

SPECIAL EDITION

Inform' Accueil



**DEFENSE,
CARING
AND SUPPORT**
in 100% human way!

Volume 20 - Issue 03 - October 2024



Fédération des familles d'accueil
et ressources intermédiaires
du Québec

50
ans



Crazy
about our
children

For | 50_{ans}



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[A word from the president



Dear foster families,

I'm delighted to present you with this special 50th anniversary of the FFARIQ. We've been digging through the archives, and we've found some little treasures! In addition to the magazine you're holding in your hands, we'll be publishing other finds throughout this financial year that I'm sure you'll enjoy!

I invite you to discover the hard work of our builders and their teams. They built the foundations of the FFAQ which, after unionization, became the FFARIQ.

You'll see that all the presidents and their entourages worked hard with passion and conviction, while opening their doors to children who arrived with backpacks full of life experiences too heavy for their frail shoulders.

I've been lucky enough to be part of this great organization for 20 years. **It's tattooed on my heart.** In the past, I've been lucky enough to be surrounded with some of the people involved, and I can say with conviction that they all had the good of

children and foster families at heart. They wanted to defend them, support them and look after them, with guidelines that have been established over the years.

Today, I'm proud to be the president who has taken up the lead to be the voice of foster families, representing them, supporting them and defending their rights. This is only possible with a strong team at my side. I would like to thank my Executive Committee, made up of foster families, the Board of Directors, also made up of foster families, and all the employees who meet the support needs of foster families on a daily basis.

Congratulations to all those who have helped make the FFARIQ such a strong, human organization.

Now, help yourself to a good cup of coffee and take the time to immerse yourself in our story!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mélanie Gagnon". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mélanie Gagnon
Provincial President
FFARIQ

Foreword

Consulting the archives of the FFARIQ confirms what we already knew.



Its history is filled with kind-hearted people who all share the same goal: to ensure that foster families are recognized for their true worth, and that they are properly supported so that they can provide the best possible care for these children with far too much baggage. The presidents and their teams have devoted themselves to ensuring that children's voices are recognized, even in the early days when more traditionalist and patriarchal values left little place for them to express themselves.

We also found that the FFAQ quickly gained a reputation for being consulted on a wide range of issues, for making changes to legislation concerning children, for being invited to take part in research projects, and for being welcomed by various ministers in order to defend the interests of foster families.

Before the advent of foster families, it was the nuns who took in so-called orphans and looked for parents to adopt them. The sheer number of children and the nuns' rigour meant that they met their basic needs, but didn't have the time to give them the affection and love essential to their development. To be adopted, these children had to "be nice".

Then, in 1921, the institutions received financial support to take in these children. However, this did not meet the children's emotional needs. In 1954, the first foster homes appeared. It would be another 17 years before foster families were legally recognized. At that time, the law also recognized the need to keep children in their natural environment or in an environment close to it, as well as deinstitutionalization.

In 1978, the FFAQ had its first permanent office. Foster families grouped together in regional associations to collectively assert their role. Whereas in France, foster families are paid; here they receive honoraria to meet the children's needs.

Over the years, **the working conditions of foster families have evolved**, and the role of institutions towards foster families has become clearer. In 1993, these institutions began to oversee foster families.

Lobbying for **better remuneration**, recognition of the right of association, demands concerning working conditions: it's clear that the battles being waged today are nothing new.

In 2011, the FFAQ becomes the FFARIQ. Special efforts are devoted to raising the organization's profile and promoting the role of foster families. Increasingly, the FFARIQ is present in the media to speak out on conditions of practice, relations with politicians and to highlight the important role that foster families play in helping children emerge from the darkness of a life with maladjusted parents.



You'll find it all in this special edition of the Inform'Accueil. We also wanted to hear from those who live the reality of foster families up close. These people have seen the framework surrounding this important role evolve. A framework that is still evolving today. And despite the many challenges of being a foster family, they are still there for the children. Of course, we couldn't pay tribute to our foster families without having a former DYP child testify, to fully appreciate the relevance and necessity of these families of the heart.

Enjoy your reading!

From foster homes to foster families



© Photo credit: La Presse

The status of foster families has changed considerably over the years. These changes have included the creation of regional associations, which have enabled them to break out of their isolation and gain the recognition they deserve.

1921 - State Support for Institutions

For the first time, the Public Assistance Act grants financial support to institutions that take in so-called orphans.

1954 - Foster Homes

First placements in substitute families, also known as foster homes.

1971 - Legal Recognition of Foster Families

The legal entity "foster family" is created by the Act respecting health services and social services. It designates a residential resource for children, adults and the elderly. It comprises two distinct networks: foster homes for children run by social service agencies, and affiliated homes for adults and children run by psychiatric hospitals and nursing homes. The Act also recognizes the need to maintain users in their natural environment, or in an environment as close to it as possible, as well as deinstitutionalization.

1973 - Institution of Professional Standards

The Ministry of Social Affairs establishes professional standards for foster family placements for children, adults and the elderly, bringing about significant changes in professional practice and establishing the specificity of this type of resource: its family character.

1978 - A First Permanent Office for the FFAQ

The first office of the Fédération des familles d'accueil du Québec (FFAQ) is set up in Arthabaska. It moved several times, spending a few years in Thetford Mines, before finally settling in Quebec City.

1991 - The Family Resource Designation is Created

The updating of the Act respecting health services and social services introduces the term "family-type resources" with two distinct entities: foster families for children and residences for adults and the elderly.

1993 - Institutions Now Oversee Foster Families

Professional and administrative responsibility for FTRs is gradually being transferred to the institutions, which are beginning to assume responsibility for recruiting, assessing and monitoring the resources and, as the case may be, the users entrusted to them.

Around 1995 - Recognition of Mixed Banks

A new type of foster family is recognized: Mixed Banks.

1995 - The FFAQ Works to Avoid Regional Disparities

The regional boards become responsible for the foster family contract. The FFAQ is working to establish a common core contract to avoid regional disparities.

1998 - Decentralization and Regionalization

The Quebec government decentralized and regionalized health and social services. Huguette Blais, President at the time, says that the FFAQ saw this change coming and had already recommended to its regional associations that they reorganize to become stronger.

1999 - Cloutier Report

The Cloutier Report, which assesses the recruitment, accreditation, training and reassessment process for foster families, has been published. The FFAQ was an active member of the committee that produced the report.

2000 - Distinguished Guests at the FFAQ Symposium

The FFAQ symposium welcomes two distinguished guests. First, Richard Cloutier, chairman of the working group on foster care policy, which will publish its report in 2019. Then Gilles Baril, Minister for Youth Protection, who is committed to working hard to ensure that foster families are recognized as an integral part of our society.

2002 - Lobbying Against Underfunding

A special edition of the Inform'Accueil deals with the underfunding of foster families. Members are invited to take certain actions as pressure tactics:

- Send a pre-written letter to Roger Bertrand, Minister of Health and Social Services;
- Ask to see your foster family file;
- Ask for a few days' reflection before accepting a new placement;
- Stop defraying excess education costs.

