

Focus on... intersectoral action



Montréal summits on school readiness: impacts on mobilization

NUMBER

1

WHAT EFFECTS DID THE *EN ROUTE POUR L'ÉCOLE !* SURVEY RESULTS HAVE ON MOBILIZING STAKEHOLDERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

DID THE MONTRÉAL SUMMITS ON SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE THAT FOLLOWED FROM THE SURVEY PRODUCE THE DESIRED CHANGES?

Presenting the results of the *2012 Québec Survey of Child Development in Kindergarten (QSCDK)* provides an opportunity to describe the mobilization process organized following a similar survey conducted in Montréal in 2006, *En route pour l'école !*. The process was part of the school readiness summits initiative put forward by the Direction de santé publique de Montréal. We hope that stakeholders concerned by the results of the QSCDK will be inspired by our analysis, and will want to engage in further discussions on and collective actions for child development.

BACKGROUND

Child development is an important determinant of population health. That is why, in 2006, the Direction de santé publique de Montréal (DSP) conducted a school readiness survey of Montréal children called *En route pour l'école !* After the survey results were released in February 2008, the DSP's call for collaboration gave rise to local summits, which led to the Montréal Summit on School Readiness (2009). The goal of this operation was to define child development needs in Montréal in order to improve resource and service provision. Before data were collected, the DSP met with the main actors in early childhood; this led to the 29 CLSC districts being divided into 101 neighbourhoods. The new configuration reflected living environments more accurately.

The survey and the Montréal summits initiative followed in the wake of a Canada-wide movement for child development, initiated in 1999 by the Offord Centre for Child Studies (McMaster University, Ontario), in partnership with the Government of Canada's *Understanding the Early Years (UEY)* initiative. The process suggested by the DSP is based on research conducted in British Columbia by Clyde Hertzman's team. Their results,



photo: Bachir Blidi

obtained using the *Early Development Instrument (EDI)*, provided quality data that led to communities working together toward common goals.

Few Canadian initiatives have been the subject of studies documenting the change processes that ensued. Hence the importance of the joint Léa Roback Research Centre–DSP study of actors engaged in the Montréal summits on school readiness initiative. The goal was to document the effects of the initiative, both on partner engagement and on subsequent actions carried out in six CLSC districts. The current publication will focus on the first objective, that is, effects on engagement, using actions as examples.

About the Study

Study title

Mobilisation des acteurs et transformation des services à la petite enfance : évaluation des retombées de l'Enquête sur la maturité scolaire des enfants montréalais

Funding

CIHR, 2009 2012 – Population Health Intervention Research Initiative

Intervention studied

Montréal summits on school readiness initiated in 2008 by the Direction de santé publique to follow up on the findings of the *En route pour l'école !* survey

Objective

Document the impacts on stakeholders and on actions, at the local and regional levels

Methodology

Districts studied

- CLSC Ahuntsic
- CLSC LaSalle
- CLSC Pierrefonds
- CLSC Saint-Laurent
- CLSC Saint-Michel
- CLSC Verdun

Regional study of the *Comité régional pour une action concertée en développement de l'enfant* (called *Horizon 0-5* since 2011)

Period targeted

Phase 1 – Launch of the survey to Montréal summits
Phase 2 – Post-Summit period to the end of 2011

Data collection

- Review of pertinent administrative documentation
- Observation of monitoring committees and of relevant events
- Series of semi-structured individual or small group (2 or 3 people) interviews

A CALL TO ACTION

In early 2008, as it was about to release the results of the *En route pour l'école !* survey, the DSP met with its regional partners to study ways of using these data. Two findings stand out: when they first start school, 35% of Montréal children are vulnerable in at least one domain of development; and results vary considerably among CLSC districts, from 23% to 43%. For the DSP, publishing the results presented an opportunity to rally stakeholders around a theme, breathing new life into existing collaborative efforts in the field. The DSP proposed that, under its leadership, regional partners participate in organizing local summits and one regional summit.

