



Literacy Quebec

2021

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ACTIVITY REPORT



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Funding

Literacy Quebec is funded by the *Ministère de l'éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur* through the Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain d'éducation (PACTE), and by the *Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise*.



Literacy Quebec is a Proud Member of the Following Organizations:



Message from Board of Directors

The year of Covid!

Yes, it was a year of change, of creativity and of pulling together (and apart!) - And while Literacy Quebec was certainly met with the challenge of operating during a pandemic, not only did they succeed, but they thrived.

Thanks to the leadership of our Executive Director, Margo Legault, Literacy Quebec quickly shifted into high gear. Ensuring that our members had the support they needed, Literacy Quebec offered a plethora of workshops and meetings, covering a variety of topics, including how to access funding and how to make the switch to online learning, while also providing positive motivation to keep everyone going during the pandemic.

While the main focus shifted to ensure that our members were being supported, the other work being done certainly did not take a backseat. With the wonderful team Margo assembled, the work that was started on the English Secretariat project was showing great results, creating new partnerships, new opportunities to speak out about the issues of literacy and overall expanding our network.

While remote work made other projects more challenging, Literacy Quebec was nevertheless able to make great strides in aligning themselves as the voice of English speaking literacy in Quebec.

As for the Board of Directors, the focus was on ensuring that our human resources felt supported during these trying times. Literacy Quebec worked hard this year to have a strong work-life balance for all employees (especially during the pandemic, when the challenges of working from home were plentiful).

We also continued to review new project opportunities, new partnerships and soon will tackle the issue of Literacy Quebec membership. As the network expands, so does our opportunity to explore new and exciting ideas.

A huge "thank you" this year to the Literacy Quebec team: Margo, Chris, Laura, Jaimie, Brendan, Kelsey and Heather, who pulled together to ensure that operations continued despite the numerous challenges of working from remote locations. Margo had the added challenge of hiring remotely, but was successful in putting together a strong, cohesive team.

Message from Board of Directors (continued)

Lastly, I cannot express my gratitude to the board members: Wendy, Eric, Sia and Michèle, for always being there and stepping up to the plate when needed. We come from a variety of different backgrounds and have diverse 'expertise'; and it works! I truly have never worked with such a dedicated bunch, during such a trying time. If possible, we have become even stronger together. There are not enough words to thank them for their efforts and support.

-Joy Fyckes
President

Board of Directors



Joy Fyckes
President



Wendy Seys
Vice-President



Michèle Gagnon
Secretary



Eric Aubry
Treasurer



Sia Spanoudakis
Director



Message from Executive Director

As we embarked on a year of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, Literacy Quebec and its member organizations were quick to adapt and innovate in order to reach adult learners and families. This report is a testament to the resilience, dedication, and resourcefulness found within our organization and our network.

I believe we all took inspiration from basketball coach, John Wooden's quote that: "If we fail to adapt, we fail to move forward".

Despite facing a global pandemic, this year has been one of Literacy Quebec's most successful and I attribute this to the dedication and commitment of our wonderful board members, our amazing staff and our delightful member organizations.

This year our committed board of directors rapidly put measures in place to ensure that the LQ staff not only felt supported, but also that they were able to achieve a proper work-life balance through these unforeseen times. As the situation of the pandemic evolved, the board went way above the call of duty to make themselves available to Literacy Quebec. Meeting on a monthly basis allowed them to keep an accurate pulse on the organization's operations and break the staff's isolation. It is an honour to work for an organization that cares deeply about the well-being of its employees.

Thank you just doesn't seem like enough for our superstar board of directors, they deserve a thank you dipped in rainbows with sprinkles on top.

To our amazing team: Chris, Laura, Kelsey, Jaimie, Brendan and Heather, thank you for believing in the vision we had for this year and working tirelessly through the unforeseen obstacles in order to collectively thrive.

I speak on behalf of the entire LQ team when I say that we are extremely proud of the work that we accomplished and the support we were able to offer our members during these trying times.

-Margo Legault
Executive Director

Services & Support

Literacy Quebec adapted most of its training and services to an online format due to the pandemic.

Hosting events virtually opened a world of possibilities that LQ took advantage of. Access to training by professionals was no longer limited by geography and associated travel costs.