2003 - Adoption of Bill 7: Foster Families are "Non-Unionizable"

The ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux publishes *La pratique professionnelle et la ressource de type familial - Guide d'orientation* to support institutions in their responsibilities. The government also adopts Bill 7, which amends the Act respecting health services and social services, specifying that an IR or FTR is deemed not to be employed or an employee of the institution, which has the effect of determining whether these persons are "unionizable" under the Labour Code.

2003 - Partners' Day

Holding of the first Partners' Day (foster families, FFAQ, institutions, ministry) in connection with the partnership agreement. The 2006 edition will be cancelled, marking the end of this annual meeting.

2004 - Provincial Tour: All in Tune

A province-wide tour of the partnership agreement led Huguette Blais, Executive Director at the time, to say in the *Inform'Accueil* that this was practically the first time that all those involved in providing services to children in need had read the same document at the same time, in order to take ownership of an agreement that finally established guidelines for communication and collaboration.

2006 - Agreement, Code of Ethics and Contract

In January, the *Gazette officielle du gouvernement du Québec* reported that the FFAQ had been recognized as an organization able to determine the general conditions for the exercise of resources.

In the wake of Bill 7, an agreement was signed in April after almost 2 years of talks. The guiding principles of this agreement are designed to maintain a spirit of partnership between all players and to preserve the specific reality of each type of accommodation (FTR and IR). A code of ethics and a contract between a foster family and an institution are the tools that will guide the relationship.

2008 - Invalidation of Bill 7: Foster Families Can Associate for Their Rights

A Superior Court decision invalidates Bill 7, declaring it unconstitutional and invalid for infringing freedom of association and the right to equality. In 2009, this led to the adoption of the Act respecting the representation of family-type resources and certain intermediate resources and the process for negotiating a collective agreement respecting them, and amending various legislative provisions. Foster families can now form an association, negotiate and enter into a collective agreement with the Minister.

2011 - The FFAQ is Now Called the FFARIQ

The FFAQ becomes a union federation recognized by the Commission des relations de travail. In order to structure itself properly as a union, it affiliates with the UES-800 (Union des employés de services) through a service contract. It then took the name FFARIQ.

2012 - First Collective Agreement Signed by the FFARIQ

An agreement in principle is accepted by the vast majority of members. The first collective agreement for childcare resources is signed in August 2012 and renewed in December 2015 for a period of 5 years.



2012-2013 - Local and National Committees on Concerted Action

Implementation of Local Committees on Concerted Action and the National Committee on Concerted Action to monitor the agreement.

2013-2014 - Union Representatives Join the Team

Arrival of a team of five union representatives.

2014 - Regional Committees Everywhere

Each region now has its own regional concerted action committee.

2015 - Proximity Foster Families

Recognition of proximity foster families (PFF).

2022 - A Second Office for Permanent Staff

In addition to the Quebec City office, the FFARIQ is opening an office in Trois-Rivières to make it easier for all foster families in Quebec to meet the permanent staff.

Life story of a former DYP child

Find your happiness and your path



24/
60

Patricia Forget, age 25, taken in by Ghislaine Pelletier-Robitaille and André Robitaille at the age of 6 days

Region: Laurentides

On December 25, 2017, Patricia, then aged 19, was on the set of 24/60 on Radio-Canadian with her foster mother, Ghislaine. They had been invited by host Anne-Marie Dussault for a special program on commitment, on the bonds forged when we reach out to one another.

"Ghislaine and André are my second mother and father. I came to live with them when I was a baby. I was their first daughter. My youth went well, even if at first it was difficult to make friends because I was afraid that people wouldn't accept me because I was a child in a foster family."

“**The greatest need of Quebec children is to be loved,**”

says Patricia



A Foster Family Even After 18

Patricia has many fond memories of her life with Ghislaine and André, including outings and trips. But she's also grateful for the guiding role they played once she came of age. "When I was 18, I stayed with Ghislaine and André. They have a big house. I suffer from anxiety and didn't feel ready to find an apartment.

I was able to learn how to live my adult life, how to manage the rent and the telephone, and cook my own meals. I also had my own job. I was lucky enough to have someone I could trust to teach me all that. Now I know how to budget and make decisions by asking myself the right questions," says Patricia.

The right educational path to a job she loves

Patricia has always had learning difficulties with mathematics. She has been diagnosed with dyscalculia. She can't add, subtract, multiply, divide or solve problems. In public high school, she spent 3 years in a special education program and another 3 years in training to prepare her for the job market. Learning time was divided between basic classroom courses and on-the-job training. So she did a stint in catering, but didn't like it. Next, she trained as an orderly, followed by an internship in a seniors' residence. That's where she found her calling!

After 9 months' training as an orderly, she now works in a CHSLD. She enjoys working with the elderly. She particularly enjoys helping people.



Patricia's Biological Family History

When Patricia was born, she already had a biological big sister. Despite this, her biological mother was not fit to care for a second newborn baby, partly because she'd had no role model, and partly because she didn't have the tools to care.

Patricia's biological sister also lived with Ghislaine and André from the age of 3 ½ to 10, i.e., for 7 years. Then she moved to another resource that could better meet her specific needs. Patricia had contact with her until the death of their maternal grandmother, who helped her mother take care of her daughters when they were visiting.

Reconnecting With Your Father

Some time ago, Patricia found her biological father. "I found him through a friend who was his neighbor. I went straight to his house, and he recognized me by the look in my eyes. We have the same eyes. I was nervous at first - I hadn't seen him for 24 years. And he too was on his guard at first. But as soon as he told me I had his eyes, it all just sank in. He told me his life story. I also met my paternal grandparents last Christmas. It went really well. I've found him a year ago now and we're making up for lost time. We have a good bond and I'm thinking of moving in with him," she concludes.

DYP teenagers sing in 1980

Teenagers from the DYP express in their own words what they are going through and what they are feeling, in a very touching text set to song.

Atelier 3

Message

Pourquoi perdre son temps à haïr quand on a si peu de temps pour aimer. Présentement tout va bien mais demain à quoi s'attendre? Qui serons-nous? Que deviendrons-nous, si nous sommes seuls à parcourir notre chemin. Si nous voulons devenir heureux, il faudra nous changer nous-mêmes ainsi que les gens du monde.

LES DÉLAISSÉS

(air: Les portes du pénitencier)

Les Portes du Service Social
Bientôt vont se refermer
Et c'est là que je commencerai à vivre
Car je n'ai pas encore fait
- 1-

Pour moi ma mère m'est inconnue
Elle m'a laissé tomber
Mon père m'est lui aussi inconnu
Je n'ai pu les aimer
À vie je suis handicapée
Pourquoi m'ont-ils laissée?
O toi ma mère qui m'a mise au monde
Demain tu peux revenir
-2-

Vous tous parents écoutez-moi bien
Ne laissez JAMAIS vos enfants
Seuls dans la vie, perdus dans ce monde
Ils n'iront jamais bien loin
Toi ma mère qui m'a mise au monde
Pourquoi m'as-tu laissée?
Je veux savoir la vérité?
Je n'ai que trop pleuré.

