



*Living life without limits*

## Case for Support 2014 Call to Action



## Living Life without Limits

The Action Centre believes in Living Life without Limits – and that every physically disabled person deserves an opportunity to grow within an environment of respect, support, encouragement and safety.

## Who Benefits?

The Action Centre's services have a **direct impact** on approximately **700 people every day** and indirectly impacts countless others. Who benefits from our services?

- Approximately 170 active members who participate in our daily workshops and activities
- Hundreds of caregivers who are able to care for more people because of the respite our Centre provides
- Countless professionals in the healthcare system who count on our services as an important resource in the continuum of care for these adults with multiple disabilities
- 10 members who derive a sense of empowerment and fulfilment from employment in the operations of the Centre
- The Quebec Government Social Services and Healthcare agencies derive a significant bottom line benefit of \$3.5 Million cost savings per year

## Members

The Action Centre is a membership centric community center. Members derive specific benefits from joining the Action Centre, including access to all structured activities and workshops and a cost reduction on specific activities and programs. Members are at least 21 year of age, have a physical or cognitive disability, are motivated to participate in the programs and activities of the Centre, pay an annual membership fee of \$20/year, agree to respect the Centre's Code of Conduct and pay the additional costs for certain social activities and outings.

## Mission

To increase our members' independence, personal growth and to promote improved health and wellbeing by assisting them in active learning ~ through educational, social and recreational opportunities in a safe environment that promotes peer support, trust and acceptance.

## Vision

Our vision is to facilitate our members in re-integrating back into their communities, to give back to their community to the best of their ability; to create public awareness of the needs of the physically challenged, and to advocate and be the role models for other people with disabilities and for groups across Canada and throughout the world.

## Objectives

Our objectives are four-fold:

1. Enhance our members' self-esteem
2. To improve our members' quality of life, and enhance their autonomy with mutual assistance
3. To enrich their lives through fulfilling activities and education
4. To ensure their active involvement and participation in the decision-making process at all level of the governance of the Action Centre

## Action Centre saves the Quebec Government on average \$3.5 Million / year

The services and structured activities offered by the Action Centre to adults with significant motor disabilities **represent significant cost savings of \$3.5 million per year and an unquantifiable value to our members.** These government cost savings are derived from cost avoidance for caregiver salaries and intermediate care housing.

If the Action Centre were to close its doors, members living in partially subsidized government housing would be unable to meet the housing eligibility requirement (leaving their residence 3 days a week for 6 hours per day) and this would have a cascading effect on the government housing bottom line. Currently, 78% (133 of our 170) of our members live in these residences and this eligibility requirement results in reduced staff supervision costs within the government funded housing units, enabling them to attain budgetary viability. If the Action Centre closed, members would then have to relocate to intermediate level community based residences that offer housing, and a higher level of care and assistance than what they receive in partially subsidized housing. At an intermediate average housing cost of \$72.5 per day (including the amount reimbursed to the government by the member), the **annual government housing cost savings is \$3.5 Million for the 133 members of the Action Centre who are currently living in low level care partially subsidized government housing.**

If the Centre stays open, there is an additional cost savings to the government beyond the housing savings, which is derived from caregiver salary cost avoidance. The Centre has a current attendance days rate of 12,112 days per year (average attendees per day x number of days open per year). If our members did not attend the Action Centre we estimate that they would require on average 2 hours of caregiver time /day in lieu of attending the Centre. Based on an average caregiver salary of \$17.5 per hour (includes employers benefits) the cost savings to the government for caregiver salaries is **\$424,000 per year.**

Since the founding of the Action Centre in 1998, using the annual cost savings estimates, the Action Centre's structured activities have resulted in cost savings for the Quebec government (from reduction of intermediate level housing needed) of over **\$50 million (\$3.5 million per year cost savings on housing x 16 years of operations).** It is also important to note that the creation of the Action Center enabled the Constance-Lethbridge Rehabilitation Center to realize significant savings by closing a sheltered workshop program for over 30 physically disabled adults, who subsequently became members of the Action Centre.

Having access to structured activities provided at the Action Centre decreases the risk of isolation and depression for our members, increases their ability to stay involved in their community, promotes empowerment and self-sufficiency. If the Centre closed members would have very limited options.

## Action Centre History

The creation of the Action Centre was spearheaded by our founding partners at the [Constance-Lethbridge Rehabilitation Centre,](#) to establish a bilingual, structured activity (day) Centre that would permit Montreal adults with severe disabilities to enhance their overall quality of life.

In 1998, thanks to a generous donation from the JW McConnell Family Foundation, the Action Centre opened its doors. The Centre was originally located in Pointe St-Charles but was moved to the current location in LaSalle in January 2002. Many capital projects have been spearheaded since 2002 with financing provided by the Action Centre Foundation's founding donors.

