

THE ACTION CENTRE NEWSLETTER

We believe in life beyond limits!



STAY IN TOUCH!
www.centreaction.org



A Message from the Executive Director

These pages reflect everyday life at the Centre; people learning, creating, debating, laughing, performing, exploring, building friendships, and supporting one another, whether as staff members or members of the Action Centre.

At the Action Centre, we do not believe in creating a separate community for adults with physical disabilities.

We believe accessibility and inclusion are fundamental rights, and that our members should fully participate in, contribute to, and be recognized as valued members of the broader community. This journey happens day by day, activity by activity, and our members chose to share part of it with you through these pages.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us, and happy reading!

Mojgan Yazdani
Executive Director

At the Action Centre, our mission goes beyond programming, it's about creating a space where every person feels welcomed, valued, and supported.

It is a community built on respect, inclusion, and genuine connection, where everyone can feel comfortable being themselves and know they belong.

What makes this work so meaningful to us, as staff members, is **the people**, our valuable members. Each of them brings their own story and energy, shaping the vibrant environment we are so proud of. We care deeply about every individual and strive to ensure everyone feels seen, heard, encouraged and, taken care of.

At the Centre, we also grow together, whether through outings, shared conversations, or member-led activities. Learning is something we build as a community, day by day. Together, we continue to learn, grow, and build something truly special.

To our members, thank you for trusting us to be part of your journey!



HAPPY READING!
The Action Centre Team

WE GROW TOGETHER

Curiosity in Action: Unite & Ignite Young Adult Club

The Unite&Ignite Young Adult Club is a member-driven program where young adults come together to explore a variety of topics based on their interests. Each session block is shaped by members' suggestions, creating a dynamic space where curiosity, discussion, and shared learning guide the programming.

During Monday sessions over the past four months, the group explored the topic of cosmology and discovered fascinating concepts not only within our Solar System, but also far beyond it.

Learning was supported through a mix of interactive activities, including games and trivia that helped reinforce new knowledge in an engaging way. The group also had an opportunity to explore concepts in a more hands-on manner. One activity involved creating galaxy pinwheels to better understand the structure and movement of spiral galaxies on a small, more accessible scale. In another activity, members designed and tested their own "meteors," experimenting with how different speeds, impact angles, shapes, and weights influence the craters they produce.

These playful, hands-on experiences helped make complex theoretical ideas more visual, tangible, and easier to understand.

On Thursdays, the young adults participate in workshop focused on cooking. This hands-on activity not only helps build practical cooking skills and increase their autonomy, but also offers opportunities to explore cultural traditions from around the world as well as learning about health and nutrition.

Over the past three months, the group has traveled widely through food, discovering traditional dishes from many different countries, including Zimbabwe, Senegal, San Marino, Georgia, Ecuador, Cyprus, Brunei, Greece, Tunisia, Trinidad and Tobago, Finland, Croatia, and Indonesia. Each session has provided a chance to connect with different culinary traditions while developing confidence in the kitchen.

Looking ahead, the possibilities for future culinary exploration remain wide open, with many more countries and flavours still to discover!



WE STAY CONNECTED

Our Virtual Program - Connexions

Recognizing that accessibility goes beyond physical spaces, Connexions creates a space where members can connect, share, and learn no matter where they are. This online community fosters friendship, personal growth, and participation at each person's own pace, with a range of activities that supports education, engagement, and entertainment.

Within this space, Connexions seminars highlight meaningful topics and provide participants with useful information and tools. February's session for Black History Month honoured trailblazers of Black history and their lasting impact. In March, "From Communities to Classrooms: Hearing for All" marked World Hearing Day, followed by "Give to Gain" for International Women's Day, focusing on empowerment and community. April included sessions for World Autism Awareness Month and Earth Day, emphasizing inclusion and collective action.

Member-led sessions allow participants to share their interests and knowledge. A highlight is History with Christophe, exploring key moments in history, with recent focus on Quebec history, including the Quiet Revolution and the Grande Noirceur. Our inspiring member also launched Psychology with Christophe, a series raising awareness about mental health in an accessible way.

In the new year, Connexions also introduced monthly guest speaker sessions. Mamadou, a writer and disability rights advocate, spoke about inclusion and social inequalities. Isabella, a neuroscience graduate student, explored links between brain function and mental illness. And lastly, sexologist Rozanne led a session on healthy relationships and recognizing harmful dynamics, with a focus on education and awareness around safe and respectful relationships. Seasonal celebrations also added to the Connexions experience, including Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day events filled with festive games and trivia.

