

**Women's Centre  
of Montréal**

*Help women  
help themselves*

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## **ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026**





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## Mission

The mission of the Women's Centre of Montréal is to **help women help themselves** by offering them the tools they need to improve their living conditions and achieve their full potential.

A not-for-profit organization, it also informs the public about women's concerns and serves as a driver for improving the conditions of women's lives.

## Introduction

Founded in the early 1970s, in the wake of the rise of the feminist movement, the Women's Centre of Montréal is a health and social services organization anchored in the heart of its community.

**For over 50 years**, the Centre has provided a proactive response to the constantly changing needs of women in the greater Montréal region, based on changing demographics and the emergence of various social issues.

From the simple information and referral centre of its first baby steps in 1973, the Women's Centre of Montréal has grown, evolved, developed its various services and expanded its field of activity. At the same time, it took part in a variety of collective actions targeting the social transformations needed for greater social justice and the achievement of the ultimate goal of full gender equality.

Over the last year, the Centre has maintained its service hours over an annual period of 50 weeks (closed between Christmas and New Year), from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with certain activities on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from September to June.

The Centre's team, made up of 50 employees and interns, responded to **12,522 requests for assistance**. **250,960 people** were indirectly reached through virtual presentations at tradeshow and teaching institutions, the publication of articles and communications on the Centre's website and social networks.

Please read on to learn about all our efforts and achievements!



## *Message from the* **President of the Centre's Board of Directors**

As the year draws to a close, even though we are still working toward and preparing for next year, it is important to take a step back and celebrate what we have accomplished. 2025-2026 was a year of upheaval and challenges, but that didn't stop the Women's Centre of Montréal from staying on mission: *Helping women help themselves!*

In the face of reduced contributions, cuts and resource challenges, everyone who works at the Centre, including management and our many volunteers, has managed to clearly identify action priorities. They also demonstrated incredible agility to identify new sources of income, as well as making sure that the women who turn to the Centre every day are welcomed, heard and supported in the best possible way. I am always impressed by the sense of duty, collaboration and professionalism of all these women, and I thank them all sincerely for their daily work.

Throughout the year, the management team rolled up their sleeves and worked harder than ever, in synergy, adjusting rapidly to the context and the issues. The management team maintained operations effectively, in keeping with the participants' needs and in compliance with the budgets. For that, they deserve kudos and many thanks!



It was also a pleasure to spend time with the women on the Board of Directors of the Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal, who, once again, with their contagious energy, ensured the success of the 2025 Benefit Evening. These dedicated women also dedicated time and energy to reflections and important decisions related to the development of a major funding campaign to protect the future of the Centre and its services.

To my colleagues on the Board, I want to thank you for your ongoing presence, your dedication and the continued interest you clearly hold in women's causes and the Centre's needs. You did not hesitate to pitch in to get actively involved on committees, which allows the Board to move forward and hold structured, well-prepared discussions. Thanks to your involvement, in collaboration with management and the Centre's staff, a new strategic plan was born. The strategic priorities adopted by the Board will allow the Centre to focus on the most important actions by drawing on its strengths.

I want to warmly thank the Board members who are leaving us, having finished their terms. Emilie Paquin-Holmsted has been contributing to the Board for six years, as chair of the Human Resources Committee for two of those. Josée Pichet has been contributing to the board as a participating member for two years. Thank you both for your involvement as volunteers through the Board's discussions and work.

Women's causes are more relevant than ever. I am confident that the Centre will continue to attract resources and talent to allow it to continue its mission. The same is true of the quality of the services offered to women and, more broadly, our quality of life as a society.

*Joëlle Thibault,*  
LL.L, DEA, Ph.D.



## *Message from the* **Executive Director of the Centre**

**Fifty-three years after the Women's Centre of Montréal was founded, its mission resonates with renewed strength. More than ever, it is essential.**

In a global context marked by a worrisome decline in rights and equality for girls and women and the rise of masculinism, one thing is clear: we can take nothing for granted. What we believe to be solid may falter. This reminds us to step up our vigilance and, above all, strengthen our collective engagement.

Every day, at the Centre, we are on the front lines. We support women in personal and professional journeys that are sometimes affected by precariousness, violence, isolation and uncertainty. Behind every statistic, there is a story, immense courage and the desire to advance. It is for them — and with them — that we are taking action.

Faced with political and social challenges and, despite a persistent lack of recognition on the part of certain government bodies of the fundamental role of community organizations, we choose to stand up, determined, united and engaged. Because we know that our actions are indispensable for building a society that is fairer and more human.

And we are not alone.

Over the years, a strong community has grown up around the Centre and its Foundation: institutional, corporate and community partners, members, donors, volunteers, employees and Board members. Together, we are a movement. A movement that is growing with the power to act, the power to transform, the power to change lives, one woman at a time...

To each and every one of you, I want to express my deepest gratitude. Your commitment, your trust and your solidarity are the drivers of everything we accomplish.

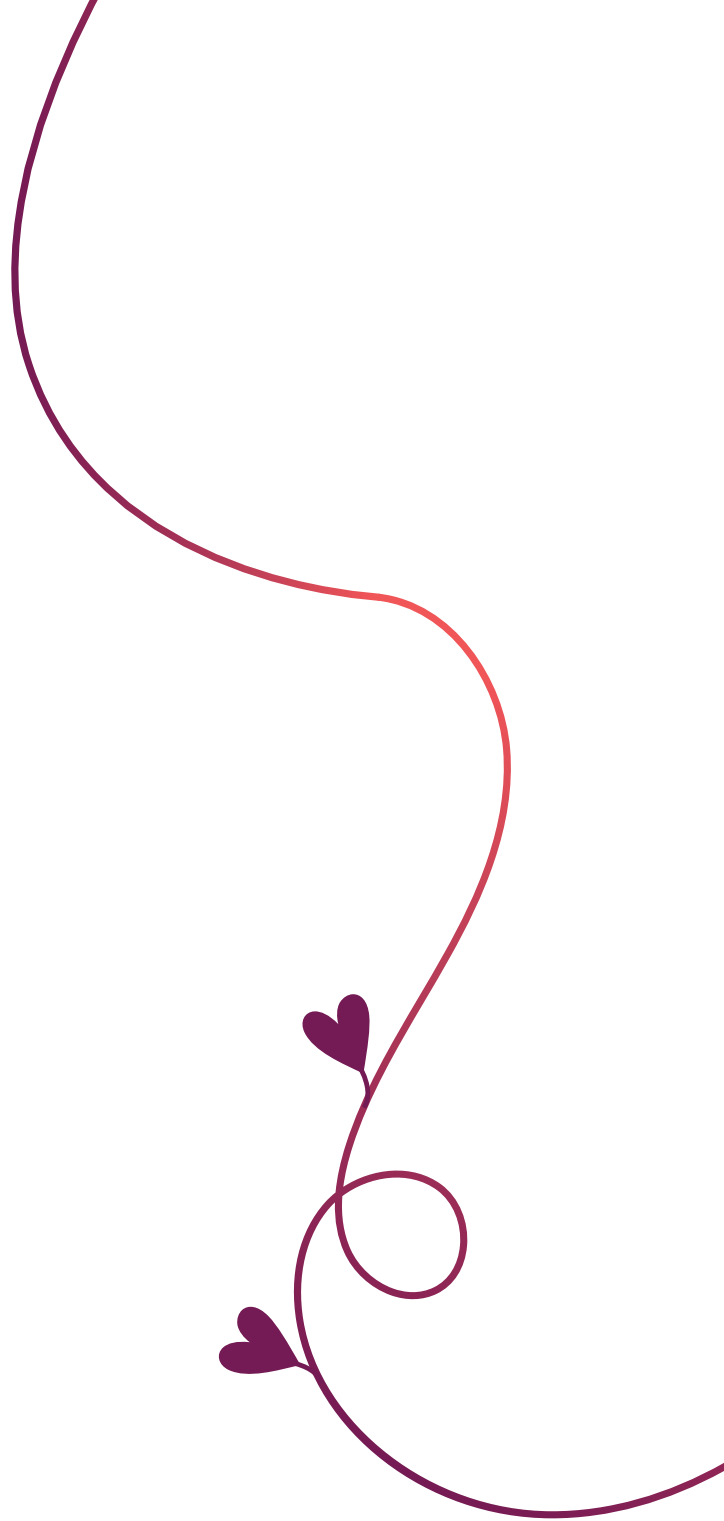
Thank you to our employees, volunteers and interns, whose daily dedication makes a tangible difference. Thank you to our members, to the Boards of the Centre and the Foundation, and to our committee members, for their much appreciated involvement and their leadership. Finally, thank you to Joëlle Thibault and Annik Desmarteau, the Presidents of our Boards of Directors, for their vision and constant support.

The following pages attest to the scope of our actions. But beyond these achievements, they also carry a clear message: together, we have the power to go further.

We must continue to act, continue to mobilize, continue to work to build a future in which every woman can be safe, live with dignity and embrace her full potential.

Thank you for being part of this movement.

*Johanne Bélisle*



# The Centre from 1973 to Today

**1973**

Founding of the Women's Information and Referral Centre (CIRF)

**1978**

Creation of Action-Adaptation, which later became the Service for Immigrant Women and their Families

**1980**

Creation of Service Optionnelle (employability)

**1983**

Acquisition of the building at 3585 Saint-Urbain

**1986**

Introduction of francization programs for immigrant women

**1985**

The CIRF becomes the Women's Centre of Montréal

Establishment of the emergency food service

**1989**

Creation of the FEMA employment integration assistance module for immigrant women

**1987**

Creation of the Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal

Establishment of Confiance-Confidence, for adult women who experienced incest in childhood

**1994**

Inauguration of an intimate partner violence support program

Establishment of Virage, to guide women interested in non-traditional trades

**1997**

Creation of a school training program of non-traditional careers for professional women

**1993**

Inauguration of Formationelle, the non-traditional work program

Establishment of a program for new and expecting mothers: La Cigognerie

**1998**

La Cinquantelle: employment assistance for women 50 and over

**1992**

Establishment of community kitchen activities

**2003**

Establishment of an intervention project for Indigenous women in the urban environment, in partnership with Québec Native Women

**2000**

Three-year research-action project with McGill University's Centre for Developing-Area Studies (CDAS) targeting women from countries that have faced armed conflict





**2004**

The Centre's second expansion project

**2006**

Launch of the mother-child intervention pilot project

**2016**

Creation of the "Pay It Forward" movement: socio-professional meetings for working former participants and new participants who want to join the workforce

**2017**

Beauty for a Better Life pilot project: hairdressing training, in particular with L'Oréal Canada

**2018**

**SURVIVARTS:** artistic exploration and exhibition of the artworks of participants in support groups for women who are survivors of sexual assault in childhood

**2023**

The Centre's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

**2024**

30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Johanne Bélisle as Executive Director

**2025**

10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Professional Mentoring Program: Pay It Forward



**2008**  
Pilot project for women 65 and over seeking jobs

**2009**  
Launch of sexual assault awareness sessions for newcomers

**2013**  
Pilot project to support women who want to apply for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

**2019**  
Video production project: video produced by participants about the consequences of sexual assault in childhood

New programs related to skills assessment, action (combining theory and practice) and women 60 and over seeking jobs

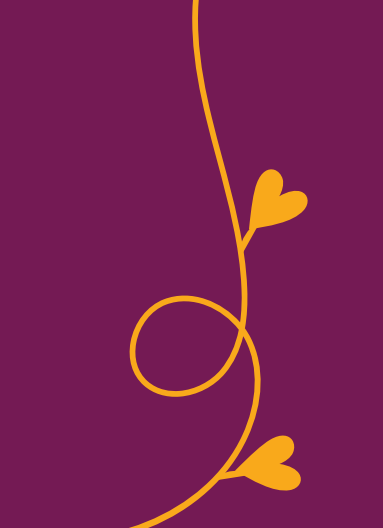
**2020**  
Pilot project in partnership with PRAIDA to improve housing search assistance for asylum seekers

**2021**

Continuation and improvement of essential services to deal with the pandemic

**2022**

Three-year project with Indigenous women who have experienced sexual assault



# 2025-2026 *by the Numbers*

## INFORMATION, REFERRAL AND PROTECTION OF RIGHTS

*12,058 requests for assistance* were handled by our Front Line Service

*137 women* received legal information

## COMBATING POVERTY

*1,855 weekly food baskets* and **378** emergency baskets were distributed to **922** women

*130 women experiencing serious vulnerability* received warm clothing and/or personal hygiene products

*1,024 adults and 424 children and teenagers* received food and gift baskets at Christmas

## COMBATING VIOLENCE

*414 women* benefited from follow-up and interventions related to intimate partner violence

**67** intimate partner and family violence awareness and prevention sessions were held for **1,000** students

*3 support group meetings* were offered to **20** women who experienced sexual assault in childhood to help them to address their trauma

## PSYCHOSOCIAL ASSISTANCE

*1,035 hours of direct intervention*, through **35** individual treatments of between 5 and 15 sessions

## PROGRAM FOR INDIGENOUS WOMEN

*1,695 interventions*, follow-ups and assistance sessions were provided to Indigenous women

*96 women* from different nations and communities benefited from services offered by the Centre

## SUPPORT FOR ENTERING THE WORKFORCE

*464 women* took advantage of our employment services:

- **84** women in a career exploration or job search process in male-dominated fields
- **165** beneficiaries in our 50+ programs
- **151** women long out of the workforce
- **64** newcomers to Québec

*53 themed sessions* were offered to our clients, generating 415 enrolments from our participants on themes related to job seeking and women's networking

## SUPPORT FOR MOTHERS AND PREGNANT WOMEN

*148 women and 176 children* received diapers and we distributed 99 layettes

*46 women or expecting mothers and 38 children* took part in the *Cigognerie* program through:

- **43** workshops were held to strengthen the mothers' parenting skills and encourage their daily wellness
- **22** mother-child support workshops
- **8** collective kitchen sessions
- **18** recreational outings

## HELP FOR IMMIGRANTS AND NEWCOMERS

Accompaniment for *1,052 immigrant women* including **247** asylum seekers

*195 registrations* in the francization course (Francisation Québec)

\*Figures from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026

# Personal Accompaniment

The mission of the Front Line Service is to support women in their life journey by helping them overcome their daily challenges and reveal their strength, their resilience and their value. It offers them a space where they feel heard, supported and valued.

Day after day, a team of engaged counsellors and employees offer their expertise to women by giving them support tailored to their personal, social and economic challenges. Whatever their origin, status or social condition, every woman is given access to a wide array of internal resources and external references, as well as group activities, individual support and tools for improving their living conditions and those of their family.



Food baskets received from Moisson Montréal

## FOOD SECURITY

Québec families are turning with increasing frequency to community organizations to access adequate food. The housing crisis, combined with the fact that employment income is not keeping up with the rising cost of living, is plunging many women into precariousness and food insecurity.

