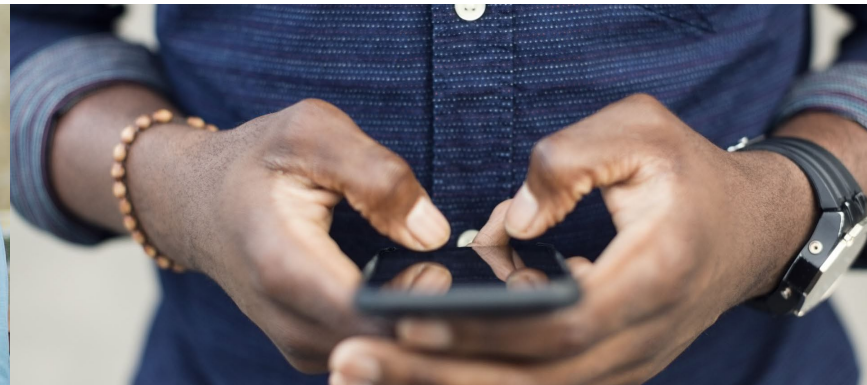
Dating violence experienced during adolescence significantly increases the odds of future victimization by a romantic partner.

**Prevention is Key**

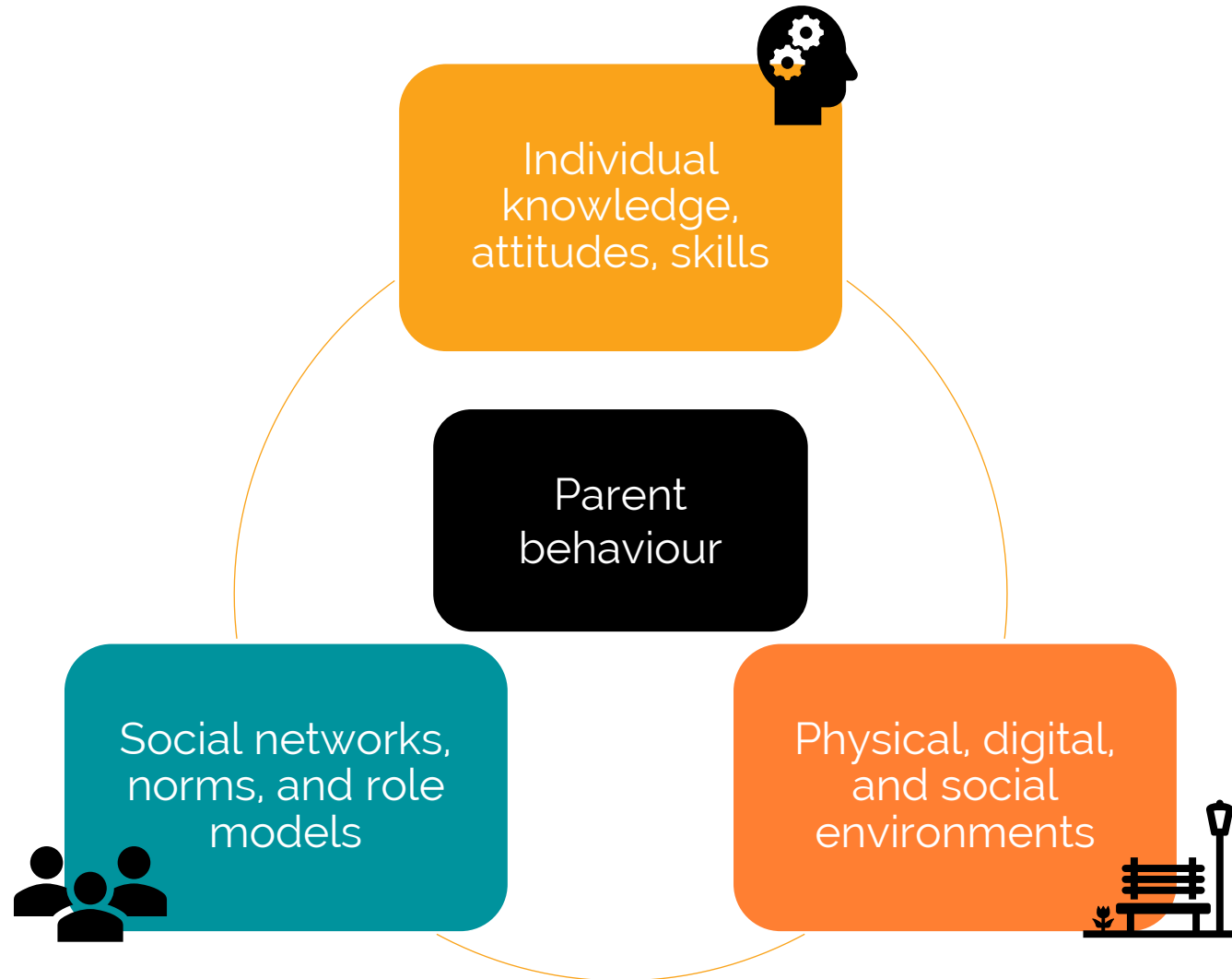
# Learn more about the research and theories guiding the ConnectED Parents approach:



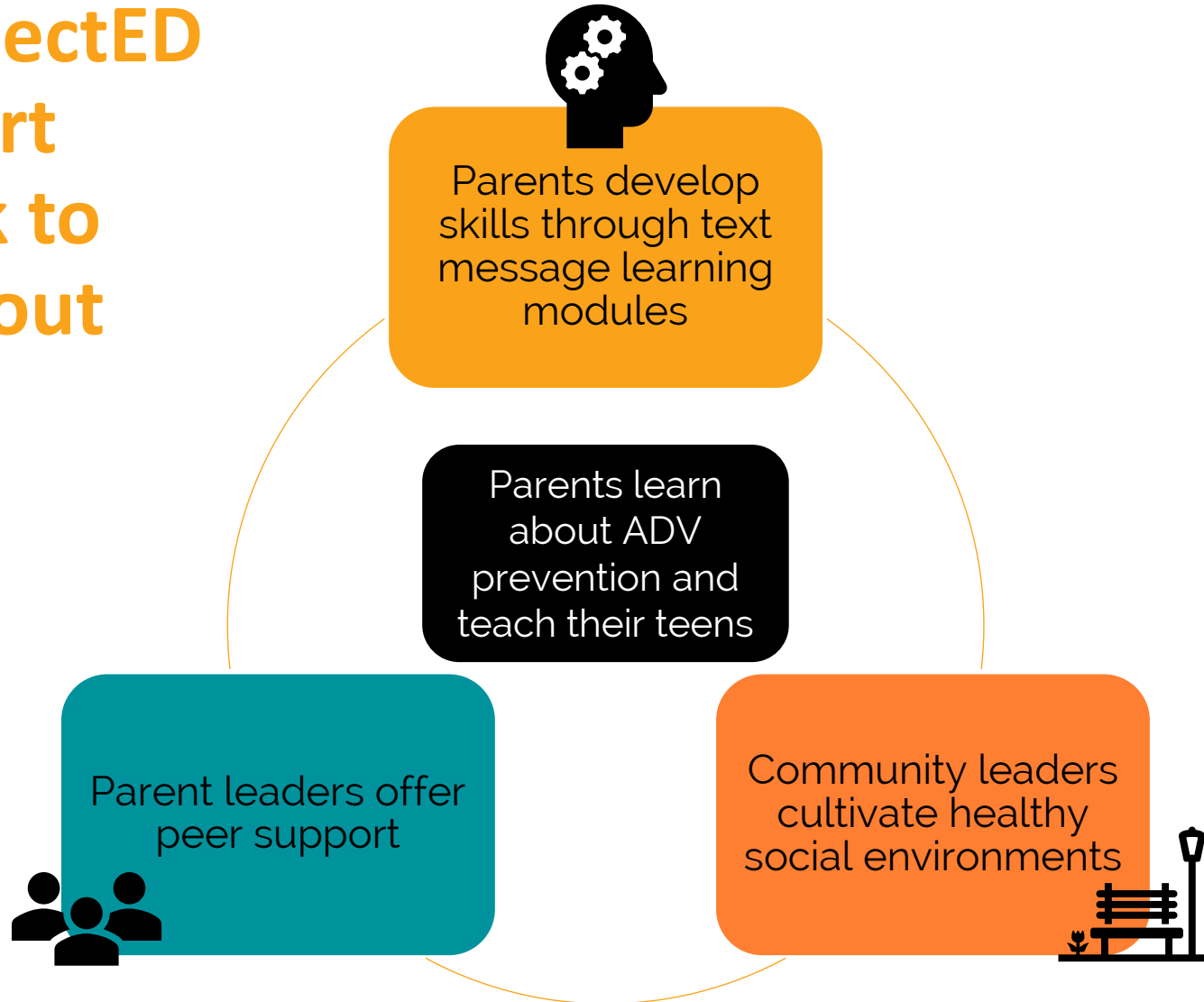
<https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/our-work/children-youth-parents/connected-parents-project/>



