



The Social Practice of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi

Intervention Philosophy and Application

Reference: The Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais

Martine Morissette

November 2006

The Social Practice of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi (CJE)

Table of Contents

About the Author	3
Introduction	4
A Growing Concept	4
Key Mission of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi	5
Brief History of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais	5
Sharing A Practice	7
Intervention Philosophy and Application of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi.....	7
Summary	7
Serving Young Adults	8
A Carrefour jeunesse emploi Provides Help.....	9
Communicating with the Sector	10
Client Reception	12
Needs Assessment	13
Choosing the Approach	14
Multiple Intervention Plans	17
Client Follow-up.....	26
Evaluating Services	27
A Carrefour jeunesse emploi Raises Awareness	27
Roadmap of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais.	30
An Authentic Sector Response	30
Professionalism of Working Groups.....	30
Institutionalizing the Work Organization.....	31
Partnerships and Funding Procedures	31
Interface with Public Authorities.....	32
Current and Future Challenges	33
Conclusion	34
Bibliography.....	35

About the Author

Martine Morissette has been involved with Quebec youth for 30 years. She has worked in a wide variety of settings including a reception centre for young offenders, an adolescent psychiatric facility, in the field of education, and for the past twenty years, in the community sector.

She holds an Honours Bachelor of Social Communications degree. Over the years, she has taken a number of upgrading courses in administration and management that have enabled her to progress through positions as support worker, coordinator and director.

Her experience in the community sector was the deciding factor in her determination to do something different, constructive and creative to respond to the problem of youth exclusion. Her solution is the integration of young adults into society through employment and job creation by offering them a multitude of levers available in an integrated services centre designed exclusively for young adults. The formula she chose is the “*Carrefour jeunesse emploi*.”

Martine Morissette developed Quebec’s first Carrefour jeunesse emploi. This Outaouais Carrefour has served as a reference for others that have since been established throughout Quebec. Martine Morissette played a key role in introducing these centres in her capacity as a deputy minister with the Quebec government when the concept was expanded during the years 1995-1996.

She shares her vision of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi in a document entitled “*Carrefour jeunesse emploi, Philosophy and Application*.” This reference document is addressed primarily to volunteers, support workers and agencies working with young people and seeking a new intervention formula. It is also intended for government and political advisors in the context of a general evaluation of the *Carrefour jeunesse emploi* concept.

Introduction

❖ A Growing Concept

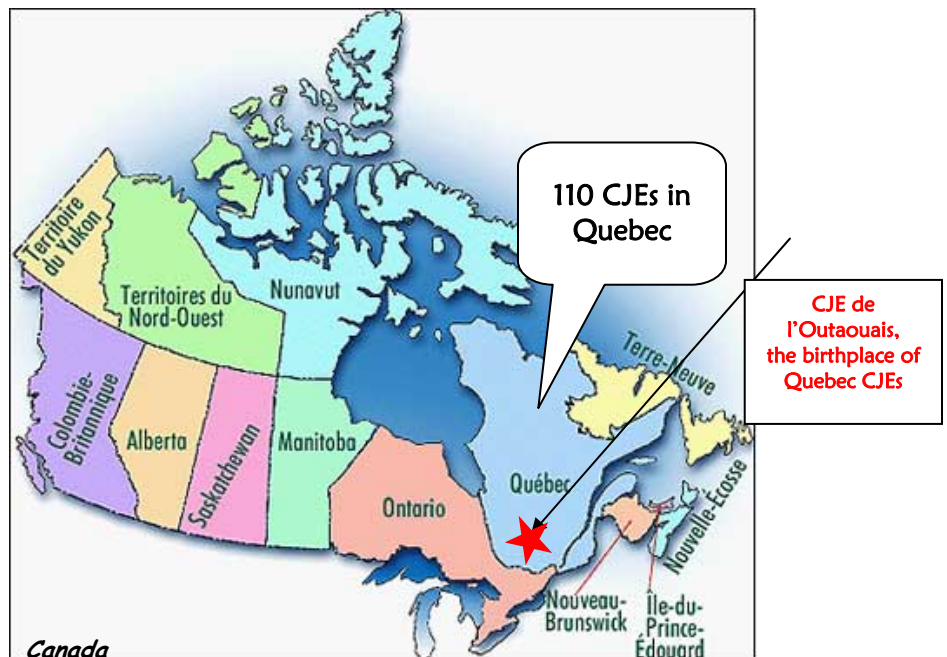
The Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais has over twenty years experience in the service of young people in Gatineau, a large city in Quebec. It was Quebec's first Carrefour jeunesse emploi and the experience served as a reference during the implementation of this concept throughout the province. Quebec now has 110 Carrefour jeunesse emploi.

The Director General, Martine Morissette, instigated this movement by developing the first intervention and financing framework used by the Quebec government as a basis for the deployment of this concept throughout the province.