**1,855** food baskets  
were distributed

Between March 1 and 31, 2025, Québec food banks responded to 3.1 million requests for food assistance, according to the *Bilan-Faim Québec 2025* (Banques alimentaires du Québec). Furthermore, the *Observatoire québécois des inégalités* (2024) reports that Indigenous communities, recent immigrants and single-parent families – groups that we regularly support through the Front Line Service – are the most likely to be affected by this insecurity.



Food baskets received  
from Moisson Montréal

Thanks to our partnership with Moisson Montréal, our participants enjoy occasional monthly food aid to combat food insecurity. **1,855 food baskets** were distributed to **707 women and their families**. Another **378 emergency food baskets** were given to **215** unhoused women and women in extremely precarious situations. This invaluable aid allows us to give many people some level of food security with some basic groceries, and reinforces the sense of solidarity, mutual assistance and dignity for the women who receive it. Between April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026, we received **28,964 kilograms of food** from Moisson Montréal, representing a monetary value of **\$228,526**.

*"Ms. Joubert, first of all, I want to express my deep gratitude for the help and support you gave me in 2025. Your availability, your wise counsel and your unconditional help were pivotal for overcoming the challenges I was facing. Your practical assistance with food baskets and the opportunities offered by the lectures and outings were also a great comfort to me. The Carte Proximité you arranged for me also made my daily life easier and helped me stay on course.*

*Meeting you really changed my life in 2025: it helped me regain my confidence, feel supported and see things from a more positive angle. Thanks to you, I was able to get through hard times with more serenity and hope. These few words are not enough to express my full gratitude for what you have done for me this year.*

*I wish you a 2026 full of success and great opportunities, as amazing as what you give to others.*

*With my deepest thanks."*

*M-G Blanc*



*"I want to express my sincere gratitude for the Christmas basket I received.*

*It was packed full and far more than I expected. Very generous and much appreciated.*

*Thanks to this gift, my holidays were calmer and I felt supported.*

*I sincerely thank the donors and volunteers for their generosity and solidarity.*

*Your assistance made a big difference for me and for many women and families in Montréal.*

*Thank you from the bottom of my heart.*

*Happy Holidays!!!"*

*Ana R.*

*"With these few lines, I want to express my gratitude. During a period that is so important for families when I was actually without a job, your generous contribution made a big difference for me. It gave me some peace of mind during the holidays, when family gatherings often lead to extra expenses. Your gift was truly a blessing for both me and my family.*

*Your generosity and the generosity of everyone else involved make a concrete difference in the lives of many families and women who, like me right now, have not yet found stability. This is why I really encourage you to renew your commitment for the year ahead in this beautiful mission of helping and blessing people in need. I hope that I, too, one day soon, will be able to give back and pass forward what I have received today.*

*Please accept my whole-hearted thanks, and I hope that 2026 brings you and your family new opportunities, good health and many blessings.*

*With my very best wishes."*

*Erika*

## CHRISTMAS BASKETS

The holiday period at the end of the year is not always synonymous with peace and joy for all families, including our participants, for whom it sometimes brings isolation and financial insecurity.

In December, as we do every year, the Centre offered concrete support to these families, thanks to generous monetary and material donations, allowing us to distribute **570 Christmas baskets**. Every basket contained food items, a gift for each woman, a grocery gift card and a gift card for each of the 424 children and teenagers. Among our participants, **78** women received a \$130 cheque from the Gazette Christmas Fund. Overall, a total of **1,024 adults and 424 children and teenagers** benefited from our Christmas Campaign.

Receiving a Christmas basket is also soothing for families facing economic challenges or far from their families. It is a reflection of collective solidarity.

We especially want to thank Moisson Montréal for the Christmas boxes made up of a variety of food items, the Fondation Jacques Francoeur, which allowed us to purchase additional groceries, the Fondation Marcelle et Jean Coutu and anyone who got involved in making this year-end period joyful for women and their families.

## EMERGENCY CLOTHING BANK

In today's economic context, making sure everyone has the clothing they need can be a challenge, especially for families with children. Our Emergency Clothing Bank allows participants to get clothing for their family for free, avoiding major expenditures in stores.

This year, **clothing assistance was provided 234 times** to women, offering essential support. This service helped asylum seekers, Indigenous women, unhoused women and victims of intimate partner violence. This occasional assistance, in the form of clothing, coats, boots, shoes or personal hygiene products, offers a precious helping hand during difficult periods



Emergency Clothing Bank

## DEFENCE OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

### Information and Referral Service

Our information and referral counsellor, with the valuable support of volunteers, warmly answers women who contact the Centre, by email or by phone.

Whether it is a newcomer seeking integration services, a participant with financial difficulties who needs material aid, a woman facing a difficult personal situation or one trying to escape from intimate partner violence, each one finds an attentive ear and is guided to the appropriate sources to support her in her process.

This year, our service answered **12,058 requests for assistance**, allowing many women to access the right services for their needs, internally or externally.

**12,058** requests for assistance  
handled by our telephone information  
and referral service

### Legal Information Service

We have the privilege of offering our participants guidance on many fronts, including legal situations. Thanks to the commitment of experienced legal volunteers specialized in immigration law, labour law, housing law, human rights and civil rights, they are offered consultations to get information and learn about their rights.

This year, **128 women** were guided in complex legal situations, related mainly to immigration, separation, child custody, intimate partner violence or housing and employment disputes.

This advice helps the participants reduce their anxiety, resolve complex situations before they degenerate further, assert their rights and advance their goals. It also allows women in precarious situations and those lacking information to get free advice, supporting equality before the law.

### Psychosocial Service

In 2025-2026, the Psychosocial Service continued to welcome women going through periods of deep vulnerability – marked by violence, isolation, emotional distress or life transitions. Behind these realities we often find silent suffering that, without the appropriate support, risks getting worse and becoming entrenched.

In times like these, being able to find a safe, confidential and welcoming place is a must. A space where each woman can be heard, recognized and supported at her own pace. A space where it becomes possible to put her experience into words, to understand her needs and gradually regain a sense of stability and power over her life.

This year, the team — made up of one counsellor, two interns, four volunteers and supported by strict clinical supervision — offered constant and engaged presence to the participants.



In total, 1,035 hours of direct intervention were provided, through:

- 35 individual treatments, offering regular, in-depth support
- 105 one-off meetings, offering rapid, targeted support
- 56 assessments of needs and social and sexual function, to direct the women toward more appropriate resources
- 6 support groups, with 36 participants over the course of 54 sessions

These numbers speak to far more than a volume of activities: they attest to ongoing human presence, active listening and a commitment to meeting complex and diverse needs.

The **support groups** continue to be a central pillar of our approach. From groups for women who have experienced sexual assault during childhood to art therapy groups to overcome isolation, these spaces help the participants make sense of their experiences and create meaningful bonds.

It gives them a safe environment where they can speak freely. This allows the women to break their silence, recognize their resources and begin the healing process. The advanced groups consolidate these foundations and allow the women to progress further in their personal journey.

The outcomes we see are extraordinary: a reduced sense of isolation, an increased feeling of belonging and progression toward lasting empowerment.

The **art therapy groups** offer complementary spaces for exploration and transformation. Through music and creation, the participants can express emotions that are hard to put into words, leverage their imaginations and build their self-confidence. The effects include improved mood, better emotional regulation and an enhanced sense of empowerment.

In complement to the therapeutic interventions, **cultural activities** are also offered with courtesy tickets generously provided by MAI, arts intercultural, and the cooperation of engaged artists. These initiatives allow the participants to reconnect with the exterior world in a setting that

is both satisfying and stimulating. By accessing artistic and cultural spaces in the neighbourhood, the participants have been involved in meaningful experiences that foster a sense of inclusion and openness. These moments help nourish their self-esteem, revive their sense of pleasure and curiosity and support the creation of positive social ties in an enriching collective setting.

And, in a context where the demand for our services continues to grow and waiting can further weaken women seeking support, we decided to break new ground by setting up a new space designed as a bridge between immediate needs and more sustained support: the **Online Self-Care Space**.

This service was born of a simple, but essential wish: to avoid leaving participants alone during wait times or transition periods. It offers a touchstone, a point of continuity, where the women can stay connected with the Centre online while developing practices that support their well-being at their own pace. Accessible, flexible and complementary to psychosocial care, it supports a type of gentle independence where the participants gradually become the authors of their own balance.

During the year, this pilot project came to life in the form of **17 theme workshops** and **20 guided meditation sessions**, get-togethers that added to the participants' daily lives and helped structure a regular wellness space.

The Self-Care Space offers a framework that is accessible and inclusive with no prerequisites, where each woman can engage at her own pace and based on her own needs. The guided meditations — centred on breathing, anchoring, visualization and self-compassion — provide practical tools for calming the mind, while the theme workshops address issues such as stress, negative self-talk, relationships, identity, the relationship with the body and reclaiming power.

Through these introspective and creative exercises, the participants are invited to slow down and enter into dialogue with themselves. This supports a gentler, more mindful reclaiming of the self and fosters a better understanding of the repercussions of past experiences. The outcomes have already been significant. Several participants say they have increased their ability to calm their stress, recognize their emotions and recenter themselves during periods of vulnerability. The Self-Care

Space serves as a constant in their journey, supporting self-reconnection, needs awareness and the development of practical strategies that can be used in daily life.

In addition to immediate wellness, this service also plays an important preventive role. By offering accessible resources in advance, it allows for intervention before certain kinds of difficulties ramp up and, by extension, reduces more acutely distressing situations. Finally, the Self-Care Space provides a valuable accessibility mechanism. By connecting with participants who cannot always come in person or make an immediate commitment to regular involvement, it expands the scope of our services and enhances our capacity to offer a flexible, inclusive response to the diversity of lived realities.

In conclusion, this past year demonstrates the relevance and impact of our services for women living in vulnerable situations. The roll-out of new services illustrates our capacity to adapt and innovate in response to emerging needs. Thanks to our human-centric, diversified approach, focused on the participants' strengths and needs, we have been able to support transformative trajectories coupled with empowerment, greater autonomy and lasting well-being.

Beyond the numbers, these are life journeys in transformation: women who are finding their voices, their strength and their capacity to act. It is still essential to maintain and develop these services in order to continue our mission.

*"After the first group workshop, I didn't want to stay. There was such real listening, such goodness, and I was so fragile: it scared me.*

*I found the courage to share my hesitation with the counsellor — even though I usually keep my cards close to my chest! This amazing person gave me what I needed so much: the power to recognize what is good for me and make decisions that are beneficial for me.*

*They are all like that, at Psychosocial Services! They welcome you even though you feel completely broken and they remind you about the beauty and courage you have inside. They validate your experience and the ordeals you're going through. They know how to help you put back the pieces that are scattered all around you.*

*I went back to the workshop. I joined the other women there who, with respect for our differences and acknowledgement of our similarities, were struggling through the painful exercise of transformation."*

*Geneviève G., Psychosocial Services participant*

## CONJUGAL VIOLENCE

### Follow-Up and Court Accompaniment Service

Intimate partner violence is a chain of coercive control strategies used by aggressors to isolate, degrade, exploit and dominate women by directly attacking their right to freedom, dignity and equality.

It mainly affects women and appears in many forms, with varying impacts on physical and psychological health. Combating this social issue requires structured, accessible support.

There is no standard portrait of the women victims of intimate partner violence, but some categories of women are more likely than others to suffer it, including those in minority groups, Indigenous women, seniors, women in poverty, disabled women and people outside "traditional" sexual and gender categories.

Police data shows, year after year, that women represent nearly all of the victims of sexual assault and intimidation, as well as a very large portion of the victims of serious assault and criminal harassment committed in domestic settings. It bears mention that the vast majority of intimate partner homicides are committed by men against women.

Intimate partner violence has devastating effects on the physical and mental health of the women who are its victims. Physically, they feel various pains, chronic health problems and repercussions for reproductive health, insomnia, digestive disorders and more. They sometimes have permanent scars and disabilities. In terms of mental health, the consequences play out as sleep problems, psychological distress, symptoms of depression, anxiety disorders and even suicidal ideation or post-traumatic stress, which can require medication.

Québec is facing a disturbingly high number of femicides. Since January 2026, 9 femicides have already been recorded, related to separation or relationship breakdown in the context of intimate partner violence. Femicides are the most extreme form of violence and show us the urgency of preventive intervention and victim support.

Through this dark yet realistic portrait of the consequences of intimate partner violence on women, it is important to recognize the strength and enormous resilience they demonstrate. These women are survivors who delve into their deepest selves to find the hope and capacity to take back their power over their lives.

Thanks to our intimate partner violence support and follow-up service, supported by Ville de Montréal, victims can discuss the situations they experience with a counsellor in a safe and confidential setting.

We offer our participants a warm welcome, with no judgment and that respects their pace as a victim.

Our work with women involves a prevention and awareness aspect, informing the women about the realities and consequences of intimate partner violence (its various forms, the cycles, the consequences, the available resources, etc.). Our meetings allow them to talk about their fears, the reasons pushing them to stay in a toxic relationship, their concerns about the judicial mechanisms if they were to decide to press charges, etc.

The violence can continue after separation. It may change form after a breakup. The courts deem this to still be intimate partner violence. We address post-separation violence and its consequences with the women. We also guide them to the appropriate resources.

We offer the women accompaniment to court, during a criminal or family trial, as well as to the lawyer, to CAVAC for a compensation application (IVAC) and to Youth Protection. Having someone to accompany them helps demystify the legal process and procedures and reduces their anxiety at having to face their aggressor or a justice system that can be very intimidating.

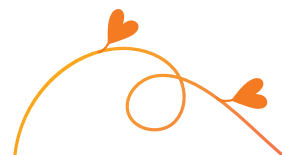
Our short- and medium-term follow-up supports women in their reflections and on their journey, to help them make informed choices.

In our follow-up with the women, we emphasize their strengths and provide information about the resources and services available to them. We assess the risk and establish a plan or protection scenario to ensure their safety and that of their children.

Our work consists of assessing the women's needs and guiding them based on their current situation and their present reality. It is not about imposing our own perceptions of the violence but, rather, supporting the participant so she can come to her own conclusions without any kind of pressure. Ultimately, we support the woman as she takes back power over her life, we offer her information and, above all, we respect her choices. Independence, confidence and mutual respect are the values we advocate for an intimate partner violence intervention to be successful.

This year, we carried out **40 court accompaniments**, **414 intimate partner violence interventions** and offered short- or medium-term follow-up to **144 women**.

Along with our intimate partner violence interventions and accompaniment, we offer information and awareness sessions for newcomers to Québec who are engaged in the francization process. At 67 sessions, we reached **1,000 students** to tell them about various forms of violence, present Québec's legislation on intimate partner violence, address gender equality and inform them of their



rights and the resources they can access for help. These sessions are essential because they give hope to women living in violent situations and help raise awareness in various communities that intimate partner violence is a criminal offence in Québec.