Our builders



1977 to 1982

Gilbert Giroux
President



1982 to 1986

Georgette Carpentier
President



1986 to 1991

Ginette Tétreault
President



1991 to 2008

Huguette Blais Thériault.
President

Since 2004, she has also
been General Manager.



2008 to 2011

Véronique Dubé
President

Huguette Blais, General Manager
(2008 to 2010)
Luc Drapeau, General Manager
(2010 to 2011)



2011 to 2016

Jacinthe Boucher
President

Luc Drapeau, General Manager
(2011 to 2012)
France Beaudry, General Manager
(2012-2013)
Jérôme Dumont, General Manager
(2013 to 2015)
François Caron, General Manager
(2015 to 2017)



2016 to 2023

Geneviève Rioux
President

François Garon, General Manager
(2015 to 2017)



2023 to 2024

Mélanie Gagnon
Acting President,
President

Life story of a foster family since 1976

48 years of welcoming children into their hearts and homes



Pierrette and André Boisvert, foster family for
nearly 500 children

Region: Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec

1 biological child, 1 adopted child and 8 DYP children
Resource type: FTR

“ When I was younger, I was hoping to find a life partner who was going to be able to be a foster family because I wanted to give back the chance I had. ”



saw the white corridor and I saw my deceased father who told me that I still had things to do on earth. I came back into my body and this experience has guided me all my life."

Pierrette also took care of her mother, who had become invalid. She is very grateful to her husband, who has always been there to welcome and care for Pierrette's foster parents.

The 1st Child: A Wounded Heart

Pierrette took in her first boy, aged 16. She was his 3rd foster family and he had no contact with his biological family. "He didn't like school and was very short-tempered. He had big emotional wounds in his heart. In the end, I succeeded. He wanted to leave school. I found him a job. He lived with us until he was 27," she recalls.

Pierrette and André are in their seventies.

They were a young couple in their early twenties when they decided to become foster families. They also had a biological daughter in 1975 and adopted another in 1987. Even today, they open their home to children whose parents are unable to care for them. They currently have 8 at home. "It's like being on vacation! I'm used to having 10 or 11," says Pierrette, who is happy to have been able to give a good time and love to all the children who have lived with her, sometimes for a few days, sometimes for several years.

Why did you become a foster family?

Pierrette is a foster child herself. She doesn't know her biological parents. "When I was 16 months old, I was placed with wonderful parents Laura and Lucien, who were 56 and 57 years old. I always stayed with them. I even kept them with me when they were older. They were my foster family," she says.

This woman, with a heart so big it could hold so many people, has not always had an easy life. At the age of 27, she almost died. "I had an operation and went into respiratory and renal failure. I saw my children and my husband holding my hands. I

A Child With Limited Potential

She also recounts the arrival of a 15-year-old girl in 1982. She was being bullied. She was attending a school for children with learning difficulties, but they had assessed her incorrectly. But Pierrette saw the girl's potential and fought to move her to another group. The girl went on to Secondary 3 and 4, and then to her Practical Nursing course. She stayed with Pierrette and André until she was 21. However, she met a boy with whom she used cocaine. Pierrette is still in contact with her. She says she has a real talent for making people laugh, to the point where she'd even make a dead person laugh!

A Child's 49th Foster Family

And then there's little Sophie, who came to Pierrette at the age of 11. It was her 49th foster family! She changed schools so often that she couldn't succeed. Pierrette helped her as best she could. Eventually, Sophie made it all the way to university. Pierrette and her husband even bought her a small used car for her school trips. Today, Sophie is a school principal, has two children and visits her foster family a few times a year, including at Christmas.

From Yesterday to Today

Pierrette and her husband are privileged witnesses to the changing conditions and recognition of the role of foster families. "Back in the old days, we started out old school. The kids would rip out the frames. When you've been used to all kinds of violence, your behaviour is affected," Pierrette testifies.

Young People More Crippled Than Before? No!

“ Today, children put a lot of words to what they're going through, but I think it's pretty even. I've always had big cases. One thing's for sure, I had to go into my heart to be a foster family, because we would have closed a long time ago! ”

confides Pierrette

She takes a lot of positives from her role as a foster family, because giving back is important and rewarding for her. "The kids feel it when we love them. You could feel it at home. One of the children we took in was always running away from his foster families. He'd had five before us. But he never ran away from home. He told me it was because he felt at home," she says.

Message to New Foster Families

To new foster families, she tells them to "pick up lots of love, patience and tolerance", because these children need it. Positive reinforcement is very important, and every little effort must be rewarded.



“ You mustn't see everything as a tragedy. If a child hides food, it's normal if they've run out. You mustn't show children that you're impressed by them, or you'll be in for a world of hurt! The most important thing is to be yourself. Being a foster family isn't a job. You have to have it in you. You have to be able to welcome and love a child who isn't yours, while accepting the biological parents as they are, because there's always a wound hidden behind drugs or alcohol. Often, they're repeating the same pattern they went through. ”

Symposium 1980

sing along!

Hénédine Dallaire proposes a theme song for the symposium to the tune of "Une boîte à chansons" by Georges D'Or. We reproduce here the text as it appeared in the Inform'Accueil.

Sur l'air d'une boîte à chanson

Un enfant

Pour un petit enfant
Ce qui est important
C'est. son proche entourage
Le sourire de sa mère
Et la voix de son père
Regarder leurs visages
De se blottir contre leurs coeurs
Comme il est bon
Et de sentir
Qu'y a du bonheur dans la maison

Mais s'il est orphelin
Qui pourra en prendre soin
Il attend en silence
Si quelqu'un voudrait bien
L'accueillir chez les siens
Ce serait une chance
D'avoir enfin une maman
Et un papa
Qui chaque soir
Dans son p'tit lit le bordera

Si la vie vous sourit
Penser à ces petits
Ils sont notre espérance
Partageons avec eux
Rendons les plus heureux
Soulageons leurs souffrances
Tout ce que vous donnez
A l'un de ces petits
Sera écrit dans le grand livre
Du paradis.

Hénédine Dallaire

Recognizing the role of foster families: 50 years of gains

By coming together, foster families have forged bonds, broken isolation and increased the reach of their voices. By joining forces, they are ensuring that their role with children is fully recognized. We also pay tribute to our builders by associating their names with the gains made under their presidencies.

Although the last years of the FFARIQ are better documented, we were able to find in our archives some **key gains** of the last 50 years.



Gilbert Giroux – 1977 to 1982

1978 – Staying in the natural family

Law 24 establishes the work orientation, "maintenance in the natural family - short-term placement." This social vocation implies the development of tolerance between the foster family and the natural family. As for the institution, it must express the real needs, so as not to create false expectations, and quickly direct families wishing to adopt to the right service.