350 de la Gappe Boulevard
Gatineau, Quebec J8T 7T9
Telephone: (819) 561-7712
Fax: (819) 561-1455
direction@cjeo.qc.ca

Director General:
Martine Morissette



❖ Key Mission of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi

Basic Mission: The Carrefour jeunesse emploi seeks to offer services aimed at improving the living conditions of young adults from 16 to 35 years of age by accompanying them on the road to employment, as they return to school or start a business. For young adults, a Carrefour jeunesse emploi is a place where they can feel at home, obtain help and know that they are valued in their undertakings

Intuitive Mission: In its intervention practice, a Carrefour jeunesse emploi seeks to better position young adults to make their choices. Their progress within a Carrefour jeunesse emploi enables them to move forward in life, take their place, manage their projects, develop know-how, accomplish their dreams and take risks.

❖ Brief History of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais (CJEO)

The CJEO is the story of a unique experiment in developing the concept of an integrated services centre dedicated to youth and employment.

1983 to 1985

The creation of the CJEO originated with the concerns of a nucleus of community organizers from the health and social services sectors. Throughout their discussions on the region's youth situation, they recognized a growing phenomenon of exclusion among young people. Following an initial field survey in which the situational analysis centred on the employment issue, a reflection table - *Jeunesse travail* – was established. Its members, from the public, community and private sectors, actively participated with community organizers in developing the CJEO, a concept of an integrated services centre dedicated to youth and employment. Working together, using a general orientation and a certain number of principles adopted unanimously, they designed a youth services offer, an organizational structure, a physical setup, the first budget projections and a development and implementation strategy. They became the master thinkers and founders of a new organization. A non-profit corporation was born.

To assist them in their reflection, an initial grant from the Canadian government (*Young Canada Works*) enabled them to conduct a socioeconomic study of Outaouais youth, focusing in particular on the realities of young adults in the City of Gatineau.

1985 to 1986

This study underlined the importance of developing the first CJEO. The Canadian government agreed to fund an employability initiative for those youth who were furthest away from the job market and the Government of Quebec provided funding for an entrepreneurship project.

These first two distinct, specialized measures became the pillars of the CJEO service offer. They were financed through existing government programs from which the CJEO received the necessary funding. This funding was non-recurring and renewed each year on the basis of the results obtained.

1986 to 1987

The CJEO received backing for the construction of its centre from the City of Gatineau, the *Office de planification et de développement du Québec* and a solidarity fund of the *Syndicat des travailleurs du Québec*. A foundation was also created to solicit funds and ensure the involvement of all community stakeholders.

1987 to 1988

A third intervention was organized when the CJEO, with help and financial support from the education sector, was able to offer a process to facilitate the return to school of young adult dropouts. The CJEO had finally completed its base of operations: school, employment and entrepreneurship!

1988 to 1995

The CJEO initiated a series of experiments and projects to improve its service offer. The agency also kept up to date on various government youth programs in order to provide these services. From a few hundred young people who visited the centre at the beginning, the numbers grew to between six and seven thousand young adults per year.

Each project, experiment and service that was developed had to comply fully with the CJEO mission and intervention philosophy.

1995 to 1996

A crisis threatened the CJEO and its mission when the Canadian government, which was already funding a number of CJEO services, obliged the agency to accept only young people who were receiving government benefits. The goal was to integrate these young recipients into the work world. The government was less concerned about the other youth, commonly known as the “*no cheques*,” since they were not receiving government benefits and did not represent a direct expense.

The entire community banded together to save the CJEO mission and ensure that the agency remained accessible to all young adults. The agency spared no effort in defending its principle of welcoming all youth, irrespective of their social or economic status. In defending its mission and with an unprecedented mobilization, the CJEO succeeded in bringing the issue to the attention of the Quebec government, which agreed to fund the CJEO’s basic mission and that of any future Carrefour jeunesse emploi in Quebec. This decision to grant recurring basic funding to support the agency’s mission was a first in the province.

1996 to 2006

In the first phase, an envelope of \$25 million was budgeted for the development of CJE throughout Quebec. The CJEO became the founder and prime mover of the CJE group.

The CJEO is continuing to develop its projects. Its development vision and service offer for the young adults of its community relies on quinquennial strategic planning exercises in which its staff and volunteer administrators, who are very representative of the community, are invited to participate.

❖ **Sharing A Practice**

This document is designed as a reference tool. It enables working groups that support the establishment of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi in their community to discover a social practice directed exclusively toward young adults: their dynamics, situation, potential, options and progress toward social and economic insertion.

Finally, to further support the introduction and development of this concept, and in the context of the development of an agreement, the CJEO can offer groups its experience, writings and tools. The CJEO can also transform itself into an internship sector to enable young support workers associated with the introduction and development of their Carrefour jeunesse emploi to take advantage of a unique Quebec experiment in order to adapt the approach and instruments to the realities of each community.

Intervention Philosophy and Application of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi

❖ **Summary**

The philosophy is based on a community joining together as young adults, parents, entrepreneurs, retirees, public servants, teachers, social workers, economists, bankers, city councillors, community organizers, etc. to reflect on the situation of social, cultural and economic exclusion of young adults in their community. The next step is to design TOGETHER, with ENTHUSIASM and CREATIVITY, a community centre specifically conceived for young adults and aimed at responding more effectively to their need for integration into the community through social and economic insertion.

It means regrouping under one roof, or according to the territorial reality of a region, integrated services aimed at improving the living conditions of young adults from 16 to 35 years of age.