**144** received follow-up  
related to intimate partner violence

**1,000** students  
were informed about intimate  
partner and family violence

## INDIGENOUS WOMEN WORKING TOWARD WELL-BEING

Compared to other groups, Indigenous women who leave their community in the hopes of improving their living conditions find settling into an urban environment to be an especially complex challenge. Although they represent less than 1% of Montréal's population, these women account for nearly 13% of the unhoused people in the city (Rapport sur l'itinérance au Québec, 2023). This overrepresentation can be explained by an intersection of systemic and historical factors, including the consequences of the Indigenous residential schools, persistent poverty, intergenerational trauma and sexual exploitation. These women face serious obstacles in their social, vocational and residential integration processes. Discrimination in access to housing, stigmatization in the workforce and ignorance about Indigenous realities on the part of urban institutions are all barriers preventing them from achieving their goals. At the same time, they are targeted by traffickers and the perpetrators of misogynistic violence, making them vulnerable to increased exploitation.

Care facilities and generalized services, often designed without consideration for Indigenous social and cultural characteristics, are sometimes not up to meeting their needs. Aware of this gap, the Centre worked with Québec Native Women in 2003 to set up a specific program for Indigenous women in the urban environment, offering support and accompaniment that respect their rhythms, their values and their culture.

**1,695** interventions  
with Indigenous women

Between April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026, this program connected with **96 Indigenous women** and carried out **1,695 interventions with them**. The interventions met essential needs: food, clothing, hygiene products, transportation, diapers, emergency housing, etc. Our counsellors also carried out physical health interventions (accompaniment to health resources, hospitals, etc.) and mental health interventions, provided references to legal support, offered help with processes related to housing, intimate partner violence or addiction, administrative procedures (social assistance, RAMQ, the OMHM, NIHB), and engaged in home visits, street work, mediation and more.

The pace of follow-up and intervention is tailored to the needs of each woman. Some interventions are one-offs, such as requests for food, transit tickets, clothing, hygiene products and diapers. Others require ongoing support and presence to break isolation and facilitate access to healthcare services. The program also guides women in their administrative processes with various government

bodies. Most of the interventions are in person, through home visits, the delivery of supplies, street work and regular presence in community activities and at our partners' premises. In-person work integrates us into the community and gives us first-hand knowledge of the realities.

The interventions all rely on an approach based on respect, listening and compassion, taking into account past traumas and encouraging rebuilding in dignity. Our counsellors provide a stable presence, active listening and expanded access to a network of appropriate resources.

Over the years, we have stepped up our collaborations with several partners (see the Dialogue, Partnerships and Collaboration section) to improve the service offering and provide a better response to emerging issues – such as the opioid crisis and over-representation in the unhoused community – that affect Indigenous women in the urban environment.

We refocused our efforts on the women's immediate needs while strengthening our ties with our existing clients and our community partners through one-off events. We actively participate in key committees: the Montréal Indigenous Health Advisory Circle (MIHAC), the Local Accessibility Table for Health and Social Services, the homelessness committee, the Milton-Parc/Hôtel des Arts subcommittee, etc.

Raising awareness about the realities of Indigenous people is also part of the counsellors' role, to help deconstruct myths and prejudices. In this vein, a presentation was made to an organization and to the Centre's employees interested in learning about the reality and issues of Indigenous women and the work that the counsellors do with them.

To help Indigenous women develop bonds of solidarity, a social network and a sense of belonging, we held nine collective kitchen activities with traditional food, to give the participants the chance to experience a little return to their roots and traditions in a friendly space. These activities were carried out in partnership with the Native Friendship Centre of Montréal and held in our facilities. Last summer, in partnership with Projets Autochtones du Québec, we also organized a rabaska (canoe) trip to create an opportunity for connecting with nature in community. The Tlachiwak art co-op also hosted two activities, including our Christmas activity, a festive gathering with the participants.



Outing in a Rabaska

## SUPPORT FOR MOTHERS AND PREGNANT WOMEN

Becoming a mother is an important step in a woman's life, but this period may also come with many challenges, on the material, social or emotional fronts, for example. To respond to these realities, various services are made available to pregnant women and new mothers. These initiatives aim to break isolation, support the development of parenting skills, encourage discussions among mothers, share practical advice related to infancy and support and strengthen the development of young children.

This is where our **La Cigognerie** program comes in, designed to support mothers in the first years of their children's lives. The program also meets their support needs by facilitating social integration (access to employment, return to studies, participation in training courses, francization, etc.), by giving them tools for their parental role (competency building, creation of bonds) and by fostering the overall development of children aged 0 to 5 to prepare them for harmonious integration into daycare or elementary school.

This year, **46 mothers** (including **2 pregnant women**) and **38 children** participated in the following activities through the program:

- **43 workshops** helped them strengthen their parenting skills, gave them tools for various aspects of daily life and contributed to their overall well-being;
- **12 allophone mothers** started their social and linguistic integration process, helping them understand and communicate in French better, including with the program educators and the Centre's staff;
- **22 playful and educational mother-child pair workshops** (games, dances, crafts, etc.) fostered bonds between the mother and child by proposing activities that are easy to reproduce at home;
- **8 collective kitchen activities**, which also addressed healthy dietary practices;
- **18 recreational outings** (Biodôme, public markets, river shuttle, beaches, etc.), offering opportunities for family fun and relaxation;
- **An educational program for children**, focused on motor and cognitive development, creativity, communication and expression in French.



*"I feel that it's really important for my child to go to the drop-in daycare for several essential reasons. We are living here without any close family, so the daycare gives him an excellent opportunity to meet other children, interact with them, play together and develop his social and communication skills.*

*It also contributes to his global development, in terms of language, behaviour and autonomy. He is learning to adapt to a structured environment, follow a routine and become more independent.*

*The fact that it is a daycare also gives me time to learn French, which is indispensable for integrating into society here. Without the drop-in daycare, it would be hard for me to set aside time to learn the language, which is very important for my future.*

*I also think that the daycare gives him a safe, educational environment, where he can learn good habits like cooperation, respect for others and participation in group activities.*

*In general, I see it as an important step in building my child's personality, in his sound, balanced development, and in the way our family is adapting to life in this country."*

**Rama**

The Cigognerie activities contribute to the creation of a network of mutual assistance, support and solidarity among the mothers, replacing the one lost when they left their home country, and enhance their sense of belonging in their environment and their community.

Mother-child dyad workshop,  
La Cigognerie

*"Dear educators, we want to express our deep recognition for your kindness, your constant attention and your vigilance for all our children's needs. Your daily work demands a lot of patience, gentleness, energy and professionalism, and we are profoundly grateful. Thanks to you, the children are experiencing a comforting, warm and stimulating environment where they can grow, learn and blossom. Personally, we have seen amazing progress in our daughter. She comes every day with joy. She often talks about you at home, and she has developed more autonomy and self-confidence, as well as new skills. We can also see that she is learning to share, communicate with other children and follow the rules of group life. Knowing that our daughter is surrounded by such caring, patient and dedicated people is a great source of trust and serenity for us. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for everything you do every day with such love and commitment."*

*Ksenia*

Finally, to meet the basic needs of several mothers living in precarious situations, **99 newborn clothing sets and diapers were given to 148 mothers**, contributing to the well-being of 176 children.

Thanks to our donors, we were able to offer our participants backpacks with various baby items.

Sliding on Mount Royal, La Cigognerie



## WELCOME FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Over the years, the Centre has welcomed a significant proportion of immigrant women, who benefit from our expertise and accompaniment in their efforts to settle and integrate into Québec. Immigration is an important mechanism for Québec's development, especially in the context of the labour shortage. In the face of these challenges, many efforts are made to encourage the successful integration of people who have chosen to settle in our province. Of these, women represent about half of all immigrants welcomed each year. Their migratory journeys are motivated by many diverse reasons: seeking better job prospects, the desire to reunite a family, the appeal of Québec's egalitarian and democratic values or a pressing need to escape violence, instability or insecurity in their country of origin. It is these women, in particular, often asylum seekers, who come to the doors of our Centre, driven by the hope of offering their children a better future and rebuilding their lives in a safe, peaceful environment where their rights will be upheld.

Our integration support is offered in the form of practical and varied assistance: material support (food aid, emergency clothing bank, distribution of diapers and newborn clothing sets for young mothers), legal support, orientation, assistance in administrative and migratory processes, providing resources, explaining the way various services and institutions work, etc.

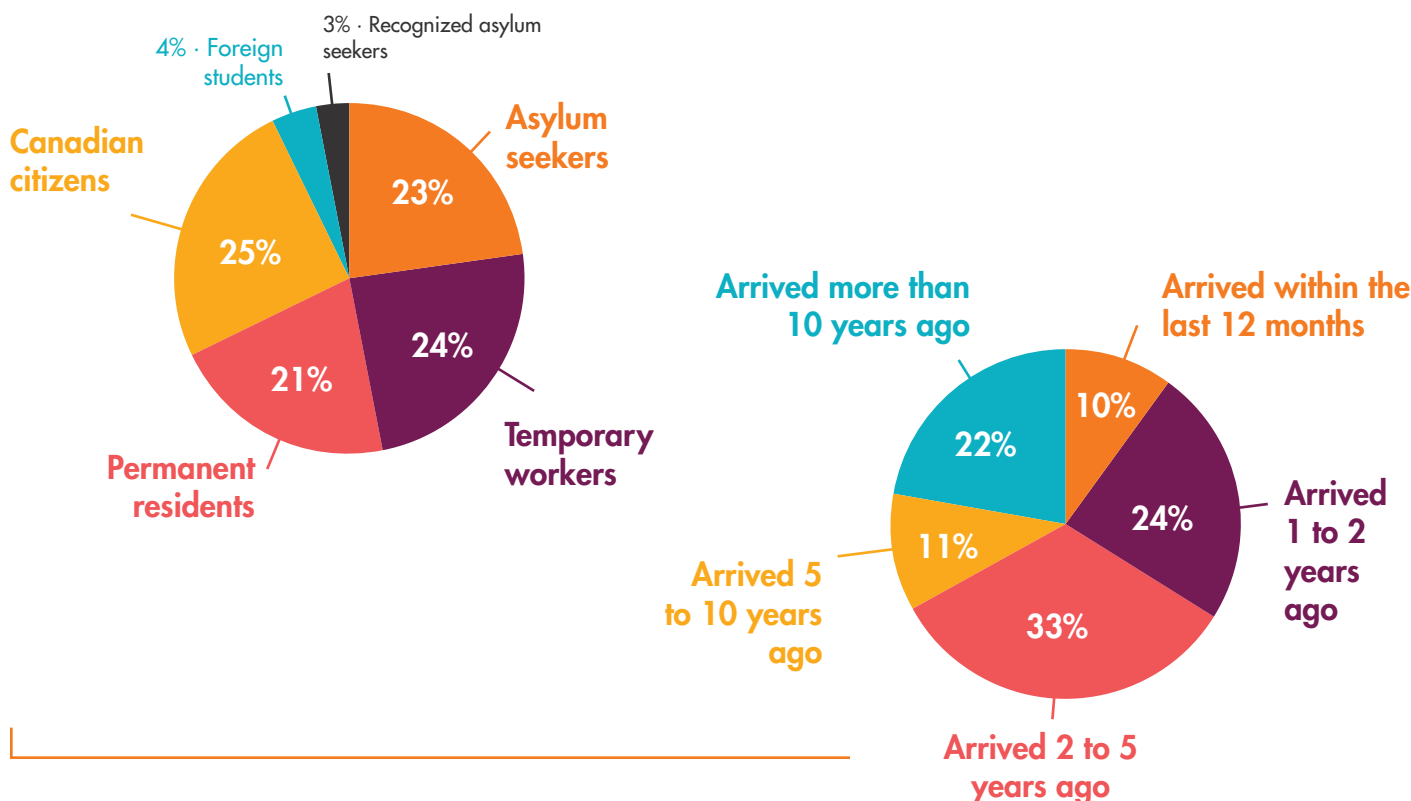
The Centre's counsellors also responded to growing psychosocial needs, particularly in relation to emotional distress, intimate partner violence or complex family situations. Using a proactive approach, they assess the participants' overall needs, quickly identify specific problems and intervene diligently, offering the resources and tools needed to facilitate their integration and full participation in Québec society.

Our interventions have a **significant impact** on their integration journey. In personal meetings, we:

- Provided **clear, targeted information** about their rights, their processes and the resources available
- Offered **accompaniment** to overcome personal and family challenges
- Facilitated **access to community and institutional services**
- Encouraged the creation of **lasting social ties** through activities that foster networking and mutual support among women

This year, we supported **1,052 immigrant women** (including **247 asylum seekers**) from **106 countries** through the Programme d'accompagnement et de soutien à l'intégration, conducted in partnership with the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration. The team conducted **3,156 interventions with them**. They mainly came from the following countries: Haiti, Mexico and Colombia.

### Profiles of our participants





Coffeehouse meeting on cultural diversity

## Coffeehouse Meetings

Welcoming and supporting by offering activities, to encourage the integration of newcomers in the host society while also helping them face the difficulties and obstacles they met on arrival, is what the coffeehouse meetings at the Women's Centre of Montréal are all about.

These group activities allow the participants to become more informed about the country's laws, their rights, the resources that exist and the recourse at their disposal. These meetings take place in a very friendly, open and caring ambiance, which allows the women to express themselves, hold conversations, break out of their isolation and forge bonds of friendship, fostering intercultural connection. Many interns and organizations, such as the Centre de Santé des femmes, La Commission des droits et libertés de la personne, Trajet Inc. and Option Consommateurs, contributed to these meetings. This year, 18 coffeehouse meetings were held, and 228 people took part.

Examples of coffeehouse meeting themes:

- Integrating and adapting in Québec
- Québécois expressions
- Québec's healthcare system
- The Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms
- The sexual education of children

Also, during the summer, two educational outings were offered for free to newcomers: a guided tour of Maison Hurtubise, built in 1739, a historic 18<sup>th</sup>-century home and one of the oldest on the island of Montréal, and a guided tour of the family home of Sir George-Étienne Cartier, a Victorian house that showcases the lifestyle of Montréal's bourgeoisie in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These tours, offered by the Centre, gave the newcomers the chance to discover Montréal and explore emblematic places in their new province.

Their smiles and happiness were a pleasure to see, because many of them would not have been able to afford such outings. They all showed their appreciation and affection for each other, exchanging phone numbers and promising to get together again. Some of them even stayed on to have coffee together afterward.

## Francization

Starting life over in a new country is a massive challenge that demands an enormous amount of courage, resilience and a solid network to advance. When they arrive in Québec, immigrant women quickly understand the need to master French – not only to navigate Québec society but also to fully and confidently contribute to it.

Every year, a few hundred women from elsewhere choose the Women's Centre of Montréal as the starting point for their francization journey. In partnership with the Ministère de l'Immigration, de

la Francisation et de l'Intégration (MIFI), the Centre has the honour of giving up to four in-person francization courses every term, and up to two remote courses. These courses are offered without cost to women living in Montréal or, for the remote courses, anywhere in Québec.