1982 - The FFAQ shares its expertise

The FFAQ is invited by the Ministry of Social Affairs to take part in various working groups, notably on improving the situation of children in care and foster families. It also presented a brief to the Charbonneau Commission. She recommends that children's vital and fundamental needs be taken into account first and foremost, and that foster families are given access to the court file.



Georgette Carpentier – 1982 to 1986

1984 – The institution must draw up a response plan

Adoption of regulations recognizing 3 categories of foster families (regular, special and rehabilitation). It also defines access to services provided by foster families, and stipulates that an intervention plan must be drawn up by the institution to provide foster families with an essential working tool. This is a tool that the FFAQ has long been calling for.



Ginette Tétreault – 1986 to 1991

1991 – Provincial standardization of conditions

A new contract is signed. Among the gains is the stipulation that all foster families in the province will be treated equally and will have access to the same information.



Huguette Blais – 1991 to 2008

1994 – Implementation of the Classification Tool

Following the work of the Frontier Committee, of which the FFAQ was a member, a user needs assessment tool (classification tool) was created to standardize the premiums paid to foster families. This committee had worked for 4 years to establish a tool that was as fair and equitable as possible.

2002 – Recognition of Underfunding

The ministry recognizes the underfunding of foster families. As a result, a total of \$13 million has been allocated to increase the remuneration of foster families by \$2 per day, and to reduce the ratios of resource workers in order to offer families better support and follow-up.



2006 – New Youth Protection Act

A new Youth Protection Act was passed, with the main following amendments:

- Promote continuity and stability for children;
- Promote the active participation of children and their parents in decisions and measures that concern them;
- Ensure that state intervention in family life is exceptional;
- Reconciling child protection and privacy;
- Modernize judicial processes;
- To formalize the exceptional use of accommodation in an intensive care unit.



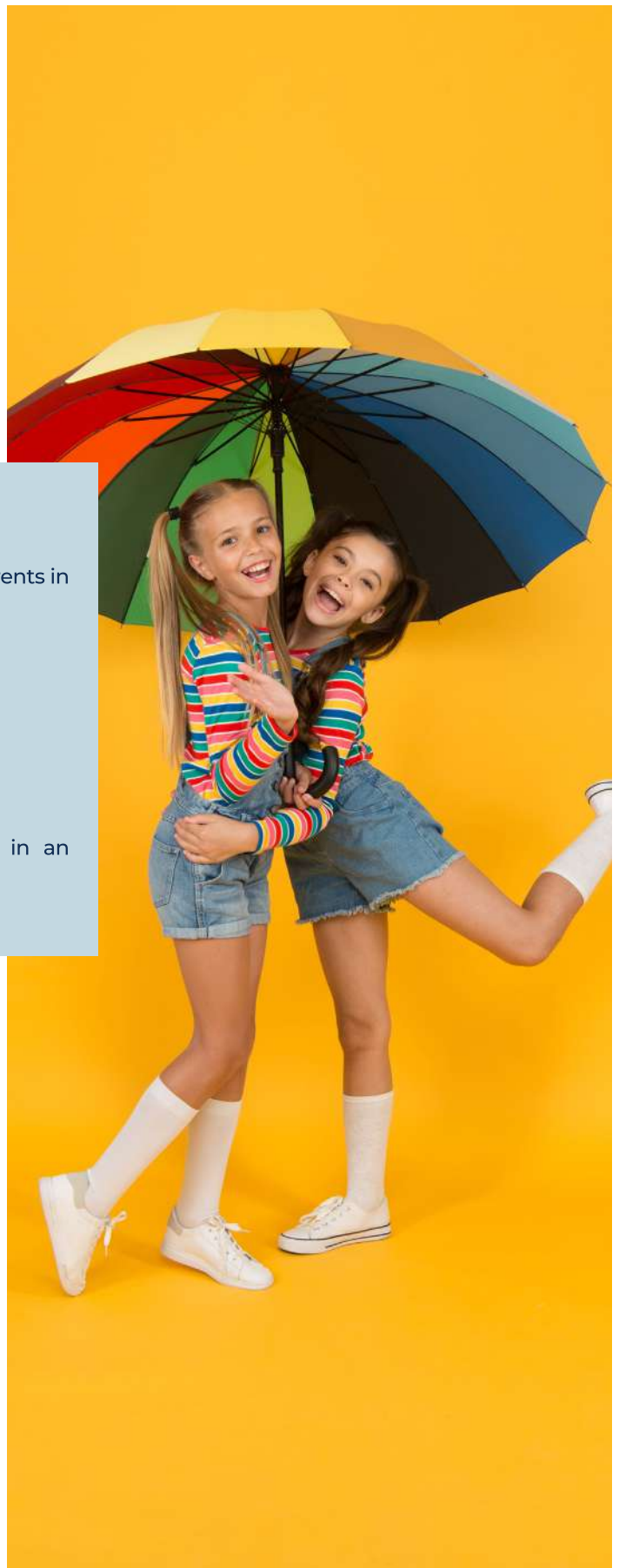
Véronique Dubé – 2008 to 2011

2009 – CSST protection

With the coming into force of Bill 49, family-type and intermediate resources will be able to register with the CSST. Under the collective agreement, the ministry will reimburse the cost.

2011 – Régie des rentes and RQAP

Bill 49 makes it compulsory for FTR-IRs to contribute to the Régie des rentes du Québec and the Régime québécois d'allocation parentale. Approximately 50% of these contributions will be offset by the Ministry.





Jacinthe Boucher – 2011 to 2016

2012 – The FFARIQ Signs a First Agreement

A 1st agreement was signed under the FFARIQ umbrella after 2 years and 3 months of negotiation. Multiple gains were made, including the following:

- Choice of grievance arbitration following a disagreement;
- 60% for fixed costs of reasonable operating expenses;
- Institution of a classification review mechanism in a letter of agreement;
- Increase in the amount allocated per resource for participation in associative life;
- New responsibilities for the institution;
- Obligation of the institution to provide a copy of the resource's personal file free of charge upon request;
- The institution may not oblige a resource to transport a user if such transportation would diminish the quality of services offered to other users.

2013 – Case Law in Favour of Foster Families

The first precedent-setting arbitration award is handed down in Quebec. The subject: the right of a foster family to be accompanied by a FFARIQ representative during the assessment of a report issued against it.

2013-2014 – Additional Fees and Speaking Rights

Eight criteria for determining a resource's eligibility for additional daily remuneration when the institution's requirements for support or assistance services are higher than normal are set out in Letter of Agreement no. 3.

An addition has also been made to the Trailer Clause, stipulating that during the analysis of the request for a review by the person in charge, the resource must be given the opportunity to present its observations, and may be accompanied by a representative from its association.

2015 – Recognition Agreement Signed

The FFARIQ signed an agreement in principle with the employers' association, in which the federation prioritized three areas: recognition of resources, rebalancing the relationship between resources and institutions, and stability of practice.