The intervention team of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi considers that obtaining a diploma or paid work, or creating one's own employment remains the best means of insertion into social life, maintaining good health, creating a network of relationships, acquiring status and planning the future. In other words, it is a question of preventing or resolving social problems through the social and economic insertion of young adults.

A Carrefour jeunesse emploi is a community centre that welcomes its clients on a voluntary basis, free of charge, with or without income or government benefits, without any form of discrimination as to marital status, race or religion - a centre that is an advocate for young people who arrive too often with their burden of labels and constraints.

❖ **Serving Young Adults**

As a community centre, the Carrefour jeunesse emploi is designed to be a place where young adults feel welcome, where they can obtain help and feel valued, where the whole person is considered by promoting the development of their autonomy and potential while respecting their human dignity. The community centre provides an environment that encourages dynamism, ambition, motivation, optimism, self-confidence and an appetite for work and effort. It is a community centre that is close to young people, where the great majority of the support workers are young adults, thus creating a relationship of equality and solidarity.

It is the responsibility of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi to help young adults in their integration into the labour market. In addition, it must bring about the changes needed to establish a place of choice for young people who wish to fulfill their potential by playing a useful role in society.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi provides assistance for its young clients, raises awareness in and mobilizes its community on the plight of young adults and develops new measures to support their social and economic insertion.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi offers assistance to avoid, at all costs, situations in which its young clients doubt themselves, lose heart, become marginalized or simply, abandon their independence. They must therefore be surrounded by support workers who believe in the potential of young adults, who are attentive, available, congenial, committed and responsible; they must be surrounded by a stimulating, supportive environment; they must receive information and training that is relevant for their development and empowerment, and finally, they must hear success stories. Today's young adults and

those of the future must be convinced that they have great value, that they are capable of resolving problems and generating new solutions and that they “*have some leeway in their social context, and consequently through certain strategies, they will be able to gain a degree of ascendancy and control over their lives*” (Assogba, Turcotte, 1996: 121).

THEIR INSTRUMENT, THEIR COMPASS: a Carrefour jeunesse emploi, a unique place where young adults come to draw on a wealth of information and experimentation, where support and understanding are always available.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi raises community awareness about its roles and responsibilities in relation to this group of young citizens. It invites each community member to extend a hand and create a place for each young person. It is a question of affection, solidarity and responsibility.

It is imperative to offer young adults forums, opportunities and mechanisms to enable them to express their needs, concerns and vision for the future, and more especially, to afford them their rightful place in society.

As an independent community agency, a Carrefour jeunesse emploi is able to take a stance and inform politico-administrative authorities about the living conditions of young adults and about their needs.

A Carrefour jeunesse emploi Provides Help

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi views young adults as clients, that is to say, citizens who are deserving of respect and entitled to receive suitable services. This therefore means believing in their potential and respecting their choices. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi is responsible for providing help in assuming the individual's particular choices. Since the objectives of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi are centred on the young client's needs, the centre must have multiple intervention plans that are sufficiently flexible to be customized and effective.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi, therefore, is an intervention setting that promotes the socio-economic and cultural integration of young adults in an approach that is both specific and complementary: integration to employment and job creation. The dual role of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi is a considered, critical approach to integration to employment, as well as to job creation, in order to have an overview and intervene at both levels, thus avoiding the trap of blaming one or the other aspect for the plight of young people. The assistance that is offered cannot be limited to preparing young adults for employment when there are few jobs, or helping to create employment when a number of them lack the qualifications for these jobs. Thus, through appropriate

preparation, some will create small businesses, whereas others will acquire the skills required to work in these same businesses.

From one end to the other of these two intervention poles, that is, from employability to entrepreneurship, a series of links are always available as services at the Carrefour jeunesse emploi: educational and occupational information, orientation to enable young people to return to school, job preparation, job search and job creation. Each of these inter-related links has its customized tools, depending on the objectives sought.

Presenting the intervention philosophy of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi, with certain applications, is impossible without attempting to dissect the determining aspects that precede the young adults' arrival at the centre, their progress and results. The action of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi includes the following seven stages: establishing communication with the sector; welcoming clients; assessing the needs; adopting a course of action; presenting multiple intervention plans; ensuring follow-up; and evaluating services.

❖ Communicating with the Sector

For a Carrefour jeunesse emploi, the sector represents young adults, citizens, socio-economic and political institutions, educational institutions, community groups, social clubs, businesses and local and regional financial backers.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi is responsible, above all, for promoting itself to youth clients in its area. Its first responsibility is to reach young adults with little schooling, who are isolated and have experienced significant failure. Communication efforts must take into account their lack of organization, poor self-esteem and fear of the unknown. As the young school dropout does not necessarily have the same profile as a budding entrepreneur or an unemployed graduate, the centre's second responsibility lies in the media strategy it must develop to reach all young adults, regardless of their profile. At all costs, it must avoid compartmentalizing severely underprivileged youth from young people who are employable or ready to create their own jobs.

The centre needs to project a global image corresponding to its primary mission, namely, to help and support young people in their integration process, irrespective of their social, cultural or economic status. It must bring together a diversified clientele, with the young entrepreneur rubbing shoulders with young adults who have no income, but nevertheless, must not be labelled. Bringing together young people with different profiles within the organization becomes a source of inspiration and hope, as understanding the difficulties experienced by those who are less fortunate is for others an opportunity for solidarity.