The initial group of regional partners in early childhood invited local organizations and institutions to form the *Comité régional pour une action concertée en développement de l'enfant*. The committee's mandate was to understand the survey data, reflect on the issues the data raises, and present a more accurate portrait of the situation, by comparing the data with expert opinion from the field. While it prepared a regional summit, the regional committee would also provide support to local summits being organized by Health and Social Service Centres (CSSS), allowing it to coordinate both local and regional initiatives. The committee would also ensure that regional funding was harmonized and a policy influence strategy developed. However, these two objectives were put on the back burner because all efforts were to be dedicated to organizing local summits that would lead to the regional summit.

MONTRÉAL SUMMITS

The 12 local summits were held between February 2008 and May 2009, when the regional Summit took place. Events varied among the districts, with some summits lasting a day and others comprising two parts. In addition, some organizers chose



photo: Zruda

to invite speakers; others decided to present knowledge that complement results, a portrait of district resources, a forum for parents to voice their opinions on school readiness, or a sociodemographic portrait of the district. In all cases, collective reflection was initiated through discussion workshops. Members of the regional committee ensured a presence sometimes in more than one district, thus strengthening links among local and regional entities.

To coincide with local summits, the regional committee planned two theme days: one on the place of parents in concerted action; the other on elements specific to Montréal such as demographics, ethnic diversity, mobility of population and poverty. Both events brought together CSSS administrators and professionals, in addition to regional committee members. A day of discussion, attended by members of the regional committee only, allowed partners from daycares and schools to present programs and outline the services they provide. A similar activity was organized for representatives from community groups.

MONTRÉAL SUMMITS INITIATIVE: MOBILIZING EFFECTS

When the summits ended in 2009, some districts adopted the same intersectoral committee structure used for the local summits to create intersectoral committees to monitor school readiness. Other districts worked with existing collaborative committee

to deal with the Summit recommendations. In 2011, once the follow-up committees were dissolved, most partners met up in other settings, where actions defined as priorities during the summits were implemented.

It should be noted that the Montréal summits initiative followed from long standing cooperation among early childhood stakeholders. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to sort out what resulted from the summits from what already existed in the various districts.

To accurately assess the mobilizing effects of the Montréal summits initiative, we looked at the local impacts on networks of stakeholders in early childhood, and at how the regional committee reshaped itself post-initiative.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRES (CSSS)

The DSP tasked the CSSS to organize local summits in their respective districts. Although some initially perceived this mandate was imposed, all eventually recognized that they were in the best position to spur their communities to action. They acknowledged the importance of analyzing results on local levels. Moreover, as the main institutional players of collaborative organizations on childhood and family in their districts, they had the required credibility and expertise to provide leadership. However, CSSS were aware that they could not be the sole organizers. For this reason, all but one CSSS formed organizing committees of intersectoral partners. Aside from planning and organizing local summits, the committees acted as venue for discussing results. Since some schools had not participated in the survey, the validity of the results had to be confirmed. Therefore, to refine their analyses, some committees asked researchers for a map of school participation and for complementary data on children from immigrant backgrounds.

For some CSSS, heading local initiatives enhanced their visibility among their intersectoral partners. Consequently, demand for services increased: improved access to speech therapy and psychoeducation, production of a portrait of resources for 0- to 5-year-olds, and follow-up on the Montréal summit initiative. Indeed, follow-up was deemed a priority in most CSSS public health action plans. In this regard, community organizers were instrumental in steering discussions back to the issues identified during summits in various sites. In response to the summits, Montréal's health and social services agency invested in early education interventions (Interventions éducatives précoces – IÉP) and integrated multidisciplinary approaches to stimulation (Approche multidisciplinaire et intégrée en stimulation – AMIS). However, the needs were great and, in comparison, the investment made in each CSSS was relatively low.

