

Working tirelessly to prevent poverty...

The Chagnon Foundation: one link in the chain

January 8, 2014

Message from Claude Chagnon, President - We refuse to accept the inevitability of poverty. In a society such as ours, it is unacceptable that many, many children are still living and growing up in disadvantaged conditions. The poverty that affects these children and their families concerns all of us: theirs is not the only development that is compromised. The development of our society as a whole is at stake.

For the past 14 years, the Chagnon Foundation has been working to prevent poverty, supporting the tireless work of the thousands of organizations and individuals who work towards this goal throughout Quebec. We want to do more than alleviate poverty. We are focussed on the future, on the development and educational success of the children of Quebec. We believe that childhood development and educational success are the key to preventing poverty and that they demand a long-term commitment in all spheres of our society. Our primary goal is to recognize and acknowledge the importance of the role and influence of parents, who are in the best position to initiate the development of their children's full potential.

We are optimistic. We know for a fact that hundreds of thousands of parents and just as many educators, teachers, volunteers, community organizations, professionals, administrators, social entrepreneurs and members of the business community are passionate about making very concrete contributions every day. Through their actions, their decisions and their initiatives, they rally around all our children, contributing to their development and supporting their parents and families.

We in Quebec are fortunate to live in a society that has made the conscious choice to invest in the welfare of all its citizens by adopting effective public policies (like our daycare and parental leave programs) that are the envy of many other states. The Chagnon Foundation endorses this approach and recognizes the importance of setting up and maintaining accessible, quality public services, which is why we work in close cooperation with the government of Quebec. We also believe that this vision of a more just society that provides equal opportunities to all its children will be achieved only if all the actors concerned work together, particularly in underprivileged areas where children are growing up.

Our experience and the lessons we have learned over the past 14 years have strengthened our conviction that there are many ways to tackle a problem as complex as that of poverty, and that each of those ways must be adapted to many different realities. That is why we have created partnerships with the government: Avenir d'enfants, Québec en Forme and Réunir Réussir. We share the governance of those agencies with the government, pooling our resources to support the initiatives of local partnership groups from civil society. It is they-and parents-who are the best placed to know what is needed for the children in their area.



We believe that is imperative to monitor all instances of social inequality. In concrete terms, that means supporting organizations that defend the rights of individuals living in poverty, give them a voice and help them to play an active role in the social debate.

All of this constitutes an extremely challenging project that is of the utmost importance for Quebec. It is by constantly working to combine all our efforts that we will create the human chain needed to prevent poverty and ensure that the children of Quebec enjoy success in school and in life.

Claude Chagnon
President