



**2023-2024**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**03 ON OUR OWN**





## 03 Origin Story

O3 started as an initiative from Maison Elizabeth House which recognized a need in the community for transitional housing for young vulnerable mothers.

It is a four building structure with 29-unit apartments constructed with the assistance of Société d'habitation du Québec, and the Office Municipal d'habitation de Montréal to provide rent subsidies for its residents.

Buildings were official opened December 2005. In 2012, O3 became an independent organization with its own charitable status and board of directors. Today, O3 continues to create a circle of support to young families.



## What We Do

O3 is a small non-profit organization that offers support services coupled with transitional housing to young vulnerable parents aged 16-30 years old with at least one child 0-5 years old.

Each family can stay for up to 5 years, during which time they work on goals relating to mental health, financial literacy, education and career, parenting, healthy relationships, and healthy living.

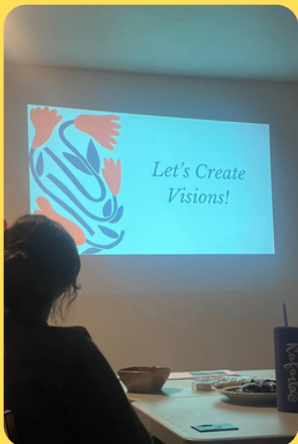
## Our Core Beliefs

We believe that strong family systems are key to reaching success. We support the primary parent, co-parent and the child to be able to leave O3 Independently.



# A Year in Review

## 2023 - 2024



# Our Board of Directors

**Debbie Douglass (President)**  
**Raeanne Francis (Vice-President)**  
**Sissy Duong (Treasurer)**  
**Elizabeth McPhedran (Secretary)**  
**Clarinda Daley**  
**Maria Valente-Fernandes**  
**Nora Jean-Baptiste**  
**Elizabeth Kabbash**  
**Joanna Kolb**  
**Shannon Duguid**

**Selection Committee  
Members and Friends  
of the Board:**

**Sabi Hinkson**  
**Ria Rombough**  
**Sharon Rossy**  
**Marilyn Rowell**

We were lucky enough to work with consultant Janis Riven this year to review our Bylaws and procedures. We came away a stronger board, with revised committee structures and mandates, updated bylaws and a more concise meeting structure.

Most importantly, we established a Resident Advocacy Committee which we will start in the 2024-2025 board year. We were very excited by the interest shown by residents at our Special General Meeting in February.



# Report from the Board President

It has been such a privilege to serve on the executive for the second year as Board president. I am proud to be a part of an organization that helps so many young families move forward and make positive changes in their lives. The programming has continued grow and develop to meet the need of our residents.

On the building side of things, the outdoor stairs were repaired, reusing our patio stones for a more reasonable cost. The office renovations were planned and designed. These renovations will add more offices, and program spaces.

On finance, we said a fond farewell to Jo, and welcomed Reyhane back to work after her parental leave. We have worked on next years budget and are moving forward with probably the most streamlined processes in our history.

Our fundraising committee was in full swing for the comedy show, and as always Joey Elias, Mark Sherman, and the Media Experts team worked tirelessly to make sure the show was a success. Amanda was also able to procure several grants to facilitate new projects.

We had a Board renewal process with consultation with Janis Riven, which proved to be very enlightening, and led to the creation of new board recommendations.

As in every year of its existence O3 has had its challenges this year, including coping with floods from the flash storm, which affected three units. Thanks to Martine, who oversaw several building repairs and upgrades.

Amanda and her team have dealt with all the challenges efficiently, and with sensitivity. Amanda often presented these challenges to the Board, with proposed solutions ready to go. I want to thank Amanda and all her amazing O3 team. Thank you to all of our Board members, and a good-bye and thank-you to Joanna Kolb, for her contribution to the O3 board.

I know that O3 will continue to move forward with even more exciting possibilities, and I hope to see everyone in the fall!

Have a great summer!