Some CSSS considered that other community stakeholders followed up on the summits more quickly than they did, and that it had become urgent to consider the specific nature of the institution. For example, one district's collaborative committee asked CSSS to focus efforts on 0- to 2-year-olds.

However, few changes were noted in CSSSs' internal services organization. Indeed, there were difficult organizational obstacles to overcome: high turnover within management teams; administrative red tape that slowed development of innovative projects with other partners; difficulty having requests that followed from the summits take priority over those that emanated from the institution; lack of time of community organizers who had to work with various partners on the collective planning required by *Avenir d'enfants* and on implementing emerging literacy programs (Éveil à la lecture et à l'écriture – ÉLÉ).



photo: Marcel Schoenhardt

"The funding agencies were invited. It was important for us that they hear concerns from the field. Centraide and the Ministère de la Famille attended the summits and said that it helped them see things from a new perspective."
– Community group



photo: Ron Zack

Montréal summits initiative at a glance

	Stakeholders involved	Objectives
Survey <i>En route pour l'école !</i>	<p>A survey conducted by the DSP</p> <p><i>Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation • The 5 Montréal school boards • Research unit on children's psychosocial maladjustment (GRIP) • Centre 1, 2, 3 Go ! • Social Development Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a profile of the state of the development of young children in Montréal when they first start school to support their well-being and their academic achievement.
Local summits	<p><i>Led by:</i> 12 CSSS</p> <p><i>In collaboration with:</i> local partners</p> <p><i>Support from:</i> Direction de santé publique</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present survey results to local stakeholders, taking into account the distinctive features of each territory • Adapt each summit to neighbourhoods' specific situations (e.g local partners, type of clientele) • Provide a space to reflect on and discuss the main issues associated with local realities and possible solutions
Montréal Summit	<p>Comité régional pour une action concertée en développement de l'enfant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on and discuss issues common to various territories • Provide greater details about preferred possible solutions, especially regarding those that require regional stakeholders to act
Overview of the process	<p>Direction de santé publique</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a cross-sectional thematic analysis of the publications that resulted from the process to support planning and implementation of initiatives in various neighbourhoods

"The community perceives us to be leaders in the field of school readiness. So it stands to reason that school readiness be included in the local action plan (PAL)."
 – CSSS

Accomplishments

- Met with school boards to enlist their collaboration in collecting data
- Met with the main early childhood stakeholders in each of Montréal's 12 CSSS to inform them of the survey objectives and of mobilization efforts
- Defined the new divisions in Montréal (more significant for communities) into 101 neighbourhoods
- Collected data from educators
- Produced and released a series of reports that present a portrait of the school readiness of Montréal children using the Early Development Instrument (EDI) to measure the five domains of readiness

Important dates

2005
Requested collaboration with school boards and other partners

February 2006
Data collected

February 2008
Results published

- Organized and carried out 12 local summits (1 per CSSS territory), each of which reached over 100 people
- Fruitful exchanges that fostered a shared interpretation of the situation, leading to identification of a number of challenges and avenues for solutions regarding resource development, service organization and ways to work with children and families
- Wrote 12 synthesis reports on discussions held during the summits (with the help of notes taken by the DSP during various activities)
- Defined three action priorities for each territory

Fall 2008 to spring 2009

- Organized and carried out two theme days (the role of parents and distinctive characteristics of Montréal) that brought to the fore specific issues prior to the local summits
- Conducted iterative analyses of information emerging from local summits to ensure the Montréal Summit is in line with local concerns
- Organized and carried out the Montréal Summit and produced a summary of the main orientations and possible solutions
- Promoted the three priorities established by the CSSS and their partners

April 2008
Committee formed

28/05/2009
Montréal Summit

September 2009
Summary published

- Disseminated a synthesis document outlining the main concerns expressed by a majority of partners throughout the summits initiative
- Disseminated a video of the highlights of the Montréal Summit on school readiness (28 May 2009)

September 2009
Analysis began

Winter 2010
Report published

Source: Laurin I, Samson I, Lavoie S, Durand D. 2010. *Les sommets sur la maturité scolaire. Document synthèse de la démarche effectuée en 2008-2009*. Montréal: Direction de santé publique de l'Agence de la santé et des services sociaux.