Overall, Connexions continues to grow as an inclusive and engaging space built on shared learning and creativity, breaking down physical barriers and making connection possible from the comfort of home.



Sweet Connexions

Connexions also introduced Sweet Connexions, our first in-person meetup in February, where members baked and decorated cookies shared across the Action Centre. These meetups will now take place quarterly, offering opportunities for in-person connection when possible.



ACTIVE TOGETHER

Adapted Sports at the Action Centre



ADAPTED SWIMMING

Adapted swimming is a physical activity organized by the Action Centre at the Ville Saint-Laurent Sports Complex. During these sessions, a group of about seven members spends the morning in the water, supported by our staff in a safe and encouraging environment. The group continues to enjoy this swimming activity immensely, making them a valued part of the weekly routine.

Water-based activity has shown notable benefits for participants in the past months. Particularly, in supporting mobility and overall physical wellbeing. Staff have observed improvements in strength as well as increased mobility in the limbs among some members over time.

Most importantly, the sessions remain fun, and an enjoyable way for members to stay active while building confidence in a supportive setting.

ADAPTED BOWLING

We take a holistic approach to our members' wellbeing, with physical activity playing an important role. Our Adapted Bowling sessions, held every Thursday, offer members a chance to stay active, connect, and enjoy friendly competition.

Over the past few months, bowling has been a particularly lively part of the program. We hosted two tournaments, both of which gave members the opportunity to showcase their skills while enjoying a fun and encouraging atmosphere. The most recent one was especially memorable, as we were joined by a group from Centre Champagnat, adding a new social dimension and even more energy to the event.

The level of play has been impressive throughout. In the January tournament, attended by about 35 member participants, the highest individual score reached 184 points, with a top team score of 1202 points across five players. By April, attended by 55 participant members, these numbers had grown even further, with an individual high score of 192 points and a team total of 1655 points over two games between six players. This progression reflects the members' growing confidence, skill development, and continued enthusiasm for the activity.

These sessions and tournaments highlight not only the importance of movement, but also the strong sense of community and team spirit that defines the program.



ACTIVE TOGETHER

Adapted Sports at the Action Centre

Adapted Boccia

Adapted Boccia remains a true crowd favourite at the Action Centre. Every Thursday afternoon, about 30 members come together to enjoy a friendly yet competitive team game in a fun and engaging atmosphere. While playing, participants continue to develop their physical abilities, as well as their analytical and strategic thinking skills.



Adapted Boccia sessions continue to bring together friendly competition, teamwork, and plenty of enthusiasm. Participants remain highly engaged each week, creating a lively and welcoming atmosphere filled with encouragement, laughter, and enjoyment of the game.

Mini Golf

Every now and then, the Action Centre transforms into a mini golf course, offering members a unique and memorable experience. During these special events, staff set up a custom indoor course, giving participants the opportunity to try a sport that is not always easily accessible.

In March, we hosted a Mini Golf Tournament, which brought an extra level of energy to the activity. One of the highlights of the event was an impressive hole-in-one scored by a participant - a moment that was celebrated by the whole group. The tournament created a lively atmosphere filled with encouragement, laughter and shared excitement.

Mini golf continues to be a favourite special activity, offering a perfect blend of skill-building, social interaction, and pure fun.



WE EXPLORE

The Action Centre outings



One of the biggest highlights of the season was a visit to a traditional Cabane à Sucre - a true Quebec experience! Members shared a delicious meal, laughter, and plenty of festive spirit in a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

From culture to community, each outing brings new moments of discovery, fun, and connection - and plenty of great memories along the way.

As the warmer months approach, we are excited to take more of our activities outdoors and make the most of the season. Members can look forward to a variety of outings, including adapted sailing, park visits, trips to outdoor markets, and even a cruise on the Saint Lawrence River!

Outings are a highlight of life at the Action Centre, giving members the chance to get out, explore Montreal, and enjoy new experiences together all assisted and supported by our experienced staff. Whether discovering cultural spaces or simply spending time out in the community, these trips bring a sense of adventure and connection to everyday life.

Over the past four months, the group has been busy making the most of what the city has to offer. Members stepped into the world of design and urban ideas at the Canadian Centre for Architecture and explored the magic of film at the Cinémathèque québécoise. Art lovers enjoyed inspiring visits to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, as well as a special exhibition at the Bibliothèque du Boisé.

The group also mixed in some relaxed and social outings, including trips to Place Vertu and Carrefour Angrignon, where members could browse, chat, and enjoy time together at their own pace.