**BOARD PRESIDENT  
DEBBIE DOUGLASS**



# 03 Staff



**Amanda Murphy**  
Executive Director



**Jade Parkinson-Gayle**  
Resident Development Coordinator



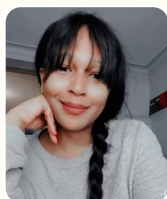
**Millicent-Ann Castillo**  
Community Development  
Coordinator



**Jean Souakolay Lama**  
Fathers Engagement Coordinator



**Brittany Sweet**  
Parenting Attachment  
Educator



**Ellise Radlein**  
Director of Development



**Olivia Herron**  
Wellness Educator



**Judy Battista**  
Childcare Educator



**Reyhane Khusbin**  
Finance Coordinator



**Jo Wedlock**  
Finance Coordinator  
Leave replacement



**Howard A. Johnson**  
Cooking Educator



**Jaylen Westfield**  
Summer Student



**Martine Wagnac**  
Building Manager



**Ishmael Marshall**  
Building Repair

# Director's Report

This year has been incredibly busy but we've also gotten an incredible amount of work done! I'm forever thankful to all the wonderful staff who make it a pleasure to come to work every day, all the residents who inspire and amaze us, and the Board of Directors who is always there to support us.

Thanks to the Community Services Recovery Fund, we were able to undertake two large projects to improve the way we function and how we are accountable to our community. One was our board renewal process, and the other was an audit and exploration of best practices for communication with lower literacy learners. We also continued our work on the Theory of Change with Garrow & Evoy consultants, working to refine our programming offer and make sure we're setting residents up for independence and self-determination after their time at O3. Being able to dedicate time to this work has allowed us to solidify a strong foundation for the future of O3. I'm looking forward to building on this foundation in the next year, welcoming new board members to participate in our new board structure, and revealing the finished revised Theory of Change in the coming year.

Starting our office renovations was a big step towards making sure we have the office and community space we need. Although our time spent working out of a temporary office in an apartment was a bit chaotic, it was ultimately worth it, and we're super happy to be settling into the regular office space again just in time for our AGM.

In the upcoming year, we will be continuing to focus on fundraising to sustain our growth and to complete the remaining necessary building repairs. We'll also be growing our volunteer base and continuing to focus on community partnerships. As we start the summer, we're welcoming many new families into the O3 community, and we're looking forward to spending the warmer months getting to know each other through fun activities such as field trips, gardening and many other parent-child activities.



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
AMANDA MURPHY**





## RDC Report

As we approach this year's AGM, it is also the end of my second year in the role of RDC at O3. Looking back on the year, what stands out to me the most is the foundational blocks we have been able to instill within this program. While my first and most joyful passion here is the one-on-one work I have the privilege of doing with residents, this year has allowed me to appreciate the group work and community aspects of this role.

Across this past year, I have been able to engage with residents in ways that go beyond clinical and psychosocial support. We have had a lot of fun. It was a joy to celebrate resident achievements at our 1st Annual Achievements BBQ. We went beyond celebrating academic achievements, also recognizing the valiant efforts of residents as they successfully potty trained, or sleep trained, their children, as they obtained a driver's license, or simply set a healthy boundary. I have also been able to integrate into the community, participating in workshops like Vision Boarding alongside our residents, hanging out in reading tents and even going out to a lovely Holiday Dinner at Kavos! Deelish! (Thank you Lin Sok).

Coming out of the remnants of the pandemic, we have been able to stabilize, as a team, and as an organization. There is a sense of connectedness and resilience that has emerged, that I believe is due in great part to the tenacity of our team and all its members. I am so grateful to work alongside some of the best humans this world can offer!

We have been able to revamp our food programming, and engage in new partnerships such as with the McGill Dietetics program, as well as receive a Social Work Intern from the McGill Social Work program. In their respective ways, these interns have contributed to building up our capacity as a team, and improving our organization for the better.

Another interesting and meaningful opportunity for me this year, has been the process of working on the Theory of Change. While this has been a long standing project, the positioning of our organization in the community, and the state of the community sector, has changed over the years. There is a lot of pressure on community resources and a lack of available services. We've had to get creative to respond to needs in a more sustainable way and rethink how we conduct programming. It has been a pleasure to work with my teammates, to revisit and revise the TOC in ways that reflect the current context and the future of our program. Huge shoutout to Stephanie Garrow & Veronique Carbonneau. This process has also served to bring a sense of unity to our team as we work diligently towards this milestone.

I am so looking forward to supporting our residents further, creating pockets of joy in our community and contributing meaningfully to this wonderful environment. Thank you so much to all O3 residents, past and present, this amazing team, and everyone who plays a part in making O3 thrive.