Geneviève Rioux – 2016 to 2023

2015 to 2019 – New structure: services, communication and management

Numerous changes are made to the way the FFARIQ operates. A survey of members, as part of a strategic planning exercise, led to the creation of a hiring committee, an ethics committee, a finance committee and a misunderstanding/LCCA committee. New means of communication are also being placed in place, such as the creation of private Facebook groups by region. The FFARIQ builds its reputation and positions itself with the following slogan: Defense. Benevolence. Support - in a 100% human way. Then, the FFARIQ innovates by offering a free telemedicine service for its members and their families living under their roof, including the children they foster.

2017 – FFARIQ's Demands Influence the New YPA

A FFARIQ brief submitted as part of the revision of the Youth Protection Act is highly influential. The following gains were made: foster family participation in the judicial process, in decision-making concerning the transfer of a child from one living environment to another, and in the review of a child's situation. At the time, Lucie Charbonneau, Minister for Rehabilitation and Youth Protection, Public Health and Healthy Living, expressed her delight at seeing the bill passed, noting in passing that foster families will have a beneficial impact on youth protection through their perspective and involvement.

The right to preservation of a child's cultural identity is also enshrined in this law, ensuring that a First Nations child is placed with a family from his or her community first.

2019 – Institutions That Are Too Curious!

The FFARIQ has denounced the use by CIUSSS Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec of a questionnaire designed to assess the sexual habits of Mixed Bank applicants. Extremely intrusive questions are being asked without any valid reason. It took a media appearance to get Minister Lionel Carmant to react.



2020 – Submission of a Brief for Children's Well-Being

The FFARIQ was invited to express its views to the Commission spéciale sur les droits des enfants et la protection de la jeunesse (Laurent Commission). It therefore submitted a brief to the Commission.

2021 – Publication of the Laurent Commission Report

The Laurent Commission publishes its report. The FFARIQ is very pleased to note that several of its recommendations have been taken into account, including better collaboration with institutions, the creation of a charter of children's rights, the creation of an independent commissioner for children's welfare and rights, the involvement of children in decision-making, and support for DYP youth in their transition to adulthood.

2022 - ARR - a Victory for Your Collective Bargaining Rights

The Superior Court ruled in favour of the FFARIQ, stating that certain sections of the Act respecting the representation of family-type resources and certain intermediate resources and the process for negotiating a collective agreement respecting them (ARR) violate the resources' freedom of association, a right protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. The FFARIQ had been calling for this recognition for several years. It is therefore with deep relief that we welcome this decision by the Honourable judge Éric Hardy.

2022 – The FFARIQ Consulted on Amendments to the YPA

The FFARIQ is also invited to take part in the consultations of the Commission de la santé et des services sociaux on Bill 15, which will amend the Youth Protection Act.

2023 – Clear Directions for PFF

The ministry issues its guidelines for applying as a proximity foster family (PFF). The FFARIQ claimed the right for these families to be able to benefit, like any other type of foster family, from the support needed to carry out their role. PFFs are often faced with lengthy assessments.

2023 – Working Group on Initial Training for Foster Families

The FFARIQ begins its participation in the Working Group on the initial training of foster parents in youth protection, which is the first response to its repeated requests to better prepare foster families for their role.



Mélanie Gagnon – 2024 to today

2024 – Memorandum on the Creation of the Position of Commissioner

Following the creation of the position of Commissioner for Children's Welfare and Rights, the FFARIQ submits a brief to the National Assembly containing its recommendations.

2024 – Organizational Performance and Agility

A new strategic plan is implemented around organizational performance to increase the FFARIQ's agility. Several levers are in place: structure, management, corporate culture and management control.

2024 – Exceptional Global Sum

An agreement has finally been reached with the ministry regarding the Exceptional Global Sum, which will restore a balance in the remuneration of foster families. As a result, families will receive the monetary compensation to which they are entitled.



COMPENSATION OVER THE YEARS

Retributions 1969 to 1980

Foster family rates in 1969 :

0 to 9 years \$1.65
 10 to 15 years \$2.00
 16 and 18 years \$22.30

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	oct. '80
0 to 4 years	\$2.50	\$3.00	\$3.35	\$3.60	\$4.50	\$4.70	\$4.85	\$5.33
5 to 11 years	\$2.85	\$3.40	\$3.80	\$4.10	\$5.50	\$5.75	\$5.95	\$6.54
12 to 15 years	\$3.50	\$4.20	\$4.65	\$5.05	\$6.50	\$6.85	\$7.00	\$7.70
16 and 17 years	\$4.00	\$4.80	\$5.35	\$5.80	\$7.50	\$7.90	\$8.10	\$8.91

