

Action Centre Annual Report

April 2025 - March 2026

Live life beyond the limits...

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Table of Contents

Message from the president of the board of directors and the executive director	3
Action Centre – Overview	4
A Snapshot of 2025 – 2026	5
Our Members	7
Our Programs and Services	
• On-Site Programming	8
○ Young Adult Club	8
○ The Education Pillar	9
○ The Well-Being Pillar	11
○ The Social Pillar	12
○ The Recreational Pillar	13
• Socio-Professional Integration Program _ PAAS Action	13
• Action Centre Respite Program (Caregivers Support Program)	14
• Action Centre Advocacy and Awareness Initiatives	15
• Action Centre Virtual Program – Connexions	15
• Interns and Volunteers	17
Action Centre Team	18
Acknowledgments	19
Testimonials	20

Message From the President of The Board of Directors and the Executive Director



Dear Action Centre Members, Families, Community Partners, and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2025–2026, we do so with pride and gratitude for a year marked by growth, inclusion, creativity, and stronger community engagement. The Action Centre continued to provide a welcoming space where adults living with physical disabilities could connect, participate, build skills, and enjoy meaningful community life.

Through the delivery of diverse and accessible programs, we created opportunities for social connection, self-expression, personal and professional growth. We also expanded our Young Adult Group, responding to the growing need for supportive and inclusive programming for younger adults in our community.

This year, we increased the visibility of the Action Centre through stronger outreach and expanded partnerships with organizations, funders and educational institutions. These collaborations increased opportunities and resources available to our members and strengthened our community reach and impact.

Empowerment and inclusion remained central to our mission. Our members continued to challenge barriers, promote accessibility, and contribute meaningfully to the broader community.

With more than 10,000 program participations and 20% membership growth in the past year, the need for accessible and community-based services remains clear. Growth in grant funding and strategic partnerships allowed us to expand programming, introduce new activities, and enhance services for members and caregivers, helping reduce isolation, strengthen community inclusion, and support greater independence and well-being.

This year also marked an important milestone as the organization began developing its new Strategic Plan for 2026–2029. Through consultation and collaboration, we started shaping a shared vision that will guide the Action Centre's future growth, impact and priorities over the next three years.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication of our members and their families, Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, partners, donors and community supporters. Their continued trust and commitment inspire the work we do every day.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to building a stronger, more inclusive, and connected community for all.

Mojgan Yazdani
Executive Director

Benita Goldin
President, Action Centre Board of Directors

ACTION CENTRE - OVERVIEW

WE BELIEVE IN LIVING LIFE BEYOND LIMITS!

The Action Centre supports adults living with physical disabilities, along with their families and caregivers, in Montreal and beyond. We are especially committed to supporting young adults aged 21+ as they transition out of the school system and seek continued services, connection, and independence.

Through accessible in-person and virtual programs, we create inclusive spaces where individuals can learn, connect, and thrive in a supportive community.

Our Mission

The Action Centre is a member-based bilingual community organization where adults with physical disabilities are supported in achieving their full potential. Equal access, inclusivity, respect, and empathy are our guiding principles.

Focusing on education, socialization, recreation and wellness, the Action Centre enhances the quality of life of its members in a safe, enriching environment. The Action Centre provides respite care for its members' caregivers thus improving their quality of life as well.

The Action Centre raises public awareness about the needs of individuals with physical disabilities and the systemic barriers that hinder their personal and professional development.

Our Values

- Respect for everyone's contribution
- Commitment and teamwork
- Responsibility
- Initiative
- Diversity and inclusiveness
- Independence
- Active participation

Action Centre's Beneficiaries in 2025-2026

- **169 beneficiaries** who regularly participated in a wide range of **in-person** educational, recreational, well-being and social activities, as well as in our **virtual** programming "**Connexions**".
- A significant number of **caregivers** who benefited from our respite services, providing them with essential support and relief.

- Numerous **health and social services professionals** who rely on the Action Centre as a resource to better support and serve individuals living with physical disabilities.
- **Vocation program participants** engaged in our socio-professional integration program (PAAS Action), where they develop professional, personal and social skills.
- **Interns** from multiple educational institutions who gained hands-on experience in their fields.
- The Centre also provided a welcoming and inclusive environment for a diverse group of **volunteers**, who contributed meaningfully to programming and community life.

