



**Press Release
For immediate release**

**Early Childhood Week
People and Organizations Across Quebec Stand
“Hand in Hand for the Little Ones”!**

Montreal, November 15, 2018 – The 540,000 children in the 0-to-5 age group in Quebec may make up a mere 6% of our population, but they represent 100% of our future. By this virtue alone, they deserve special care and attention from every sector of our society. The third edition of Early Childhood Week, which will take place from November 18 to 24, promises to bring even more people together, as numerous stakeholders from around the province pledge to make early childhood development a true social priority.

“Early Childhood Week is an opportunity for everyone to stop for a moment and focus on early childhood in Quebec, in order to collectively reflect on what we can accomplish to help children achieve their full potential,” said Lucie Champagne, Co-Chair of Early Childhood Week and Strategic Consultant for the Association québécoise des centres de la petite enfance. “By taking action as early as possible, beginning at pregnancy, and giving children an equal chance to succeed, we will be empowering the society of the future to grow and develop in the best possible conditions. Let’s dream big for our little ones!”

Hundreds of activities, everywhere in Quebec

A number of activities will be organized throughout the province during Early Childhood Week in an effort to engage decision-makers and the general public about the key role played in the future of our society by our youngest citizens. These activities include:

- New – A Grand Rally for Our Little Ones, in Quebec City, on November 20 and 21. More than 600 decision-makers and early childhood development stakeholders involved in their respective communities will join members of major networks dedicated to improving conditions for babies, toddlers and preschoolers in Quebec.
- A number of municipalities will receive their “Municipalité amie des enfants” accreditation, and walks will be held in various communities in conjunction with the Carrefour action municipale et famille.
- Activities will be organized by early childhood development partners, including public libraries and several First Nations communities.
- The findings of a survey will be released: one led by Léger for the Early Childhood Observatory revealing what Quebecers expect of decision-makers with regard to young children and their families.

For the full Early Childhood Week program, go to handinhandforthelittleones.com.



Early childhood development ambassadors

Early childhood development is an issue that concerns everyone in society. This third edition is fortunate to be able to count on the support of a number of people from diverse backgrounds who have agreed to serve as our ambassadors, namely:

- Nathalie Bondil, Director and Chief Curator, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
- Simon Boucher, Mayor of Sainte-Clotilde-de-Horton, MAE (Municipalité amie des enfants) Representative for MRC Arthabaska
- Martin Damphousse, Mayor of Varennes and Chair of the Carrefour action municipale et famille
- Martine Desjardins, Executive Director of Mouvement national des Québécoises et Québécois, and Columnist
- Rosannie Filato, City Councillor for the Borough of Villeray and City of Montréal Executive Committee Member in Charge of Social and Community Development, Homelessness, Youth, the Condition of Women, and Sports and Recreation
- Vincent Graton, Actor and Columnist
- Marie Grégoire, Columnist and Publisher
- Michel Leblanc, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal
- Elsie Lefebvre, Director of La Ruche Montréal and Former MNA
- Monique Leroux, Former President of Desjardins Group, Chair of the Board of Investissement Québec
- Myriam Nadeau, City Councillor for Gatineau
- Olya Ovtchinnikova, 2008 Fencing Olympian and Program Manager, Athlete Marketing, Canadian Olympic Committee
- Jean-François Parenteau, Mayor of Verdun
- Ghislain Picard, Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief, Quebec/Labrador
- Jean-Louis Roy, Chief Executive Officer, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
- Kim St-Pierre, Olympian (Hockey Goaltender), BOKS Regional Coordinator for Eastern Canada

“The general public, early childhood stakeholders and decision-makers alike are invited to join with us for Early Childhood Week. Backed by a strong group of ambassadors and allies from every sector of society, we are confident that this third edition will be an unprecedented show of support for early childhood. Let’s all join hand in hand for the little ones!” said Isabelle Lizée, Co-Chair of Early Childhood Week and Executive Director of Carrefour action municipale et famille.

Addressing vulnerability through early intervention

In Quebec, a little more than one child in four (27.7%, or close to 24,000 children) in kindergarten are identified as vulnerable in at least one of five areas of development, according to the [Quebec Survey of Child Development in Kindergarten 2017](#). The conditions children grow up in can have direct repercussions on their health, development, academic success and their entire life path. It is vital to offer these adults of tomorrow what is best for them today so they can achieve their full potential. Globally, societies that invest in early childhood and families have the best levels of health.

EARLY CHILDHOOD WEEK



In conjunction with Early Childhood Week, the Hand in Hand for the Little Ones campaign will be launched to raise public awareness about this reality and the importance of making early childhood a priority for society. People will also be encouraged to take concrete action, in particular by writing to their public officials.

About Early Childhood Week

Running from November 18 to 24, 2018, Early Childhood Week is an opportunity to share information and open up a dialogue about early childhood development, to shine the spotlight on local and regional initiatives designed to support young children and to reach out to the entire population. A number of activities and events will take place across the province throughout the week.

The Early Childhood Week Partner Committee consists of the Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec, the Association des haltes-garderies communautaires du Québec, the Association québécoise des centres de la petite enfance, Avenir d'enfants, Carrefour action municipale et famille, the Community Health and Social Services Network / Réseau communautaire de santé et de services sociaux, the Conseil québécois des services éducatifs à la petite enfance, the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec, the Fédération québécoise des organismes communautaires Famille, First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, the Instance de concertation régionale en petite enfance (Horizon 0-5), the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation (Observatoire des tout-petits, Naître et grandir), the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, du ministère de la Famille, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec, the Réseau des Centres de ressources périnatales du Québec, the Réseau des instances régionales de concertation (IRC) sur la persévérance scolaire et la réussite éducative du Québec, the Réseau pour un Québec Famille and the Table de concertation nationale en promotion prévention.

About Hand in Hand for the Little Ones

Hand in Hand for the Little Ones champions early childhood development with the support of a number of engaged partners whose shared goal is to make early childhood a social priority for Quebec.

Today's toddlers are tomorrow's adults. Does this not qualify them as a group that warrants special attention by our society? It is important to take collective action, from conception onward, to provide the best possible conditions so that every child can thrive at every stage of their development. By starting early, we can help them realize their full potential and become well-rounded, engaged adults. By making sure all young children have the same chances, we will be building a more just, more dynamic, more enlightened and more prosperous society.

To learn more, go to handinhandforthelittleones.com

Facebook: facebook.com/Touspourlestoutpetits/

Twitter: twitter.com/TousPourlesTP

EARLY CHILDHOOD WEEK



For more information:

Ariane Richard / Marie-Pier Kenney
Morin Relations Publiques
ariane@morinrp.com / mariepier@morinrp.com
Office: 514-289-8688, ext. 241 / ext. 237
Mobile: 438-822-2845 / 514-757-8619

Josée Massicotte
Early Childhood Week Communications
massicottejosee@videotron.ca
Office: 514-388-0169
Mobile: 514-915-0511