Tools to Support Deliberations

Researchers have put several tools at the disposal of stakeholders to help them assimilate data from

- (1) detailed reports on school readiness by school board (5), school (203), CSSS for which data are also analyzed by CLSC and neighbourhood (12), a regional report, and a synthesis report;
- (2) a map of public early childhood programs that have been implemented, that is, Integrated Perinatal and Early Childhood Services (SIPPE, in French), child care services and kindergarten for 4-year-olds;
- (3) a summary table of school readiness and socioeconomic indicators by CSSS, CLSC and neighbourhood.



photo: Zruda

"Yes, community groups are very present. The survey helped us strengthen the bonds between us. It made us aware of the urgency to do something."
 – Community group

"Our committee worked to get more daycare spaces. The district got many more places than had been planned, and I think school readiness provided leverage."
 – The City

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Little changed for community groups as a result of the Montréal summits initiative. These groups were already heavily involved in collaborative efforts and they simply continued along this line by participating in organizing committees and follow-up on the summits.

It should be noted that the *Regroupement des organismes communautaires famille de Montréal* (ROCFM) withdrew from the regional committee, in part because of its position against social public-private partnerships (PPP) and because *Avenir d'enfants* is one of the regional committee's main funding agencies. ROCFM's withdrawal left its members in a delicate position. Although they supported this decision, some groups continued to collaborate on early-childhood activities in districts funded by *Avenir d'enfants*. These groups were invited to take part in community action because their initiatives are valued; they initially became involved because many of them had already been working with groups in their community who have fewer concerns regarding social PPP.

In districts where there are few family community groups, some groups already in place were contacted and asked to add family components to their programs to respond to the needs identified in their neighbourhoods.

DAYCARE SERVICES

In light of the complex analysis caused by the unequal distribution of different types of childcare services (early childhood centres (CPE), subsidized and non-subsidized private daycares, and family daycares), it is difficult to define the consequences of the summits on the childcare services network. Moreover, CPE and subsidized private daycares were already participating and continue to participate in early childhood collaborative committees. Overall, mobilization changed very little in the wake of the summits.

It is not because of a lack of trying: the *Regroupement des centres de la petite enfance de l'île de Montréal* (RCPEÎM) invited its members to take part in the summits and the ministère de la Famille (MF) did the same with members of other childcare services, subsidized or not.

Still, there are positive outcomes. For instance, CPE got involved in actions in their communities. In some districts, they joined early childhood collaborative committees to demand places when a call for tenders went out in 2008. They used the survey results for neighbourhoods with higher percentages of vulnerable children. However, we are unable to say whether or not the places requested were granted.

Representatives from CPE and some subsidized private daycares regularly attended committee meetings, including literacy program committees and those looking at transition to school. Many attended days of sharing organized in several districts to discuss transition to school. These events brought together stakeholders from the school and childcare services networks. Also, following the regional summit, the RCPEÎM developed the ODILE toolkit designed to assist educators' language development strategies.

According to CPE already engaged in the process, more CPE should participate in discussions on early childhood community planning, by joining collaborative committees, for instance. Moreover, partners deem essential that representatives from different kinds of childcare services participate. They are concerned that many children who attend family daycares or subsidized or non-subsidized private daycares do not receive the same services as children in CPE, such as, for example, and an early childhood intervention delivered through CSSS and literacy programs. Nonetheless, their presence on collaborative committee poses certain challenges. On one hand, committee members are clearly partial to CPE, which they consider to be of better quality. On the other hand, without the flexibility inherent to

the structure of CPEs, private daycares have had trouble setting time aside for educators to attend more collaborative or training activities organized in the community.