A Snapshot of 2025-2026!

2025–2026 has been a year of engaging, innovative, and inspiring activities at the Action Centre. This year also saw the growth of our Young Adult Club, offering age-appropriate programs that bring young adults together to connect, learn new skills, build friendships, and actively contribute to shaping activities and programs within the Centre. The program responds to the gap between school and adulthood and supports young adults in navigating this transition toward adult life and greater independence.

We introduced new programs to educate, motivate, and connect our community. Highlights included **ACCESS Stage**, a professional dramatic arts workshop where participants discovered, wrote, and staged their own plays; **L’art des mots**, a French-speaking creative writing workshop; **Fun Lab**, hands-on summer science workshops with interactive experiments; **Pop Culture Exploration**, a summer program exploring contemporary popular culture; and the revamped **Speak Up / Speak Out** empowerment group, encouraging members to share their voices and help build an inclusive community.



This year highlighted the importance of bringing in knowledgeable speakers and creating opportunities for learning, discussion, and meaningful community interaction through a variety of events, including



Seminar Series, **Book Reading** session, **Theatre Tout à Trac!**, and **Creative Dance Classes** with Arts Adaptés at Place des Arts. The dance program engaged ten members in weekly classes that culminated in a joyful public performance, combining physical activity, creativity, and social connection.



Another highly praised initiative was **Art & Asana**, an outdoor art and yoga experience where members enjoyed nature painting followed by an adapted yoga session. The event was enhanced by the generous support of Lululemon, which provided yoga mats and participation gifts.

For the first time, a group of members participated in a multi-day stay at Camp Massawippi, where they enjoyed nature, outdoor activities, recreational and communal experiences, and strengthened social connections in a supportive environment.

Action Centre members became television stars when the ACCESS Harmony choir group performed at Fairview Shopping Centre in front of a bustling crowd of shoppers, creating a special moment of talent, confidence, and community presence, involved and captured by media!



Throughout the year, we remained deeply committed to promoting social inclusion, and public awareness through a wide range of meaningful activities and partnerships. During the **National AccessAbility Week 2025**, we organized diverse events including a creative writing workshop, seminars, inclusive dance parties, and friendly boccia and bowling tournaments. We



also marked the **International Day of Persons with Disabilities** with highlighting the invaluable contributions of people with disabilities to science, pop culture, and society at large.

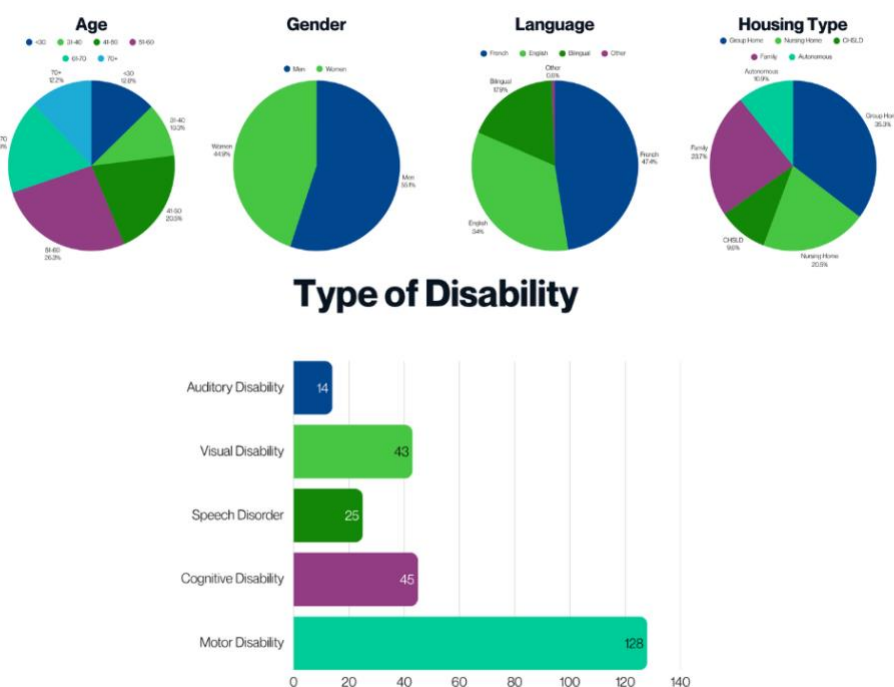
Finally, our newly revamped Speak Up / Speak Out empowerment and self-advocacy group has made strong progress by equipping members with practical tools to express themselves, assert their rights, and confidently navigate advocacy situations. building on the success of this year’s diverse programs, we aim to continue offering experiences that inspire learning, creativity, empowerment, personal and professional growth, independence, and social connection