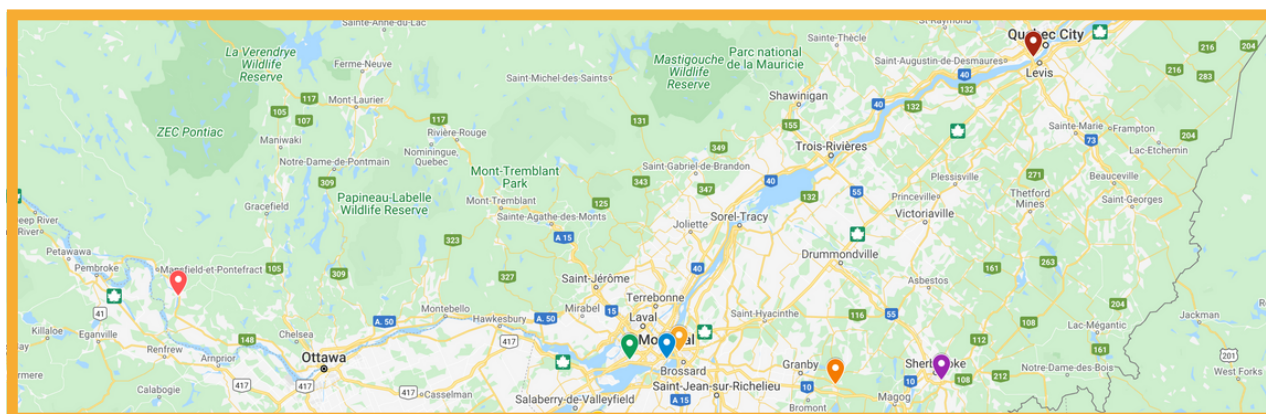
Creating Successful Funding Proposal	10	Espace idées
Communicating Impact	10	Espace idées
Project Management Training	15	Focus Company
From Emergency to Opportunity: Bouncing back in the not-for-profit sector after COVID	11	CCVO
Engaging across generations	12	Espace idées
Building a philanthropic culture	20	Espace idées
ProLiteracy: members benefits and resources	12	Proliteracy
Project Management Platforms	14	Focus Company
Introduction to AirTable	11	Focus Company
Media training	12	CBC
Common messaging & Member Portal	10	Espace idées
How to talk to the media	6	CBC

12
Professional development workshops
40 Attendees

LQ hosted regular Members Meetups in order to break isolation, share information and foster a sense of community amongst the network.

(19 Member Meetups via Zoom, 25 people)

LQ attended 8 of their members' events, including 5 AGMs and 3 on-site visits.



- Western Quebec Literacy Council
- Quebec City Reading Council
- Literacy in Action
- Yamaska Literacy Council - Waterloo satellite office
- South Shore Reading Council
- RECLAIM
- Literacy Unlimited
- Chateauguay Valley Literacy Council

Reports created by LQ

Literacy Quebec documented the effects and resilience of its member organizations during the first year of the pandemic by conducting surveys and creating reports of the main findings. In total, two reports were created. LQ also collaborated with CHSSN on the translation of a guide that was developed by CTROC for community organizations to know when and how to deconfine. The translation allowed the resource to be accessible to English community organizations.



Literacy Initiatives

Empowering the Literacy Network Project

As this project comes to a close, Literacy Quebec was able to focus efforts on advocacy, raising awareness, and strengthening the network of literacy practitioners, as well as its own internal organizational capacity. Funding from the Secretariat for relations with English-speaking Quebecers allowed LQ to:

- Become an essential communicator about all matters related to literacy
- Develop a community of practice to formalize and share knowledge and strategies
- Create innovative ways to raise awareness about literacy: podcast, e-learning course, etc.
- And increase human resources, advocacy efforts and representations

The successes of this project are entwined throughout this report, but one of the major highlights of the project was engaging with the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills on the theme of collaboration to empower English-speaking communities within Quebec.

Literacy and Clear Language 101

In 2020, we adapted our in-person Literacy workshop into an online eLearning course. This course provides an opportunity to learn how to identify and support people with low literacy skills, and it can be completed at any time from anywhere. The course was launched in April of 2021 and had 23 users sign up in the first month. Of those, 11 completed Literacy 101 and 6 completed the Health Literacy Assessment add-on for Healthcare providers.