Given their privileged relationship with children, childcare services are better able to understand children and therefore, should have pivotal roles in planning. Partners acknowledge that every effort must be made to ensure that childcare services of all types participate.

SCHOOLS

The participation of schools in early childhood issues is not new. For instance, some school principals have been on collaborative committees for a long time. However, the summits initiative is an opportunity to strengthen links with the early childhood network and formally develop preschool intervention strategies.

A number of actions undertaken in 2009 bore witness to school mobilization: *I care about school!* launched by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS; the *Table des partenaires pour la persévérance scolaire à Montréal* and *Carrefour de lutte au décrochage scolaire* merged to form the *Réseau Réussite Montréal* (RRM or *Montréal Hooked on School*). Preschool interventions made possible because of bridges built with the early childhood network are now action strategies promoted by both authorities. This encourages stakeholders in schools to participate in follow-up committees in large numbers. For example, three school boards in one district were part of the local summit organizing committee and sat on the follow-up committee on school readiness for over a year. Another example is the contribution of pedagogical consultants from most districts to early childhood collaborative committees and sub-committees on school readiness. The positive outcomes of these collaborations were the subject of many comments. These specialists, who are very familiar with preschool programs in many schools, also fostered connections between

schools and childcare services. In districts where ÉLÉ was implemented or who had experience mobilizing around transition to school, specialists played important roles in liaising with various working committees and collaborative committees from both the early childhood and the school networks.

Collaboration between school boards and daycare centres, which the latter had long been hoping for, proves that schools aspired to become involved and thus justified the engagement of school principals in early childhood. Nonetheless, in districts not targeted by *Montréal Hooked on School*, the repeated succession of school board representatives on collaborative committees, turnover rate of school principals and budget cuts undermined links and, toward the end of 2011, threatened the gains that had been made. In districts targeted by *Montréal Hooked on School*, where school boards are active, links between this organization and early childhood collaborative committees needed to be adjusted. There is some confusion between *Montréal Hooked on School's* specific role and that of school boards. For instance, stakeholders who participated in summit follow-ups were surprised that *Montréal Hooked on School* did not consult them when it developed school retention action plan, even though one area on which the plan focused was 0- to 5-year-olds.

In contrast, schools and daycares in all districts but one actively collaborated—and still do—on development or implementation of tools for enhancing transition to school. One district was unable to act as quickly as the others in this instance. This was due to the fact that there are many new immigrants in this district whose children begin or leave school during the academic year or attend informal daycare services, which are underrepresented in consultation settings. The particular character of this transitional district poses challenges that the *Table de concertation des CPE* planned to tackle in 2012.



photo: Sneeibly



photo: Wez

"We were already working with all partners from the milieu, but what's really new is the more intense and formal involvement of schools."
– *The City*

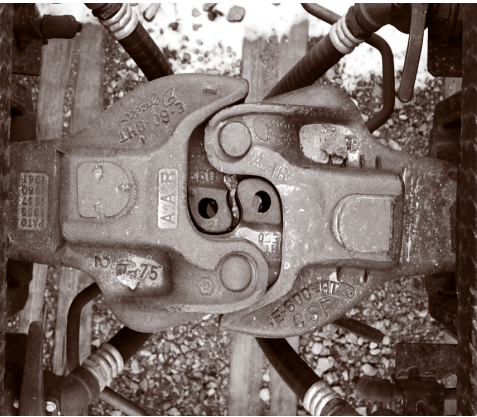


photo: Chris Huggins

"The borough gives us a lot of support. Since the summit, I've noticed that when they put out calls for projects funded through the cross-cultural and family initiatives envelope, they give priority to early childhood. It wasn't like that before the summits. It's really struck me."

– CSSS



photo : Sneebly

Of the two districts that actively reached out to English-language schools during the summits, only one succeeded; some English early childhood centres and schools in this district translated an entry-to-school tool.