OUR MEMBERS

The Action Centre’s membership model promotes accessible and inclusive participation by offering free access to regular programs and highly subsidized rates for select special events, reducing financial barriers and encouraging ongoing community engagement.

During the 2025–2026 session, the Centre served 169 beneficiaries living with various physical disabilities through in-person programs, respite initiatives, and virtual programming. Members recorded 10,267 participations throughout the year, averaging 856 visits per month, an average of 55 per day, demonstrating strong and consistent engagement. This participation reflects both the value of the programs offered and the importance of accessible community-based services for individuals living with physical disabilities.

A graphical representation of member demographics, including age distribution, gender representation, linguistic preferences, residential status, and types of disabilities, is as follows:



OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

On-Site Programming

Young Adult Club

Bridging the critical gap between school-based services and adult community life, our Young Adult Club continued to grow this year, welcoming an expanding number of members aged 21 and over seeking meaningful social, recreational, and life-enrichment opportunities in a supportive adapted environment.

Designed for young adults transitioning into the community, the program provided a structured yet member-driven space to build confidence, independence, communication skills, and social connections. Activities were shaped by members' interests to encourage engagement and participation in workshops such as Geography & Culture, *Fun Lab* science

experiments, Pop Culture Exploration, Mental Health, and Vacations. This year's programming also included diverse themed events, conversations on social and personal topics, cooking activities, and recreational and social events.

Through accessible and inclusive programming tailored to diverse abilities and support needs, the Young Adult Club promoted autonomy, self-expression, peer interaction, and a stronger sense of belonging within both the Centre and the wider community.



The Education Pillar promotes continuous learning and personal development through accessible and engaging opportunities, including vocational training, skill-building workshops, debate classes, discussion groups, monthly seminars, and cultural initiatives. Its goal is to foster an intellectually stimulating environment that encourages curiosity, critical thinking, self-expression, and transferable life skills.

This year, these objectives were achieved through dynamic, member-centered programs, including:

Discussion and Conversation Groups: Designed for members who enjoy sharing ideas, engaging in meaningful conversations, and exploring diverse perspectives, sessions such as *Mind Mingle*, *Debate Club*, and *Speak Up / Speak Out* provided dynamic and inclusive spaces for thoughtful dialogue. These groups encouraged participants to strengthen communication and critical-thinking skills, express their opinions with confidence, and connect with others through respectful and engaging discussions.



ACCESS Stage – New: A play writing and theatre program where members explored, wrote, and staged theatrical plays. Partially funded by Canadian Heritage’s Community Cultural Action Fund, the project amplified the voices of English-speaking adults with physical disabilities through weekly workshops averaging 15 participants. The program fostered creativity, confidence, teamwork, storytelling, and community belonging.

ACCESS Harmony: A structured choir workshop led by a professional vocal instructor, focused on singing techniques, vocal control, musical theory, and performance confidence in a supportive environment. The group performed multiple public performances throughout the year.

L'art des mots – New: A French-language creative writing workshop led by a talented young author living with a physical disability, whose creativity, perseverance, and passion for literature served as an



inspiring example to participants. The workshop encouraged literary expression, storytelling, poetry, and creative exploration in French while fostering confidence, imagination, and meaningful artistic exchange.

- **World's Kitchen:** A holistic cooking workshop combining hands-on culinary instruction with cultural, geographical, historical, social, and nutritional exploration through traditional recipes from around the world.
- **Monthly Seminars:** Interactive seminars covering

topics such as Autism Awareness, Stress Management, Accessibility Awareness, Sexual Education, Truth and Reconciliation, Gender-Based Violence Awareness, Alzheimer's Awareness, Black History Month, and Women's Rights, fostering awareness, critical thinking, and informed discussion. Together, these initiatives created an inclusive and empowering environment where members could learn, explore, build confidence, strengthen social connections, and actively participate in community life.