Number of Users: **23**

Completed Literacy 101: **11**

Completed Health Literacy Assessment: **6**

The screenshot shows the user interface of the 'Literacy & Clear Language 101' course. On the left is a navigation sidebar with a progress indicator showing '0% COMPLETE'. The main content area is titled 'Lesson 1 of 23' and 'What Will I Learn in This Course?'. It features a video player with a progress bar at 00:26 and a play button. Below the video, there is a list of learning objectives under the heading 'By the end of this course you will be able to:'. The objectives are numbered 1 through 6. At the bottom right, there is a 'CONTINUE' button.

Literacy & Clear Language 101
0% COMPLETE

INTRODUCTION

- What Will I Learn in This Course? (0%)
- How to Navigate the Course (0%)

LITERACY & LOW LITERACY SKILLS

- What is Literacy? (0%)
- Why Does Literacy Matter? (0%)
- What Experiences May Lead to Low Literacy Skills? (0%)
- Who is an Adult with Low Literacy Skills? (0%)

SUPPORTING ADULTS WITH LOW LITERACY SKILLS

- How to Identify Signs of Low Literacy Skills (0%)
- How to Support Adults with Low Literacy Skills (0%)
- Create a Safe Space (0%)

Lesson 1 of 23

What Will I Learn in This Course?

Literacy Quebec

00:26

Click play to listen to an audio version of the text below.

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- 1 Explain what literacy and low literacy are.
- 2 Describe the causes and effects of low literacy skills.
- 3 Recognize the signs of low literacy skills.
- 4 Identify best practices for offering support.
- 5 Use clear language in your verbal and written communication.
- 6 Recognize the benefits of using clear language.

CONTINUE

The Literacy eLearning course provides clear and detailed explanations and examples of how to identify and help those with low literacy skills. The course outlines and walks through many of the problems that those with low-literacy face, and specifically what can be done to aid them. For example, what should be done when designing documents, and how to create welcoming environments. Constant reinforcement of the key considerations will have those who complete the course assured they have the necessary knowledge to help those who might need it in the future. Plus, they get a certificate to prove it!

Literacy Helpline

In February 2021, Literacy Quebec unveiled a free Literacy Helpline (1-888-521-8181) to help adult English speakers connect with their provincial network of literacy organizations. The helpline was developed as an easy first access point for those who had been struggling to connect with services and programs online for work, learning, or life in general. The Helpline is managed by trained volunteers.

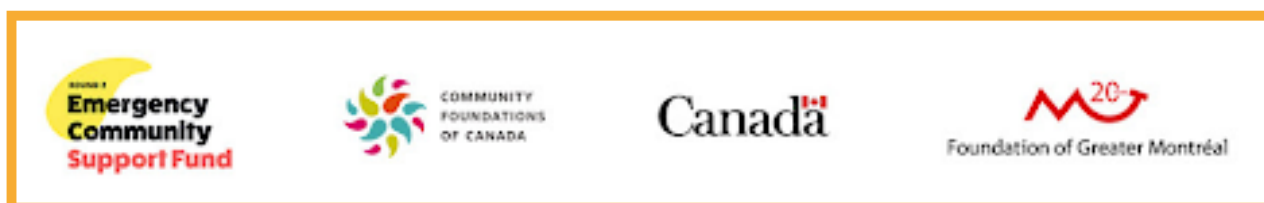


While created to meet the challenges of the pandemic, the Helpline will be a long-term Literacy Quebec service. This program was brought to life through a collaboration between LQ, the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund and the Foundation of Greater Montreal.

Stats: **11 callers.**

Of those:

- 5 for health-related concerns, including booking Covid vaccination appointments;
- 3 wanting Literacy Support;
- 2 Tax Filing Appointments;
- 1 Support Worker wanting to promote it.



The creation of the Literacy Helpline was supported by the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund and the Foundation of Greater Montreal.



“What’s Literacy Got To Do With It?”

Literacy Quebec Podcast

The podcast released its 5th and 6th seasons in 2020-21.