The early childhood and school networks are connected mainly through activities that foster entry to school. Aside from this issue, concerns in the early-childhood network are not shared by school principals, who periodically question their inclusion on collaborative committees. In this regard, the schools' long-term commitment to early childhood is not ensured. Early-childhood centres seem to benefit from this alliance to a greater degree, which is not surprising given that they are the ones with the important role of preparing children for school.

BOROUGHS

In 2008, after seeing the *En route pour l'école !* survey results, the City invited itself to the first meeting of the *Comité régional pour une action concertée en développement de l'enfant*. City officials wanted to participate in the collective discussion because of its supportive role of informal educator in early childhood. It organized two meetings: one with stakeholders from the library network and another with those in social development. The goal was to encourage them to participate actively in the summits in their respective boroughs.

Travelling libraries

Montréal's network of public libraries benefited greatly from local mobilization efforts. In 2009, the City created new "extramural" librarian positions in some districts. The City's decision was not a direct outcome of the summits, but the new services program apparently was. In the districts concerned, this meant that libraries would have a stronger presence on early childhood collaborative committees, ÉLÉ committees and other summit follow-up committees. Because libraries offer reading activities in day camps and parks, they established links with social development and recreational services. Other benefits

that arose include a new service authorizing youth organizations to have library cards so they could borrow documents for their groups; a review of sites chosen for mobile libraries based on the new priority accorded to neighbourhoods with high percentages of vulnerable children; a collection of books especially for daycare services.

Partners agree that the summits allowed libraries to draw closer to the community by strengthening their ties with various organizations. They feel that libraries see their roles in a different light: before, we went to the library; now the library comes to us. Partners are also aware that the library network can reach children in non-subsidized private daycares as well as those not attending childcare services.

Local actions

Aside from new library services, the City was also commended for other actions. One borough integrated a school readiness component to an action plan in a neighbourhood identified as a priority area. The intervention was introduced in 2009 as a result of a partnership established with schools, health services, community groups and the library network. The borough, whose representatives already sat on the early childhood committee, stood out post-summit by funding activities to enhance school readiness.

PARENTS

Local organizing committees strongly encouraged parents to participate in the summits, especially in discussion workshops or in parent forums. In some districts, especially those where *1, 2, 3, GO !* had been implemented, parents participated in a collective reflection that was part of the initiative. In addition, the Bureau de Consultation Jeunesse (BCJ) in the West Island mobilized young mothers in its area. These women were the ones behind a petition denouncing the small number of places set aside for parents at the 2009 Montréal Summit.

The regional committee also insisted on giving them a voice. The DSP led nine discussion groups with parents recruited in collaboration with CSSS community organizers. Parents were asked about their needs and use of services related to school readiness. Indeed, as deplored by the BCJ, few parents had been at the Montréal Summit. However, they were able to contribute to discussions by participating in debates and forums.

Parents' participation ended with the Montréal Summit. Although all stakeholders acknowledged the importance of including parents in setting up services, cooperation structures and their operation, the interests of those stakeholders and the political context governing service provision does not encourage parents' participation.

REGIONAL

Following the Summits, the *Comité régional pour une action concertée en développement de l'enfant* had to modify its mandate. It revised its composition to consolidate its partnership with other regional collaborative bodies. As a result, the Comité invited a representative from the *Table des directeurs régionaux des commissions scolaires de Montréal*, which, in turn, invited a representative from *Montréal Hooked on School*. This ensured that information would be passed on and that the link between school readiness and school retention would be the focus of actions. Aside from *Montréal Hooked on School*, the *Conférence régionale des élus* (CRÉ) also joined the regional committee. The Conférence is composed of elected representatives, actors from the public sector and business people, and is a key government contact for regional development.

The ROCFM had left the regional committee during the summits' organization; it was not comfortable with the DSP's leadership and had difficulties adding the issue of basic funding for family community organizations to the agenda. The ROCFM rejoined in 2009

before leaving definitely in 2011, this time because of differences regarding operations and orientations. It nonetheless remained on the sidelines and was ready to collaborate sporadically and informally on regional committee activities.