Promotion in the community means adopting effective tools such as a marketing plan that takes account of the profile of young clients, their needs and the access routes developed by a Carrefour jeunesse emploi to build a bridge between young adults and the job market.

Taking the time to communicate with the sector provides an opportunity to promote the various services the Carrefour jeunesse emploi offers to young adults. It is a first step in building their trust and inviting them to visit THEIR CENTRE.

Promotion in the community is also an opportunity for a Carrefour jeunesse emploi to bolster public opinion of its clients and to counter prejudice. The centre's commitment is aimed not only at young adults as persons, but also as members of a supportive group, motivated to succeed in their endeavours. It is an opportunity to express a positive, constructive, dynamic approach that associates young adults with qualities such as willingness, ambition and motivation, and with their future rather than their past.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi works toward integration into society and its success will largely depend on its relationship with the community. There must be a marked concern to remain in constant contact with the sector, to be a full social partner. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi favours a one-to-one partnership in which its contribution to furthering the cause of young adults is unequivocal. Its alternative practice must be recognized as different from that of a financial backer, an educational institution or a local health and social services centre.

MEASURES...

- The link with the sector is established through public recognition activities: for employers who make an extra effort to integrate young adults into their companies, or through their various contributions within the organization; for volunteers who give generously of their time and expertise to the development of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi in their area; for support workers who demonstrate commitment and innovation in their work.
 - This link with the sector is also established through regular participation in various local and regional round tables or through groupings of community agencies.
 - Entrusting the role of ambassador to a young support worker and participant in a Carrefour jeunesse emploi facilitates contact with other young adults outside the Carrefour jeunesse emploi. This role of ambassador creates a sense of belonging, which gives rise to pride and solidarity.
 - Standard promotion methods such as press conferences, interviews and open-line programs are used to talk about the projects and services offered and to invite young adults to visit the centre if they need a helping hand.
-

- Testimonials from clients on their own progress and demonstrating qualitative and quantitative results help to enhance the image of young adults in general and to promote the centre's services in a tangible way.
- The use of newspaper "ads" is an additional strategy. Clients read them, since they are looking for work. Through this accessible means, young clients identify the centre as an ordinary tool they can use. The message can be simple, direct and personal: "Are you looking for work? Do you want to go back to school? Would you like to be your own boss? Talk to Eric or Julie at Carrefour jeunesse emploi." On the one hand, the young adults' freedom of choice is respected, on the other, they are being asked to make an initial effort, their first step toward action.

❖ Client Reception

Getting to the Carrefour jeunesse emploi is not complicated. The centre is well situated in the young adult's community. If public transportation exists, it passes quite near, parking is free, and in certain towns, a bicycle path can be developed as part of a youth project. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi also invites young adults to take part in carpooling or to work out a strategy to develop their independence and make them more responsible.

Finally, the young adults arrive at the Carrefour jeunesse emploi. Since they are the most important element of a Carrefour, the primary objective of the reception consists of ensuring that they feel welcome in a warm, dynamic atmosphere.

A comprehensive series of conditions, gestures and attitudes concretely translates a willingness to afford a warm welcome to the young clients who must be assured that the support workers are there to serve them, and that the centre, organized accordingly, is their own.

MEASURES...

- The decoration is preferably simple and colourful, where young adults can once again contribute, clean, well-lighted premises, open spaces where they can come and go without restrictions. There is no distinction in the choice, quality or appearance of premises or furniture between what is used by the clients or the support workers.
 - Work tools are readily made available to all young adults seeking employment: desk, photocopier, fax, notice board, computerized job bank, telephone, documentation centre, Internet, etc. and even a lounge area where friends and support workers can enjoy a coffee. The premises are also available in the evening and on weekends for certain youth projects run by young people and youth agencies.
-

A community centre is a comforting place, where young adults can feel at home and, if they wish, pause to assess their situation and find the resources they need to pursue a serious, structured course of action.

The desire to welcome young adults in a warm, professional manner translates into a rapid determination of their needs, and through various measures, making the centre's full range of services available to them. Despite the willingness to offer a multitude of services, a Carrefour jeunesse emploi is unfortunately unable to meet all needs.

❖ Needs Assessment

If the Carrefour jeunesse emploi is unable to assist certain clients, support workers must direct them to other agencies without wasting their time or having them trail from one resource to another. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi reference tools are up to date, even avant-garde, and contacts with other sector resources are emphasized.

Once the clients of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi are ready to express their needs, an intervention then begins which puts the support workers' skills at their service. This work is both delicate and demanding, because it confronts the clients with a reality that is aimed at engaging them in action. It is always in line with the basic philosophy of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi: accompanying young adults in their employment process and especially, being prepared to help them in case of problems, as they prepare, compass in hand, to clear their own trail at their own pace.

The first stage of this accompanying consists of determining the type of support the Carrefour jeunesse emploi can offer them. The second is to provide the support.