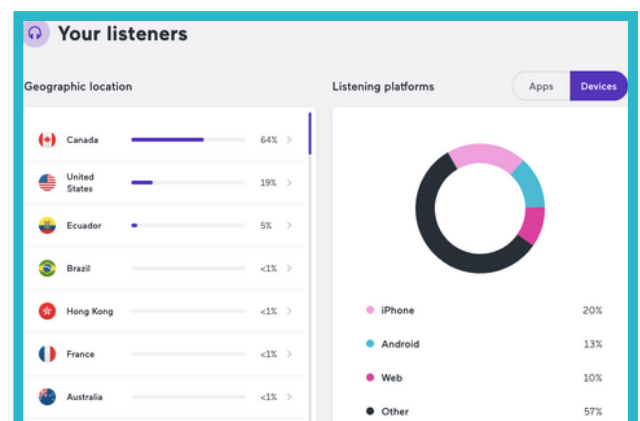
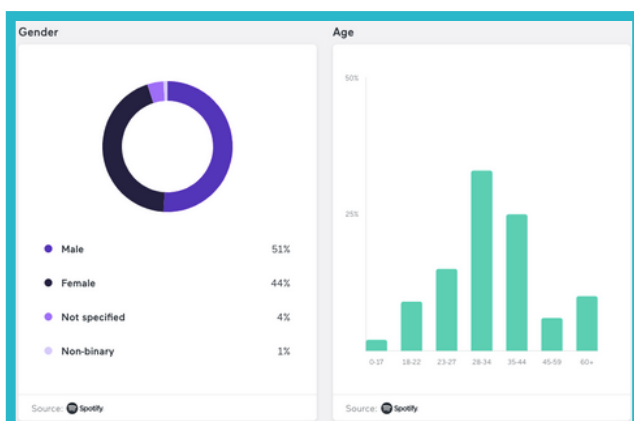
Season 6 brought a name change and a spiffy new theme song. Hosted by Jaimie Cudmore and Chris Shee, episodes discussed a variety of topics ranging from Family Literacy, getting connected online with affordable internet, and digital literacy in general. They featured guests from all across Canada, the United States and France.



Interviewing **33 guests** in total, the podcast had **3678 listens** from June 2020 to May 2021.

Notable appearances were made from the famous Dr. Joe Schwarcz, the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and many more.

Podcast Stats



Book & Resource Distributions

In total, **7370 resources and books** were distributed to 48 organizations

2515 books were given away to organizations and won in contests.

350 copies of *Tips and Tricks: The Book, The Ultimate Toy for Toddlers* were given to our members

4475 copies of Learning With Your Child were given to **27 groups**, including our members and other organizations across Quebec.

30 students from the North Shore Community Association were able to access **Red Apple Reading** online educational software.

LQ is also proud to have created a partnership with **Projet WEcare.**

Projet WeCARE is a non-profit organization that supports vulnerable individuals suffering from challenging economic circumstances and/or mental health issues. Showing **compassion** and **warmth** by listening to their stories and understanding their needs, Projet WeCARE provides care kits with essential items.

Through this collaboration, LQ was able to distribute **900 promotional items** (hand warmers, wallet tissues, and magnifiers) to members of vulnerable populations to raise awareness of the Literacy Helpline.



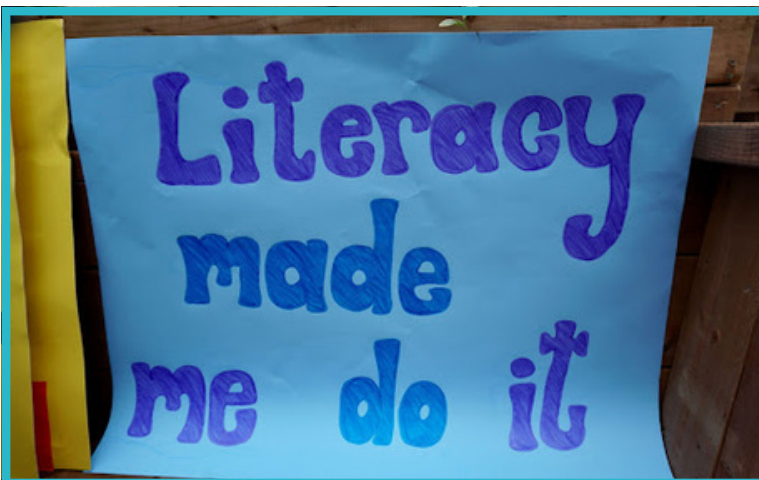
Scotiabank Charity Run 2021

Literacy Quebec had a record **36 runners** participating in the 2021 Scotiabank Charity Run. These literacy runners collectively ran and/or walked **537km in the name of literacy**.

Held virtually again due to Covid-19, runners were able to participate from anywhere. We had 170 donors give a whopping **\$9750**. Big kudos goes out to our fantastic race coordinator, Chris Shee, who not only supported all the runners and made super cool motivational videos, but also ran the 5km, 10km AND the 21km.