# What drives a parent's behaviour?



# How can ConnectED Parents support parents to talk to their teens about healthy youth relationships?





# The ConnectED Parents Approach



# 1. Partner with settings where parents naturally go



## Examples:

- Faith settings
- Workplaces
- Interest-based groups
- Informal parent groups
- Extracurricular settings for youth
- Online spaces

## Current implementation settings:

1. Centre for Sexuality's parent group adjacent to their Girls Program
2. Shift-developed and led parent Facebook group

# The ConnectED Parents Approach



3.

2. Train  
leaders to  
design  
healthy social  
environments

1. Partner  
with  
settings  
where  
parents are  
at

4.

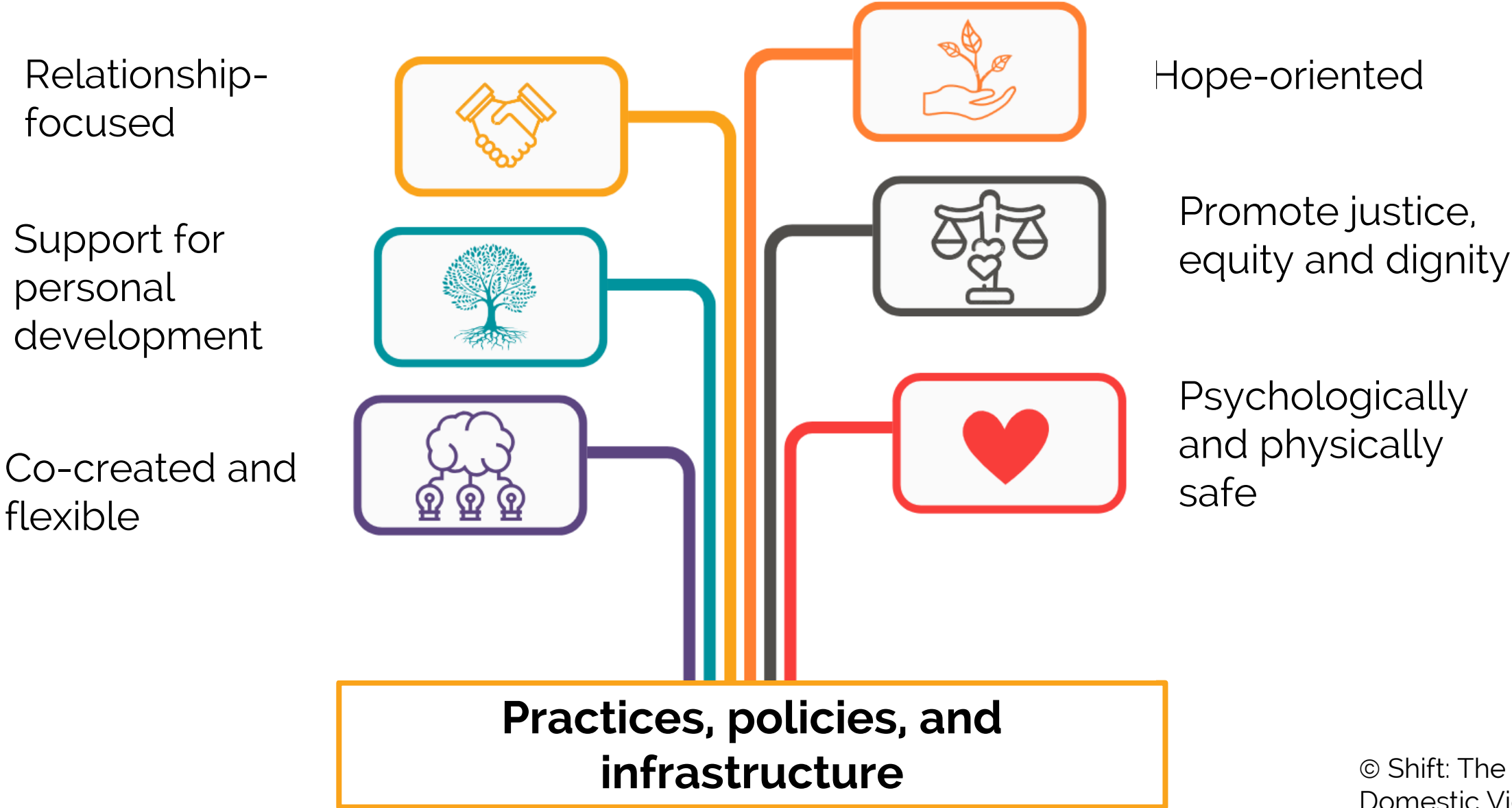
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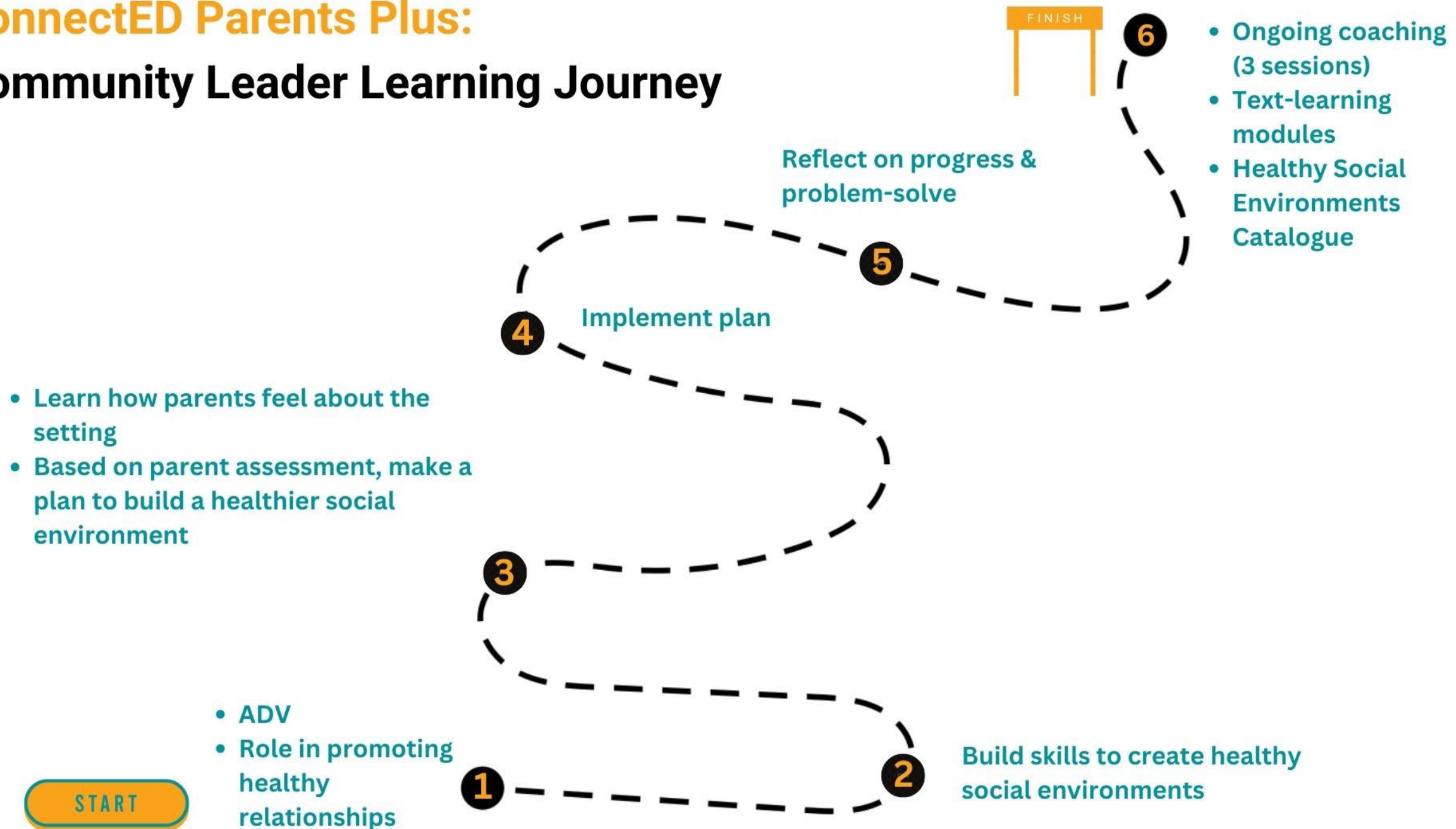
# Why focus on social environments? Start by thinking about a toxic work environment...