## What makes the Action Centre Unique?

The Action Centre is the **Only Bilingual Day Centre** for people with disabilities in Montreal and has been operating for over 16 years. As a result, many of our members travel 2 hours in each direction in order to participate in our structured activities. The Action Centre provides a **unique and essential service** and is a place where members can have communal interaction in a safe environment, where they benefit from a multi-dimensional approach to health and instructional education, social integration and recreation, at a price they can afford. The services we offer are **unavailable elsewhere** in the community, and are instrumental in assisting adults with disabilities regain their independence and transform their vision of the future. Our members suffer from many forms of severe physical disabilities, some with coexisting or mild cognitive dysfunction. Their chronic conditions and diseases range from Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis to stroke, head trauma and accidents. Many of our members were marginalized - socially and emotionally - before coming to the Centre. Over **78%** live in government-assisted housing, where many are mandated to vacate their residence 3 times per week for *structured activity* leaving them **limited options**.

The Action Centre has a very sound fiscal and administration track record; we offer our services at a cost of \$38.52 per person, per day, while a similar facility in Mississauga Ontario offers comparable services for almost twice the cost (\$71.60 per person, per day).

The Action Centre's classes and workshops are offered by committed teachers from a variety of community organizations and our own dedicated team of interns and volunteers. A comprehensive list of Community Partners who contribute to the education programs is below:

Montreal Neurological Institute	Centre de Ressources Éducative et pédagogique	Lester B. Pearson School Board
Centre Lisette Dupras	Nutri-Centre	

As a pivotal member of the social services and healthcare community, the Action Centre offers training opportunities for students from the following educational institutions:

Université de Montréal	Concordia University	Vanier College	École des Faubourgs
Cégep du Vieux Montréal	College LaSalle	Dawson College	Lester B. Pearson School Board

## Programs and Services

The Action Centre offers 25 classes and workshops each week to stimulate the mind, motivate the body and improve self-confidence and self-esteem. Our four key programs center around the following pillars: **Education, Arts & Creativity, Health & Wellness and Community Participation**. Each of the activities and workshops in the four pillars are geared towards providing better choices for healthier lifestyles, improved quality of living and better mobility.



## The Four Pillars

These are some of the workshops and activities we offer our members:

Educational Classes & Workshops	Arts & Creativity	Health & Wellness	Community Participation
Beginner and Intermediate French & English	Writing / Photography	Personal Development – Argyle Institute	Outings to tourist attractions
Beginner and Advanced Computer	Music Appreciation	Psychological Development – Argyle Institute	Bowling & Boccia
How to use the internet	Art / Painting	Fitness & Exercise	Fundraising activities
Geography, News and Current Events	Gardening	Safe Cooking & Nutrition	Picnics, BBQ, Dances & Holiday Parties