“This feels to me like a sort of attestation to the literacy journey; that we all move forward at different paces, all require different little things to help us get there.”

- A Runner for Literacy



Community Events

Total reach: **761**

2 In-Person Events

August and September 2020

2 big book giveaways

Reached approximately **600 people**



5 Webinars and Virtual Events

Lunch and Learn with the famous Dr. Joe Schwarcz

In the midst of the pandemic, Literacy Quebec organized a webinar with Dr. Joe to Demystify COVID. Participants were able to gain a better understanding of the current pandemic and ask questions about their concerns.

Reach: **72 literacy volunteers, practitioners and learners**

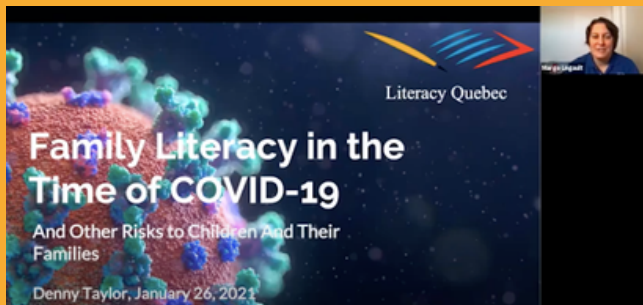


Family Literacy Day with Dr. Denny Taylor

On Family Literacy Day, January 26, 2021, LQ hosted a virtual seminar with family literacy pioneer Dr. Denny Taylor. Attended by people from across Canada, the seminar was a big success. Helping us establish a relationship with the delightful Dr. Taylor, she has since been a podcast guest and wrote the foreword for our updated Family Literacy Toolkit.

Reach: **54 people**

Webinars and Virtual Events (continued)



"Thanks so much for organizing the uplifting and motivating session!"



Just what we need at this time.

I loved it!"

-Seminar Attendee

From Burnout to Balance: Strategies for Managing Stress

Registered social worker and compassion fatigue specialist, Amanda Rocheleau, provided training on how to recognize the warning signs of compassion fatigue and how to integrate self-care into everyday life.

Reach: **14 Literacy Practitioners**

Meet-and-Greet with a Canadian Ironman

How to Train and Prepare for Scotia Race

Participants were able to meet and get valuable tips on nutrition, apparel, training habits and schedules, from Canadian Ironman Brendan Naef in anticipation of the Scotia Race.

Reach: **10 Runners**

Rapid Reads, Lunch and Learn with Barbara Fradkin

Canadian mystery writer, and a two-time winner of the Arthur Ellis Award for Best Novel, Barbara Fradkin provided some insight into her famous character Cedric O'Toole. She also answered questions about her writing process, her Rapid Reads series with Orca Books and life as a writer.

Reach: **11 People**

Campaigns & Communications

For social media, “reach” is where it’s at, and for Literacy Quebec Facebook had by far the greatest reach of any of the used platforms; Twitter and LinkedIn saw growth, but Facebook still reigns supreme!

Over the past year, posts with the highest reach were those related to the Literacy Helpline, and those about specific online events. Additionally, posts which included a “call to action,” such as specifically requesting people share the post, saw a greater reach than those which did not.

Our social media platforms saw the highest reach with posts that featured services and concrete solutions that people could engage with during the pandemic.



Top Performing Social Media Posts:

"If you or someone you know needs help getting the paper form to complete the census, call the literacy helpline at 1-888-521-8181. Share if you think this could help someone you know! 😊"

Reach: 1.3k

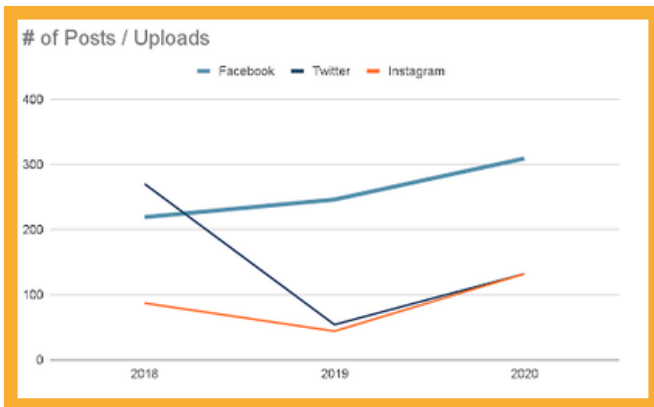
"Heads up for tax season! Community organizations are hosting free virtual tax clinics."