Much love,

**RESIDENT DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR**  
**JADE PARKINSON-GAYLE**



# CDC Report



Being the Community Development Coordinator at O3 has been an absolute joy. Each day, I've had the privilege of using my creativity, drawing inspiration from the remarkable individuals within our community, both residents and staff. I have been crafting and facilitating community engagement opportunities and personal development workshops spanning a diverse array of topics.



One of the most exciting parts of my job is designing and facilitating workshops. This year I piloted our revised six-session Budgeting program for new residents. These workshops introduce residents to the basics and the benefits of budgeting. Additional 1-on-1 support is provided as needed throughout the year to help residents successfully apply these skills.



Another workshop I created was inspired by my firm belief in the power of self-care and the significance of self-love. Residents who chose to come to this workshop learned that the journey to self-love is continual and challenging, but it is so valuable. My hope is that they continue on their own self-love journeys by taking space and really honing in on their self-determination needs.

As we move into spring, I'm especially proud to introduce our new Gardening-Parenting program, which teaches parents how to use the garden as a parenting tool. We aspire to help parents benefit from all nature has to offer, and hopefully create little humans in touch and in love with nature. A special shout out to The David Suzuki Foundation for their time, guidance and generosity.

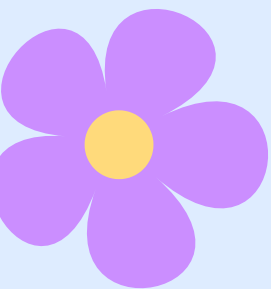


I want to share my deepest appreciation and gratitude to all of the facilitators we have welcomed into our space. You are a part of what makes O3 a valuable experience by sharing your multi-layered skills and passion supporting residents' needs, Thank you.

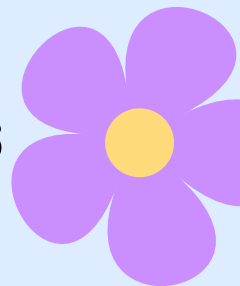
I am truly inspired to keep fostering a space for meaningful and engaging workshops that cater to the diverse needs of O3 residents and I can't wait for what the future holds for our little community.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR**  
**MILLICENT-ANN CASTILLO**





# Stats by Program Domains



## Parenting Skills



We held 8 parenting workshops this year. We also focused on building and strengthening our Parenting Program for the coming years.

## Financial Literacy



Our CDC piloted our series of 6 adapted in house Budgeting workshops for new residents, and our 2 session budgeting for move out workshops.

## Education and Career



We held 22 study nights and were assisted by 2 tutors from McGill University.

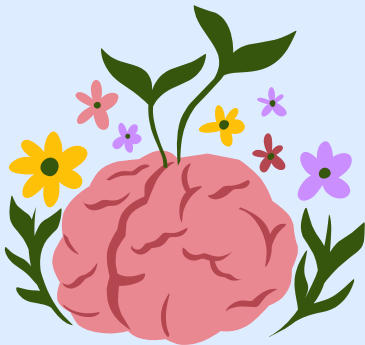
# Stats by Program Domains

## Healthy Living



We held 47 cooking activities. Most were Collective Kitchen nights with our Cooking Educator,

## Mental Health



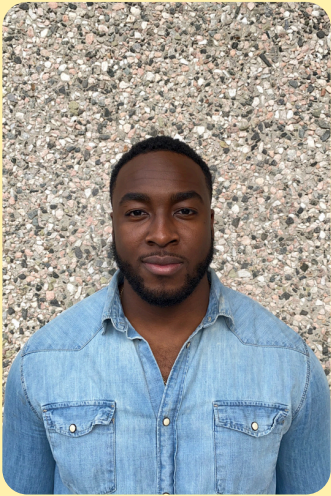
We ran 22 workshops on various Mental Health topics, held 6 guest speaker activities, and ran 8 on site exercise classes.

## Healthy Relationships



We focused on relationships with the self this year - holding workshops such as Practising Rest, Self-Love and Vision Boarding.

# Fathers Programming Report



It has been a year of highs and lows, but the emphasis is on all the positive stories I've witnessed. My position is focused on supporting and working with men, and I've seen a huge change in their parenting skills and their confidence in their role within the family over the past year. Many feel that finding their "clear" place in the family has enabled them to strengthen their bond of attachment with their children. We now have fathers who are not only committed, but who perceive themselves as affectionate, playing the role of teammate, educator and helper.