# Dimensions of a Healthy Social Environment



# ConnectED Parents Plus: Community Leader Learning Journey



# The ConnectED Parents Approach

1. Partner  
with  
settings  
where  
parents are  
at

2. Train  
leaders to  
design  
healthy social  
environments

3. Work with  
community  
leaders to  
identify parent  
leaders and build  
their capacity to  
support other  
parents

4.

5.

6.



# 3. Build capacity of Parent Leaders

**Parent leaders** (a subset of parents in the setting) will offer fellow parents with:

- Emotional support
- Informational support
- Socialization





# ConnectED Parents Plus: Parent Leader Learning Journey

**START**

- Practice, practice practice!
- Handling challenging situations

- ADV
- Role in promoting healthy relationships
- Healthy relationships spectrum

**1**

**2**

**3**

- Ongoing coaching (3)
- Text-learning modules

**4**

**FINISH**

**5**

Connect with other parents!

- Explore how social location impacts our parenting & approach to being a peer leader
- Build skills for being a peer leader

# The ConnectED Parents Approach

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leaders and build  
their capacity to  
support other  
parents

4. Work with  
community &  
parent leaders to  
create a healthy  
social  
environment with  
social supports

5. Implement  
text-learning  
modules that  
support  
parents

6.

# 5. Text-based learning: 7 modules for parents

Over 6 months, parents receive 2-3 texts per week on:

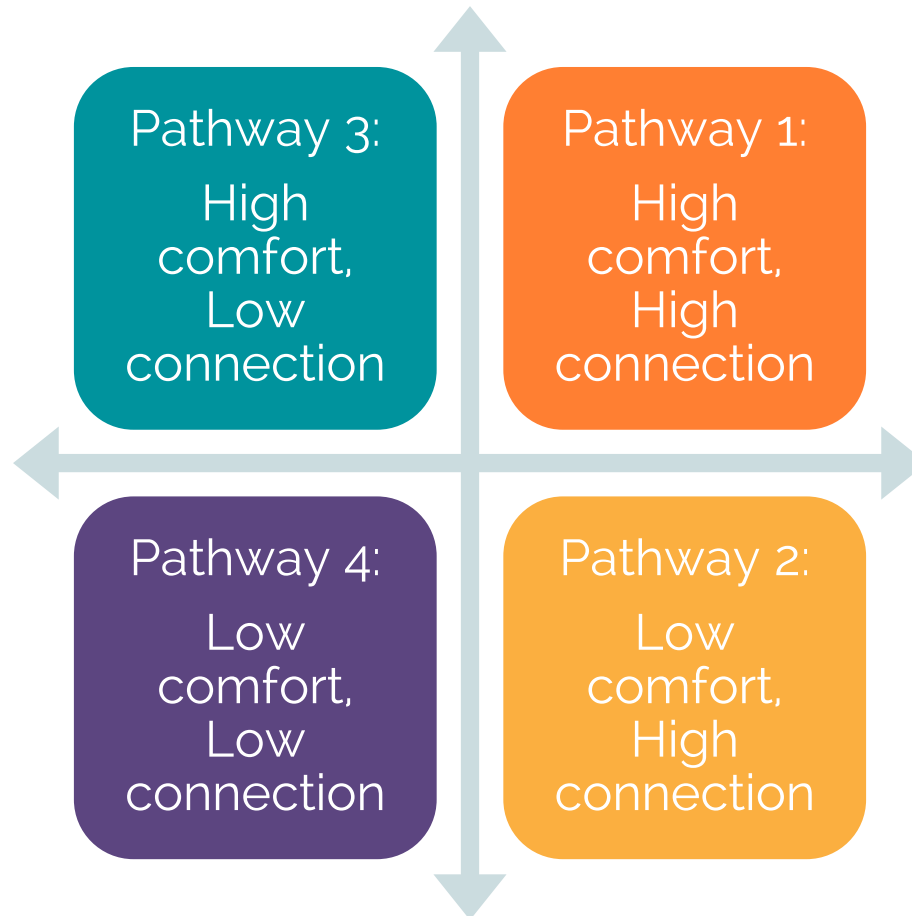
1. What is dating?
2. What is ADV?
3. How do our own values, beliefs, and experiences influence how we teach our adolescent about healthy relationships?
4. How can we deepen our parenting relationship with our adolescent to help them have healthy relationships?
5. How can we help our adolescent develop healthy relationships skills?
6. What are the warning signs of ADV?
7. What are helpful responses to ADV?



# Supporting a broad range of parents through 4 text-learning pathways

Comfort around child dating

Parent-child connection



## Example text to parents



Let's work through a scenario! Your mental health is not great this week and you're under a lot of stress, but you want to talk to **[CHILD\_FIRST\_NAME]** about something: "I saw you hanging out with someone from your school, and it looked like you were more than 'just friends.' I think you were holding hands."

**[CHILD\_FIRST\_NAME]** says, "We are just friends. But so what if I was dating Alix?"

You respond, "How'd you know that I was talking about Alix, huh? You know you're not allowed to date."

## Example text to parents



**[CHILD\_FIRST\_NAME]** shouts, “I said we’re just friends! You never listen to me!”

You want to shout back but remember what you learned about active listening and sharing power with **[CHILD\_FIRST\_NAME]**. Plus, a big fight right now would probably just make you both feel more stressed, and you’re already on the edge. You take a deep breath.

## Example text to parents



Here are some possible responses that show you hear what they are *actually* saying (and not what you *think* they are saying):

A. Get upset or cry, and say, “Hey, not cool. I’m upset but let me see if I have this right: You and Alix are just friends and I misunderstood. Is that what you’re saying? I’m not buying it so let’s figure this out.”

B. Turn towards your child, use eye contact, and say, “I’m frustrated. It sounds like you are too? Should we check-in later when we are both calmer?”

C. Put your mobile phone down and say, “I hear you. You say you and Alix are friends. We may disagree. What do you think is the best thing to do now?”

D. None of the above.

What is the response that you will most likely give – be honest 😊 ? TEXT letter A, B, C, or D.