The regional committee, who had adopted horizontal governance, set up a coordinating committee to guarantee leadership was shared among members and to abate fears, felt during the summits, that the DSP steers decisions. The committee obtained funding that allowed it to hire a development officer and provided program support.

By the end of the Montréal Summit, regional committee members committed to mobilizing around for children's development by signing the *Déclaration montréalaise sur le développement de l'enfant*. The regional committee based its strategic plan on the Déclaration as well as on the summits initiative synthesis. Given the importance of considering local concerns in its orientations, the regional committee sounded out the 300 attendees to the 2009 Montréal Summit about the strategic areas to include. On 6 June 2011, after two years of work, the regional committee presented its 2010-2015 strategic plan. It also took this opportunity to disclose its new name: *Horizon 0-5*.

The Plan focused on three priorities, with general and specific objectives that took into account concerns raised during the Montréal Summit and retained following the event. The question of funding for community groups was discussed. However, funding for the mission that the community movement hoped to get was dropped. In its place, the regional committee, along with local groups, proposed the idea of a basket of basic resources and services for all neighbourhoods. They believed they had identified a tool that ensures investments in resources is more fairly divided among neighbourhoods.

A year after the Montréal Summit, the regional committee could rely on the participation of two major regional collaborators whose mission is closely linked to child development:

- Montréal Hooked on School (persistence, school success, reducing school dropout)
- Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal (regional development)

Horizon 0-5 - Partenaires en action pour l'enfant

Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal - Direction de santé publique

Avenir d'enfants*

Centraide of Greater Montreal

Montréal coalition of community committees

Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS)

Ministère de la Famille (MF)

Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés Culturelles (MICC)

Québec en forme

Regroupement des centres de la petite enfance de l'île de Montréal (RCPEIM)

Montréal Hooked on School

Table des directeurs généraux des commissions scolaires de l'île de Montréal

Table régionale de santé publique - Health and Social Service Centres City of Montréal

* Centre 1, 2, 3 Go ! and Québec Enfants have merged and are now known as Avenir d'enfants

The 2010-2015 strategic plan, in short

Two targets:

- Reduce by 5% the rate of vulnerability at school entry of Montréal children aged 0-5
- Mobilize 75% of local communities to reach this objective

Three strategic areas:

- Consolidate alliances and links among networks working with Montréal children aged 0 to 5 and their families
- Enhance understanding and facilitate exchange and dissemination of knowledge and practices that target the overall development of Montréal children aged 0 to 5
- Support development and implementation of resources and services for Montréal children aged 0 to 5 and their families

Source: *Plan stratégique 2010-2015 : partenaires en action pour l'enfant (Horizon 0-5)*

"Parents are very important sources of information for us and the summit has confirmed this [...]. They were more than helpful. They were very committed."
– CSSS

The post-summit period was marked by a decline in collaboration between local and regional stakeholders because of regional players' lack of guidance and of support for the communities. However, the strategic plan introduced in 2011 allowed regional actors to renew ties with their local counterparts.

Aware of the regional and local discrepancies already instilled, *Horizon 0-5* carried out two projects in 2011 and 2012 to encourage them to renew contact: *En action pour les familles isolées* and *Panier de services*.

However, local stakeholders' expectations of the regional level are not being met. On one hand, they want *Horizon 0-5* to use political influence in situations where local entities are powerless. For instance, they would like a halt to the spread of non-subsidized private daycares. On the other hand, they request that the regional body work on harmonizing funding. It is undeniably difficult to meet such expectations. Any solution means that funding agencies would have less independence in defining programs and accountability mechanisms. The introduction of stakeholders issuing from public-philanthropic partnerships, which also insist on separate accountability mechanisms, do not make things simpler. In terms of political influence, *Horizon 0-5* has adopted a position that ensures its members are never placed in situations that could be embarrassing, since these individuals also represent ministers responsible for public programs and policies.