In 2025-2026, **18 courses** were offered (12 in-person and 6 remote), for a total of **195 enrolments**. The team is made up of eight dedicated teachers who share a mission: not only teach the language but also convey a real passion for Québec culture and the host community.

The Centre offers a unique, welcoming and inclusive setting, where having only women participants creates a sense of safety and sisterhood. This non-competitive environment, based on tolerance and acceptance, allows the group to grow at their own pace and to balance family and studies, thanks to free on-site childcare. Our family-study balance approach is a fundamental pillar of our mission: here, social and vocational life does not stop with motherhood – it allows women to blossom!

As the sessions pass, we have the privilege of seeing the students grow in confidence, express themselves more easily and open up to new personal and vocational opportunities. Many of them get actively involved in the Centre's life, taking part in activities and expressing its importance in their integration process.

Every term wraps up with a festive potluck meal, where the participants bring dishes from their home country, sing, dance, take souvenir photos and share their future plans. It is a lively and emotional event that symbolizes everything the Centre represents: diversity, solidarity and the joy of building together.

In addition to the French courses, 32 French conversation workshops allowed the newcomers to practise their French in an informal setting. Every meeting was structured around a theme to support not only the dialogue of daily life but also a better understanding of Québec society.

*"I really appreciate my francization teachers for giving me the confidence to learn this language. I also want to thank the coordinator of the education service."*

*Elena, francization student*

## GROUP AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

### Educational Service Courses and Workshops

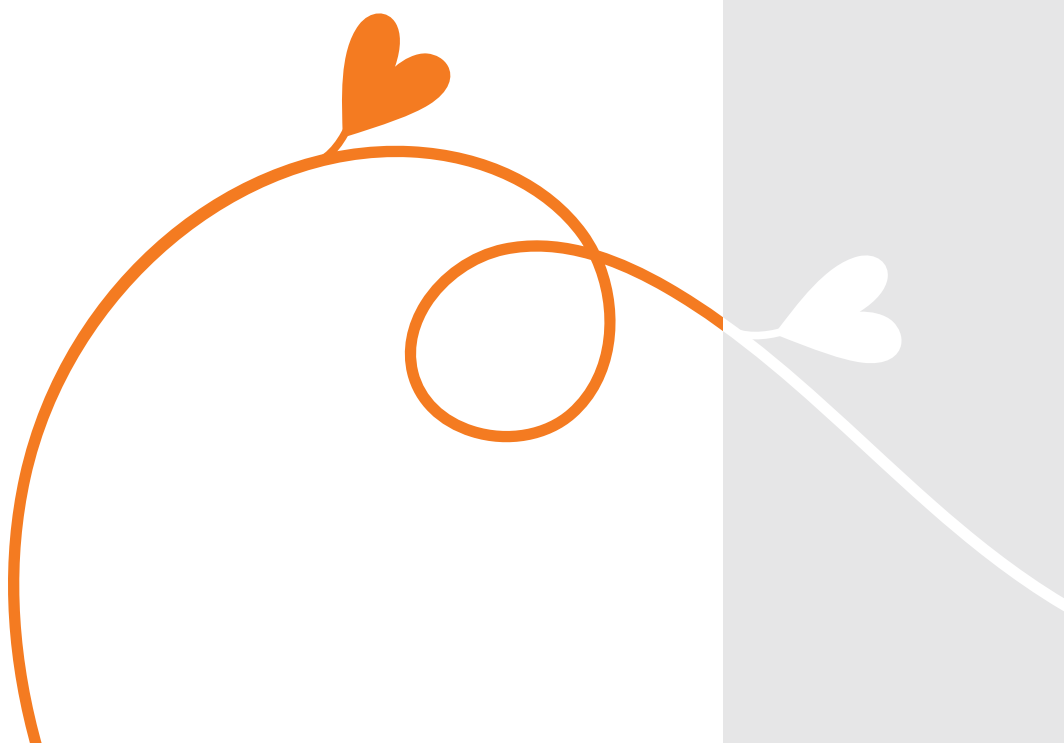
Beyond the classroom, the Centre offers rich cultural and social programming. These activities, offered primarily in French, give the participants an opportunity to practise the language in a relaxed setting while discovering all the treasures of Montréal life.

To make the most of summer 2025, we held two gardening workshops at the Jardins Norman, in partnership with *Jardins pour Tous*: "Gardens of the world" and "Medicinal and edible plants." We took advantage of the sun by visiting Verdun Beach during the summer heat wave. We had a guided tour of the Québec and Canadian art collection at the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts. The Père-Ambroise library offered two workshops based on the "Coup de poing" collection, specially designed for our clients learning French: one on gender stereotypes and one on solidarity. We also had the privilege of receiving donations of tickets for a variety of events: 30 tickets for the Botanical Gardens and 40 tickets for the Biodôme from Espace pour la vie, and 30 tickets for two performances by the Chorale du Gesù. A yoga teacher generously offered more than 25 free yoga classes for our participants, thanks to Studio Idolem Saint-Laurent.

Conversation workshops are offered in French and English, all year round, with more than 30 sessions. They are facilitated by volunteers and allow women learning French or English to advance their linguistic skills and socialize with other women who often share similar realities. This year's Education Service volunteer team involved 12 women dedicated to our mission. Since March 2025, beginner and intermediate English courses have been offered to more than 65 participants.

These activities allow the women to create ties, socialize without pressure and open up to their new community with pleasure and compassion.

What sets our approach apart is our desire to support the women while helping them learn to fly on their own. Our mission is not to impose a route but to offer the tools each participant needs to become the master of her own integration. We are their ally, their spokesperson and a place to recharge. The Women's Centre of Montréal is far more than a learning centre: it is a space of transformation. Thanks to French language lessons, cultural activities, community support and the compassion of the entire team, the women who cross our threshold regain confidence in themselves, forge solid ties and advance along their journey with pride and determination. We have the privilege of accompanying them for a while along the way – and it is an honour we cherish every day.



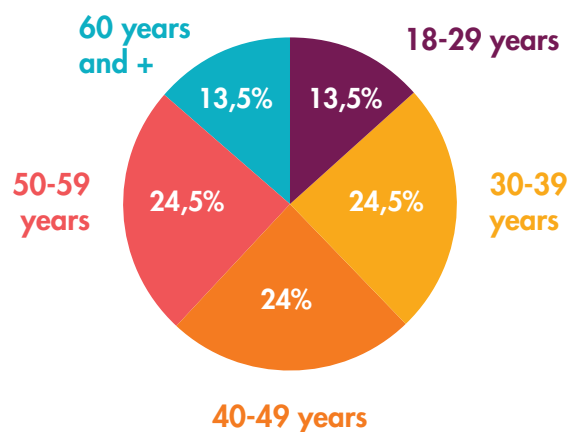
# Professional Support

Giving women back their personal power lets them regain confidence in themselves and their potential in order to define an inspiring professional goal that allows them to achieve their financial autonomy, improve their quality of life and adopt a positive view of their future path and plans, thanks to getting a satisfying job or completing a successful career reorientation that reflects their personality and objectives.

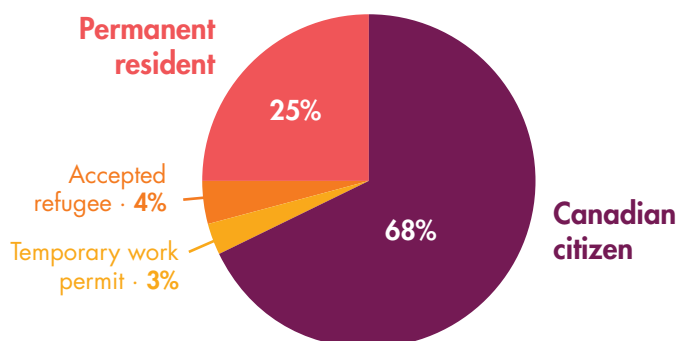
**464**  
women benefited  
from our employment  
programs

## Profiles of our participants

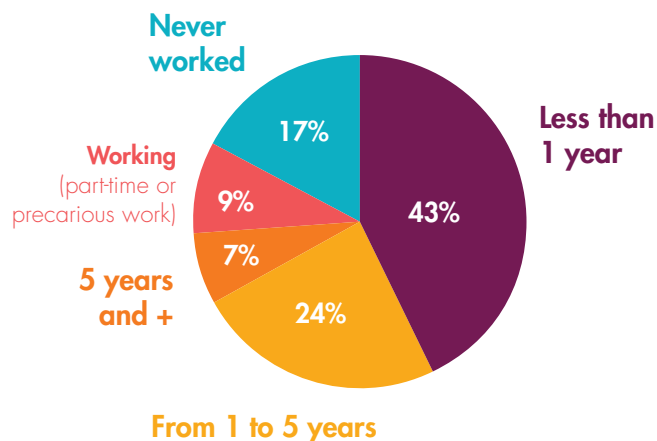
Age of the participants



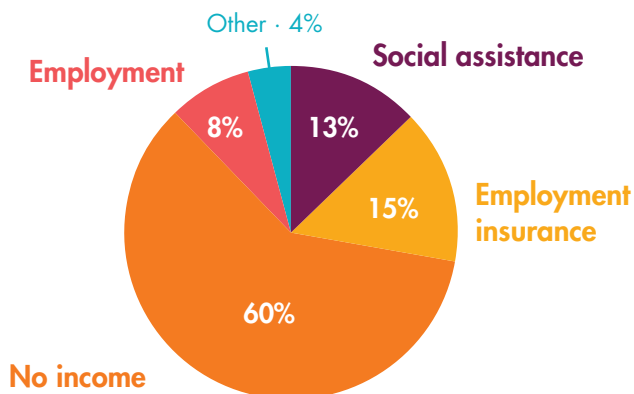
Immigration status



Time away from the workforce



Source of income



Single-parent family 20%



## JOB SEARCH COACHING

Our team is committed to the success of our clients and they offer top-quality follow-up, with flexibility and understanding for each person's reality. Whether the participant's goal is to get back on the workforce quickly or completely reorient her career, the quality of the coaching provided by our counsellors stands out for its tailor-made, global approach. We offer coaching adapted to the reality of the women we accompany, and we take their entire situation into consideration.

Our team's goal: to help the women put their best foot forward, drawing on all their skills and experiences to maintain healthy motivation and a positive outlook, in order to encourage the achievement of their professional objective.

Offering a warm and gracious welcome to the women who come to us is central to our concerns. The administrative assistant in Customer Service receives multiple requests from women every day, listens to their needs and sends them in the right direction. In collaboration with her, our Welcome and Referral officer receives requests from women who have reached out to us looking for support in their job search. She takes the time to listen to them and tell them about the services the Centre offers, so she can direct them to the program that best suits their profile and the needs they express, based on their eligibility for our programs. Most of them can get a first appointment with the employment counsellor who will support them through the process.

Our programs have been developed to reflect the diverse situations experienced by the participants. Our team works using a global approach, helping the women to define their vocational goals broadly, by reflecting on their personal needs, their social and family situation, their lifestyle, etc. Our counsellors are available to accompany each of them personally while encouraging their autonomy in the creation and use of the tools and techniques made available to them. To ensure they offer innovative and effective service, the counsellors stay abreast of current trends in recruitment and new technologies which they teach and use in the

participants' job search process.

In 2025-2026, we accompanied **464 women** through our employability programs. During the year, **299 participants had positive results with their process, getting a job, entering training or another step based on their objective**. More positive results will come, because our participants enjoy 12 weeks of follow-up at the end of their program.

This year, we observed that persistent economic uncertainty sometimes made the job search more complicated for the women we are supporting, despite their determined perseverance. During the last year, the job market in Québec posted a low growth rate (1.7%). The Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ) reported a 14% drop in vacant positions in 2025. The unemployment rate in Montréal continued to climb, reaching 7.2% in recent months. Likewise, the wage gap between women and men increased in 2025, to nearly 10% for the average hourly wage (women earn 90.1% of men's wage), contributing to persistent economic inequality.

With the deteriorating economic and social situation, and housing and grocery costs rising again this year, the women we support are facing financial vulnerability. This pushes them to choose a program that will get them back to work as quickly as possible under the circumstances, rather than taking the time for a career reorientation, even if career reorientation would provide a significant boost to their long-term vocational situation.

The vast majority of our services are always offered as individual coaching, and our group programs are taken by participants with specific objectives, such as joining predominantly male sectors or career reorientation.

Source: Data from Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ) quarterly publications and 2025 job report, as well as Statistics Canada.



Individual coaching

## INDIVIDUAL COACHING

Our individual coaching service is targeted, adapted to the reality and pace of each participant, and confidential. Every week, the participant has an appointment with her counsellor, who offers her expertise based on a tailor-made action plan. This could be to develop an in-depth professional and personal skills assessment, to define a professional goal or to conduct a rapid, targeted active job search. The counsellor is there at every step to coach the participant in the achievement of her goals.

Our individual counselling service is offered by appointment, in French and in English.

*"In 2024, I started working in the accounting office where I did my internship, but unfortunately, that experience turned out badly. Since I stayed at home for quite a while, I didn't really know my rights or the true value of my skills on the job market.*

*I knew that I needed help and orientation from a place that could provide good information and give me the tools to overcome this situation. That's when I decided to contact the Women's Centre of Montréal, which I found through an ad on Facebook.*

*The first meeting with my advisor was like lifting a great weight off my shoulders. I cried and I told her about my fears after my failures. We got straight to work. She helped me rework my CV and enrolled me in free workshops offered by the Centre. The information shared by the counsellors was really valuable.*

*After a month, I nabbed a job. The beginning was very difficult, but my advisor was there listening. Her friendly yet objective attitude helped me see my errors, correct them and, above all, know my rights.*

*My enormous thanks to my advisor and to all the counsellors at the Centre. You are such an amazing resource for women who feel lost or who simply do not know where to begin."*

*Wassila. M*

## CAREER REORIENTATION

The coaching offered by our counsellors to these women guides them in drawing up an in-depth skills assessment and gives them effective tools to achieve better self-knowledge and reflect on their professional future, oriented toward a realistic and positive objective. The resulting job search process is all the more motivating and effective. This approach is offered both through individual coaching and in a group program.

## PROGRAM FOR WOMEN 50 AND OVER: SUCCESS HAS NO AGE!

With expertise developed over more than 30 years for these women in midlife, this group program encourages sharing and discussion among women of the same generation, who are going through similar changes related to this time of life and who feel like they want to reposition themselves with respect to work and their careers. This process aims to redefine their needs, expectations and goals. It also helps them gain a better understanding of the labour market, make the most of their training and experience, and develop effective job search techniques. This year, we also added a workshop on communications using videoconferencing platforms (Zoom or TEAMS).

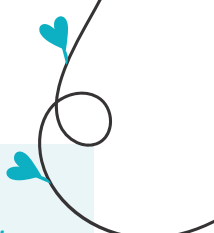
In 2025-2026, the group program for women 50+ was held **twice** (15 participants).