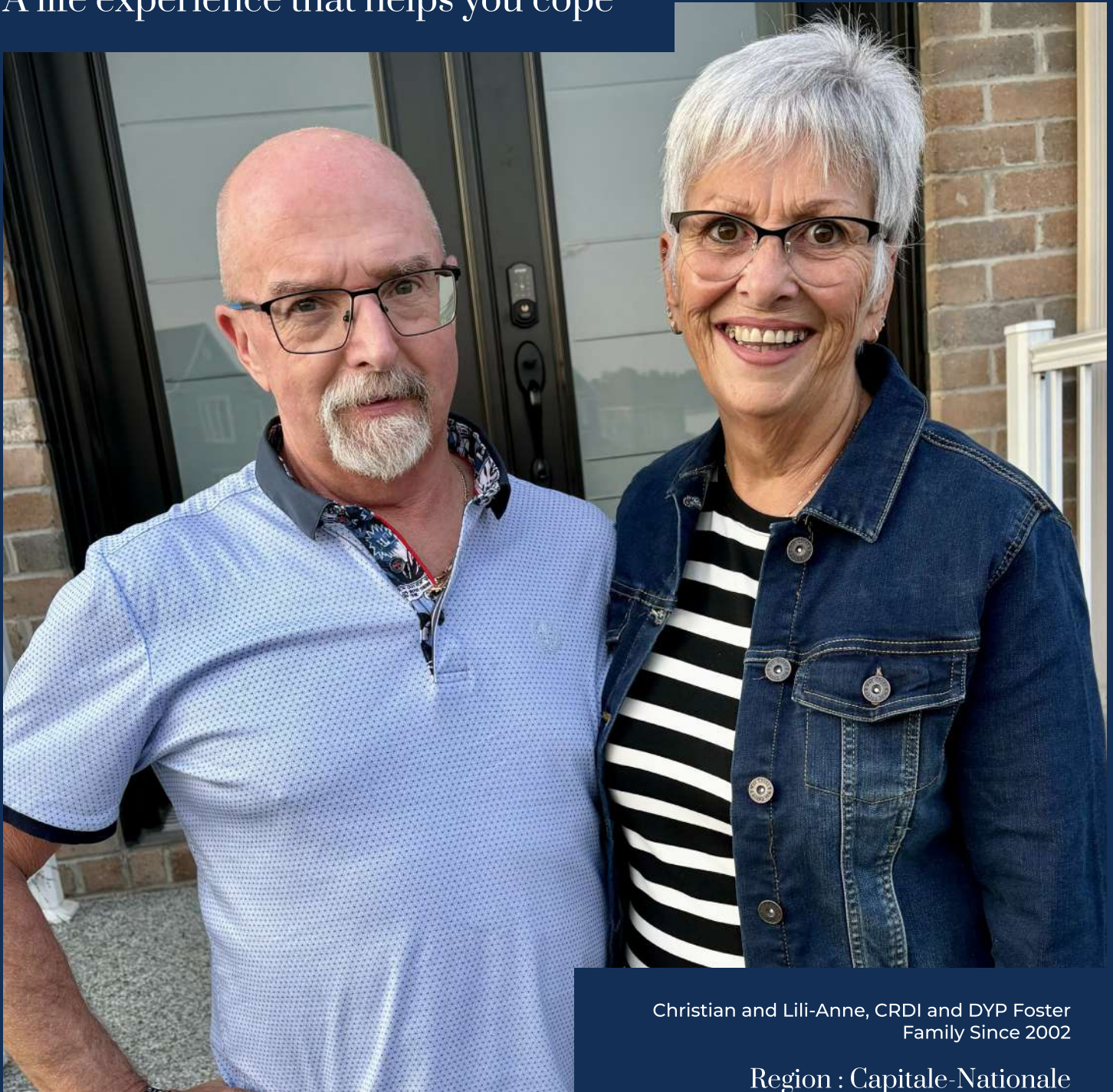
Retributions 2015 to 2020

	From 2015-04-01 to 2016-03-31	From 2016-04-01 to 2017-03-31	From 2017-04-01 to 2018-03-31	From 2018-04-01 to 2019-04-01	From 2019-04-02 to 2020-03-31
Service level 1	34.88\$	35.39\$	36.01\$	36.74\$	37.67\$
Service level 2	43.60\$	44.24\$	45.01\$	45.92\$	47.08\$
Service level 3	52.31\$	53.09\$	54.02\$	55.10\$	56.50\$
Service level 4	61.03\$	61.94\$	63.02\$	64.29\$	65.91\$
Service level 5	69.74\$	70.78\$	72.02\$	73.47\$	75.33\$
Service level 6	78.47\$	79.63\$	81.03\$	82.65\$	84.75\$



Life story a CRDI and DYP foster family

A life experience that helps you cope



Christian and Lili-Anne, CRDI and DYP Foster
Family Since 2002

Region : Capitale-Nationale

4 biological children now adults
1 child and 1 adult in CRDI and 3 children in DYP as of right now
Resource type: CRDI and FTR

“ We've never pretended to be the perfect family, but we do the best we can. ”

Christian Tremblay and Lili-Anne Cyr have both had careers in the healthcare field, in rehabilitation. Sensitized to the situation of people living with disabilities (Lili-Anne's brother lives with a handicap), they wanted to make room in their family for these children neglected because they are different.

Therefore, the family (they still have two biological children at home) sold their house to build a new one up to DYP standards. They began the process of becoming a foster family. In August, they moved into their new home, and in January 2002 welcomed their first child. "It's never been a confrontation for our children. It's a reality they knew through contact with their uncle. Today, they come to babysit, and our granddaughters also give us a hand," says Christian.

In all, they have taken 12 CRDI children and 9 DYP children under their care. Today, they are home to two CRDI residents (1 adult and 1 teenager) and 3 DYP children (aged 7, 9 and 11).

A First Child: René

At the time, Christian and Lili-Anne were the first to be offered the choice of welcoming children with intellectual disabilities or mental health disorders. Their experience with Lili-Anne's brother led them to choose intellectual disability.

René came to them at the age of 8. Diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder with intellectual disability, he was placed in a CRDI residence until his biological mother, whom he saw occasionally, requested a move to a foster family.

"His arrival went well," recalls Christian. "As with all the children we take in, there are adjustments. The children will try to test the limits. René was able to verbalize, but some learning was more difficult, whether it was writing his name or tying his shoelaces."

René was also epileptic. Fortunately, an operation to install a vagus nerve stimulator gave him a better quality of life. (René is a fictitious first name for confidentiality reasons)

Vincent : A Story That Makes Christian Cry

When you are a foster family, you may know that the children are coming and going, but you still get attached. With tears in his voice, Christian tells the story of a little boy they took in when he was 3 years old.

They cared for him for 7 years. "He was one of our heaviest cases. He's autistic. He would hit himself to inflict injuries. We managed to establish a routine that calmed his outbursts. He'd get up, sit at the table with me. We'd have breakfast and then wait for the bus to take him to school.

Then came COVID. Disabled children were forgotten by the system. There was nothing left for them, and even after COVID, the situation never returned to normal. They used to go to school five times a week, now it's just two. So, Vincent lost his routine, his landmarks, his opportunity to socialize. His condition deteriorated. When he went back to school, he was banging his head on the walls and the floor. They had to put a helmet on him. He had blue ears, black eyes."



Welcome center

Resigning Yourself to Letting Go

Vincent was kicked out of school. He was sent to a more specialized educational institution, but his behaviour continued to deteriorate. "It got to the point where my wife and I would spend our days sitting on the couch to keep him from hitting himself. When he showered, it took two of us to make sure he didn't hit himself. We insisted for 2 years that he sees a child psychiatrist. Then, on January 24, 2024, our little guy was hospitalized. He was weaned off his medication. We went to see him every day. After a month, the hospital team met with us to tell us that there was no diagnosis for the little guy's behavioural problems. It can stop or it can continue," says Christian.

"It was suggested that we place him in a more suitable environment. Unfortunately, we were no longer able to help him. Therefore, we resigned ourselves to accepting the transfer. Since March 2024, he has remained in a youth centre where we were told he would be fine. But that's not true. The quality of life will never be the same as in a family," continues Christian, with a tremor in his voice.

Christian and Lili-Anne continue to visit him twice a week. They are still significant people for this young man who knows no other family. "I promised that as long as I have my health, I'll go and see him. When he sees us, he's happy and has fewer seizures," confides Christian.

Developments Over the Past 22 Years

One of the major changes since Christian and Lili-Anne became foster families is the reunion of CRDI and DYP within the CIUSSS de la Capitale-Nationale.

"When the CRDI was independent, we had people who knew the children very well. And the users knew their care provider. We had the same care worker for 21 years, so we worked hand in hand. Nowadays, the workers know little or nothing about the user, partly because they often change jobs. So it's harder to come up with concrete solutions when faced with a problem. This means that foster families have to be more autonomous," comments Christian.

He recounts, among other things, that when there's a problem at school, the social worker is no longer in a position to propose concrete solutions adapted to the child, because he or she doesn't really know him.

One year, no fewer than four different quality care providers were involved with the family, which meant starting from scratch or almost from scratch each time. "We're lucky enough to have worked for 37 years in a hospital rehabilitation centre. We've gained a lot of experience," Christian points out.

CRDI and FTR: What's the Difference?

The family also takes in children from the DYP. For Christian, although the services are different, it's no more complicated to take in a DYP child than an CRDI child. The issues are different, but the need for love and guidance remains the same.