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6. Ongoing  
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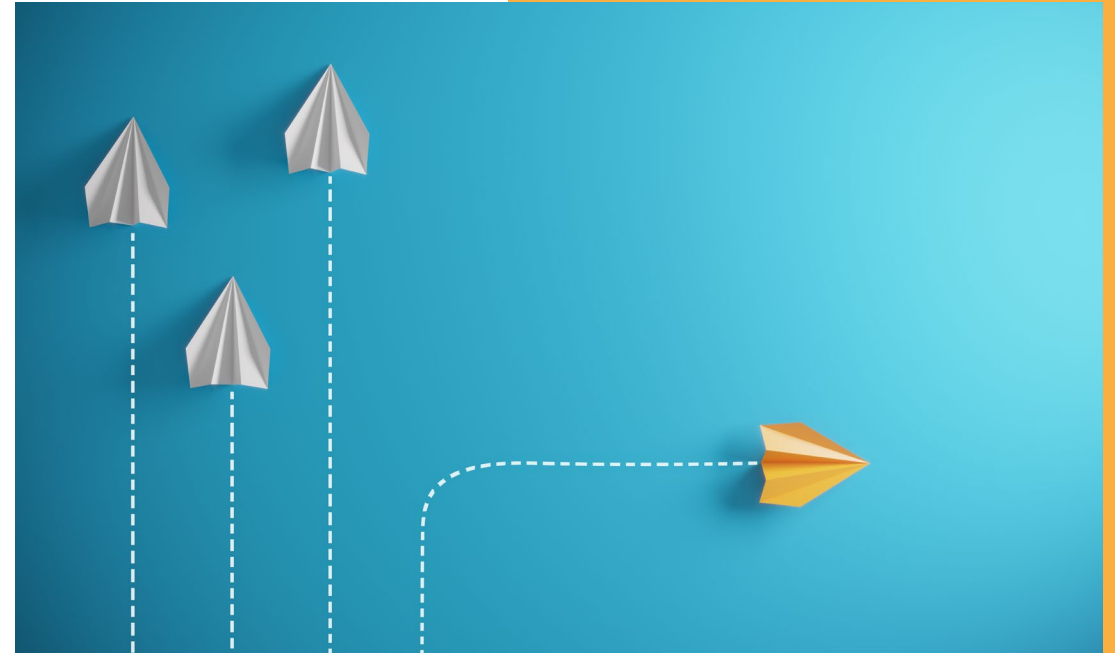


# Emerging Lessons and Reflections

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# Integration of new approaches versus working outside our traditional structures



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**How can the social sector  
keep up with technology  
and how can the tech  
sector work better for us?**



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**How can we leverage technology to build capacity in community and parent leaders?**



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**How do we support civil society to lead prevention efforts *and* ensure we don't over-burden them?**



# CONNECTED PARENTS

Calling parents & caregivers of 6 to 20 year olds!



Did you  
kn  w?

Text messages can help you  
build healthy relationships skills  
in your child?

## Join our project!

- Learn how to foster your child's healthy relationships through texts sent right to your phone.
- Share your feedback through surveys.

To learn more  
or sign-up

Registration  
ends March 22!



Powered by:

**sh!ft**  
THE PROJECT TO END  
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CALGARY

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties  
Research Ethics Board has approved this study  
(REB22-1631)

Questions? [LiLee@ucalgary.ca](mailto:LiLee@ucalgary.ca)

## Please spread the word!

Info can be found on our website:

[https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/  
our-work/children-youth-  
parents/connected-parents-project/](https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/our-work/children-youth-parents/connected-parents-project/)

Contact Lianne Lee:

[LiLee@ucalgary.ca](mailto:LiLee@ucalgary.ca)

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Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada



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**SHIFT TO STOP  
VIOLENCE**  
BEFORE IT STARTS

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[www.preventdomesticviolence.ca](http://www.preventdomesticviolence.ca)

Initiated by the Brenda Stafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence



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