

# COMMUNITY NetLink

NEWS FOR THE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES NETWORK

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## Language as a Barrier on Access to Care

Anne-Marie Cech and Jennifer Johnson from the CHSSN attended the launch of the 7th edition of the early childhood week this past November.

This launch brought together members of the *collectif* petite enfance across the province to discuss the rights of children. In particular, the CHSSN has an interest in promoting the rights of English-speaking children and their families to access the best possible health care. "It was a great networking opportunity to connect with our partners in the early childhood ecosystem" explains

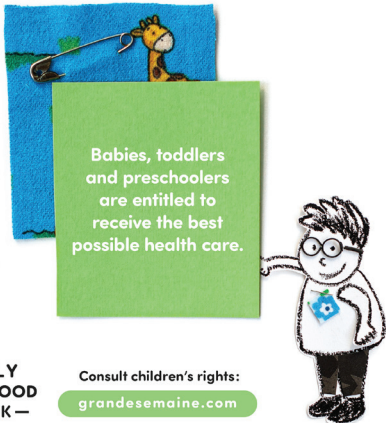
(L to R) Jennifer Johnson and Anne-Marie Cech pose for a photo opportunity with the Minister of Families, Madame Suzanne Roy (middle) at the Early Childhood Week launch.

Anne-Marie Cech. She goes on say that "the *collectif* petite enfance does a great job in bringing us together and being inclusive to ensure the needs of all children are made a priority".

The theme for the 7th edition of *Early Childhood Week* was *Bouncing Back Together* and CHSSN chose to highlight a recent study funded by Health Canada and conducted by

# Language as a Barrier on Access to Care

continued...



Dr Tina Montreuil from McGill University. Dr. Montreuil presented data on the effects of language as a barrier on access to care for English-speaking families. Over 100 people participated at this on-line event consisting of community organizations, early childhood service providers and government stakeholders. **The report** is available on the CHSSN website. An opinion letter on Dr Montreuil's research was also published in the **Gazette**.

Organizations participating in CHSSNs Bright Beginnings program were very active during this special week as many of them hosted events that brought together English-speaking children and their families. Some of these events included offering free play activities, parenting workshops and delivering educational fun kits to vulnerable families. There were also great examples where English-speaking communities valorized the important role of childcare providers. **N**

## DR. MONTREUIL STUDY A FEW TAKEAWAYS

The majority of English-speaking speakers in Quebec and parents to a child aged 0–8 years old, reported feeling socially awkward, uncomfortable and experiencing symptoms associated to stress and anxiety when speaking in French.

Parents also reported feeling socially inhibited and confused when required to speak in French to healthcare professionals.

Respondants expressed challenges navigating the healthcare system due to language barriers.



ARC, MWCN, MEPEC, CHSSN and regional partners attending inaugural meeting held in Longueuil.

# English-speaking Mental Well-Being Committee Launched!

The Assistance and Referral Centre (ARC), the Montérégie West Community Network (MWCN) and the Montérégie East Partnership for the English-speaking Community (MEPEC) recently launched a new English-speaking Mental Well-Being Committee. "There was a need to meet with our partners on a regular and more structured basis," explains Chris Lapointe, Executive Director of ARC. Pauline Wiedow from MWCN further explains that "we hope to increase awareness of the gaps in mental health services and develop solutions with our partners". The committee members also discussed creating a social enterprise that would support English-speaking adults with special needs, as there are very little supports for this vulnerable population group. **N**

This initiative is sponsored by the NPI program with funding from Health Canada. For a full overview of the NPI program, please visit [chssn.org/projects/npi](https://chssn.org/projects/npi)



## Early Childhood Coordinators

# Jump Out of the Sandbox!

This past fall, the CHSSN held an early childhood event called *Learning, Sharing and Connecting... Outside the Sandbox*.

Over 25 people from across the province involved in CHSSN early childhood program funding from Bright Beginnings and Healthy Early Years programs attended this 2-day event. "It was a great opportunity for those of us involved in the programs to share and learn from each other face to face for the first time since the start of the pandemic" explains Shannon Day, Regional Bright Beginnings coordinator at CASA.

The two CHSSN early childhood programs support over 40 local projects across the province involving over 20 organizations. The Réseau des centres des ressources périnatales du Québec (RCRPQ) was there to talk about their services as well as the importance of early intervention. [📄](#)



Anne-Marie Cech from CHSSN animating with colleagues from the RCRPQ, Marie-Claude Dufour and Marie-Noëlle Angers, le 19 septembre dernier.

To learn more about this important resource, please visit their English website at [www.rcrpq.com/english-version/](http://www.rcrpq.com/english-version/). For more information about Bright Beginnings or the Healthy Early Years Programs, please visit [chssn.org/programs/](http://chssn.org/programs/).

The Laurent Commission Report provides recommendations on actions to improve Children's Rights and Youth Protection in Québec.