### Examples of positions obtained this year by our 50-and-over participants:

- Payroll administrator
- Social prescription liaison officer
- Family and social aid
- Lawyer
- Administrative assistant
- Reception agent
- Home carer
- Production assistant
- Assistant manager
- Pharmacy technical assistant
- Court usher
- Project manager, organization
- Project manager, architecture
- Communications advisor
- Executive Director
- Educator – Daycare
- Vegetable packer
- Online Spanish teacher
- French instructor
- Data entry clerk
- "Call for tenders" clerk
- Home care worker
- Content editor
- Customer service representative
- Tax clinic manager
- Technical documentation support manager
- Deputy returning officer
- Accounting technician
- Legal assistant
- Sales consultant
- Game and event creator and facilitator
- Auxiliary nurse
- Intercultural facilitator
- Customer service clerk
- Beneficiary attendant
- Facility supervisor

Special program for women  
50 and over



*"I want to warmly thank the Women's Centre of Montréal for the remarkable quality of the professional support I received in the fall of 2025. In particular, I appreciated the attentive listening of our wonderful advisor, her shrewd advice, the relevance of her suggestions and her generosity, not to mention her amazing creativity. She demonstrated extraordinary humanity toward each of us, which allowed me to trust her fully from the very beginning of our discussions. It was that precious bond that enabled me to push my limits in terms of career reorientation and face the current market.*

*Despite sustained searching and hard work since last October, I was starting to feel discouraged after the winter holidays. But with the understanding and support of our advisor and the team, I enthusiastically restarted my search, and my efforts finally paid off. Thanks to this professional support, in early 2026 I received a really good offer that I accepted with a great deal of interest and appreciation. It is a position that suits me well, in terms of both my deeply held values and the variety of duties to be performed, which thrills me and fully satisfies me after two months on the job.*

*That, in itself, is a success. Thank you so much, ladies!"*

*- Sylvie*

## MALE-DOMINATED FIELDS

Coaching women in these fields is a kind of expertise that our Employability Service has been honing for over 30 years.

The programs we offer in this area aim to help integrate women into jobs held, still today, primarily by men, in order to break down social and gender inequalities. By expanding their career choices into male-dominated professional sectors, the women gain access to better working conditions and higher salaries. These jobs are often in future-oriented fields.

Many prejudices still hinder the integration of women into these "non-traditional" fields, in which women make up 33% or less of the workforce. In 2025, the proportion of women in Québec who are working in a male-dominated field, such as construction, engineering or computer science, is still quite low. This is due to the low representation of women in the technical and scientific sectors, where women's participation has not increased significantly in recent years and has even declined in some highly male-dominated jobs.

Engineering, business management and construction jobs come to mind, of course, but women still also make up only a small minority in sectors where people assume women have

achieved some level of parity, such as information technology or real estate assessment and estimates, for example.

We have two programs in these sectors that are unique on the island of Montréal: Virage and Action-Réaction.

### Virage - Non-traditional career exploration program

In 2025-2026, this program was offered **7 times** (34 participants).

This program targets a return to study to open the way to advantageous employment opportunities that are accessible to women in male-dominated sectors. Many of these jobs do not require long training and can offer women job opportunities with very appealing working conditions and salaries. Furthermore, many of the jobs in these sectors do not require extraordinary physical strength and do not involve unpleasant or difficult work environments.

Complete professional orientation skills assessment, led by a professional orientation advisor to prepare for a return to study.

### Examples of training areas chosen by the participants:

- General construction site health and safety course
- DVS/DEP in general building maintenance
- DVS/DEP in truck transportation
- DCS/DEC in information technology
- ACS/AEC in IT infrastructure and cybersecurity
- DVS/DEP in surveying and topography
- DVS/DEP in precision sheet metal work
- DVS/DEP in building painting
- DVS/DEP in water treatment process control
- DVS/DEP in stationary machinery mechanics
- DVS/DEP in tin work



Action-Réaction Program

### Action-Réaction – Workforce integration program for women with a non-traditional professional profile

**7 groups** were held in 2025–2026 (50 participants), including two in English.

This program equips the participants to deal with integration obstacles that arise in non-traditional fields.

It involves specialized coaching to help women trained in these fields to develop job search methods based on Québec's reality with regard to male-dominated fields, using role play, direct contact with employers and adapted networking techniques. A four-week internship is also possible to facilitate workforce integration.

*"When I went to the Women's Centre of Montréal, I had been looking for a job for nearly a year. I was running through my savings quickly, and I was going to have to go back to my country of origin if I didn't find a job fast. During that period, I tried to learn on my own everything I could about optimizing my CV, ATS systems, networking and so on. I was also exploring less conventional professional routes, but I needed support. I finally decided to turn to the Centre for help. Luckily, I found a job two weeks after the program began, but it was more than enough to see how well structured and cohesive the program is. I am convinced that if I had found it earlier, I would have found a job even faster. I also want to point out that the counsellor leading the program wasn't just an excellent educator. She also had an amazing ability to listen to all of our issues, to quickly identify what should be done and to adjust her support for each of us. I highly recommend this program!"*

- R.

### Lunch-and-learn

In December, two lunchtime talks were held for the participants in our job search program for male-dominated sectors. On December 1, an engineer from EXP, engineering and design services, addressed the following topics: work, children, work-life balance, the place of women in male-dominated environments, harassment, the

connection with the fear of making mistakes, and more. On December 2, a former participant from our Action-Réaction program, who works at Desjardins in IT, shared the major challenges she faced in her job search. These meetings were very inspiring on both the personal and professional levels!

## JOB SEARCH PROCESS

The personalized coaching practised by our employment counsellors helps clarify and narrow down the participants' professional goals and targeted sectors and make the best use of all available job search tools so they can put their best foot forward in contact with potential employers or professional networking situations. Our counsellors strive to equip the participants to optimize their chances of success and to face periods of discouragement and/or obstacles by guiding them through the different phases of the job search process.

### Examples of positions in male-dominated fields obtained this year by our participants:

- BI analyst
- Java developer analyst
- Business analyst
- Candidate to the profession of process engineering
- Researcher
- Product designer – biomedical engineering
- Mechanical engineering designer
- Engineering project consultant
- Software developer – programmer
- Junior interactive developer
- Repair and maintenance technician
- Welder
- Production specialist
- Water treatment technician
- Production machine operator
- Construction materials quality control technician
- Building compliance inspector
- Building acoustics project manager
- Candidate to the profession of environmental engineering
- Food processing research and development scientist
- Health and safety coordinator

*"When I met my counsellor at the Women's Centre of Montréal, I was just recovering from a period of illness and I was trying to gently get myself back on track. I didn't think they would be able to help me. I was in my early 50s and I had the impression that I had lost everything. I was afraid, I was discouraged, and, above all, I felt a lot of shame about where I was in my life and the gaps I could see in my professional and personal history.*

*With her stable and professional presence, my counsellor supported me with a great deal of delicacy. She pushed me...without pushing me. At the time, even the idea of making a LinkedIn profile petrified me. I was afraid that people would only see the instability and failures.*

*Using rational and very practical methods, she helped me move forward one step at a time: understand LinkedIn, write, put myself out there, publish, apply for jobs and take initiative. In particular, she helped me change my view of where I was and how I got there: stop feeling ashamed about it and learn to incorporate it and recognize the skills it involved.*

*She gave me courage, stability and accuracy.*

*Today, even though my situation is still not ideal, I have started to move forward. I am giving courses to several groups of professionals, and I have developed my own learning method. I continue to apply for my dream jobs, even though responses are still tepid. I also increased my work hours and started creating events and initiatives again, which allows me to stand out and promote myself.*

*My journey is not over, but I have found something fundamental: the confidence to continue."*

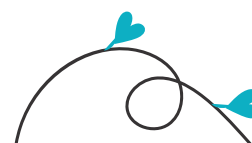
*- B.A.*

Our counsellors offer our participants:

- A skills assessment, which is an indispensable tool for making a great CV and presenting the best version of themselves in hiring interviews
- A personal action plan with short-, medium- and long-term objectives
- Job search tools tailored to their needs and suitable for the current job market and social networks
- Coaching for contact with employers and professional networking
- Regular follow-up focused on action
- Special attention and support for maintaining motivation and bolstering self-esteem

## GROUP WORKSHOPS

Thanks to videoconferencing, we were able to continue to offer group workshops, on a continuous-entry basis and job-search themes. It was important to provide group coaching because it allows the participants to break out of their isolation and expand their network by meeting other women who are going through the same process. The group workshops generate a spirit of mutual assistance that is important for remaining motivated and positive in order to achieve their goals.



## THEME MEETINGS

In 2025-2026, we offered **53 theme meetings** to our participants, generating **415 registrations**, on topics related to seeking employment, women's networking and motivation, or offering hands-on opportunities to put into practice issues addressed with their counsellors.

### FRENCH

- » Self-confidence and self-esteem - 3 times
- » Motivation and time management – Action plan - 3 times
- » LinkedIn profile optimization - 4 times
- » Conducting a successful job search on LinkedIn - 4 times
- » Sexual and psychological harassment at work - 3 times
- » Self-sabotaging attitudes - 3 times
- » Succeeding in your first 90 days on the job - 3 times
- » Happiness at work – Ikigai - 3 times
- » Life changes and career reorientation - 1 time
- » The hiring interview: Negotiation or examination - 2 times
- » Artificial intelligence and the job search - 3 times
- » The job market - 1 time
- » Preparing for the hiring interview (theory) - 1 time
- » Preparing for the hiring interview (practical) - 1 time

### ENGLISH

- » Self-confidence - 2 times
- » How to better manage your time - 1 time
- » A successful first 90 days on the job - 2 times
- » An essential professional network for an effective job search - 2 times
- » How to use LinkedIn effectively for your job search - 2 times
- » Employability skills and personal branding - 3 times
- » How to prepare for the job interview - 2 times
- » Interview questions - 2 times
- » Managing stress as we look for work - 1 time
- » Job search strategies - 2 times

There were **415**  
registrations for our  
theme meetings.

## EMPLOYERS' PRESENTATIONS

We invited three employers to come meet our participants to present prospects and employment opportunities, their target profiles and the steps of the hiring process. **133 women** attended these presentations. The businesses that offered a presentation were:

- Loblaws, June 27 (25 participants)
- Statistics Canada, February 16 (57 participants)
- Loto-Québec, March 11 (51 participants)

Last February 19, Revenu Québec offered a webinar on taxation for self-employed workers, attended by 12 participants.

## CONFERENCES ON MALE-DOMINATED CAREERS

Last March 9, for International Women's Day, two counsellors offered a one-hour "lunch-and-learn" presentation about male-dominated careers, in French and English, to staff at MDA Space, reaching 117 people, most of whom were engineers. On March 12, for the AntiSalon de l'emploi held by the Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi Centre-Ville, a counsellor offered a presentation called Women in Action: Breaking Barriers in Male-Dominated Jobs, which was attended by 60 people.

## PROFESSIONAL PHOTO SESSION

Two professional photo sessions for our participants' LinkedIn accounts were held on May 26 and October 7, with the help of a volunteer photographer. **22 participants** took advantage of this opportunity to get a high-quality photograph to optimize their profile.

## INFORMATION CLINICS AND ENGLISH PRACTICE

This year, we set up a system of information clinics and English practice for participants feeling short on the knowledge and skills required to use Microsoft Office programs and/or basic English for their future work environment. 34 of our participants benefited from these activities.

## WORKPLACE INTERNSHIPS

All our participants have the opportunity to do a four-week internship with a business, through our agreements with Services Québec. It is an excellent way to develop or acquire skills that are complementary to training, enrich their CV or get their first work experience in Québec.

An internship is also a way for them to expand their professional network and get new references, and for businesses, it is an important avenue for recruitment. It plays the role of a trial period while the business assesses the skills of a potential candidate. During internships, our participants learn more about the work atmosphere and culture in companies in their target field of employment.

## A JOB-SEARCH SPACE

Our participants can enjoy the spaces set up by Google and access tools to make their job search easier. The Centre offers Wi-Fi and an internet connection in all our rooms, computers in a bright, pleasant space that can be used outside of workshop hours, and a room with telephones and laptops with webcams to communicate privately with employers.

Professional photo session



## PAY IT FORWARD PROGRAM

This professional mentoring program is designed primarily as a gesture of solidarity on the part of former participants of our employability service, to share their knowledge and learning through a mentoring relationship with women currently seeking employment. This women's assistance movement aims to help them overcome the challenges and obstacles of vocational and social integration.

Last June 18, a networking activity was held in a playful setting at Parc Lafontaine, to encourage sharing and the development of ties among the women in attendance: mentors, mentees and counsellors.

Last September 25, a networking night was held to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pay It Forward. **60 women** took part. The discussions and sharing between former participants and women currently seeking jobs were greatly appreciated. The atmosphere was celebratory and friendly.

Since 2023, we have established **71 mentorship pairs, including 27 in 2025-2026**, between former participants who successfully re-entered the workforce and women looking for employment. This mutual aid movement lets them share tips and insights about their professional trajectories.

*"More than eight years ago, I was in a full-time active job search, which can be very frustrating and isolating. The Women's Centre of Montréal gave me essential support, on the human and professional levels. It helped me regain my self-confidence and gave me the support I needed to persevere in this process. Today, with an international cooperation job that I really like, I feel profound gratitude for that guidance, and it is a real honour for me to be part of the Pay It Forward program and to be able, in turn, to serve as a mentor and support other women on their journey. Thank you for this amazing program and for the real impact it has in our lives. Gratefully."*

- Claudia

10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pay It Forward



## PROFESSIONAL WARDROBE – *WE DRESS YOUR SELF-ESTEEM!*

Our professional wardrobe made its big comeback this year, updated to today's fashion and maintained over the seasons, thanks to a devoted volunteer. This space and service are a testament to the spirit of initiative and cooperation in the Women's Centre community. Thanks to the generosity of women who offer their time and/or clothing, women actively engaged in the challenge of finding a job can get a professional outfit for free if they need it. Every woman who benefits from the opportunity to choose appropriate clothing for her professional aspirations remembers the kindness of others, and it is more than clothing that is recycled through the experience of giving and receiving.