"Sometimes, when children come from the youth centre, they don't have very good experiences behind them. These children didn't ask to be born. Nor did they ask to be placed. Some cases are sad, like that of a 9-year-old girl we took in. She had to have her leg amputated because of the neglect she suffered at the hands of her parents," says Christian.

Carry on Regardless

Christian and Lili-Anne don't even think about giving up. They are, in a way, the **spokespersons and advocates for the children** entrusted to their care, ensuring that they receive the care and assistance available.

Through all these difficult experiences, there are also these young people who, even though they are adults and life is now good for them, continue to give news. Like the young woman they took in from the age of 14 to 18. She's now 32 and has just told them she's pregnant. Or the young man who visits them from time to time.

"We've never pretended to be the perfect foster family. There's always room for improvement, but we do what we can."

An Ever-growing Reputation



An organization's reputation is built, among other things, on a strong mission and values, irrefutable expertise, fluid communication with its various publics and a well-kept image. From its very beginnings, the FFAQ has worked hard to build and maintain its reputation and, at the same time, the recognition of foster families.

Strategic Planning

In 2019, a strategic planning exercise gave the organization a vision based on four major pillars. This 3-year plan raised the FFARIQ's profile with various authorities and the general public, and developed the service offering to be even closer to foster families.

A First Marketing Communications Plan

In the wake of the strategic planning, an initial marketing communications plan was adopted. It sets out a game plan for the next three years: to raise awareness of the FFARIQ among foster families, demystify public misperceptions and establish the brand's distinctive positioning: Defense, Caring and Support – in a 100% human way.

These best practices for promoting foster families are still among the organization's priorities today. In 2023, a second strategic plan set out the main priorities for the FFARIQ. Three

major projects are targeted: adapting to changes in the social services system, finding solutions to the shortage of foster families, and restructuring the organization to make it more agile.

L'Inform'Accueil: a Magazine that Evolves With the Federation

In February 1978, foster families, now grouped since 1974 into regional associations under the umbrella of the Fédération des familles d'accueil du Québec (FFAQ), acquired a communications tool: a magazine published 2 to 4 times a year.

This one didn't have a name. A competition was launched among foster families. The winners were Mr. and Mrs. Jean-Louis Côté of Plessisville, who came up with a name and a design that combined the basic elements of the publication: Information and Foster family. This was the birth of the Inform'Accueil.





The renowned Dr. Chicoine in the Inform'Accueil

In April 2015, Dr. Jean-François Chicoine, a leading figure in Quebec pediatrics, penned a column in the Inform'Accueil

in which he revisited some of the many issues raised during his appearance at the FFARIQ symposium held in 2014.

A publication as relevant as ever

Over the decades, the Inform'Accueil has changed its look. Content varied, and for a few years it even included games and recipes. However, it remains faithful to its mission of informing and training foster families.



Provincial Promotional Campaigns



There was a time when the Quebec government invested in the promotion of foster families, notably in 1980 when the Minister of Social Affairs, Denis Lazure, launched a campaign of radio and TV messages under the theme Une famille d'accueil, un second chez-soi. The FFAQ helped prepare this campaign.

In 1983, with financial assistance from the Ministère de l'éducation, the FFAQ produced a video to inform and educate specific clienteles and the general public about its mission and services.

Foster Families in the Media

Listing all the mentions of the FFAQ, the FFARIQ and foster families in the Quebec media would be a tedious exercise! However, there are a few moments worth highlighting here.



Foster Families at Claire Lamarche

On May 12, 1994, as part of the International Year of the Family, Claire Lamarche hosted several families and young adults who had lived with foster families on her program of the same name broadcast on the TVA network. They talk about their experiences.

Article in Reader's Digest Selection

In June 2000, foster families contributed to an article in Reader's Digest's Selection entitled Abused children: from one hell to another - Stubborn judges, passive caregivers, repeated placements, the cure is sometimes worse than the disease.



A 3-hour open line!

In 2011, Véronique Dubé, then president of the FFARIQ, took part in a 3-hour open line during which many people called to congratulate the foster families. Adults who had grown up in foster families also talked about their experiences.

"If I were a minister, how would I approach things?"

That same year, as part of Foster Family Week, Ms. Dubé appeared on Radio-Canada's L'après-midi porte conseil radio program. With Claire Chamberland and Michèle Dionne, then Director of Youth Protection at the Centre jeunesse de Montréal, she answers the question: If I were a minister, how would I approach things?



Gigi and Guét

In July 2013, the Inform'Accueil reproduced an article published in the Graffiti newspaper. In it, we meet Gigi and Guét, a foster family involved with the Gaspésie-Les Îles regional committee for many years.

Ils sont des dizaines en Gaspésie à prendre soin, chez eux, d'enfants suivis par le Centre jeunesse ou de déficients intellectuels. Ils acceptent cette responsabilité 24 heures sur 24, sept jours sur sept. Rencontres avec des familles d'accueil.

Chez « Gigi et Guét »

PASPÉBIAC - Un jour, en route vers Québec, Gisèle Gignac et Gaétan Lussier se sont arrêtés dans un restaurant avec les six enfants, alors sous leur garde, et leurs deux fils. « La serveuse nous a dit : "Vous avez donc une belle famille, vous vous ressemblez !" », raconte Mme Gignac en riant. Pourtant, « J'en avais un blond, un noir, une rousse... »

Mme Gignac n'a pas contredit la serveuse. « Pour moi, le temps où ils sont chez nous, ce sont mes enfants. » Il y a 20 ans que le couple héberge dans sa maison de Paspébiac des jeunes suivis par le Centre jeunesse.

Quand on leur a parlé du manque de familles d'accueil, Mme Gignac et M. Lussier ont répondu « présents » presque tout de suite. « Au départ, on aimait les enfants et on était très impliqués avec les jeunes, explique Mme Gignac. Le processus d'évaluation n'était pas terminé qu'il arrivait un jeune, puis deux », se souvient-elle. Il a fallu aménager de nouvelles chambres. Mme Gignac a laissé son emploi de secrétaire-réceptionniste. « C'est du 24/7 », dit-elle.

Aujourd'hui, cinq jeunes de 10 à 15 ans vivent chez les Gignac-Lussier. Comment sont-ils ? « Ce sont des enfants comme les autres,



Gisèle Gignac et Gaétan Lussier hébergent des enfants de la DJJ depuis 20 ans. Ils conservent précieusement les témoignages des jeunes dont ils ont pris soin.

sement les messages laissés par nous présenter sa fille. On devient tu n'as pas une grande protection.



The FFARIQ, a Reference for the Media

In 2019-2020, FFARIQ President Geneviève Rioux is very much in demand in the media. In addition to her appearances on Deux filles le matin and Zone franche, there have been 127 media articles and 400 mentions on radio and TV.

Ghislaine and Patricia on 24-60

In 2017, foster family Ghislaine Robitaille Pelletier and her foster-daughter Patricia took part in the program 24-60 hosted by Anne-Marie Dussault on Ici RDI, which also featured Josélito Michaud. The program deals with commitment and what happens when you reach out to others.