Reach: 1.1k

"Wednesday, March 31 - Noon-1pm - Lunch and Learn with author Barbara Fradkin."

Reach: 1.1k

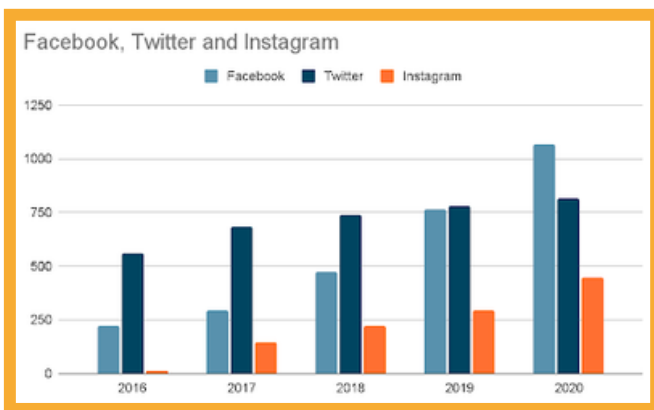
Chart a Course... ...for Social Media Statistics!



Graph 1

The first line graph represents the number of posts & uploads made throughout 2018-2020.

As we can see, there was a steady increase in posts across channels between 2019-2020. Most efforts targeted Facebook in particular, thanks to its success in regards to Reach.



Graph 2

However, while there were fewer posts made for Twitter and Instagram in 2019 (see graph 1), we still managed to see a steady increase in overall likes, year over year, since 2016 (graph 2).



Youtube Stats

	# of Uploads	Subscribers	Views
2018	6	9	354
2019	23	12	187
2020	56	20	1628

Volunteers

Amidst a pandemic, LQ was not able to continue its partnership with the YMCA to welcome volunteers into the office in order to complete their community service hours. Fortunately, many people were able and willing to volunteer remotely.

Helpline: **10 volunteers, 181 hours**

Scotiabank Charity Run: **36 runners, 93 hours**

10 volunteers were recruited through our website and directed to our member organizations

General LQ volunteers: **6 volunteers, 60 hours** for graphic design, book distribution, etc

Board of Directors: **5 members, 350 hours**

Total of 55 Volunteers (does not include referrals), **684 hours**

Freda Hudson Volunteer Recognition Award

The 2020 Freda Hudson Volunteer Recognition Award was awarded to longtime volunteer Kathy LePoer from Yamaska Literacy Council.

Kathy is dedicated to providing support and encouragement to her student on her lifelong learning journey.

She goes above and beyond the call of duty to help her student, Yamaska Literacy Council and her community.

“She makes the world a better place, and YLC counts its blessings to have [Kathy] as a member.”

- Nomination submission



Representation & Advocacy

LQ advocates for and represents community-based literacy organizations and strives to improve the quality of life of those struggling with low literacy skills through advocacy and awareness efforts. This year, LQ participated in the following:

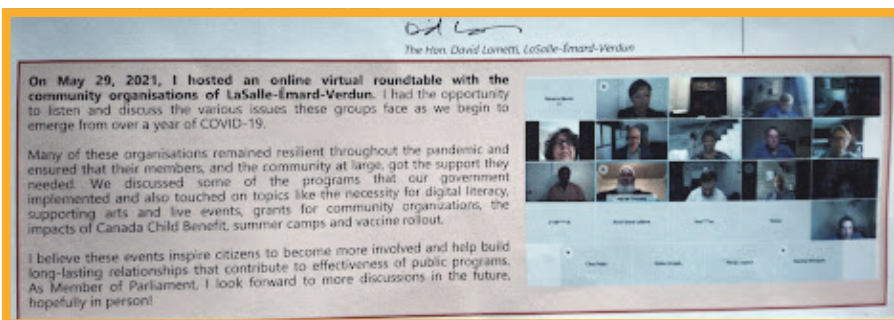
- 21 representative and participatory events, including consultations, forums, roundtables and focus groups.
- 9 meetings with elected officials and government entities, including discussions with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada the Honourable David Lametti, the Minister of Education Jean-François Roberge, the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills.
- 5 press releases and/or letters were sent and 3 briefs were submitted.

LQ reached a total of **910 people** through these efforts.