Professional wardrobe



### Examples of jobs obtained by our program participants – newcomers, women long out of the workforce:

- Digital marketing strategist
- Administrative assistant
- HR business partner
- Customer service officer
- Volunteer manager
- Home carer
- Seniors' carer
- Accounts payable and receivable technician
- Teaching assistant
- Caregiver
- Product sorter-verifier
- Technical assistant/researcher
- Chemistry laboratory analyst
- Graphic designer
- Camera assistant
- Store associate
- Digital marketing project manager
- Project manager
- Chief cook
- Operations clerk
- Graphic artist
- Auxiliary nurse
- Stem cell register advisor
- Rental advisor
- Sales advisor
- Controller
- Coordinator
- Advertiser coordinator
- Art teacher
- Childcare educator
- Music teacher
- Elementary school teacher
- Manager
- Project manager
- Counsellor
- Mandarin interpreter
- Second-hand clothing store and laundry clerk
- General warehouse clerk
- Secretary
- Server
- Special education technician
- Research technician
- Assistant art director
- Accounting clerk
- Bilingual employment counsellor
- Tenant services coordinator
- Cook
- Housekeeper
- Animator/guide
- Massage therapist
- Sewing machine operator
- Counter clerk
- Receptionist
- Administrative technician
- Freelance journalist
- Entertainment clerk
- Communications manager
- Lunch monitor
- Editor

## TESTIMONIES

Individual career  
reorientation  
counselling  
for women 50  
and over and  
food assistance  
services/Christmas  
baskets

*"I am writing today to acknowledge and applaud the exceptional dedication of the entire team at the Women's Centre of Montréal toward women 50 and over who want to 'reboot' their lives after a job loss, health crisis, abusive relationship, and who are facing ageism – often all at once.*

*I was referred to you by the Gingras-Lindsay rehabilitation centre last year. At 68 years old, I was going through multiple crises, but the Centre reached out a hand and made me feel heard and recognized. I not only received the encouragement I needed to consider a new career after 40 years in the media, but also the support of your food bank, as well as valuable connections to employment workshops that provided essential information and inspired me to take a new path forward.*

*I also want to express my deep gratitude for the Christmas basket I received. It touched me deeply to know that volunteers were taking the time to prepare these baskets for people like me, living alone and without support, so we can feel loved and cherished during the holidays.*

*I would especially like to thank the volunteers working at the food bank. I had never needed this kind of assistance before. To receive support without judgment, with warmth and respect, is both precious and priceless.*

*I also want to point out the remarkable work of the counsellor I have had the good fortune to work with for the last six months. I cherish her mentorship and empathy. She not only helped me redefine the way I could leverage my varied and valuable skills, but she also gave me sincere emotional support and practical professional guidance toward a new career. She helped me redesign myself, focus and believe in what I am able to accomplish.*

*I worked in the media industry for many years, but I had no idea that this remarkable organization existed – full of kind angels who help so many of us find hope for a new life.*

*I am grateful to everyone who works at the Women's Centre of Montréal, because they changed my life for the better. As soon as I am back on my feet, I hope to be able to volunteer there in one way or another, to 'pay it forward' in honour of these extraordinary people who care so deeply for many women like me who feel forgotten and invisible.*

*You will always have my respect and gratitude."*

Era

### Individual counselling for newcomers

*"Arriving in a new country is never easy, and the Women's Centre of Montréal was a real cornerstone for me. From the very first meetings, I found a warm, open, judgment-free ear and a real commitment to helping me. My employment counsellor guided me through each step: clarification of my skills, understanding of the process in Québec, preparation and review of my CV, preparation for interviews... And above all, she gave me confidence in my abilities. Today, I feel much better prepared to achieve my professional goals. I sincerely recommend the Women's Centre of Montréal to any woman looking for a comforting, human and professional space to advance their career."*

Fadwa

### Individual counselling

*"I want to sincerely thank the Women's Centre for the support I received in my job search, especially preparing for the interview. Special thanks to my counsellor, who guided me with patience, a listening ear and kindness. With her advice and targeted preparation, I was able to feel more confident and ready to succeed in my interviews. Today, I am really happy to have gotten the job I have wanted for so long. It is a dream come true, and I know that I would not have managed without your help. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support and your commitment to women. With my deepest gratitude!"*

Naomi

### Individual counselling

*"Things are going well for me so far in my new job. Overall, it is positive, and I am making the most of this great opportunity that opened up for me. I want to thank my counsellor for listening and for her support, both of which helped me get back on course. I had not realized how fragile I had become. Luckily, there are organizations like yours and people as competent as my counsellor and her colleagues. Thank you so much!"*

Anonyme



# Promoting the Centre and its Services

To provide a multi-service window to the participants, the Centre offers two separate services: the Front Line Service for personal support and the Employability Service for professional support. To ensure consistent communication and meet the specific objectives of each service, the Centre combines shared communication channels with channels dedicated to each service.

## COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS SHARED BY BOTH SERVICES

### Website

The website is a central platform that provides information to the visitors about the Centre's mission, programs and accomplishments. It offers all the information about the Women's Centre of Montréal in one central location, including the Front Line Service, the Employability Service and the Foundation. It also makes it easier to raise funds, especially for the Foundation's Benefit Evening and the registration of members, thanks to a secure online donation platform.

### Instagram

Since its creation, on March 1, 2023, the Instagram account has reinforced the Centre's online presence, thanks to continual growth. By sharing authentic and inspiring content, the Centre raises awareness about our mission, reinforces our connection to the community and amplifies our positive impact. It reaches audiences beyond the web visitors and expands our reach by maximizing our coverage.

### YouTube

The Centre's YouTube channel offers a number of videos featuring the Centre, its personal and professional coaching services and the activities of the Foundation. Testimonies, detailed presentations of programs and activities, videos of the Benefit Evenings, and more, are posted there.

**WEBSITE**  
centredesfemmesdemtl.org  
Views: **67,218**

**INSTAGRAM**  
Centredesfemmesdemtl  
Subscribers: **2,705**  
Impressions\*: **343,738**

**YOUTUBE**  
Women's Centre of Montréal  
Views: **537**

**LINKEDIN**  
Women's Centre of Montréal  
Subscribers: **6,161**  
Impressions\*: **37,247**

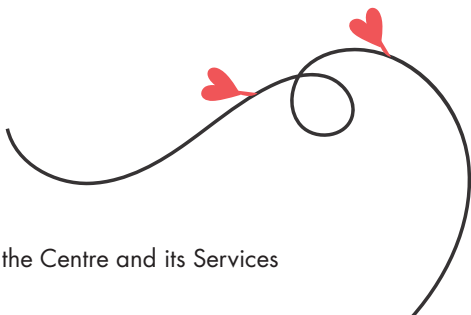
\*total number of times a content has been displayed, even if some people viewed the same content more than once.

## FRONT LINE SERVICE

The Front Line Service is promoted through an array of online and offline communications channels, including the website, social networks, print and participation in kiosks:

- Information booth at the Centre Yves-Thériault
- Information booth at the Jeanne-Mance school open house event
- Information booth at the Centre Saint-Louis

This year, we also released an advertising campaign on our social media, to reach more immigrant women. This approach allowed us to more effectively target those who were not necessarily aware of the services the Centre can offer them.



## EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

### Employability Service at the forefront: expanded reach

From April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, the Centre's Employability Service social media, newsletters, webinars, traditional media and strategic partnerships allowed us to reach a growing audience and offer content that is accessible, interactive and tailored to the needs of our participants and partners.

Here is an overview of our promotional activities in 2025-2026:

- **Institutional presentation** of our programs and activities to the team of employment assistance agents at the Services Québec office in northeastern Montréal.
- **Media coverage:**
  - Interview of one of our counsellors by a Canadian Press journalist, on women entering male-dominated sectors and how our program helps break down prejudices.
  - Publication of an article, based on a participant's testimony, illustrating the concrete results of our non-traditional sector program (*L'Actualité*, *L'Écho de Laval*, *City News Montréal*).
  - Live interview of one of our Action-Réaction counsellors in English on the *Andrew Carter Morning Show*, to talk about our program and the reality of women entering male-dominated work environments.
- **Professional events:** Attendance at 2 sessions of Événement Carrières, in the Génie & TI and Intégration et aide à l'emploi spaces.
- **Targeted advertising:** Publication of ads and display in various media, newsletters, websites and Facebook groups/online communities, specifically to reach women newcomers to Montréal.
- **Newsletters sent to participants and employers:**
  - "*Et si ce printemps, vous faisiez fleurir votre avenir professionnel?*" (What if, this spring, your professional future blossomed?) – 218 recipients, April 2025.
  - "*L'été, c'est aussi le moment d'avancer vers vos objectifs professionnels!*" (Summer is also a great time to advance toward your professional goals!) – 210 recipients, June 2025.
  - "*Envie d'aider d'autres femmes à trouver un emploi? Passez le relais!*" (Want to help other women find a job? Pass the baton!) – 213 recipients, November 2025.
  - "*Bonnes fêtes*" (Happy holidays) – 212 recipients, December 2025.
- **Employers' presentations**, open to our clients and externally: 3 activities carried out in collaboration with Loto-Québec, Loblaws and Statistics Canada.

On social media, our numbers attest to our vitality. Our sustained digital growth demonstrates strengthened communications that directly support our mission of giving women tools for their professional success.

### FACEBOOK

#### Front Line Service

Subscribers

**5,529**

Impressions

**327,922**

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#### Employability Service

Subscribers

**10,533**

Impressions

**1,252,930**

Interactions

**2,200**

Page visits

**16,100**



Événement Carrières



# The Centre's *Commitment* to its Community - Dialogue, Partnerships and Collaboration

The Centre participates actively in various bodies that deal with social and economic issues that affect women. Thanks to our collective action, we can stay vigilant about emerging social issues, share our expertise and act proactively to support women in the greater Montréal area in the improvement of their living conditions, in collaboration with the other stakeholders involved.

## IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

### Table de quartier Corporation de Développement Communautaire Plateau-Mont-Royal

The Centre was involved in two committees:

- *Homelessness committee*

The homelessness committee (Comité Itinérance de la Corporation de développement communautaire Plateau-Mont-Royal (CDC PMR) aims to gain a better understanding of the reality, characteristics and specifics of people who are unhoused or at risk of becoming unhoused, who live in the Plateau-Mont-Royal or spend time there regularly. The committee's goal is to ensure that the interventions for these people are relevant to their specific situations and to try to have the issue of homelessness in the Plateau recognized by the political authorities concerned. For nearly ten years, the committee has been speaking out about the lack of public spaces, sanitary facilities and infrastructure accessible to people facing homelessness, which prevents an adequate and dignified response to their basic needs.

- *Local food security committee (CLSA)*

The local food security committee (CLSA) is made up of several organizations, including the Women's Centre of Montréal. They work together to respond to the growing food needs in the Plateau-Mont-Royal. With the rise of food insecurity, this committee advocates a collective approach to combat poverty and social exclusion. It supports our Christmas campaign by contributing food baskets and playing a key role in the coordination of the Carte Proximité program and the SALADE project (local, accessible, sustainable and economical food system), enhancing the impact of our community actions. Launched in summer 2020, the Carte Proximité is an initiative that allows households to purchase local food using a card that is rechargeable monthly, for free, with an amount based on the size of the household. This project aims to make it easier to access fresh produce and support local producers and short supply circuits. The SALADE project facilitates food transportation for community organizations, giving the Women's Centre of Montréal access to a truck at an affordable price to collect and distribute food every week.



### Funeral procession for the movement: *Le Communautaire à boutte*

We took part in a symbolic *Communautaire à boutte* funeral procession in the Plateau-Mont-Royal. This rally, organized by stakeholders in the community sector, was designed to illustrate the consequences of the decline of the sector and emphasize the crucial importance of its role, in harmonization with the public health and social services system. The route, from Mont-Royal metro station to the local CLSC, crossed the paths of many people, raising awareness of the realities and challenges facing community organizations. We were present to show our solidarity, support the visibility initiative and actively contribute to the collective reflection on the future and recognition of the community sector.

#### Table de quartier Peter-McGill

- Immigration committee

We participated in the meetings of the Table de concertation Peter-McGill immigration committee. A collective reflection on the committee's goals was launched to facilitate networking among the various community sector players through networking activities and to promote public participation and volunteering.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

### Commemoration of the Events at the Polytechnique – December 6

As is the case every year, the commemoration activity was part of the *12 days of actions against violence against women*, which runs from November 25 to December 6. During this period, people from around the world mobilize to denounce this kind of violence and defend human rights. It marks, in particular, the tragedy on December 6, 1989, at Polytechnique Montréal, in which 14 women were assassinated in an anti-feminist attack that profoundly affected Québec and Canadian society. This commemoration honours the memory of the victims, supports the survivors and underscores the importance of solidarity in the face of sexist violence. The francization students, who were invited to attend, heard about it for the



*Le Communautaire à boutte funeral procession*

first time, discovering a cathartic event in recent Québec history and the issues surrounding it and learning about the actions required to prevent this kind of violence.

### International Women's Day – March 8

On International Women's Day, we arranged a special activity for our participants: we screened the documentary *Call Me Human* by Kim O'Bomsawin, about Innu poet Joséphine Bacon. We discussed the themes of protecting nature, the sense of belonging and wellness, our ancestors and our language and the feminine models who have affected our trajectories. It was a beautiful discussion, inspired by the artist's poems, and the themes were chosen for a gentle celebration of this important day.

## Table de concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal (TCVCM)

The mission of the Table de concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal is to unify and mobilize the various players working against intimate partner violence. Our membership in the TCVCM allows us to embrace an approach rooted in global analysis, prevention, actions to protect women, children and people who are vulnerable or have special needs, and the accountability of aggressors, to combat and eliminate domestic violence and its consequences. Members' meetings and lunch lectures offer the opportunity to share relevant information and learn about new resources or update knowledge. This year, we are once again serving on the Board of Directors.

## RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

The Centre works closely with Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations to improve access to services for Indigenous women living in the urban environment. As a feminist organization, on round tables or in unplanned meetings with partners on the street, we use an intersectional approach that aims to communicate the interests of Indigenous women as they describe them. Our counsellors also participate in the following groups: the Milton-Parc/Hôtel des arts committee, the Montréal Indigenous Health Advisory Circle (MIHAC), the Local Accessibility Table for Urban Aboriginal Health and Social Services for Aboriginals in Montréal and the Comité itinérance CDC du Plateau-Mont-Royal. We contribute mainly by relaying the specific needs and issues related to the intersection of various kinds of discrimination experienced by Indigenous women. Our feminist approach takes the form of mediation with partners, awareness-raising, specific accompaniment, mutual discussions, the offer of distinctive materials based on gender and group activities that give the women a chance to get together in a safe place.

## IMMIGRATION

### Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes

The Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes (TCRI) includes over 150 organizations working with refugees, immigrants and people without status. It facilitates collaboration among the members and key players in the immigration sector and supports organizations in their daily actions. The TCRI-PASI forum that we participate in is a platform for reflection and collaboration. Its goal is to monitor the implementation of PASI (integration guidance and support program), to track changes in PASI efforts and requirements in collaboration with the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration (MIFI) and to collectively support the demands of the member organizations. Specifically, PASI offers financial support to organizations like the Centre that are engaged in welcoming, settling and integrating refugees and immigrants to Québec.

## INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTION

The Centre had the pleasure of welcoming a delegation from the Korea Institute for Gender Equality Promotion (South Korea). At the meeting, we presented all our services, programs and initiatives for women, to fuel reflections on various approaches to equality.