The Well-Being Pillar Prioritizes the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of members, recognizing wellness as essential to independence, confidence, and quality of life. Through accessible, inclusive, and adaptable programming, this pillar supports members in caring for their bodies, managing stress, building emotional resilience, and maintaining healthy routines in a safe, supportive community where people of varying abilities can participate comfortably and independently through the following:

- Music and movement (**Action Beats Live!**)
- Boccia
- Adapted Bowling
- Adapted Swimming
- Nutrition Boost – Community Kitchen
- Mindfulness (Guided Meditation)
- Action Arcade



Our assisted and adapted **swimming program** at the Complexe sportif de Saint-Laurent, ensures that participants can safely engage in water-based physical activity, regardless of ability level.

This year, our members participated in **Creative Dance classes** with Arts Adaptés at Place des Arts, accompanied. The weekly 4 sessions and culminated in a public performance, offering members a chance to share their creativity and achievements with the community, liberating and joyful experience, blending physical activity with artistic expression and social engagement.

For the first time, our members enjoyed a largely subsidized overnight camping experience, connecting with nature through boating, picnics, campfires, and outdoor adventures. From campfire stories under the stars to new friendships on the water, Camp Massawippi became an unforgettable adventure for our members.

The Social Pillar creates opportunities for connection, companionship, and shared experiences through inclusive and welcoming activities. It helps reduce isolation, strengthen social skills, and foster a strong sense of community and belonging.

This year, our Members participate in accessible and meaningful social and cultural activities that encourage interaction, collaboration, and friendship-building. Activities include:

- Bi-weekly Cultural Excursions
- Bi-weekly Action Centre Social Events
- Themed Parties and Social Events (Valentine's Day, Holiday Parties, Karaoke Days)
- Cultural Celebrations (Sugar Shack, Corn Roast, Thanksgiving)
- Social Games
- Bowling Tournaments
- And more

Through these experiences, the Action Centre promotes inclusion, connection, and meaningful community engagement while creating enjoyable and memorable moments for members.



Excursions and Thematic Events

From sailing adventures to karaoke showdowns, this year was filled with laughter, discovery, and memorable moments for Action Centre members.

Members participated in 29 excursions across Montreal and surrounding areas, exploring art, science, culture, and recreation. Highlights included visits to the MEM, MAC, Optica Montreal, the Planetarium, Biodome, Rail Museum, and the Canadian Centre for Architecture, as well as popular Saint-Lawrence River cruises, adapted sailing,



apple picking, yoga and painting in nature (a new experience for many), market visits and shopping trips, and a sweet traditional Sugar Shack trip!

At the Centre, members enjoyed 34 themed events such as movie days, karaoke, and game days. Major events included the Great Action Centre Bake-off, bowling and boccia tournaments, Earth Day, Action Centre's Got Talent, the Cort Roast, Thanksgiving celebrations, the Caregiver Appreciation Ball, our very famous Holiday Party, and the Saint Valentine's Party and still more...

These excursions and events strengthened friendships, encouraged independence, and connected members with both the Centre and the wider Montreal community.

The Recreational Pillar: Who says personal growth can't include paint splatters, arcade victories, and the occasional bingo showdown?

The Recreational Pillar gives members opportunities to relax, have fun, and explore their passions in an inclusive and supportive environment. Through engaging leisure activities, participants are encouraged to try new hobbies, express creativity, build confidence, and enjoy meaningful shared experiences.




Members can take part in activities such as:

- Action Centre Beats Live!
- Fine Arts Workshops
- Bingo Sessions
- Action Arcade
- Fun Lab
- Pop Culture Exploration
- Mindfulness & Relaxation
- And more

Group projects, creative challenges, and themed events promote collaboration, imagination, and camaraderie, while cultural experiences add variety and enrichment to every session. By combining entertainment, creativity, and active participation, this pillar supports overall well-being, a positive mindset, and a balanced, fulfilling lifestyles for all members.