This year at O3, as in previous years, I was able to focus on our different approaches in the workshops presented to the residents: trauma informed, culturally competent, two generational and community based. With each of the participating fathers, we worked on their personal development in the following areas: parenting, healthy relationships, financing, healthy living, mental health, education and career.

This past year was very difficult in terms of inflation, and this had an important impact on participating fathers in the education and career domain, which in turn influences their parenting ability. All of our fathers are trying to manage their different roles: worker, father, brother, student. These roles are often conflicting, and the fathers worked hard to develop resilience and learn anxiety management strategies together to face this challenge.

This year we saw fathers who were committed to changing their personal situation, changing their role within the family and having a positive influence on the rest of the family and their partner by becoming more aware of their emotions, by being sensitive to the needs of their child and co-parent, and by using better communication. Every father has the power to change, to build his path and his base and to improve it, to ultimately sustain and give love to his child, which can also be called dad power. Being sensitive to the reality that affects men, and understanding what it takes to ask for help, I thank each participating father for giving me the chance and having confidence in me to be able to support them through the highs and lows, in moments of doubt, in moments of vulnerability and especially in moments of transition when the goal is achieved.



Yours sincerely,

**FATHERS ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR**  
**JEAN LAMA**



# Parenting Program Report

As the Parenting Attachment Educator, I am grateful for the opportunity to share the progress and accomplishments of the past year. In September, I collaborated with our dedicated drama therapy intern, Rafaela Diaz-Byers from Concordia University, to create a parenting intake form and process for parents. This annual intake helps define parents' goals and strengths for the coming year, guiding group sessions and identifying needs for individual or small group support.

Rafaela and I began monthly parenting workshops, focusing on parental mental health, safety and family routines. We created a safety manual to help parents child-proof their homes, and collaborated with Zoe Schmidt, our dietetics intern from McGill, to help parents build mealtime routines, learn about basic nutrition and manage challenging behaviours.

Integrating the parenting program into the O3 Curriculum has been a key focus this past year. I've researched many evidence-based programs suitable for a five-year rolling attendance program, and which cover essential parenting knowledge, such as parenting styles and temperaments, nurturing, self-reflection on the mother role, practical hands-on skills for managing power struggles, and space for group programming informed by resident input to help them reach their parenting goals year by year.

Looking ahead, I am excited about launching a baby stimulation group this summer for children one year and under, aimed at fostering early developmental skills and parent-child bonding. One of my ongoing goals is to integrate our parenting approach with more child-centred components in collaboration with our childcare coordinator, Judy Battista. We will use the sensory toys we were able to purchase this year thanks to the CHSSN's Autism funding to support emotional and motor skills development and strengthen collaborative play skills. This approach aims to build secure attachments by improving relational skills for both parents and children.

Reflecting on the past year, I deeply appreciate the willingness of parents to show up for their kids and their curiosity in understanding their children's needs at a deeper level. Thanks to the incredible support from my colleagues, funders, and board members, I look forward to many more years of growth.

I am committed to continuing to develop and expand our parenting attachment programs and anticipate further collaboration and support to strengthen our community ties and improve parenting outcomes.

**PARENTING ATTACHMENT EDUCATOR**

**BRITTANY SWEET**



# Kids' Programming Report



This past year has been another continued success. Despite all of the renovations, the childcare and all other programming thrived.

As always, I was happy to provide childcare during all the programs that were provided throughout the year including a few Drop-offs for the moms and dads for them to have a bit of time for themselves once or twice a month. I also provided childcare during Study Nights, Collective Kitchen as well as during Jean's programming with the dads.

I look forward to another year of exploring and discovering with the children and starting a few new programs this fall to share, discover and learn in a fun and loving environment.

**CHILDCARE COORDINATOR**

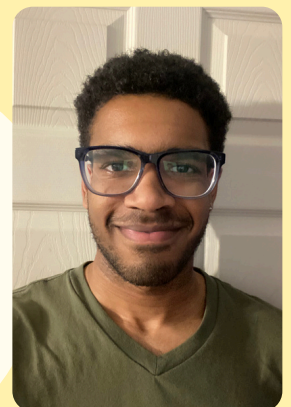
**JUDY BATTISTA**



During the summer of 2023, I animated activities for parents and children living at O3. The activities were run for the parents to participate with their children and develop skills while doing so. Some of the activities done were baking, arts and crafts, games, etc. I received positive feedback from the residents about the activities I did and look forward to finding more activities that are suitable for the group this summer.