Javiera Arroyo, Director of our Front Line Service, and the South Korean delegation

## LES GRANDS ÉCHANGES MOISSON MONTRÉAL

Moisson Montréal plays a key role in the fight against food insecurity in Montréal. In its food collection and distribution work, every week the Centre offers food baskets to 50 women and their families, in addition to Christmas Baskets at the end of the year. As it does every fall, Moisson Montréal held its *Grands Échanges*, a key meeting with its partners. The event provided an opportunity to share the organization's latest news and orientations. The participants also discussed the issue of digitization, particularly in relation to the Go-Toucan platform. Finally, a group reflection was launched on the food security challenges and outlooks.

## WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN

The World March of Women in Québec City in 2025 brought together thousands of participants to defend equality and social justice, including part of the Centre's team. The event highlighted the fight against violence against women and persistent economic inequality. Community groups, unions and activities came together to voice shared claims. The atmosphere was both combative and supportive, with engaged speeches and artistic performances. Environment and Indigenous issues also held an important place in the presentations. The march wended its way along the streets of Québec City, attracting public and media attention to feminist concerns. This gathering strengthened ties among local and international feminist movements with a view to future actions.

## EMPLOYABILITY

### AXTRA

The Alliance des centres-conseils en emploi (AXTRA) is an umbrella for 89 organizations from 16 regions of Québec. Their mission is to represent, inform and support employment development organizations in the face of job market issues.

This year, a variety of topics were addressed at the members' meetings, including presentations made to Services Québec, orientations and the renewal of agreements, changes made to the SIP platform (partner service) and administrative red tape.

Given the many recriminations made by the employment counselling centres, over the years, AXTRA has set up a red tape committee that we took part in with four other member organizations. The committee's goal was to identify and document simplification proposals. There were three meetings in the past year, on October 28, November 27 and January 29.

### IRIPI

On June 19, we attended the launch of guidelines for skills for counsellors working with immigrants, an event held by the Research Institute on the professional integration of immigrants (IRIPI).

### CIAFT

On July 2, we remotely attended the annual general meeting of the Conseil d'intervention pour l'accès des femmes au travail.

World March of Women, Québec City 2025

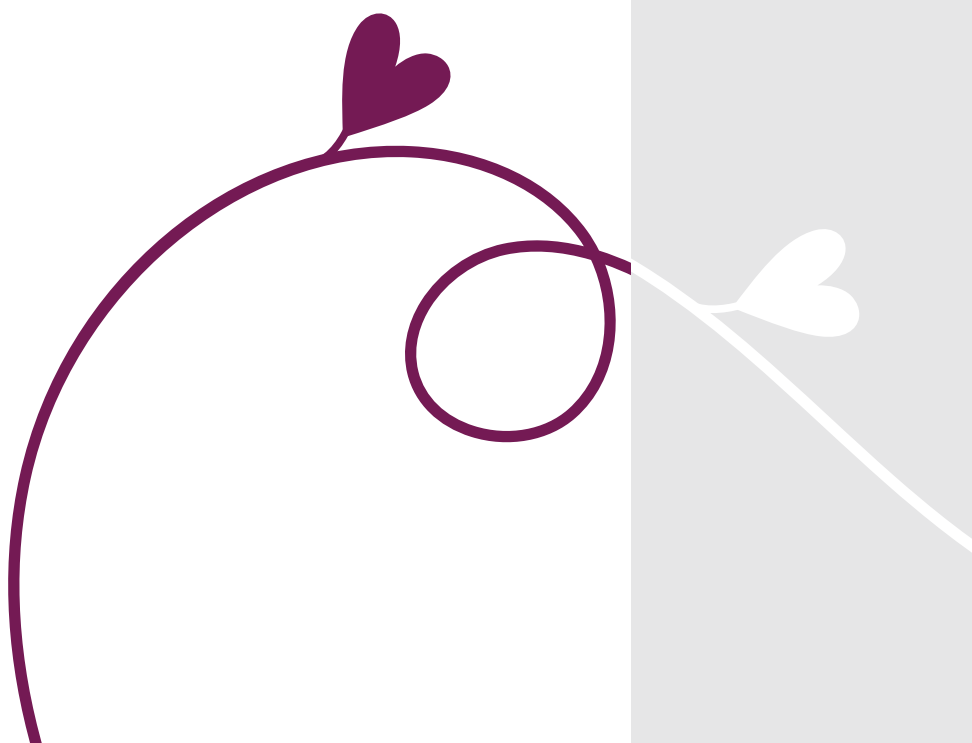


## SUCCESSION – INTERNSHIPS AND SUMMER JOBS

The Centre is an important place of learning for many social work, sexology, art therapy and music therapy students. We are proud to be actively participating in training the next generation of workers in these fields. This year, 3 students did internships at the Centre, acquiring hands-on experience in intervention and leading support groups for women who have faced distressing situations, particularly those related to sexual abuse in childhood.

Also, thanks to the Canada Summer Jobs program, we were fortunate to welcome 2 social sciences students for enriching work experience. They learned about our intervention approach, put their knowledge into practice and confirmed their respective academic orientations.

We extend our deep gratitude and wish them every success in their professional futures or ongoing studies, for those who are continuing on to higher education.



# Community Involvement with the Centre and Associative Life



## OUR BELOVED VOLUNTEERS

At the Centre, we are deeply grateful for our volunteers, whose indispensable involvement creates a network of solidarity that allows every woman to feel supported, heard and at home. Our volunteers play a key role in our services, offering psychosocial support, legal advice and French and English conversation workshops, preparing food baskets for distribution or getting involved on the Board of Directors of the Centre and the Foundation and on the various work committees, contributing to the Centre's orientation and helping uphold and develop its mission.

Volunteer action strengthens the fabric of society, meets essential needs and helps women gain autonomy and integrate into the collective. Volunteering also gives the volunteers the chance to expand their knowledge, cultivate empathy and contribute significantly to the lives of our participants. It is an enriching experience that runs both ways, in which everyone finds value and support.

All year long, corporate groups back our efforts, including by supporting our Christmas Campaign. Their material and logistical support is crucial in order to offer efficient service, allowing every family to receive help during the holidays and all year long. We want to thank all the businesses that got involved in various initiatives, such as sorting clothing and setting up our emergency clothing bank, as well as painting some of our spaces.

We warmly thank our volunteers for their generosity, their expertise and their dedication. This year, **274 volunteers** offered **2,817 hours** of their time, allowing our mission to grow and positively affect the lives of women and their family.

*"Becoming a volunteer at the Women's Centre of Montréal for the food security program was an extremely enriching experience, especially because it was one of my first volunteering experiences in Montréal. The team is amazing and welcoming, and they create a respectful and inclusive environment for the volunteers they work with and the community they serve. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to support the Centre's efforts. My deepest thanks to the entire team!"*

M.T.

**274**  
volunteers supported the  
Centre and its mission  
with **2,817** hours of  
volunteering

*"For the second year in a row, we proudly supported the Women's Centre through volunteer activities and donations of essential items. This is a memorable team-building experience that gives us a deep sense of accomplishment and gratitude, knowing that we are supporting an organization that plays such an important role in the lives of women in our community. We look forward to continuing our support of the Women's Centre in the years ahead, because their mission to help women achieve their full potential resonates with ours."*

*Women in Leadership – Siemens Energy AGT Montréal*



Corporate volunteering

## COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

### Support from the RBC Foundation for women's economic autonomy through the Women's Centre of Montréal

The Women's Centre of Montréal wants to highlight the generous support of the RBC Foundation, which made a \$70,000 donation to support our employability programs and our actions to further women's economic autonomy.

This partnership illustrates the importance of the private sector's commitment to combating inequality and reinforcing the economic participation of women. More than simple funding, this contribution represents the tangible recognition of the essential work our team of counsellors perform every day with women seeking stability and confidence in their professional future.

During the RBC Foundation team's visit to our centre, we had inspiring discussions about the resilient and transformative journeys of the participants we have been supporting for more than 45 years. Every woman who finds her path to employment is also advancing her entire community.

Thanks to committed partners like the RBC Foundation, the Women's Centre of Montréal can continue to offer human, personalized and lasting support to women who need it and to build a fairer, more equitable society for everyone, one step at a time.

Thank you to the RBC Foundation for their trust and commitment to inclusion and economic equality.



Duffay Romano (WCM), Elizabeth Robitaille (RBC), Emmanuelle Brion (WCM), Anne No Delaide (RBC), Johanne Bélisle (WCM), Gina Amoroso (RBC), Sherine Morsi (RBC), Javiera Arroyo (WCM) and Valérie Dinh (RBC)

### Montréal Association of Insurance Women (AFAM)

Faithful to its commitment of over 30 years, the AFAM once again held its annual fundraising event for the Women's Centre of Montréal, Le Chaînon and the WICC (Women in Insurance Cancer Crusade). We are extremely grateful!

### Pure Industrial

Thanks to the generosity of Pure Industrial, we once again had the privilege this year of having access to 3,000 square feet of space to store our donations for free.

### La Société d'Histoire du Plateau-Mont-Royal

On November 6, 2025, the Centre received the Plateau-Mont-Royal historical society (SHP) 2025 Prix Engagement, from Louise Harel, former Québec government minister and first female Speaker of the Québec National Assembly, jointly with the Centre de santé des femmes de Montréal.

The SHP wanted to pay homage to the two organizations' 50 years of engagement with women in the neighbourhood.

### Pharmaprix

Our warm thanks to the Pharmaprix at 3861 Boulevard Saint-Laurent and its owner, Eric Van Hoenacker, for his loyal support for over 15 years. As part of the initiatives carried out by the Fondation Pharmaprix pour la santé de femmes, every year during the *Festival d'art urbain* on the Main, he and his team hold a corn-on-the-cob and lemonade sale and collect donations from their customers for the Centre's programs.

### La Tablée des Chefs

Once again this year, the Women's Centre of Montréal is proud of our ongoing collaboration with La Tablée des Chefs, an organization with the mission to feed and educate. Thanks to La Tablée, an agreement between the Centre d'hébergement Paul-Émile-Léger and the Women's Centre of Montréal lets us combat food insecurity. Prepared dishes are collected and distributed to families once a week, which amounts to 52 times a year. This allowed us to offer **920 food portions** to large families and to enhance their food baskets.



Javiera Arroyo, Director of the Front Line Service; Johanne Bélisle, Executive Director; Louise Harel, former head of the Parti Québécois and Vision Montréal; Joëlle Thibault, President of the Women's Centre of Montréal Board, and Emmanuelle Brion, Assistant Director, Employability Service  
Photo credit: Pierre Crépô



Paul Fitka, Manager (Pharmaprix), Eric Van Hoenacker, Owner (Pharmaprix), Johanne Bélisle, Executive Director, and Javiera Arroyo, Director, Front Line Service (Women's Centre of Montréal).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES

### Members of the Board of Directors of the Women's Centre of Montréal

**11**  
Board meetings



**Joëlle Thibault**, *President*  
Ombuds, mediator and conflict resolution coach



**Maya Bisson**, *Employee member*  
Educational Service  
Coordinator, Women's Centre of Montréal



**Yveline Delma**, *Vice-President*  
Manager in the healthcare system



**Emilie Paquin-Holmested**,  
*Member*  
Partner | Co-Leader, Labour, Employment & Human Rights, Fasken



**Roxane Côté**, *Treasurer*  
CPA auditor, Senior Director, Deloitte



**Josée Pichet**, *Participant member*  
Clinical nurse



**Isabelle Troitzky**, *Secretary*  
Founder and consultant, Isabelle Troitzky Communications



**Cloé Potvin**, *Member*,  
Manager, Labour and Employment Law, Dairy Regulation and Compliance, Agropur



**Johanne Bélisle**, *Ex-officio member*  
Executive Director, Women's Centre of Montréal



**Isabelle Viger**, *Member*  
Liaison Officer - Agreements Manager, Community Relations Division, Ministry of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

### Strategic Planning and Governance Committee

- Members: Johanne Bélisle, Roxane Côté, Isabelle Troitzky, Yveline Delma, Joëlle Thibault
- Chair: Joëlle Thibault

In 2025-2026, the Strategic Planning and Governance Committee met regularly to finalize the 2026-2029 strategic plan. A new plan was adopted by the Board in November 2025 that will allow the Centre's teams to develop action plans related to the new strategic priorities.

The Committee also started a process with a governance expert to prepare amendments to the Bylaws in order to respond more effectively to the organization's current challenges.

It also examined the question of Board succession.



Once again this year, the Board members engaged in a self-evaluation questionnaire to confidentially and individually express their opinions about their contributions and the governance improvements they identified. Improvements related to the way the Boards operate were put in place after this evaluation.

We want to thank all members of the Strategic Planning and Governance Committee for their participation in the committee's work and reflections.

### Finance Committee

- Members: Javiera Arroyo, Johanne Bélisle, Roxane Côté, Cécile Demers, Duffay Romano
- Chair: Roxane Côté

As part of its recurring activities and after the adoption of the annual budget projections, the Finance Committee closely monitors the Centre's financial situation. For example, it conducts a monthly review of the financial statements and a quarterly analysis of budget variances, to quickly identify trends, explain significant variances and recommend any corrected measures required to support the achievement of objectives throughout the year. A presentation of budgetary developments and key indicators is made to the Board quarterly.

The committee also participates in the audit process of the annual financial results, in collaboration with the external auditors, by examining the financial statements and making a recommendation to the Board about adopting it. It works with the other committees to assess the financial impact of the orientations and decisions, to support sound risk management (internal controls, compliance with funders' requirements) and to anticipate changes that could affect the Centre, primarily in relation to funding and the changing needs of the clients. As such, maintaining and diversifying sources of funding – to ensure the Centre's longevity and the continuation of its global mission – will be a priority issue in the coming years. The committee is monitoring changes in agreements and subsidy programs and helping to identify complementary avenues of funding, in keeping with the Board's guidelines and the Centre's mission.

### Human Resources Committee

- Members: Javiera Arroyo, Johanne Bélisle, Cécile Demers, Emilie Paquin-Holmested, Cloé Potvin, Duffay Romano
- Chair: Emilie Paquin-Holmested

In 2025-2026, the committee continued to support the management team with many challenges. For example, it helped the management team identify ways to retain and attract quality resources and to keep the staff engaged and equipped to continue to offer relevant services to the Centre's participants.

It reviewed the employees' working conditions in comparison to the market and current challenges and it supported the management team in updating work policies, maintaining pay equity and implementing an occupational health and safety plan.

Our profound thanks to the members of this committee, who were able to grasp the importance of the human resources issues and who dedicated the time and attention required to achieve its goals.

### Public Relations and Marketing Committee

- Members: Johanne Bélisle, Caroline Lacroix, Kaouther Sfar-Felfoul, Isabelle Troitzky
- Chair: Isabelle Troitzky

In a situation marked by organizational changes related to the Centre's communications responsibilities and the need to strengthen our external presence, this committee continued its strategic role with intention and consistency. It supported the team by assisting with the integration of an external agency to take care of digital communications, particularly to support the recruitment of immigrant participants, a priority that emerged this year.