WE SPEAK UP

From Speaking About Problems to Building Solutions: A New Chapter for Speak Up / Speak Out



At the Action Centre, Speak Up / Speak Out has taken on a new life this year. What was once mostly a place to talk about the challenges faced by people with disabilities, has grown into something more active, hopeful, and empowering.

In the past, the group offered an important space for members to share frustrations and name the injustices they experience. Those conversations mattered. They created validation and solidarity. But over time, it became clear that talking about problems alone wasn't enough. Members wanted tools. They wanted direction. They wanted to know what could actually be done.

What do we do?

The year begins with communication. Members learn how to better express their feelings, understand how others may see a situation differently, and recognize the difference between venting and advocating. The focus is on clear, respectful, solution-oriented dialogue - the kind that opens doors instead of closing them.

The group also looks at broader social issues, studying how other communities have faced injustice and worked toward change. These conversations help members see that advocacy is not just about pointing out what's wrong - it's about building strategies that move things forward.

Throughout the year, participants practice debating ideas, researching community resources, writing thoughtful letters, and exploring who to contact when change is needed. The goal is simple but powerful: to move from "What isn't working?" to "What can we do about it?"

With the introduction of the new EMSB Social Participation program in adult education, Speak Up / Speak Out was reshaped with a fresh purpose. The class now blends the Action Centre's mission with practical skill-building that supports autonomy, confidence, and real-world engagement.

Looking ahead, the class plans to put these skills into action through projects like accessibility audits, solution proposals, and advocacy toolkits. At the same time, the program remains flexible and responsive to the needs and interests of its members. Speak Up / Speak Out is no longer just a place to express frustration. It's a place to grow, to learn, and to build confidence. It's about helping members not only raise their voices - but use them with purpose.

WE LEARN

The Math Bingo: Learning Through Play

At the Action Centre, education remains a priority. one of the engaging ways participants have been building numeracy skills recently is through Math Bingo, a fun and interactive activity.

Far from a traditional game, Math Bingo is designed to help participants practice recognizing and working with numbers, solving simple problems, and developing mental calculation skills. The activity is adapted to each participant's level, with visual supports when needed, while more advanced participants can take on a leadership role by helping facilitate the game.

Through this weekly session, participants strengthen their mathematical understanding in a positive, supporting, and motivating environment, making learning both effective and enjoyable.



Who said bingo couldn't be versatile? Meet Music Bingo!

While Math Bingo gets participants thinking with numbers, Music Bingo offers a creative twist on the classic game. During these sessions members explore a variety of musical genres while discovering how music evolved over time.

Participants play an active role in shaping the experience by suggesting themes that are then turned into curated playlists that everyone can enjoy. Recent sessions have featured a wide range of styles, including French-language music from around the Francophone world, Indian music, Rock and Roll from the 1950s, acoustic hits from 1970s and 1980s, 90s R&B, Hispanic music, and ballroom dance classics.

Music Bingo thus provides a fun and interactive way for members to connect and celebrate music together.



Monthly Seminars

Our Monthly Seminars are designed to raise awareness and encourage discussion around meaningful topics, often aligned with the theme of the month. Over the past few months, members have had the opportunity to explore a variety of important subjects, including Alzheimer's awareness, Black History Month, women's rights, autism awareness, and Earth Day. These seminars provide a space for learning, reflection, and open conversation, helping members stay informed while engaging with topics that matter both personally and within the wider community.



CREATIVITY CORNER

The Action Centre Artistic Initiatives



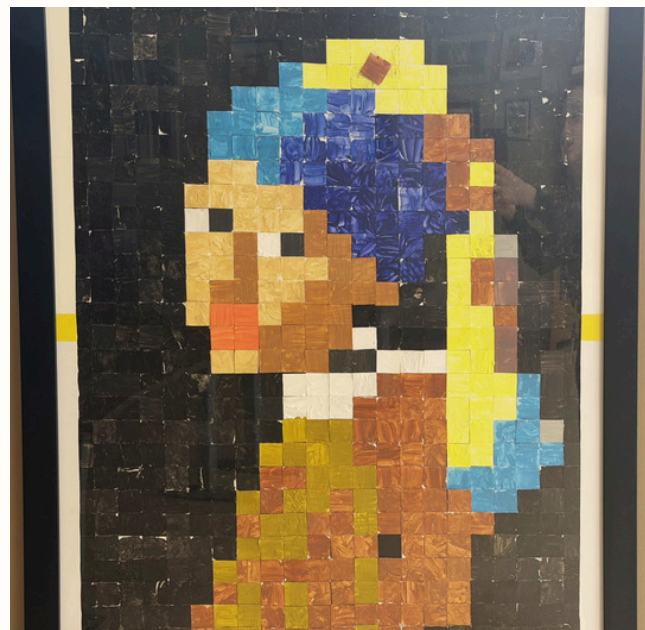
Walk into the art room at the Action Centre and you will quickly notice that something special is happening. Paint, clay, paper, music, and laughter all seem to blend together into one shared creative space where everyone plays a part.