Two principles guide this approach. On the one hand, it is the clients who determine what they want and make their choices; the role of the support worker is to listen and provide information. On the other hand, the young adults receive support until they find what they are seeking, since they have themselves set the goals to be achieved.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi works solely with information provided by the young adults, based on an interview and a written questionnaire. Accessing other sources of information is not common practice or deemed useful since support workers consider they are addressing free individuals who are responsible for their progress and who are seeking to further develop their independence through employment. If a search for additional information proves necessary, this is conducted with the young adult's permission in order to preserve the link of trust that forms the basis of the entire intervention.

Technically, the gathering of information takes place during a private interview lasting from fifteen to forty-five minutes, allowing clients to express themselves in an atmosphere of utmost respect. Support workers endeavour to make clients feel at ease, simplifying and demystifying the encounter. They explain why they need detailed knowledge of the client's situation and assure them that the information will remain confidential, within the Carrefour jeunesse emploi.

The support worker then provides information about the various tools that are suitable for the clients based on their needs assessment. What is their analysis of the situation? Are the proposed tools suitable? Do they want something else? They are not left without an answer and are directed, if necessary, to another service after receiving the relevant information. In cases where the required service is available at the centre, the support worker personally accompanies the young client to make the necessary introductions to the other colleague who will ensure continuity of service.

If clients must be directed to another agency, the support worker supplies the relevant information to enable them to contact the resource person concerned and if necessary, provides assistance until the clients have obtained results. Where needed, support workers discuss the case with their colleagues to find the best solution in the centre's internal or external reference network.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi is committed to meeting the real needs of clients but it does not possess every intervention tool. Although it must ask its young clients to explain their situation frankly, it must also candidly acknowledge its limitations if it wishes to preserve client trust and provide genuine help. For example, if the Carrefour jeunesse emploi is not equipped to intervene with young clients who have drug addiction or mental health problems, it will render them a greater service by referring them to the appropriate agency.

A Carrefour jeunesse emploi must occasionally yield to the constraints or conditions of financial backers, which sometimes have an impact on the agency's intervention practice. It is the responsibility of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi to remain critical in order to raise awareness among government or other partners about the difficulties encountered in application of the demands. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi must be able to call for changes that are necessary for the benefit of its clients. These constraints are part of the reality of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi; they cannot be ignored without jeopardizing its practice. But they also represent a challenge that encourages the centre to produce novel responses to the needs of its young clients.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi allows itself some freedom of action by continuously adapting its interventions to better meet the needs of its clients and minimize constraints in the application of certain government-funded programs or services.

Thus, on issues involving returning to school, finding a job or creating employment, the Carrefour jeunesse emploi quickly becomes an area's one-stop centre for information and support.

❖ Choosing the Approach

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi proposes to its clients an approach that gives them control over their lives, but it cannot accomplish this action for them. In this context the task of the support workers is to give them the necessary support to help them achieve their goals. The notion of accompanying always prevails: accompanying those who are discovering their potential because they are exercising their autonomy. Accompanying means refraining from taking charge of the young adult.

The social practice within a Carrefour jeunesse emploi focuses on the autonomy of young adults and gives them the means to exercise it. The clients play a central role in defining their needs and seeking solutions to meet them. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi supplies the tools to help them succeed prepares them to cope with the various problems in the workplace and puts them in contact with resources in their sector to ensure that their training will benefit them throughout their lives.

The basic objectives pursued by all support workers in the various services of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi are aimed at developing their clients' potential. This means equipping clients by helping them to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to achieve their goal. It involves reinforcing their self-confidence, making them feel they are important and convincing them that they are capable of succeeding. Finally, it means giving them opportunities to acquire a sense of self-identity by helping them assume their choices and display resourcefulness.

The tools used to achieve the various objectives vary according to the objective. The preferred approach is a small group of eight to twelve participants to help break down isolation, encourage solidarity and create new networks for the young adults. The support workers draw from various dynamic methods to stimulate a group animation that is rich in exchanges and learning. Basic personnel training in various university disciplines, newly marketed animation tools, and tools created by support workers reflecting their creativity and personality are the main contributing factors to the training workshops.

The primary characteristic of the intervention of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi with its clients is flexibility centred on the client's needs and not on fixed habits that the agency, as young as it may be, may rapidly acquire. The centre's programming is therefore not static and adjusts gradually as its clients' needs are expressed.

MEASURES:

- As an example, a group may be offered entrepreneurship training activities in the evening to avoid interfering with paid work during the day. Young clients who leave a group activity may return to it without being penalized once the personal situation that hindered their participation in the group has been resolved.

The content of collective training is modified, if necessary, to better meet the characteristics and dynamics of the group to which it is addressed. It is through a constant effort to pay attention to the needs of individuals and groups, and to refer to their solidarity, sense of responsibility and democracy, that each individual is able to obtain maximum results in a serious, committed course of action.

A second characteristic of the approach is teamwork. All staff members of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi, from receptionist to director, from support workers to volunteers are concerned about their young clients, and all become intervention agents.

By extension, a Carrefour jeunesse emploi places great emphasis on continuing education; it encourages support workers from the various services to share the tools and intervention methods in use by allowing them time for meetings and discussions, giving them innovative pedagogical tools and an opportunity to attend conferences and training workshops. This helps to update intervention skills and information on the socio-economic environment.

As a third characteristic, support workers at a Carrefour jeunesse emploi attach a great deal of importance to atmosphere as an intervention tool. Good humour and pleasure occupy an important place in their relationship with clients. They use a large number of games, simulation exercises and simplification techniques to encourage them to achieve their objectives.

