What are STEREOTYPES?

**Stereotypes...**

...are judgments you make about a person or a group of people.
...may or may not be true for individuals within a group.
...affect the way you treat other people.

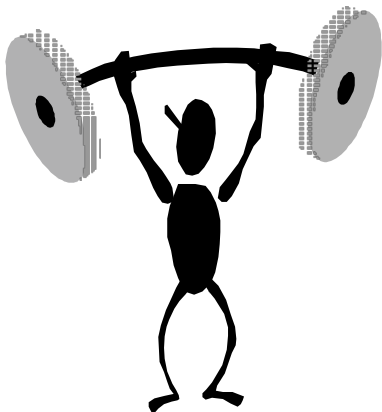**Don't believe everything you hear!** Think about the stereotypes you may have heard about people who...

...have lots of tattoos.

...like to play hockey.

...wear glasses.

...wear brand name clothing.

...enjoy skateboarding.

...come from different cultural backgrounds.

...go to a certain school.

...live in a certain community.
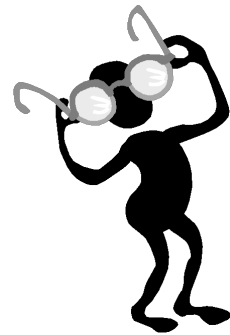
....like hip hop music...or heavy metal...or rap...or country...or pop...or opera...

...like to play computer games.

...hang out at the gym.

...make their own clothes.

...dye their hair bright colours.

...love science classes.

...shave their head.

...belong to a religious or spiritual group.

Each person is unique.
Take the time to look beyond the stereotypes!

Stereotyping affects us all!

In society, males and females are told what to do, how to act and how to look. What about people who don't fit the stereotypes? Think about the media's image of a "real" man or a "real" woman. Some of us can look at these images and laugh....others believe the hype. Stereotypes can make us feel like we need to be someone we aren't. They don't reflect real people.

Stereotypes are BORING!

Think about the most interesting people you know. Do they fit the stereotypes? Most likely they do not live up to the impossible images of the "perfect" woman or man. Real life is full of people of all different shapes, colours and attitudes. That's what makes the world such an interesting place. How boring would it be if everyone looked the same and liked the same things?

Stereotypes can be DANGEROUS!

Men and women who are trying to live up to impossible standards are bound to end up disappointed and feeling badly about themselves. They may feel they are not worthy of respect due to their failure to achieve the unrealistic ideals. This can lead to violence. Many abusers have very rigid beliefs on the roles of men and women in society. Not living up to these roles is "failure" and can result in insults, threats and even violence. People who feel badly about themselves may believe they deserve to be abused or mistreated.

NOBODY deserves disrespect or violence.

Society's Myths

Every day, we get all kinds of messages from the world around us. We learn about who we are and how we're "supposed" to be from friends, parents, teachers, television, movies, music, the Internet, "celebrities"... Society tells us how we should look, act and feel about ourselves and others. Be aware of these messages and of how the affect the way you treat people. **Think for yourself!**

That's not ladylike!   Boys will be boys!

Be a man!   Don't cry like a girl!

Myths:

1. Men need to be tough! They are the "boss" and should be in control.
2. Men don't show their feelings. They don't cry, and are never afraid.
3. It is okay to use degrading and stereotypical images of men and women to sell things.
4. Women are weak and rely on men to protect them.
5. Someone needs to be "in charge" in a relationship.
6. Men have to make the most money (more money than women).
7. Girls are not good at sports, they are not supposed to have muscles.
8. Sports are for boys, reading is for girls.
9. Men have to do dangerous things (take risks).
10.   Men are expected to be loud and intimidating, whereas girls are quiet and unheard.
11. Girls expected to be more nurturing, compassionate and compromising.
12.   Men don't know how to empathize or share (talk about) their feelings.

Nobody will like me if I'm not just like everybody else!