This year began with inspiration from artists who created despite living with disabilities, including the remarkable Yayoi Kusama. Her story reminded us that art is not about limitations, but about imagination and expression. That spirit carried into our own work as we began experimenting with different ways to create. Sometimes we built images by adding shapes, colours and textures together. Other times we discovered the beauty of doing the opposite - removing elements to reveal something new. One exercise even challenged students to draw by erasing on a black page, letting the image appear slowly out of darkness.

Creativity soon grew beyond individual pieces. Clay sculptures filled the room during a month-long exploration of shaping, building, and carving. Our ideas spread to the windows as colorful murals appeared, and at one point the room was even transformed into a life-size holiday room, complete with a chimney and a glowing fireplace.

The spirit of teamwork reached a new level during a collaborative project with the French students for the CREP exhibition. Together, nearly 30 students spent five days assembling a large pixel-art version of Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. Each person created a small section, and like pieces of a giant puzzle, the image slowly came together into one striking work of art.

What makes the art room special is not just projects on the walls, but the sense of shared creativity behind them. Piece by piece, idea by idea, the class continues to grow together - and the artistic journey is still unfolding.



CREATIVITY CORNER

The Action Centre Artistic Initiatives

United by Music - United by Words

The choir class at Action Centre meets once a week and welcomes adults of all abilities. Led by Ella Wilhelm, who leads warm-ups, selects songs, plays instruments, and directs performances, the class is built around a simple but powerful belief: that music belongs to everyone. The aim of the class is far-reaching: to nurture creative expression, build confidence, support well-being, strengthen social connections, and develop language and communication, all within a warm and inclusive space.

Members participate in the ways that feel most natural to them. Some sing, some listen and engage, and everyone is part of the experience. No two participants are the same, and that is exactly what makes the choir special.

As a bilingual activity, singing in both English and French has always been a cornerstone of the program. The choir began its journey singing traditional folk songs, building foundation of shared music and group harmony. Recently, however, Ella made a bold and inspired decision - to shift the repertoire entirely towards songs the members know, love, and feel excited about. The results have been remarkable. Participation has surged, energy in the room has skyrocketed, and new members have joined on the spot.



“L’Art des mots” is a bimonthly event dedicated to exploring creative writing in French. More than just a workshop, this space offers the Action Centre members the opportunity to master the tools of storytelling and hone their writing skills by learning a variety of techniques.

Our goal is to provide each participant with the means to transform their aspirations into stories, bringing to life the tales that reside within them and are close to their hearts.

The choir has also taken its music beyond the classroom, performing proudly at the local mall and at the Centre’s holiday celebration, as well as the dedicated Dreams of Spring event, sharing that joy with the wider community.

Week by week, the choir at the Action Centre continues to grow - in numbers, in confidence, and in the pure, unmistakable energy that fills the room every time the music starts.



CREATIVE ESCAPADES

By the ACCESS Stage Group

Our group of rag tag English Literature misfits came together in September 2025 to win the next Pulitzer Prize. Long story short, we won, but gave the prize back.

Our goals in ACCESS Stage is to develop techniques, vocabulary, styles, appreciation and confidence in our creative art approach to communication.

We have delved into script writing: story interpretation and adaptation; script editing; critique; and above all else (due to wide critical acclaim) - improvisation.