A Carrefour jeunesse emploi intervention has a number of underlying principles. First, young adults must themselves take the initiative in seeking a job or an internship, registering at a school or conducting a market study prior to starting their own small business. They have the role of pilot, whereas the intervention has the role of co-pilot. The young adults must provide the greater part of the efforts that are required. It would be a mistake to believe that they can be helped through overprotection. Instead they need understanding and confidence in their potential. This self-empowerment of young clients is a step toward strengthening their self-esteem.

The process of insertion of young adults is an occasion to reflect on their general well-being and to counter their ignorance of certain aspects of life through information and suitable training. A YOUNG ADULT'S PROGRESS THROUGH A CARREFOUR JEUNESSE EMPLOI IS THE ACQUISITION OF A TOOLBOX FOR LIFE. The group approach, assisted by resource persons, provides an opportunity to involve young adults in educational training that is essential to improve their lives and society. In an approach aimed at

developing autonomy, a number of themes can be addressed: health, diet, sexuality, prejudice, discrimination, violence, justice, money, politics, rights, responsibilities, laws, etc.

The accompanying relationship that support workers at a Carrefour jeunesse emploi establish with clients is a relationship of equality. Their role consists of helping young adults evolve toward greater maturity. To achieve this, they must provide continuous encouragement, while avoiding the creation of dependence. Helping clients to face reality, without making them apathetic, is a delicate task. Support workers must also help clients to open up to their peers, to other adults, to function as a group and in society. In other words, they must help them to break out of their isolation.

In a process of accompanying young adults, it is not always easy to disregard one's own values in order to accept them as they are, or to put aside one's personal affinities to devote the same attention to all members of a group. Other situations may prove delicate and require a course of action shared by all volunteers and support workers. To demonstrate unceasing professionalism and take measures to maintain appropriate attitudes, a Carrefour jeunesse emploi must adopt ethical guidelines that have been carefully prepared with the support workers, while firmly bearing in mind the mission of the agency and its *raison d'être*. Proud of its philosophy of intervention and recognizing the rights and responsibilities of support workers and young adults alike, the Carrefour jeunesse emploi displays its charter at the entrance - a seal of commitment, quality and transparency.

❖ Multiple Intervention Plans

Young adults are given every opportunity to obtain training, realize their full potential, take charge of their own destiny, and acquire self-esteem. The agency offers multiple occasions that become intervention and accompanying tools with constant concern between preparation for a return to school, integration to employment and creating their own jobs. Clients progress from a simple, sometimes even informal project, to a complete, structured service. This is a time to listen to young clients and make use of imagination.

It should be remembered that most clients of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi are outside organized sectors. They are alone and belong to no reference group.

EVERYDAY MEASURES:

- Establishing a “*Club des amis du Carrefour jeunesse emploi*” helps young adults to develop their sense of belonging and, once their own situation has improved, to “*help the next in line*” by volunteering their time or making a monetary donation to
-

the Carrefour jeunesse emploi. It is a type of membership that allows former clients to keep in close touch with the evolution of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi and to be present at major events such as the annual general meeting.

- In association with the sector, volunteers, retirees and former clients are called upon to help organize Labour Day celebrations, the agency's anniversary, etc.
 - Why not automatically solicit the participation of young adults on various committees established by a Carrefour jeunesse emploi? Since client participation is indispensable, and to ensure their involvement in decision making, the board of directors of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi reserves some seats exclusively for its young clients.
 - During the summer or school holidays, the Carrefour jeunesse emploi pays close attention to the needs of younger clients who are fortunately still attending school. A Summer Work Fair organized by the agency enables young students to prepare their presentation tools for applications to prospective employers.
 - All Carrefour jeunesse emploi services offer training periods for students at the occupational, college or university levels. From reception to job search, from entrepreneurship to administration, space is provided for student trainees. The objectives of a training period are set by the student, the educational institution and the Carrefour jeunesse emploi. It is a way for the Carrefour jeunesse emploi to regenerate its work teams and practise what it preaches to employers, namely, to give young adults more training opportunities.
 - Mentoring projects in the form of sponsorships in a company help to pair an experienced worker with a young adult who is experiencing difficulty integrating into the labour market. These workers offer their time and understanding to create a bridge between the new recruit and the labour market. Peer counselling formulas also extend to entrepreneurship, in which the retired person and budding young entrepreneur form a team to develop and carry out a business project. Finally, why not establish a Carrefour jeunesse emploi mentorship club?
 - In some regions where public transit is a problem, carpooling initiated by well-established workers with young adults is a concrete example of interest in young people. A public transit service or a bus provided for the Carrefour jeunesse emploi also helps to alleviate its clients' mobility problems.
 - Dinner meetings between business leaders and potential young workers or future entrepreneurs help both parties to get to know each other better. It is therefore important to multiply opportunities to bring these young workers and employers together to develop relationships, alliances and solidarity. Prejudices become blurred as a result of such activities.
-