## CHSSN Supports Follow-up of the Laurent Commission Report

The CHSSN was invited to participate on a Follow-Up Committee pertaining to the implementation of recommendations identified in the Laurent Commission Report. Chapter 11 of the report in particular highlights the recommendations related to the English-speaking population. "We are enthusiastic to contribute to the important work being undertaken by this committee" says Anne-Marie Cech, the CHSSN Early Childhood, Youth and Families Program Manager. Stay tuned for a yearly report produced by the committee regarding the advancement of recommendations. [📄](#)

[Read the French Laurent Commission Report](#)  
[Learn more about the Follow-Up Committee](#)








## Community Spotlight:

# Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre


This edition of Netlink spotlights the amazing work of Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre. As one of the long-standing organizations serving the English-speaking community in Montreal, they have recently celebrated their 95th anniversary and continue to offer educational programming for a very diverse and vulnerable clientele of Little Burgundy from birth through adulthood.

**F**or example, in Little Burgundy, close to 40% of the population are recent immigrants and it has the highest concentration of low-cost housing in the province.

Recently, Tyndale received funding from the CHSSN to help them in the expansion of their mental health promotion activities and programs. Shauna Joyce the Executive Director of Tyndale proudly explains that “we have successfully implemented a full-time family support worker who is able to provide support and valuable resources

to participants across all of our department from early childhood to our seniors wellness centre. Our participants consistently benefit from a high-quality service that is responsive to their needs.” Tyndale also participates in the CHSSN senior wellness centre initiative and offers regular programming to English-speaking seniors helping them breakdown social isolation. 

To learn more about Tyndale and their services, please visit [www.tyndalestgeorges.com](http://www.tyndalestgeorges.com)

 A Parent-Infant (0–9 months) Workshop Series offered by Tyndale providing an opportunity for parents of newborn babies to learn and exchange ideas on parenting and child development.



Erica Botner, CHSSN's Program Manager for Seniors presenting during the Feisty Fall Fling.



## More than 85 Seniors Gather for a Feisty Fall Fling

CASA, one of the regional English-speaking organizations in the Gaspésie (and the organization that created the first seniors wellness centre) hosted a Feisty Fall Fling on October 27th which brought together over 85 seniors. "Seniors were invited from all of our nine wellness centres for this one-day annual event", explains Madelyn Hayes, CASA's Senior Wellness Centre Coordinator. She goes on to explain that "this is the first time we have been able to bring everyone together like this since before the pandemic!" The main goal of this type of event is to break down social isolation for English-speaking seniors of the region. ■

To learn more about CASA's Wellness Centres Initiative, please visit [casa-gaspe.com/programs-and-projects/seniors](https://casa-gaspe.com/programs-and-projects/seniors)

## L'Observatoire des tout-petits has Two New Reports Available in English!

Over the past 8 years, CHSSN has had numerous collaborations with early childhood partners, the Collectif petite enfance, the Regroupement pour la valorisation de la paternité, the Association québécoise des centres de la petite enfance, just to name a few. More recently, the CHSSN has been building ties with the Observatoire des tout-petits. In a spirit of making information accessible to English-speaking community practitioners, they have translated three important resource documents.

The very first Québec Portrait of Public Policies, entitled **What is Québec doing to support young children and their families?** This Portrait is the result of two years of labour involving the collaboration of over sixty experts. It summarizes the primary municipal, provincial and federal public policies that can contribute to improving the living conditions and the development of young children. It also includes key information on the efficiency of these policies, as well as local and international initiatives that can serve as inspiration.

The 2021 Portrait entitled **How are young children faring in Québec?** presents the most recent data concerning the perinatal period, as well as the health and development of young children. The **Highlights** from this Portrait are also available in English. They provide a summary of the indicators that are most concerning, as well as those that have experienced the greatest variation in recent years. ■







## A Visit to the Nord-du-Québec

There are just over 14,000 English-speakers in the Nord-du-Québec covering a territory of 839,000 km<sup>2</sup> which is about 55% of the total area of Quebec.

This fall, the CHSSN was invited by the English Community Organization of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean (ECO-02) to visit their neighboring region, the Nord-du-Québec.

"They don't have an NPI and we wanted to go up and meet some of the health and social services partners in Chibougamau to see if and how we could help out," explains Brigitte Bussièrès, the Executive Director of ECO-02. "It was also a great opportunity to meet the new repondant responsible for English-Language services, Marie-Ève Barbeau at the Centre régional de santé et de services sociaux de la Baie-James (CRSSS de la Baie-James)," says Russell Kueber, CHSSN Director of Programs. He continues by saying that "Marie-Ève provided a great overview of some of the challenges and realities English-speakers face in accessing English-language services. Seeing things first hand really helped put things in perspective".

The CRSSS de la Baie-James participates in **CHSSN's Adaptation Initiative** funded by Health Canada and offers its services in the Nord-du-Québec administrative region along with the Nunavik Regional Board and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services.

ECO-02 and CHSSN were also accompanied by **Y4Y** and additional visits were made at the Native Friendship Centre, Town Hall and the English MacLean Memorial School. The school counts about 160 students at the elementary level and about 90 students at the secondary level. Close to 60% of the school population is from the Cree nation. The main purpose of these visits was to build relationships and open the door for possible future collaborations and offering support. [N](#)

◀ (L to R) Brittney Chabot and Brigitte Bussièrès from ECO-02, with Russell Kueber from CHSSN.