**SUMMER STUDENT**

**JAYLEN WESTFIELD**



# Kids' Pics



# Farewell to our Wellness Educator

Towards the end of 2022 we were lucky enough to welcome Olivia Herron back to O3 in the newly created role of Wellness Educator (also known as Mental Health Educator). Olivia had previously worked at O3 in many different roles and has been a staple of the O3 community for many years. She left O3 originally to finish her Masters in Counselling Psychology.

We were very excited to have secured funding to focus on building more robust mental health supports for both our residents and our staff. In the wake of the pandemic lockdowns we all felt the increase in stress, anxiety and overwhelm.

In her time in the role Olivia offered one-on-one support to residents facing a variety of mental health stressors. She recognized the importance of focusing on all aspects of Mental Health, including house organization, exercise and healthy eating.

Olivia will be sorely missed by staff and residents, but her legacy will live on at O3, and we're all excited to see where her journey takes her next!



**WELLNESS EDUCATOR**  
**OLIVIA HERRON**

# And to our Director of Development



We were also excited to welcome Ellise Radlein on a one year part time contract as our Director of Development this year. Ellise focused on strengthening our relationships with our donors, including starting O3's quarterly newsletter and growing our social media following. She also wrote grants, organized our new DMS and grant list spreadsheet, and did outreach to various foundations. We're thankful we got the opportunity to have this position, even if it was for a short time, and that we're starting this fiscal year so organized and ready to continue growing our fundraising efforts.

A huge thank you to Ellise and we also can't wait to see what she's up to next!

**DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**  
**ELLISE RADLEIN**

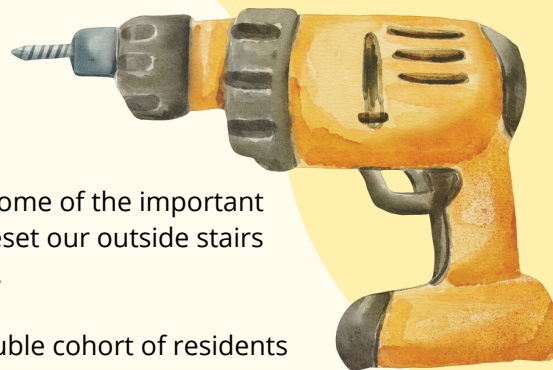


# Thank you to Jo

Jo took on the Finance Coordinator role for a year while Reyhane was on parental leave. Jo was a great addition to the team and O3 benefitted from her diligence and kindness. We miss her around the office but we know she's doing other great financial things around the neighbourhood.



## Building Report

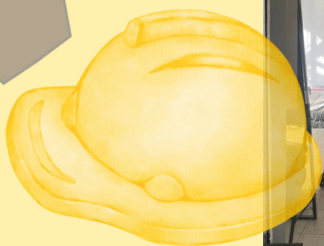


After receiving our new BSI in August 2023, we began to dig into some of the important repairs that our building needs. We were very relieved to finally reset our outside stairs and be able to use the patio doors again to enter our office space.

This year brought a higher rate of resident turnover: we had a double cohort of residents leaving as some stayed over 5 years because of missed programming during COVID, and the current housing situation has made the search for stable and affordable housing after O3 increasingly long. This meant we did an almost unprecedented amount of repairs and renovations inside the apartments, also catching up on some updates that had been put aside during the peak of the pandemic.

Finally, towards the end of the fiscal year, we were able to start our major office renovations. Our team has grown a lot over the past 5 years and we needed to construct more office spaces and improve our soundproofing to ensure the privacy of our residents. We also wanted to upgrade our programming space so parents can get the most out of their time spent in workshops. We modified our kitchen to be better equipped for group cooking, increased our storage space, and created a new small conference room which will allow us to run two workshops simultaneously.

In the 2024-2025 fiscal year we look forward to putting the final touches on the office renovations, including building a hybrid office-calm down kids space for our Parenting Attachment Educator which will be specially designed to be accessible to children with autism and sensory processing disorders.



# 03 Staff Working Hard



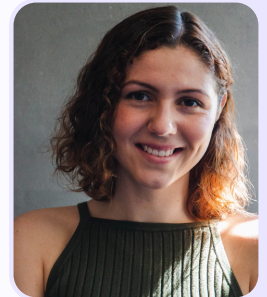


# O3 Interns

My 6 months as a drama therapy intern at O3 has been a rewarding and fulfilling experience. The team was friendly and accommodating, always striving to find ways to support me in my clinical training, pass on their knowledge, and navigate challenging situations.