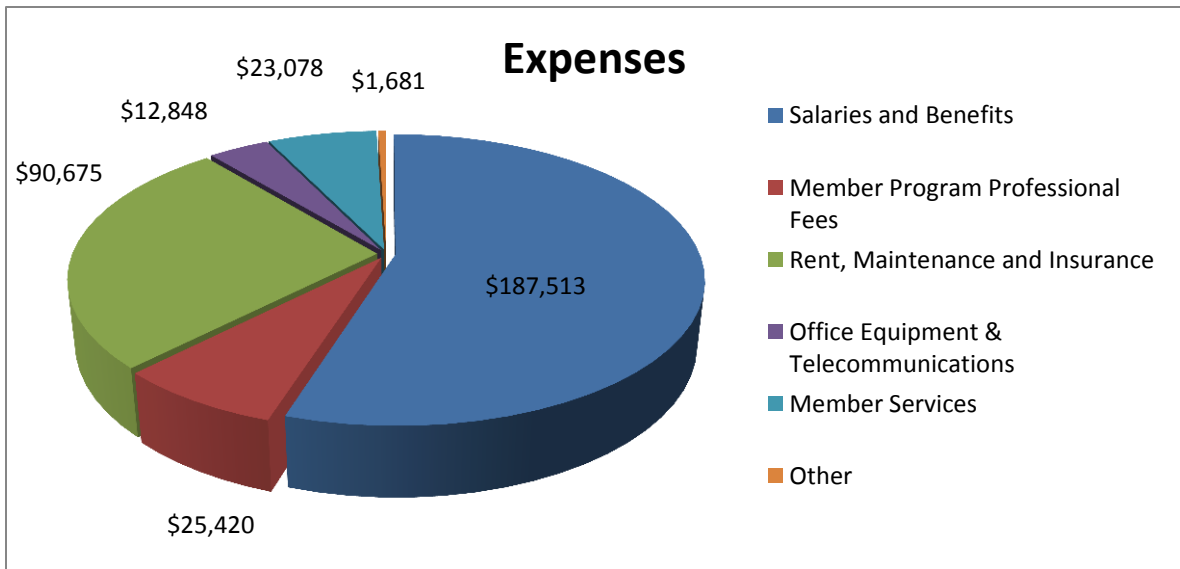
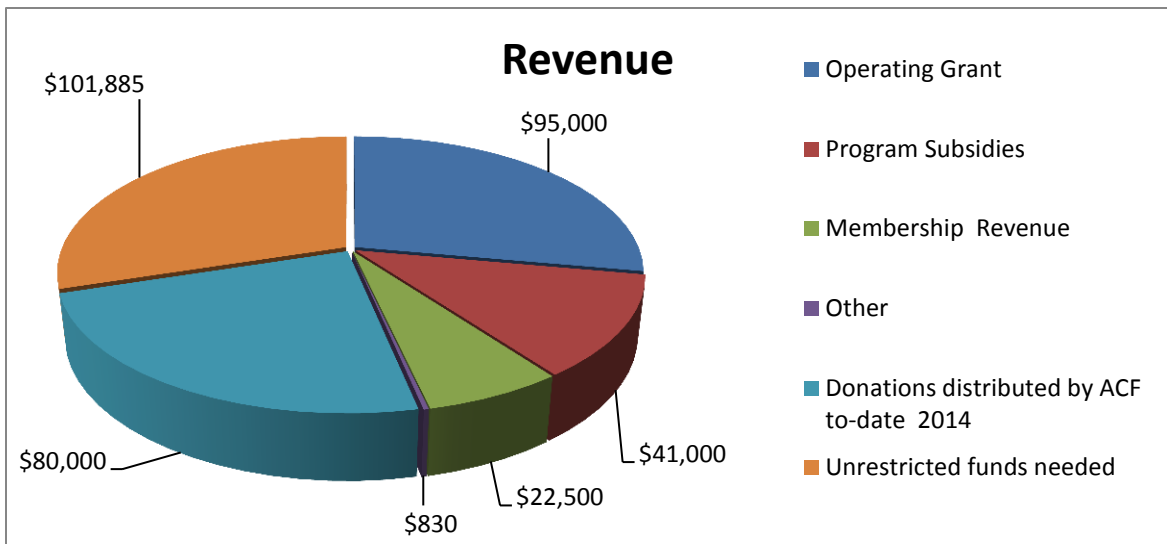
## How are we funded?

We are funded through a combination of private donations (54%), government operating subsidies (27.8%), government program subsidies (12.2%) and membership fundraising (6%). In the past, the Action Centre relied heavily upon private donations from the Action Centre Foundation. We are actively working on strategies to increase government funding as we believe that the Centre offers **essential services** that are part of the continuum of care for people with disabilities in Montreal.

The private donations are disbursed to the Action Centre by the Action Centre Foundation. The Action Centre Foundation (hereafter ACF) is a sole-funding foundation with the primary goal of raising funds in support of the Action Centre. ACF disburses funds to the Action Centre in order to enable the Centre to continue its operations.

## Preliminary Budget 2015

Expenses	Subtotal	Percentage
Salaries and Benefits (5 FT employees, 7 PT employees)	\$ 187,513	54.95 %
Member Program Professional Fees	\$ 25,420	7.45 %
Rent, Maintenance and Insurance	\$ 90,675	26.57 %
Office Equipment & Telecommunications	\$ 12,848	3.77 %
Member Services (170 members)	\$ 23,078	6.76 %
Other	\$ 1,681	.50 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 341,215</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
Revenue		
Operating Grant	\$ 95,000	27.84 %
Program Subsidies	\$ 41,000	12.02 %
Membership Fundraising	\$ 22,500	6.59 %
Other	\$ 830	.24 %
Donations distributed by ACF to-date 2014	\$ 80,000	23.45 %
<b>Total (to-date)</b>	<b>\$ 239,330</b>	<b>70.14 %</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds needed</b>	<b>\$101,885</b>	<b>29.86%</b>



With a view of broadening its donor base, the strategy for 2013 was to focus on a new approach to foundations and corporations with the understanding that results could not be immediate. Four distinct pillars were identified - Health, Education, The Arts and Community Outreach – allowing the Foundation to communicate both the Centre’s programs and needs, while being fully transparent as to the Centre’s costs and obligations. The Action Centre did the same, resulting in significant increased commitments from government programs and subsidies (\$137,000) while it tightened its operational budget (\$420,000).

With reduced resources, the ACF moved away from depending heavily on a single fundraising event, which traditionally still left a gap between subsidies and the Centre’s annual needs, forcing it to dip into the initial funding source year after year. The old formula had to be revamped as the original account will be depleted by the end of 2014. An investment in time and energy had to be made to insure the success of the plan, the immediate survival of the Centre as well the execution of a sustainable three to five year plan.

