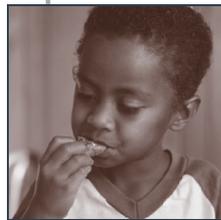


# BUILDING

Caring Communities and  
Supporting their Ability to Act



# POVERTY AND DISTRESS: STILL AFFLICT THOUSANDS OF MONTREALERS

Thousands of people in the Greater Montréal area – including those who work for a low wage, live on welfare, or hold down two jobs to make ends meet – still suffer from poverty and the social distress it creates...

## ALL AROUND US...

- We see more and more children whose development is being arrested by the negative effects of poverty.<sup>1</sup>
- More and more youth are becoming vagrants and living on the street.
- The culture of poverty, which is passed on from generation to generation, has become endemic in some neighbourhoods.
- The pressures on families are becoming greater and greater, and harder to cope with.

## FOR EVERYONE, THE BURDEN IS HEAVIER, THE CHOICES ARE HARDER

- Civil society, and especially the community agencies, is being called upon to build social cohesion and find lasting solutions to social problems.
- Communities are taking themselves in hand. Over the past 30 years, the number of community agencies and initiatives that use volunteers has grown considerably.
- Organizations like Centraide are receiving more requests for financial support than ever.
- Corporations are doing more and more to encourage their employees to get involved in the local community, while tending to choose their social causes and target their donations.
- Donors want to know how their contribution is making a difference.

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<sup>1</sup> In the general population, the proportion of children who are slightly or significantly behind in their cognitive development is 16%. In the urban neighbourhoods studied by the research team responsible for evaluating 1,2,3 GO! — neighbourhoods in which families are at considerable social and economic risk — the proportion of children who are slightly or significantly behind in their cognitive development jumps to 54%.

**“The strategic study of social issues really demonstrated Centraide’s gift for rallying people to a common cause. It also showed that Centraide knows how to listen: people from every part of the community got together to explain their needs to each other and seek out better solutions. Centraide showed that it is open to new trends and new ideas in a constant search for better ways of helping the less fortunate.”**

**Jean-Jacques Bourgeault,  
Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Social Issues**





## CENTRAIDE'S RESPONSE

Work with the donors, agencies and projects in our network.

Work with the whole community in those areas where we can be most effective.

One year ago, Centraide of Greater Montreal rallied together about 100 people from different parts of the community, including 40 representatives of the community-based agencies, to help identify:

1. the major social issues of the day,
2. the best solutions,
3. how Centraide can make a difference.



## THE ISSUES, THE SOLUTIONS, OUR STRATEGIES



## THE FUTURE IN LIGHT OF THESE ISSUES

Since the time it was founded, Centraide has evolved from a traditional charity into a builder of caring communities which promotes the empowerment of both individuals and groups.

In the past few years, Centraide has begun supporting entire local communities. For example, 1,2,3 GO!, a Centraide supported initiative aimed at giving children aged 0 to 3 years the best possible start in life, encourages whole neighbourhoods — parents, agencies, institutions, local businesses — to roll up their sleeves and promote the well-being of their young children. These experiments have clearly demonstrated that community empowerment is the key to lasting solutions.

### TO ENSURE THAT OUR STRATEGIES PRODUCE EFFECTIVE RESULTS, WE WILL, AMONG OTHER THINGS:

- invest in terms of the social issues confronting us;
- invest in the development of leadership and community action;
- build bridges between donors, volunteers and people who work in the field;
- support voluntary social involvement;
- exercise influence and act as a rallying force;
- demonstrate how our action makes a difference;
- collaborate and form partnerships with all individuals and institutions that want to help us “building caring communities.”

To obtain a copy of “Building Caring Communities and Supporting their Ability to Act,” call Kathleen Lemay at (514) 288-1261 or e-mail your request to [enjeux@centraide-mtl.org](mailto:enjeux@centraide-mtl.org).



493 Sherbrooke Street West  
Montréal, Québec H3A 1B6  
Telephone: (514) 288-1261  
Fax: (514) 350-7282  
Web site: [www.centraide-mtl.org](http://www.centraide-mtl.org)