Socio-Professional Integration Program _ PAAS Action

Building confidence, discovering new skills, and gaining real-world experience came together at the heart of the PAAS Action Program. A popular vocation program for young adults!



The PAAS Action Program, developed in partnership with Emploi-Québec, continued to support adults living with physical disabilities in their socio-professional integration journey through individualized

The program also emphasized mentorship, guided learning, and job-shadowing opportunities to strengthen autonomy, confidence, workplace readiness, and professional growth.

this year, the program welcomed six (6) participants, who collectively completed an impressive 3,911 hours of vocational training. Through personalized support and hands-on learning, the program continues to play an essential role in promoting meaningful socio-professional inclusion and expanding future employment and community opportunities.

Action Centre Respite Program (Caregivers Support Program)

2025–2026 was a year of meaningful impact, compassionate care, and renewed support for families and caregivers. As a dedicated provider of services for adults with physical disabilities, the Action Centre takes great pride in its respite program, designed to give caregivers the opportunity to rest, recharge, and attend to their personal, professional, and social needs with peace of mind.

While caregivers take a well-deserved break, their loved ones receive personalized care from our professional staff in a safe, engaging, and nurturing environment, while participating in meaningful social and recreational activities.

In 2025–2026, the Action Centre provided respite care to 21 families, making a tangible difference in the lives of both caregivers and participants. Supported by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux (MSSS), the program expanded its reach to support even more families in need.

Action Centre Advocacy and Awareness Initiatives:

From powerful public choir performances broadcast on television to meaningful conversations around accessibility and inclusion, this year at Action Centre was defined by empowerment, visibility, and the celebration of the talents, contributions, and lived experiences of individuals with physical disabilities within our broader community.

- Our highly successful **“Speak Up / Speak Out” self-advocacy group** evolved from a mere discussion-based forum into a powerful, structured advocacy and empowerment program focused on effective communication, strategy, and civic engagement. Members developed skills in emotional expression, perspective-taking, debate, research, problem-solving, and

advocacy letter-writing campaigns. The program emphasized constructive advocacy, empowering participants to move beyond frustration toward creating practical solutions and meaningful community change. Members have already helped address several accessibility barriers within our environment, and we are incredibly proud of their role in helping build a more inclusive society.

- Action Centre also celebrated **National AccessAbility Week**, recognizing the achievements and contributions of people with disabilities through a variety of activities, including personal affirmation writing, choir performances, a dance party, an accessibility awareness seminar, and Boccia and Bowling tournaments — all fostering participation, connection, and community spirit.
- In December, the Centre marked the **International Day of Persons with Disabilities** with “**Abilities in Action**,” an event focused on empowerment and challenging stereotypes. Members participated in themed art workshops and an interactive trivia session that promoted awareness, self-expression, and inclusive learning.
- Action Centre also participated in **Peace Days** through the Journées de la paix network by organizing a karaoke day that encouraged creativity, self-confidence, and community connection.
- A major highlight of the year was the public recognition of members’ talents through a **performance by the ACCESS Harmony choir at CF Fairview Pointe-Claire**. The event, filmed and broadcast by CTV Montreal, celebrated the confidence and abilities of members while raising public awareness and promoting a more inclusive perception of people living with disabilities.
- The Centre also partnered with the **Immersion MTL program**, welcoming multiple cohorts of police recruits for engaging visits throughout the year. Through discussions and shared activities, recruits gained valuable insight into accessibility, communication, and the challenges faced by individuals living with physical disabilities, while members had opportunities to share their experiences and build confidence engaging with law enforcement.