QUÉBEC SURVEY OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN KINDERGARTEN: AN OPPORTUNITY TO BOOST PARTNERSHIPS

We felt that it was important, when the 2012 survey results were published, to present an overview of the networks that lent a hand in following up on the *En route pour l'école !* survey, especially through their

participation in the Montréal summits initiative put forward by the DSP. Stakeholders from the various networks can use this new profile of kindergarten children to carry on their reflection and actions.

The study shows that the Montréal summits initiative supports ongoing mobilization of stakeholders working with children. Although some districts could already count on cooperative structures, the initiative often enabled them to strengthen existing links, extend their networks and inspire various players. We should note that the analysis of results by neighbourhood was extremely useful for this exercise: actions to undertake were identified and funded in specific areas where the needs were glaring but are rarely priorities for decision makers, due to lack of data.

We believe that the assessment of mobilization that resulted from the Montréal summits points out the existing strengths and the challenges to meet. It is also a reminder of the importance of intersectoral action in contexts where children's preschool education pathways are not all the same: they might attend daycare, go to 4-year-old kindergarten, or stay at home until they start kindergarten. By focusing on collaboration, we are sure we can bring attention to services offered in the community and to make them more accessible.

We hope this overview of the outcomes of the Montréal summits initiatives will be a source of inspiration for early childhood stakeholders who are about to engage on similar paths, and that the tools we propose help them improve their practices so we can better work together.

MORE ABOUT

... the survey and the summits

En route pour l'école ! Survey of the school readiness of Montréal children

Several documents on the Survey of the school readiness of Montréal children and on the summits are available on the DSP's Web site.

www.santemontreal.qc.ca (Tout-petits)

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... the research project

Bilodeau A, Laurin I, Giguère N, Lebel A. 2011. Transformer des résultats d'enquête populationnelle en intervention de santé publique. *La Santé de l'homme*, 414 (July-August): 25-27.

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... events that underscore partner engagement

Déclaration montréalaise sur le développement de l'enfant. Mieux faire grandir les tout-petits – May 2009

www.horizon05.com (Historique)

Parents' position on the lack of places at the Montréal Summit – May 2009

Bureau de consultation jeunesse. 2009, 27 May. *Mobilisation dans le cadre du Sommet montréalais sur la maturité scolaire* [Media Release].

Creation of Montréal Hooked on School – May 2009

Montréal Hooked on School 2009, 4 May. Assises régionales sur la persévérance scolaire – région de Montréal : une concertation qui fera école ! [Media Release].

Publication of an action plan to reduce school dropout – September 2009

I care about school! All together for student success. MELS. www.mels.gouv.qc.ca (Current initiatives)

Creation of Horizon 0-5 and publication of its 2010-2015 strategic plan – June 2011

www.horizon05.com (Nouvelles)

Position of the Regroupement des organismes communautaires famille de Montréal (ROCFM) on social PPP

www.rocfm.org (Dossier PPP sociaux)

... initiatives to foster children's development

Programme d'éveil à la lecture et à l'écriture (ÉLÉ) Early literacy program

The goal of the *Programme d'éveil à la lecture et à l'écriture* delivered in disadvantaged neighbourhoods is to make sure that public and community organizations include various early literacy activities (reading and writing skills).

Programme Interventions éducatives précoces (IÉP) Early education intervention program

The early education interventions program is a service offered in CSSS. Its goal is to foster optimal child development. It is intended for childcare services providers and family community groups that work with at-risk children.

Approche multidisciplinaire et intégrée en stimulation (AMIS) Multidisciplinary and integrated approach to stimulation

This approach was developed in CSSS. It is designed for children in whom development delays are suspected. Its goal is to reduce waiting periods for diagnostic services and accelerate access to specialized services, when required.

Outil pour le développement intégré du langage chez l'enfant (ODILE) Tool for integrated language development of children

This kit was created by RCPEÎM to enhance the language skills of young children.

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Horizon 0-5

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