- Promoting young adults' participation in volunteerism as a complimentary approach to integration provides them with an opportunity to develop a network of key contacts and to take advantage of exceptional training.
 - An insertion undertaking or a work project in services or production managed by a Carrefour jeunesse emploi helps create a controlled situation that promotes training for young apprentices while respecting the rules of free enterprise. This training is easily transferable in an actual work sector, thus contributing to the successful integration of the young adult. With the revenues generated by the insertion undertaking, a policy of investment of these revenues should lead to a reinvestment in youth projects.
 - Establishing a foundation is particularly useful for the collection of funds to support services offered to youth clients in an area served by a Carrefour jeunesse emploi. A board of directors has a responsibility to free up funds quickly to provide support for certain young adults dealing with emergency constraints that are preventing their integration to employment: purchasing bus tickets, school registration costs, basic work equipment, etc.
-

ONGOING SPECIALIZED SERVICES:

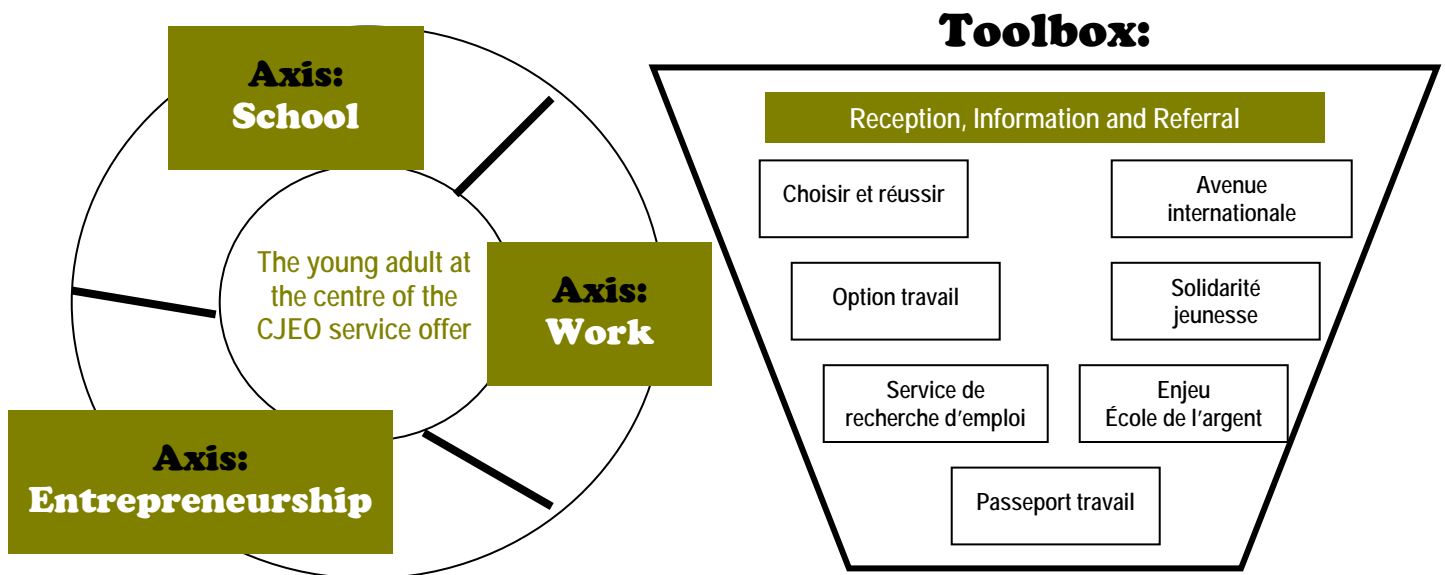
A Carrefour jeunesse emploi endeavours to improve training opportunities through a multitude of small projects. However, its regular programming is based essentially on offering specialized services with specific results objectives.

Specialized Services Offer of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais (CJEO)

We will now take a closer look at the CJEO's specialized services offer. These services have been carefully developed over the years with innovative and proven pedagogical tools. The services described briefly in the following pages can be further analysed with data on both content and results available at the Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais.

Services with young people in mind!

CJEO intervention rests on three main pillars: Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship. To these three pillars, add a set of tools that has been developed over the years and is made available to each young adult who enrolls in one of the CJEO programs on a volunteer basis and on the basis of his or her action plan.



OUR SPECIALIZED SERVICES:

For the young adults choosing to be coached through a structured process, the *Carrefour jeunesse emploi* is able to offer the following specialized services depending on the objectives they set. CJEO's services are, as always, free.

CHOISIR ET RÉUSSIR

Choisir et réussir is a school and occupational orientation service aimed at accompanying the young adult in making an occupational choice leading to a return to school or integration to employment.

Orientation procedures begin with an evaluation of the clients' precise needs and helping them to prepare an action plan. It is an opportunity for young clients to

- assess their situation;
- consider, in an informed way, a return to school or an occupational option;
- target their sector or sectors of occupational interest;
- fully determine their tastes, aptitudes and skills;
- identify local, regional, national and international sectors in which there is a shortage of workers;
- obtain relevant, up-to-date school and occupational information;
- take stock, discuss;
- prepare tools such as funding, daycare, transportation.

Finally, it is an opportunity to choose and succeed in returning to school, integrating into the labour market or creating their own employment.

OPTION TRAVAIL

Option travail is a service to develop employability.