Following its advice, the committee also contributed to the communications and visibility for the 2025 Benefit Evening, "*Setting Sail Toward Full Potential for Women*," an essential fundraising event for the Centre and a great showcase for the philanthropic community.

We supported the development of the strategic plan from the communications perspective and

took part in putting together the annual report. We also advised the staff on managing offensive comments on the Centre's social media, to ensure that the integrity and sensitivity of its messages were maintained.

We want to warmly thank the committee members for their commitment and their cooperation, which helped consolidate a foundation of consistent, sensitive communications, fully aligned with the Centre's values.

### Program Advisory Committee

- Members: Javiera Arroyo, Johanne Bélisle, Maya Bisson, Yveline Delma, Alina Liegel, Maria Stroia
- Chair: Yveline Delma

This year, the committee focused its reflections and efforts on the possibility of annualizing the satisfaction survey for the services offered by the various programs. The goal is to measure the clients' satisfaction frequently, in real time, over a longer period, with a view to continuous improvement. We reviewed the prior questionnaires and created a unique, integrated survey form, available in French, English and Spanish, that can ask participants about the various programs while avoiding having to repeatedly seek their opinions.

Although the work has progressed, it did not allow us to achieve the results we hoped for and gain an accurate picture of the clients' satisfaction. Technical difficulties biased and limited the data collection. We are actively continuing our efforts to make the required changes.

This means we are unable to present results for 2024 and 2025. It should be remembered, however, that the Centre's teams continue to listen to the clients and diligently make every effort to maintain the quality of the services and make any required improvements.

## OUR MEMBERS

### Communications with Our Members

We keep in contact with our community through our website and social networks, to ensure the complementarity of our communications channels.

Human resources challenges in terms of management support prevented us from publishing our general newsletter for the members during this past year. Thanks to a dedicated resource, however, we were able to maintain specific newsletters for the participants of our Employability Service and our partners in this sector.

**83** women are members  
of the Centre

**30** members present at the AGM  
on June 10, 2025

## MEMBERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

### Women's Centre of Montréal

CDC Plateau-Mont-Royal • Montreal Council of Women • Table des groupes de femmes de Montréal

### Front Line Service

Accès bénévolat - Est de Montréal • Alliance des communautés culturelles pour l'égalité dans la santé et services sociaux (ACCESSS) • Association des haltes-garderies communautaires du Québec • Association sportive et communautaire du Centre-Sud • Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes • CAVAC • CDC Plateau-Mont-Royal/Comités itinérance et sécurité alimentaire • Cégep André-Laurendeau • Cégep du Vieux Montréal • Cégep de Rosemont • Cégep Gérald-Godin • Cégep Marie-Victorin • Cégep Saint-Laurent • Centre d'action bénévole de Montréal (CABM) • Centre d'amitié autochtone de Montréal • Centre Iivrtivik • Centres de la jeunesse et de la famille Batshaw • Centre de santé des femmes de Montréal • Chez Doris • Cercle de consultation sur la santé des Autochtones de Montréal

(CCSAM) • CLIC-OPEQ • Clinique des Toxicomanies du CHUM • CLSC des FAUBOURGS • Commission de développement des ressources humaines des Premières Nations du Québec • Équipe mobile de médiation et d'intervention sociale (ÉMMIS) • Femmes autochtones du Québec inc. • Native Women's Shelter of Montréal • La porte ouverte/Open door • La Rue des femmes • Le Chaînon • MAI, Montréal arts interculturels • Médecins du Monde • Moisson Montréal • Native Montréal • Montréal Museum of Fine Arts • Parc Jean Drapeau • Palais de justice de Montréal • Pharmaprix du 3861, boulevard Saint-Laurent, Montréal • Plein Milieu • PRAID (Programme régional d'accueil et d'intégration des demandeurs d'asile) • Projets Autochtones du Québec inc. • Regroupement des organismes en francisation du Québec (ROFQ) • Regroupement intersectoriel des organismes communautaires de Montréal (RIOCM) • Réseau pour la stratégie urbaine de la communauté autochtone à Montréal • Native Para-Judicial Services of Québec • Sac à dos • Makivik Corporation • S.O.S violence conjugale • Table de concertation des organismes au service des réfugiés et immigrants (TCRI) • Table de concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal • Local Accessibility Table for Urban Aboriginal Health and Social Services for Aboriginals in Montréal • Université de Montréal • Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)

### Employability Service

211 Grand Montréal • Alliance des centres-conseils en emploi (AXTRA) • Banque nationale du Canada • Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi Centre-Ville • Cégep André-Laurendeau • Cégep Bois-de-Boulogne • Cégep Gérald-Godin • Cégep John-Abbott • Cégep Marie-Victorin • Centre de formation du transport routier • Centre de formation Paul-Gérin-Lajoie • Centre de formation Pierre-Dupuy • Centre de formation professionnelle de Verdun • Centre Gabrielle-Roy • Centre Lartigue • CGI • CHUM (projet 109) • Conseil d'intervention pour l'accès des femmes au travail (CIAFT) • École des métiers de la construction de Montréal • École des métiers de l'horticulture de Montréal • Événement Carrières • Groupe d'aide et d'information sur le harcèlement au travail de la province de Québec (GAISHT) • Institut de recherche sur l'intégration professionnelle des immigrants (IRIPI) • Loblaws • Loto-Québec • MDA Space • RBC Royal Bank • Revenu Québec • Statistics Canada • Table de quartier Peter-McGill • Université de Montréal

## THANK YOU TO OUR MAIN FINANCIAL PARTNERS

We are able to deliver our services year after year thanks to the support of many partners. We would like to express our deep gratitude to them for their financial support, which is essential to our mission.

Centraide du Grand Montréal • CIUSSS Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal • Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (Services Québec) • Employment and Social Development Canada • The Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal • Fondation Dufresne & Gauthier • Fondation Famille Léger • Fondation J. Armand Bombardier • Fondation J.A. DeSève • Fondation Jacques Francoeur • Ville de Montréal in partnership with the Ministère, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale • Ville de Montréal • Plateau Mont-Royal borough • Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration.



**Centraide**  
du Grand Montréal

**Montréal** 

With the financial support from:

**Québec** 



## OUR FOUNDATION

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE FOUNDATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

After many years of involvement, I had the enormous privilege of becoming the President of the Board of Directors of the Women's Centre of Montréal Foundation in 2025 and of working with an extraordinary team. Together, we made progress to promote and support the essential mission of the Centre, which is working tirelessly on social transformation and public participation. This success would never have been possible without the unfailing commitment of remarkably generous women and men, who enabled the Foundation to reach further than ever and ensure the continuation of the essential services offered at the Centre.

I want to warmly thank each and every one of you, on behalf of the Foundation, for your commitment to this cause, which makes a real difference in the lives of thousands of women and families across greater Montréal.

The Foundation's 26<sup>th</sup> Benefit Evening, held at the 9e restaurant, was a highlight of our year. Honorary co-chairs **Isabelle Garon** (Desjardins), **Renée Laflamme** (iA Financial Group) and **Anne-Marie Roy** (National Bank) played a key role in the success of the event. Thanks to their efforts and the energy of an extraordinary team of 23 patrons, we raised over \$700,000, an impressive sum that allows us to energetically continue our mission.

We are fortunate to be able to count on such dedicated people. This collective strength will be even more valuable in the years ahead, when the Foundation, the owner of the building that houses the Centre, will have to undertake major renovations for the longevity and safety of our facilities.

In this situation, our successors and the involvement of the business community are extremely important. We are calling on you to help expand our network of volunteers, recruit honorary chairs and patrons for our events, reinforce our committees or support our corporate volunteer activities. Your support will be crucial, especially with the economic situation this year, to maximize the impact of the Women's Centre of Montréal in our community.

Thanks to each of you for enabling women to help themselves to write, together, this great story of solidarity.

I look forward to continuing along this path with you,

**Annik Desmarteau,**  
Senior Manager, Asset Management, Québec,  
La Caisse

## MEMBERS OF THE FOUNDATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Annik Desmarteau**, *President*  
Senior Manager, Asset  
Management, Québec,  
La Caisse



**Marie-Hélène Delonca**,  
*Member*  
Vice President, IT/Operations,  
Commercial Financing,  
National Bank of Canada



**Johanne Bélisle**,  
*Secretary, ex-officio member*  
Executive Director, Women's  
Centre of Montréal



**Alexandra Généreux**,  
*Member*  
Vice President & Chief  
Counsel, Canada, AECOM  
Canada ULC



**Catherine Newman**, *Treasurer*  
Senior Vice President, Chief  
Internal Auditor, Laurentian  
Bank



**Angela Ones**, *Member*  
Partner, Fasken



**Émilie Charbonneau**, *Member*  
Partner, Audit and  
Certification, Deloitte



**Ashee Sarin**, *Member*  
Partner, Technology and  
Transformation, Deloitte



**Brigitte Dagnault**, *Member*  
Vice President,  
Communication and Public  
Affairs, Promutuel Assurances



**Joëlle Thibault**, *ex-officio member*  
Ombuds, mediator and  
conflict resolution coach

## GOVERNORS

**Christiane Bergevin**, Senior Consultant, Roland Berger

**Anne Boutin**, Lawyer

**Verna Cuthbert**, Corporate Director

**Dominique Fortier**, Executive Director, Client Relation Management, PwC

**Louise Fourès**, Vice President, Finance, La Vie en Rose

**Marie-Claude Frigon**, Consultant, Richter

**Denise Tessier**, CPA, CA, Advisory Partner, Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton

## THE BUILDING

This house, built in 1857, has been home to several important figures in Montréal's bourgeoisie, such as Trefflé Berthiaume (one of the first owners of the *La Presse* newspaper), Joseph Odilon Dupuis (*Dupuis & Frères*) and the notary Victor Morin (author of the famous "Morin Code"). In 1950, it was acquired by Hôpital Ste-Jeanne d'Arc as a school and residence for nurses, until it closed in 1970. Left empty for a few years, it became the headquarters of the Women's Centre of Montréal (formerly the Women's Information and Referral Centre – CIRF) in 1974.

When the hospital began to plan its demolition, the Centre mobilized to protect this historical site. Demolishing the house of Victor Morin, one of the precursors of groups dedicated to protecting the urban heritage of Montréal, seemed absolutely scandalous for the Centre's founder, Mona Forrest, and a few like-minded allies. After an arson attack on the building and a long legal battle, the Superior Court cancelled the expulsion notice in 1976. In 1978, the Société d'Habitation du Québec acquired the building and sold it back to the Centre in 1983. The Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal became the owner of the building in 1984.

Thanks to two major fundraising campaigns, significant renovation and expansion work was carried out in 1984 and 2002. In 2005, the Women's Centre of Montréal moved back into a renovated and extended building that was more suited to its mission of supporting women and families. The architectural work of the second expansion won heritage recognition and honourable mention in the Sauvons Montréal's Prix Orange.

After a rich historical journey, citizen mobilization and several major transformations, the building at 3585 Saint-Urbain continues to be a strong symbol of resilience and community engagement. Despite the efforts made over the decades, however, the passage of time and climate conditions have affected the building's structure. Recent expert inspections have confirmed the need for considerable work, especially on both facades, to preserve the building's integrity. This work is essential for the safety of the users, the continuation of the Centre's mission and the protection of a site of considerable architectural interest that is an integral part of the city's social and historical fabric.



## BENEFIT EVENING

The annual Benefit Evening is the Foundation's flagship event. For many years now, it has taken the form of a cocktail reception, bringing together the Montréal business community and providing an excellent networking opportunity in a friendly, engaged atmosphere. It raises funds that are essential to supporting the services and programs offered by the Women's Centre of Montréal.

Thanks to the generosity of the donors and the business community's support, this event contributes directly to the Centre's mission, which is to support women on their journey to autonomy and wellness.

On May 21, 2025, over 500 people gathered on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Eaton Centre for the 26<sup>th</sup> Benefit Evening of the Women's Centre of Montréal Foundation. With the theme "Setting Sail Toward Full Potential for Women", the evening raised more than \$700,000 to support the Centre's programs and services, offered every year to thousands of women.



The 26<sup>th</sup> edition offered:

- An inspiring maritime atmosphere
- Dynamic co-hosting
- A live artistic performance by painter Guilbo
- Testimonies and speeches full of hope
- Deep, stirring discussions

This resounding success would not have been possible without the exemplary devotion of the members of the Finance Committee, whose involvement and mobilization drove the achievement. We also want to warmly thank the sponsors, donors and everyone who helped to make this event unforgettable.

The guests



Theme



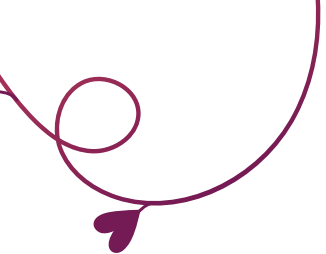
Emcee duo: Francis Reddy and Geneviève Borne



Honorary co-chairs

### Honorary co-chairs:

- **Isabelle Garon**, Senior Vice-President, Marketing, Communications, Cooperation and Office of the President, at Desjardins
- **Renée Laflamme**, Executive Vice-President, Individual Insurance, Savings and Retirement, at iA Financial Group
- **Anne-Marie Roy**, Vice-President, IT Delivery and Operations, Personal Banking, Banking Services, Financing, Insurance and Channels, at National Bank



## Patrons:

- **Daniel Alvarez**, Desjardins Group
- **Johanne Bélisle**, Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal
- **Janie Bilodeau**, iA Financial Group
- **Joëlle Carroll Bilodeau**, PwC
- **Paula Ceballos**, CGI
- **Anne-Lisa De Forest**, Zscaler
- **Marie-Hélène Delonca**, National Bank of Canada
- **Karine Desforges**, Englobe
- **Annik Desmarteau**, La Caisse
- **Johanne Duhaime**, Desjardins Group
- **Isabelle Durand**, iA Financial Group
- **Louise Fourès**, La Vie en Rose
- **Alexandra Généreux**, AECOM
- **Jason Haas**, Pomerleau
- **Ian Lapostolle**, St-Denis Thompson
- **Julie Lévesque**, National Bank of Canada
- **Julie Morand**, Fonds de solidarité FTQ
- **Catherine Newman**, Laurentian Bank
- **Angela Onesi**, Fasken
- **Lynda Poulin**, Desjardins Group
- **Caroline Pouliot**, Intact Financial Corporation
- **Valérie Sapin**, Desjardins Group
- **Ashee Sarin**, Deloitte

## LINKEDIN

### Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal

The Foundation's LinkedIn page promotes the Foundation's initiatives to the business community, especially the Benefit Evening.

### Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal

Subscribers:

**1,717**

Impressions:

**28,745**







Founded in 1973, the Women's Centre of Montréal is registered under the number 11884 6450 RR 0001.

The Foundation of the Women's Centre of Montréal is registered under the number 12077 8386 RR 0001.

Our annual report presents our activities for the period from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026.

It was adopted by the Board of Directors on June 9, 2026, and presented to our members at the Annual General Meeting on June 16, 2026.

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