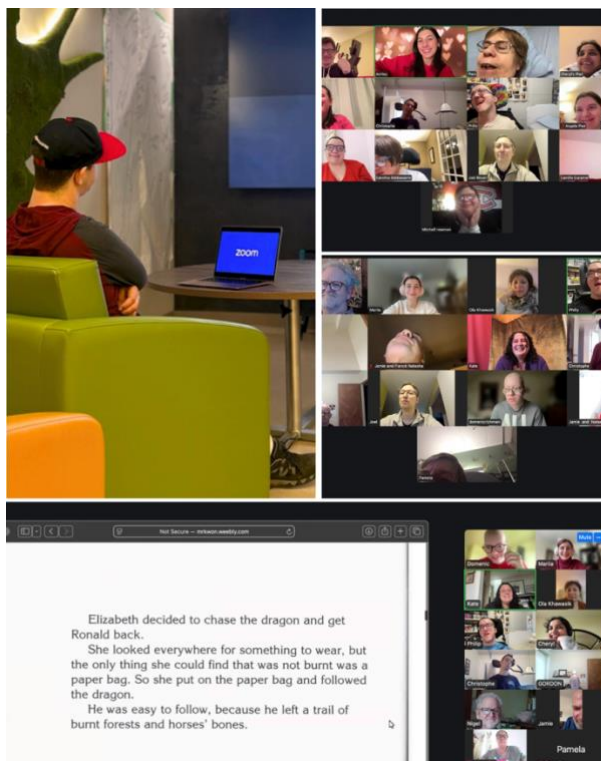
Action Centre Virtual Program - Connexions

Our Virtual Program is a vibrant online community where learning, friendship, creativity, and accessibility come together to empower participants beyond physical and geographic boundaries. Designed as an evening and weekend initiative, the program provides flexible and inclusive opportunities for adults living with physical disabilities to participate in social, educational, and engaging activities virtually. Connexions helps reduce barriers related to transportation, mobility,

scheduling, and geography, allowing members from across Montreal, and also from outside the city, to remain actively connected to community life.

Launched and sustained through the support of the “David Aronson Memorial Fund,” the program continued to expand in 2025. This year, the program was also supported by “The Department of Canadian Heritage” to add a very popular online writing workshop that brings storytelling, self-expression, and collaborative learning directly into participants’ homes, Words Without Wall Project. The program focuses on sharing knowledge in a fun, social, and engaging environment while also strengthening participants’ technology skills, digital literacy, communication abilities, and confidence using online platforms.

This year, Connexions delivered a consistent schedule of six one-hour Zoom sessions per week, totaling 271 hours of programming throughout the year for 31 members. Activities covered a broad range of interests and learning opportunities, such as social studies and current events, travel and culture discussions, interactive games and social activities, educational seminars, guest speakers, and many more.



A strong emphasis was placed on participant involvement and leadership. Members were encouraged to facilitate sessions based on their own interests and experiences, helping foster confidence, creativity, and peer connection. In 2025, participants led 12 member-facilitated sessions.

The Connexions newsletter continued to provide an additional creative outlet where members collaborated on written content, shared experiences, and remained engaged outside scheduled programming.

This year also marked the launch of quarterly in-person Connexions meetups for members able to attend at the centre. The first gathering, held in February, successfully strengthened relationships developed online while offering additional opportunities for accessible social participation.



INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

Collaboration with Educational Institutions

Throughout the 2025–2026 year, the Action Centre welcomed 11 interns from Dawson College, Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, Concordia University, and McGill University, who collectively completed a total of 402 hours of hands-on community experience. Through direct engagement with participants, interns gained valuable experience working with adults with physical disabilities, helping to prepare compassionate, skilled, and community-focused future professionals.

Coming from diverse fields of study, including nursing, special education, recreational therapy, and social work, the interns' varied backgrounds enriched the Centre's programming, encouraged interdisciplinary collaboration, and strengthened support for adults living with physical disabilities.

Volunteers

We are incredibly fortunate to welcome a diverse and passionate group of volunteers whose generosity, dedication, and community spirit continue to inspire and strengthen the Action Centre.

Our dedicated Board of Directors provided valuable leadership, guidance, and expertise to support the organization's governance and strategic direction. Volunteers also included members, family members, police officers, corporate volunteers, and community friends, all of whom played an important role in supporting the Centre's programs and daily activities.

Throughout the year, 51 volunteers contributed an impressive total of 2,180 volunteering hours. This remarkable level of engagement reflects the strong spirit of inclusion, empowerment, and meaningful community participation that continues to drive the Action Centre forward.