## Plans for immediate future

- Financial sustainability:

The Action Centre intends to increase its funding

- Through greater relationship building with government agencies to provide new and interesting solutions to expand the center with the objective of decreasing health care institution dependency thus improving financial relief on the system and the caregiver environment
- Through longer term funding agreements between the Action Centre Foundation and its long term donors and the identification and solicitation of new long-term funding sources

- Partnerships and Alliances:

- The Action Centre will establish and create alliances and/or mergers with 'like' centers to support operational efficiencies and program development across the Montreal region
- The Action Centre will establish an Advocacy Program for the physically disabled, in order to further community engagement
- The Action Centre will establish partnerships with organizations like the Société de Transport de Montréal and the Restaurant Association, to increase the community's awareness of the needs of people with disabilities

- Awareness campaign:

- The Action Centre will embark on an Awareness program to educate the community on how its services are essential and are integral to the continuum of care (health-care system) for adults with significant motor disabilities



## Appendix I – Action Centre Governance

The Action Centre is governed by a board of 12 Directors and 3 Advisors, which includes 5 active Action Centre members as mandated by the Action Centre by-laws. The directors are listed below:

### **Executive:**

Joanne Heward, Chair of the Board, Senior Consultant, The Heward Group Inc.

Peter Cohn, Vice Chairman, AC member and former VP Sales, Algo Industries

Michael Gareau, Treasurer, Business Consultant

Nancy Ryan, Secretary, Computer Teacher, Lester B. Pearson School Board

### **Directors:**

Arik Azoulay, Director, Owner, Les Pavillons LaSalle

Audrey Hamilton, BN, Director, AC member, formerly Surgical Nurse, Toronto Sick Kids Hospital

Celina Hasbun, Director, Coordination Assistant, Action des Femmes Handicapées Montréal

Andrew Lindsay, Director, Senior Partner, Lindsay Strategic

Maria Mustillo, Director, AC member, Activities Coordinator

Hugo Ouellette, Director, Program Manager, Centre Constance-Lethbridge

Seymour Silverman, Director, AC member, Former CTV Videographer

Paul Walton, Director, AC member

### **Advisors:**

Nigel Bicknell, Advisor, AC member, Director, Tango

Kevin Harrison, Advisor, Executive Director, Muscular Dystrophy Canada

Zygmunt Marcinski C.A., Advisor, President, Capital Ideas

## Appendix II – Action Centre Foundation Governance

### Executive:

Andrew T. Pepper – Chair of the Board, Marketing and Client Service, Gryphon Investment Counsel

### Directors:

Phil Belec – President, Ben-Jac Capital Inc.

Mark Culver – Managing Director, Kinsale Private Wealth Inc.

Charles Frosst – Chief Operating Officer, Nakisa Inc.

Michael Gareau – Business Consultant

Geoffrey Heward – Senior Vice-President & Director, Heward Investment Management Inc.

Joanne Heward – Business Management Leader, Heward Investment Management Incl.

Jodi Lafrenière – Business Development, Canada Post Corporation Inc.

Filipe Morales – Attorney, Colby Monet Demers Crevier LLP

Sophie Palmer – CFA, Jarislowsky Fraser Ltd.

Tyler Schlemm – Financial Analyst, BT Global Growth

Charles Vennat – General Manager, Bastos of Canada

### Advisor:

Zygmunt Marcinski, C.A. - President, Capital Ideas

## Appendix III – Action Centre Foundation Annual Soirée Honorees

Every year from 2002 to 2012 the Action Centre Foundation hosted an annual gala event called **Annual Soirée**. This event honored the Action Centre Foundation’s major donors.

Year	Honoree(s)	Year	Honoree(s)
2002	Lorne Webster	2008	Carolyn & Rick Renaud
2003	Suzan Cavell	2009	A.K. Velan
2004	Pam Dunn	2010	Dr. Arthur Porter
2005	Mary & David Culver	2011	Kevin Harrison, Rosemary Hoppenheim, Sue McConnell, James Orchard, Ginger Petty, Sandra Schlemm and Karen Velan
2006	John Rae	2012	Richard Pound
2007	Lucie & Pierre Boivin		

## Appendix IV – Contact Information

### Action Centre Office

Ilham Bouzouma  
 Manager  
 514-366-6868 Ext: 229  
[ilham@centreaction.org](mailto:ilham@centreaction.org)

Amine Rachi  
 Assistant Manager  
 514-366-6868 Ext: 222  
[amine@centreaction.org](mailto:amine@centreaction.org)

2214 Dollard Avenue  
 LaSalle, QC H8N 1S6  
[www.centreaction.org](http://www.centreaction.org)  
<https://www.facebook.com/CentreActionCentre>



**Revenue Canada Charity Number:**

884835026 RR0001

**Watch our video:**

<http://vimeo.com/109963844>