During my time, I had the privilege of working closely with many women through individual drama therapy sessions, conducting parenting intakes, and designing and facilitating parenting workshops. These diverse experiences allowed me to apply and adapt what I had learned in the classroom to the community, fostering growth in various methods of facilitation.

The hands-on client contact provided numerous opportunities for me to cultivate adaptability and independence as a clinician, and the insights gained from these experiences will undoubtedly serve as invaluable assets as I embark on my professional journey.



**Rafaela Diaz-Byers**  
**Drama Therapy Intern**



In my time as a social work intern at o3, I have been focusing on the intake process: recruiting, screening and supporting clients in their application process. Additionally, I have assisted several residents in their school and grant applications. In June, I will be hosting a series of workshops designed to support residents in planning for their future academic and career endeavors.

**Tiffany Cortez**  
**Social Work Intern**

We also welcomed 6 nurses from the McGill school of nursing who designed a sex ed workshop and related health pamphlets for our residents.

Thank you to Cryztal Paguiligan, Amanda Cabico, Anna Griffin, Laura Panado, Luiza Nuriakhmetova and Nathalia Gofman.

And finally, we worked with 7 students from Concordia's Human Relations program to audit and improve our communications to be more accessible to lower literacy learners. Thank you to Margot Strickland, Amisha Patel, Gabriel Pawlos, Hamna Sajjad, Lea Dbouk, Juliette Rose and Tyler Hylland.



# O3 Food Program & Interns

We've all seen the rising costs of groceries and heard of the increasing demand for food banks. At O3, we've been lucky enough to be able to grow our food programming over the last year to better support our families in this time of increased food insecurity. We were able to renovate our communal kitchen thanks to a one-time grant, and we began a partnership with the McGill Dietetics school to collaborate with interns to make sure the food we're cooking together is nutritious and accessible.



**Zoe Schmidt**  
Dietetics Intern

I came to O3 to do my Research Project before my clinical rotations in order to finish my dietetics masters. In my time at O3 I learned about the unique challenges and opportunities of fostering food literacy in an intimate community setting like O3, and developed a framework for future food literacy initiatives. I also got to practice community based participatory research in order to deliver meaningful workshops to residents and their families. The experience at O3 will forever shape the way I interact with my community and how I will practice as a dietitian.



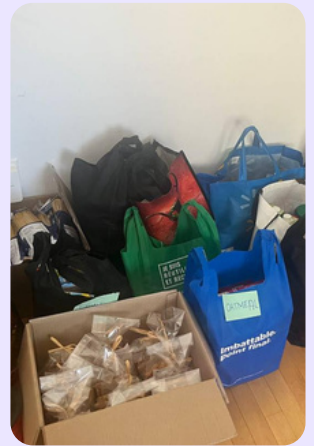
**Jinane Nehme**  
Dietetics Intern

I was placed at the O3 for my dietetics internship in order to provide activities, tools, organization and knowledge all related to nutrition and health promotion. I worked on creating healthy recipe ideas, improving food safety regulations, and organizing the pantry according to the FIFO (first in first out) method. Staff and residents can use these tools to ensure disease prevention and encourage healthy nutrition habits.

We're excited to continue to expand our food programming this year by growing vegetables and herbs on site in our own community gardens!



# 03 Food Pics



# Thank You To Our Donors & Funders!

Atrium Innovations  
Malouf Family Foundation  
Brian and Alida Rossy Family Foundation  
Gabriel Rossy Memorial Foundation



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Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

Secrétariat  
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social

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and Prevention Network

CHSSN



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Community Services  
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FAMILY FOUNDATION

*And to everyone else who made a private donation this year!  
Your contributions are greatly valued and we are so thankful for your  
support.*

And as always a very special thank you to

MEDIA X EXPERTS

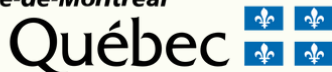
and to **STONEHAVEN** productions

Along with Mark Sherman, Ian Maclean & Joey Elias  
for their help with our comedy show fundraiser

# Thank You To Our Partners !



Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Centre-Ouest-de-l'île-de-Montréal



United for Literacy  
Littératie Ensemble



## **03 On Our Own**

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# **Keep in touch!**