▲ Participants attending the Montreal-based Youth Mental Health Initiative Networking Luncheon

## Montreal-based Organizations Meet in YMHI Inaugural Networking Event

In early September, the CHSSN hosted an informal networking lunch for its Montreal-based Youth Mental Health Initiative leads and their Executive Directors at the Centre culturel Georges-Vanier in the heart of Little Burgundy.

**A**my Bilodeau, CHSSN Program Manager for Youth and Mental Health alongside colleagues Jennifer Cooke, Regional Development Officer for Greater Montreal, Anne-Marie Cech, Program Manager for Early Childhood, Youth and Families and Erica Botner, Program Manager for Seniors received 16 guests. Networking in person again and exchanging on the incredible initiatives underway for English-speaking youth (15–29) across the city was very

appreciated. For example, Vent Over Tea shared how groups could take advantage of their services. Ami-Quebec also talked about the needs and supports for young carers. The **Youth Pulse Check Survey** and the first year **Evaluation Report** were also presented briefly to the great interest of attendees. [N](#)

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For more information about CHSSN's Youth Mental Health Initiative, please visit [chssn.org/projects/ymhi](https://chssn.org/projects/ymhi)





On November 8th–9th CHSSN hosted 18 organizations of 27 working on the ground to increase access to mental health services and supports for English-speaking youth across the province at an in-person retreat.

This gathering marks our first YMH I retreat, held in Quebec’s beautiful Vallée Bras-du-Nord area. Amy Bilodeau, Program Manager for Youth & Mental Health facilitated the sharing of tools, resources and importantly the exchanges on youth engagement strategies, initiatives and practices being put into motion by these dedicated community leaders. Our Regional Development Officer of Greater Montreal, Jenn Cooke led two design thinking workshops around partnership building and access which had attendees getting out of their heads and yet leaving filled with food for thought! Takeaways from the event included how broad the issues affecting youth mental health are such as housing, youth protection services, financial security and drug use; the challenges of addressing those issues and the expert collaborative approaches needed to respond to them. Participants left the event feeling a revived sense of hope and connection. 📌

**(Photos)** Participants attending the Youth Mental Health Initiative Retreat, Vallée Bras-du-Nord

## Participating Organizations of the Youth Mental Health Initiative Connect at Our

# Very First Retreat!





# Jennifer Johnson & James Carter

## Receive 20-Year Recognition Plaques

Jennifer Johnson,  
CHSSN Executive  
Director



James Carter,  
CHSSN Senior  
Program and  
Policy Advisor

At a recent CHSSN annual general meeting, Jennifer Johnson and James Carter received 20-year recognition plaques for their dedicated work and commitment to the organization and supporting the development of English-speaking communities across the province of Quebec. "It is a true privilege to work for such an amazing organization that has supported my own development," explains Jennifer Johnson, CHSSN Executive Director. James Carter, CHSSN Senior Program and Policy Advisor also says "I have never really seen it as work, as the mission of what we are doing is so important and engaging". James and Jennifer were instrumental in the initial start-up of the CHSSN and developing a strong network of English community organizations dedicated to improving access to health and social services in the English language.

Congrats to both of them for this well-deserved recognition! 🎉

The CHSSN and its network members celebrated the 2022 edition of User Rights Week from November 13th to 19th.

For more information please visit:  
[rpcu.qc.ca/en/en\\_week](http://rpcu.qc.ca/en/en_week)

Regroupement provincial  
des comités des usagers  
Santé et services sociaux  
[www.rpcu.qc.ca](http://www.rpcu.qc.ca)



# Users' 12 rights

- 01 Right to information
- 02 Right to receive services
- 03 Right to choose a professional or institution
- 04 Right to receive appropriate care according to one's health status
- 05 Right to consent to care or to refuse care
- 06 Right to actively participate in decision-making
- 07 Right to be accompanied, assisted and represented
- 08 Right to shelter/ accommodation
- 09 Right to receive services in English
- 10 Right to access one's User's file
- 11 Right to the confidentiality of one's User's file
- 12 Right to lodge a complaint



The rights set out in the Act respecting health services and social services (LSSSS) The LSSSS builds on the fundamental rights in order to define the users' rights. Other rights are recognized by the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Quebec Civil Code. These rights are applicable everywhere including to the Health and Social Services institutions.

The CHSSN wishes you  
a Happy Holiday  
season!



The amazing CHSSN Team with (from left to right) Amy Bilodeau, Russell Kueber, Sara Lakhrissi, Erica Botner, Jennifer Johnson, James Carter, Céline Lebigot, Anne-Marie Cech, Jennifer Cooke. Absent from the picture: Nathalie Lokoka, Pascale Guilbault, Steve Guimond.



The Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) is a network of community resources, associations and public institutions dedicated to the development of health and social services for English-speaking communities in Quebec.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHSSN  
VISIT THE WEBSITE OR CONTACT US AT:**

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