All of these efforts resulted in the securing of a COVID emergency fund for the **200+ community organizations** funded under PACTE (Programme de l'action communautaire autonome sur le terrain de l'éducation) and a better understanding of the need for affordable and accessible internet by elected officials.

David Lametti's summer message to constituents. President Joy Fyckes and Executive Director Margo Legault represented LQ at this roundtable and discussed digital literacy.



Networking and Partnerships

Literacy Quebec sat on 12 various working groups and committees which have had 47 meetings.

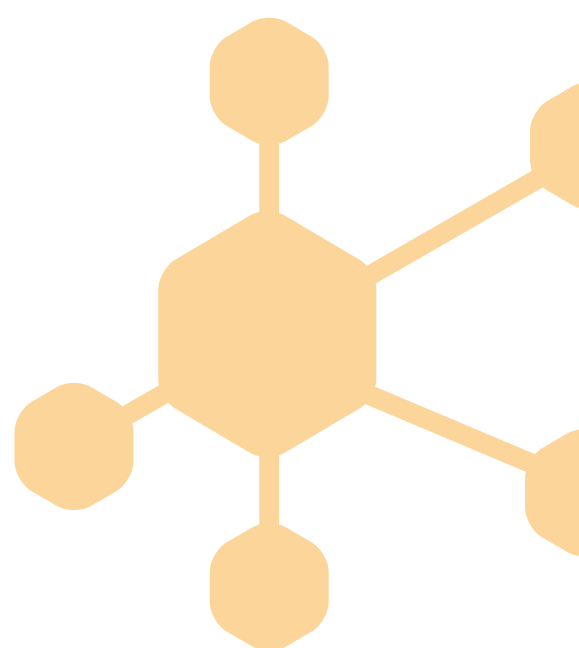
	# of Meetings	# of People
Active member of the RQ-ACA	4	46
Member of the organizing committee of the <i>Week for autonomous community action</i>	4	5
Collective of umbrella organizations funded under Amies PACTE	5	10
Training committee for PACTE reporting	1	6
PACTE Joint Committee	5	17
Early Childhood Symposium Organizing Committee CHSSN	1	8
Éducaloi's collaboration to improve their website	2	4
ILET: Inter-Level Education Table	1	20
QUESCREN organizing Committee, Education and Vitality Forum	3	15
Seminar on adult education policy in QC (ICEA, UQAM, CDEACF)	13	25
Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes Board of Director Meetings	2	18
Anglo Family Council NPI, Advisory Capacity	3	8

Total Meetings

47

Total Collaborators

194



Our Partners & Sponsors

Literacy Quebec is partners with:

- ABC Life Literacy
- Beat the Odds, Experiential Learning, Concordia University
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
- CDEAFC
- CEDEC
- CHSSN
- Coco Montreal
- CTROC - La coalition des tables régionales d'organismes communautaires
- CUPE
- Cyberseniors
- First Book Canada
- Hack4Impact
- ICEA
- LEARN
- MediaSmarts
- Naître et grandir
- Project WEcare
- Proliteracy
- QCGN
- QUESCREN
- UNESCO
- Volunteer Canada



Governance & Operations

The Board of Directors was a tremendous support to the LQ staff during the pandemic and **met a record 13 times** over the course of the year to ensure that strategic planning for the organization, as well the annual action plan was adapted to the new reality.

What they worked on for the year:

- **Strategic Planning**
- **Human Resources**

List of Committees:

- **Freda Hudson Volunteer Recognition Award Committee**
- **Human Resources Committee**
- **Nominations Committee**

All aboard! Our first ever virtual Annual General Meeting was held “on” a cruise ship on the 29th of September, 2021. Our AGM was attended by **18 participants** representing our **11 full member organizations**.



Left to Right, Top to Bottom: Darlene Brown, Chris Shee, Wendy Seys, Joy Fyckes, Margo Legault, Heather Austin, Elizabeth Moravec Hewa, Eric Aubry, Rachel Wagner, Mona Arsenault, Marlene Dagenais, Cathy Nolan, Lucy Baum, Cheryl Henry-Leggero, Sia Spanoudakis, Enza Ciampanelli, and Michèle Gagnon.

Members



Associate Members





Recap

<i>Indirect Services</i>	<i>Number of People Reached</i>
Podcast Guests	33
Activities	761
Working groups and committees	169
Representations & Advocacy	910
Total	1873

Contact

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