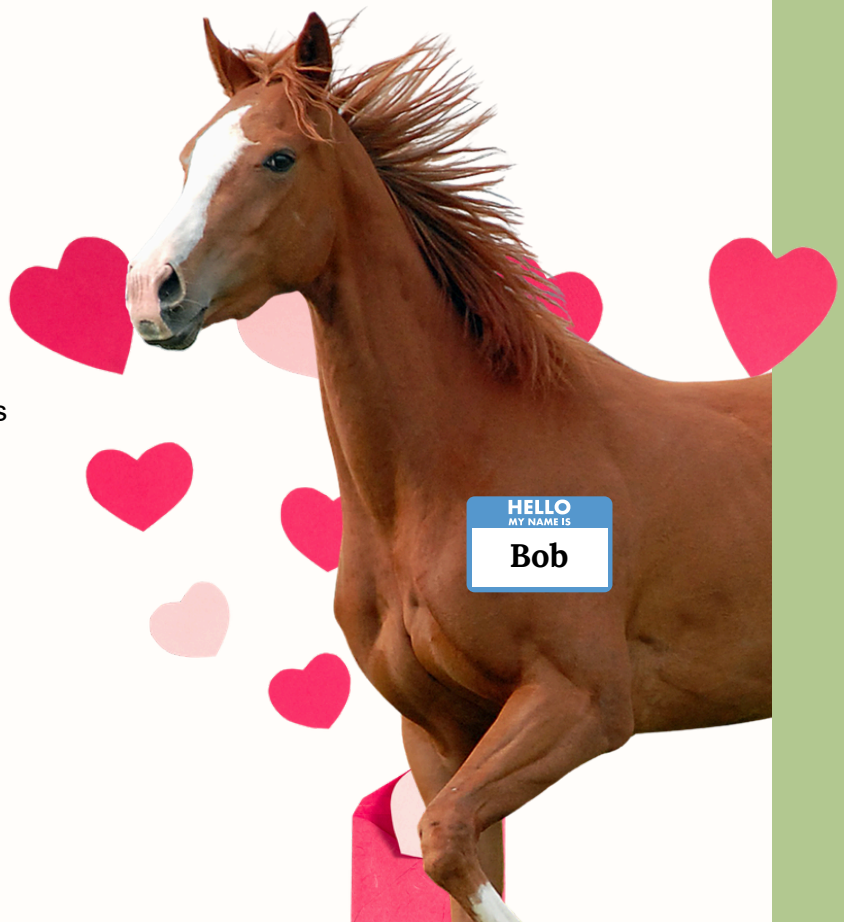
Although we spend a lot of time brainstorming, creation, editing, and production... when it comes time to performing, our class puts Lorne Michael's Saturday Night Live to shame in terms of improvisation. There is a magic to improvisation to ensure that the flow continues within the performance... more often than not, our creative group ends up on the floor in laughs emanating from the depths of our souls.

Our class has also had some special guests including: The Muppets; Mariia; the Three Little Pigs; and Alys Langburt, with Habilitas.

Alysa Lansbury visited us with her son, and read to us a special book called Inclusion. It is a story about inclusion, how sometimes our body doesn't always do what we want, but that we always have dreams and hopes.

Our future is bright with many great and creative ideas. We will soon be releasing a short film adaptation on a play we wrote during the Christmas holidays. We will also be jumping into theater script writing that we will perform live. Stay tuned to hear of more of our creative constructs... but for now, we will leave you with a poem:

I used to work on rooftops,
Action Centre is my job,
But I'm afraid of heights,
And my name is Bob.
Some call me a horse,
I left the human race,
I walked into a bar,
They asked why the long face.
I don't know this.
I just showed my fist
Some crazy happened,
And ended with a kiss.
I wanted to be a doctor,
Just to please my mother,
I have a daughter who's a writer.
And a son who doesn't bother.



Our Voices



When I first started coming to the Action Centre, I didn't know anyone. But then I began to establish relationships with everyone through other people, and I ended up loving it! I grew to know everyone slowly, and for a person who doesn't like talking about my personal struggles, I ended up opening up to everyone here. I get to experience things I've never experienced before. I feel like I am actually myself for once in my life!

Plus, the staff are very friendly, they don't shy away from socializing with members, and they are always there when someone needs them, no matter how busy they are. I feel like we're more like a family now.

Pasquale I.

The power is Yours!

The year is 2026,
I, Leo, the prince of Pierrefonds, have been fighting for women's rights for almost 34 years now since 1992.
All women have to be treated with love and respect,
And women are strong and can do anything their hearts desire!
From movies, to Samus of Metroid, women are the planets' true champions!
Especially my fiancé, princess Diane, who I love with all my heart.
I will always make sure to protect all women on the Earth!
It's time to correct the injustices of the past. The power is yours!

Prince Leo

BIRTHDAYS



Happy birthday to those who celebrated it in the last four months!

January

Lana
Nigel
Stephen
Peter
Tyler
Marie-Josée
Frances
Domenic
Claude
Natasha

February

Karen
Nathalie
Robert
Manon
Gabrielle
Maria
Kevin
Sylvain
Charlie
Berlita

March

Janet
Joan
Stephane
Normand
Rejean
Shirley
Yvan
Annabel

April

Erika
Sarah
Ronald
Melanie
Pasquale
Marie-Claude
Sylvie
Pamela
Oonagh
Debra
Ada