Jean-Marie Lapointe, Spokesperson

In 2019, the FFARIQ is producing a series of videos in which Jean-Marie Lapointe meets with foster families to discuss their daily lives and the challenges they face.

In 2021-2022, FFARIQ's expertise will be just as much in demand. A number of hot issues are in the news: the Laurent Commission, the shortage of foster families, the reform of the Youth Protection Act and the consultations surrounding it.

A number of interviews have been given in the media: ICI-Radio-Canadian Télé, Téléjournal 22 heures, ICI Radio-Canadian, Journal de Montréal, Journal de Québec, Le Soleil, Le Nouvelliste, La Tribune, Le Quotidien, Le Droit, La Voix de l'Est, etc.



Logo Evolution



The 1st logo (1978) of the Fédération des familles d'accueil du Québec features a blue hand representing welcome, reaching out to a disadvantaged person. The white X symbolizes the foster child. The yellow shell surrounding the child represents the security provided to the foster child.

The 2nd FFAQ logo (2008) represents a child in adult arms. Its overall shape represents an evolving space and a place of educational and parental guidance, where common interests of exchange and sharing prevail. It also highlights circular movement as a continuous journey in the search for a voluntary and harmonious partnership. The gesture of the parent embracing the child evokes the positive action of welcoming and offering the hospitality, care and support necessary for the child's development. The choice of ochre and burgundy colours inspires warmth and well-being in a safe, comforting environment.



In 2018, the logo was updated, notably by changing the colours. It represents the adult's benevolence towards the child he or she has taken under his or her wing. Its soft, warm and enveloping colours reflect the daily life of foster families. It's also the year that FFARIQ adopts the brand's positioning of Defense, caring and support in a 100% human way.



**Fédération des familles d'accueil
et ressources intermédiaires
du Québec**

**DEFENSE,
CARING
AND SUPPORT**

in 100% human way!

Communicating With Members

Being close to foster families has always been a top priority. Over the years, we have added a number of ways of reaching out to them, listening to them and keeping them informed.

Facebook Groups



In 2016, private Facebook groups were created for each region. In addition to providing quick information to foster families, these groups enable them to communicate with each other, support and help each other, all in complete confidentiality.

Surveying Members

A first official survey is sent to foster families to find out their level of satisfaction with the institutions and the FFARIQ, with a goal to adjusting and improving services and information.

Turning Constraints into Opportunities

In 2020, the world stopped spinning! COVID forced us to do things differently. The FFARIQ couldn't imagine not bringing its foster families together for its annual event. Therefore we held our symposium online under the theme *Près de vous partout*.

The symposium has been so successful that in 2021 it is now offered in hybrid mode. This means that foster families can choose the mode of participation that best suits their reality.

An Exclusive Portal

At the 2021 symposium, the FFARIQ launched an exclusive portal dedicated to foster families. *VotreEspace.ffariq.ca* brings together information, training, replays of inspiring and instructive conferences, files, administrative references, tips and tricks, as well as suggested reading and activities to support them in their role with children.

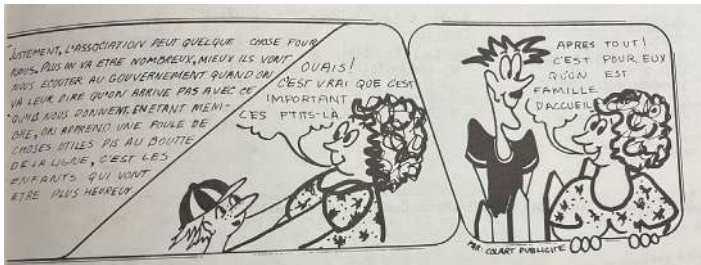


Small finds

While our energies are constantly focused on supporting and advocating for foster families, we've also taken time out during our 50 years to have fun and enjoy lighter, but equally inspiring, experiences! Here are a few gems from our archives!

June 1979 - Join Us!

A cartoon in the *Inform'Accueil* reminds us of the importance of being a member.



1980 - Trip to France

Foster families Lucille Roy, Georgette Carpentier, Laurence Jacques and Noëlla Gamache meet their peers in France thanks to an internship project set up by the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse.



Among other things, they learn that foster mothers in France are called "maternal assistants." In addition to board for the child's needs, they receive a monthly salary, which greatly differentiates their primary motivation from that of foster families in Quebec.

1980 - Speak Up!

Albini Girouard, Head of the Voluntary Organizations Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs, takes part in a chat with the FFAQ. He says: "You'll forgive me if I'm a bit blunt and give you a judgment or perhaps an impression. I would say that the foster family doesn't speak loudly enough and isn't listened to enough."

1980 - Teenage Encounter Project

As part of the International Year of the Child, and in collaboration with social service centres in certain regions of Quebec, the FFAQ is inviting teenagers from foster families to meet for a week. Through workshops, they share their experiences, needs and aspirations. A video entitled *Quelque part en attendant* (Somewhere Waiting) and two documents are produced following this meeting to raise awareness among the immediate entourage of foster children and the general public.



1980s - A Moment of Reflection

At the symposiums held in the 1980s, mass was celebrated on Sundays by Abbé Christian Beaulieu.

1993 – College Training for Foster Families

An attestation of collegial studies program in hospitality techniques is set up, then revised a few years later by a consortium of 14 colleges. Huguette Blais, President and General Manager of the FFAQ, takes part in the process.

1997 - Ways to Kill an Association...

Readers of the Inform'Accueil are reminded, via a page in their magazine, of the importance of getting involved in one's association. With humour, the page lists how to kill your association, and right next to it is an inspiring text on white goose teamwork.

Reflexion

WAYS TO KILL AN ASSOCIATION

**Don't attend meetings.
If you do, arrive too late.**



**Criticize the work of leaders and members.
It's easier to criticize than to do.**



**Get angry if you're not on a committee, and if you are,
never make suggestions.**



**Do only what is absolutely necessary, but when other
members roll up their sleeves and give their time
wholeheartedly, complain that the association is run by a
clique.**



**Don't contribute to fund-raising activities because they
take up too much of your time.**



Don't worry about bringing in new members.



**Don't read any personal publications or newsletters that
come your way.**

2002 – A Foster Family For Me Is...

A drawing competition is launched. Foster children are asked to draw what their foster family represents for them. Three works are chosen to be reproduced on cards that are sold to the public.



Mylène - 16 years old from St-Lin des Laurentides - The Family

2006 - The FFAQ on Tour!

A mega-tour is being held across Quebec to provide foster families with training in attachment theory with three leading experts in the field: Dr. Gilles Fortin, Dr. Yvon Gauthier and Dr. Gloria Jeliu. In 1994, they created the Attachment Clinic at the Centre jeunesse de Montréal, where they jointly assessed over 500 children between 1994 and 2006.



Here
for you and
your children

www.ffariq.ca
FFARIQ – 50 years

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