ACTION CENTRE TEAM

Board of Directors on March 31, 2025

Benita Goldin	President
Arik Azoulay	Vice President
Christine Boyle	Treasurer
Hema Patel	Secretary
Joel Elias	Participant Member
Jeffrey Boman	Participant Member

Management and Operations Team 2024-2025 (on March 31st, 2025)

Mojgan Yazdani	Executive Director
Mariia Talalaievska	Clinical Coordinator
Ashley Sdao	Virtual Program Leader
Shubham Soni	Recreational Animator
Fahd Cadi	Administrative Assistant
Abdellah Elouazzani	Caregiver Staff
Mélissa Goudreau	Caregiver Staff
Christian Mukeba	Caregiver Staff
Wisemanie Joseph	Caregiver Staff
Belhassen Kallel	Caregiver Staff
Valessa Paulena Chery	Caregiver Staff

Teachers

Charles Changizi (EMSB)
Samuel Mofo Tsop (CREP)

And **PAAS-Action Team, Volunteers, Summer Students, and Interns**

AKNOWLEDGMENT

The Centre extends its heartfelt gratitude to all community partners for their direct and indirect contributions to our mission. In 2025, the following community partners generously provided us with essential financial support, as well as human, material, and informational resources (listed alphabetically):

- ASC (Accessibility Standard Canada)
- ABC Center (Center for Volunteer Action Saint-Laurent)
- AlterGo
- Borough of Saint Laurent
- Camp Massawippi
- Centre des Loisirs & Complexe Sportif de Saint-Laurent
- City of Montreal
- CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'île-de-Montréal
- CIUSSS du Nord de Montréal
- COSSL (Le Comité des organismes sociaux de Saint-Laurent)
- Déphy Montréal
- Educational Institutions: Dawson College and Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, Concordia University, McGill University
- Emploi Québec
- Government of Canada - Canadian Heritage
- Government of Canada - Employment and Social Development
- Groupe des aidants du Sud-Ouest
- Habilitas Foundation
- Immersion MTL
- L'Anonyme
- L'Institut National pour l'Équité, l'Égalité et l'Inclusion des personnes en situation de handicap (INÉÉI — PSH)
- Moisson Montréal
- Montreal Volunteer Bureau
- Peace Days Network
- Programme art adapté
- RIOCM
- School Boards: EMSB, CSSDM (CREP)
- TCRPAM Montreal
- Tout a Trac theatre
- Zeller Family Foundation

As well as:

- Ms Emmanuela Lambropoulos Member of Parliament (MP), Saint-Laurent
- Ms Marwah Rizqy, Députée de Saint-Laurent

TESTIMONIALS

Pasquale (member): I would recommend the Action Centre to anybody because you get to learn people skills, get to learn everyone, do activities you enjoy doing. To me, the whole gang is like a family. Since I started, I have become very close to most of the people here. I feel at home here, I feel like I am part of the group and not excluded. I love being a member here, because I feel like myself when I am at the Action Centre. - Pasquale I.


Laurette (member): I love the Action Centre a lot because everyone is very nice here. Bingo, bowling, and choir are my favorite activities, because I get to learn new things and hang out with my friends. I also appreciate the outing because I enjoy going out with my friends instead of staying at home.

Celine (family member): [...] my family and I would like to sincerely thank you [the team at Action Centre] for the support, compassion, and caring services you provide to our brother and son, Deo. Your support, patience, and dedication bring real comfort to our daily lives, both to the person you care for and to our entire family. Thanks to your commitment, we feel supported, respected, and cared for with compassion. We express our deepest gratitude for the quality of your work and for the positive difference you make in our lives.

Christophe (virtual program member): Connexions is one of the best things that happened to me. It allows us to break away from isolation and to be busy with very fun activities. I'm very thankful that we found a way to include me in the in-person programs even though I live 5 hours away. This gives me a chance to do what I always wanted to do – to give my voice for the resolution of social injustices.

Charles (Teacher): I came to Action Centre to teach Quebec's new Social Participation program — self-advocacy, art, communications, and music — and left having learned more than I delivered. My students were adults of all ages, some born into physical challenge, others rewritten by injury, all fighting the same fight as the rest of us but with higher stakes and fewer apologies from the world.





One breath, one accident, separates most of us from that vulnerability. Education here means stretching toward what you thought you couldn't do, defending your neighbour when they cannot speak, and claiming your place not just in this building but in Montreal, in Canada, in the world. I leave with a recalibrated sense of what courage looks like — and a reminder that dignity is not a special need. It is a human one.