Employability refers to the series of aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours that interact when the time comes to seek employment. This vast area of intervention is highlighted by the fact that young adults at this stage are often facing significant needs and major difficulties. Interventions with young adults involve several areas of their lives to help, support, guide and subsequently mobilize them toward integration into the labour market or a return to school.

First, it is necessary to assess their particular needs and then determine with them a concrete and suitable action plan. Second, they need guidance and accompanying in achieving their objectives. During their employability efforts, young adults will be able to

- further their self-knowledge by discovering their values and aptitudes and identifying their passions and interests;
- discover their strengths and learn how to promote them;
- increase their confidence and self-esteem, which are often put to the test;
- learn to communicate to avoid or resolve conflicts;
- develop healthier life habits;
- meet employers and broaden their network of contacts;
- take note, if necessary, of pressing psychosocial difficulties and plan a course of action to obtain help from an external resource;
- acquire the basic skills required by employers;
- expand their horizons, discover new possibilities related to school and work;
- target one or more occupations that match their interests and skills and identify a realistic academic or occupational roadmap to gain access to these areas;
- make use of winning strategies relating to job search methods and tools to obtain and keep satisfying work.

Finally, they will be able to take action through a structured job search and maintain their motivation.

JEUNES EN ACTION

Jeunes en action is aimed at meeting the needs of young adults aged 18 to 24 who have experienced particular difficulties that have prevented them from becoming part of the labour market in the short and medium term. This is an employment preparation program for the purpose of integration into employment or school, access to another Emploi-Québec active measure or the completion of a vocational project with a view towards employment. This service features flexibility which allows the nature, sequence and length of the activities to be adapted to the issues, needs and pace of each young person. The objective of this measure is to develop their personal, social and professional autonomy and to coach them in their integration and retention.

Participation is a minimum of 20 weeks. *Jeunes en action* will enable the young adult to:

- Stabilize his or her life with action regarding: safety, housing, health, money management and social network
 - Break with isolation, become part of a group, acquire momentum for moving forward
 - Create a realistic action plan connected to his or her aspirations
 - Discover his or her potential and define his or her needs, values, aptitudes and interests
 - Develop a feeling of personal competence connected with studies and work
-

- Target one or more trades matching his or her interests and skills and then determine the necessary and realistic academic or vocational route to getting there.
- Access to practicums for observing and exploring various work settings
- Use of winning strategies in terms of job search methods and tools for getting and keeping a rewarding job

Change direction in life: find a job, return to school or deal with a significant problem related to health or the justice system.

IDEO 16/17 ANS: Innovation, Development, Exploration, Guidance

IDEO 16/17 ans is part of the *Stratégie d'action jeunesse 2006-2009, Pour une jeunesse engagée dans sa réussite*. This youth action strategy in part, provides for a service that specifically targets youth aged 16 and 17 and is based on a framework of prevention using employment assistance. This new intervention focuses on staying in school and vocational guidance for youth at-risk for dropping out of school and motivating those who have already done so, by proposing various activities to them.

First, the young person's specific needs will be assessed in order to determine a concrete, realistic action plan. Then, we coach the young person in achieving his or her objectives. Throughout the process, the young adult can:

- Build a realistic action plan related to his or her aspirations
- Attain the momentum to go forward toward success in school
- Develop feelings of personal competence related to studies and work
- Target one or more trades that match their interests and aptitudes and then determine the academic or vocational path for getting there
- Become acquainted with the reality of the job market regarding the choice to leave school without a diploma
- Discover new paths or temporarily try a choice through exploration in the work setting or at school
- Move on to action and obtain a secondary school diploma

SERVICE DE RECHERCHE D'EMPLOI

The mandate of the *Service de recherche d'emploi* is to provide tools and support to participants who have a job objective in mind and who have no significant problems that could hinder their action in seeking employment.

The approach enables job seekers to break out of their social isolation by establishing personal links with a dozen new persons like themselves who are seeking employment.

As the saying goes, “When I look at myself, I’m devastated; when I compare myself with others, I’m consoled.” To some extent, this is what happens in a group. The job seekers realize that they are not the only ones encountering problems, that their situation is not too bad after all and that it is quite possible to overcome obstacles. The group approach facilitates working within a system of empowerment. One way of illustrating this approach would be to say that clients will no longer be given fish (trainer versus student approach), but instead, they will be shown how to fish (accompanying guide versus author of one’s own development). This means that job seekers become knowledge bearers, and trainers for themselves and their co-job seekers.

These services enable job seekers to

- develop autonomy in the way they seek employment;
- develop a personalized job-seeking strategy;
- increase their knowledge of the labour market;
- prepare a dynamic résumé and business card;
- discover and practise interview techniques;
- develop Internet research skills, among others;
- enrich their self-management skills, an essential element sought by employers;
- write introduction, thank-you, follow-up letters;
- learn about internship locations, cultural exchanges and government programs;
- recognize different business cultures;
- explore the labour market through visits to potential employers.

Finally, they are able to demonstrate their skills to employers and integrate the labour market.

PASSEPORT TRAVAIL

Passeport travail is offered to young new arrivals who have been in Canada for five years. The training helps new arrivals to settle and integrate into their host society.

The approach enables these young adults to break out of their social isolation by forming personal links with new persons like themselves who have experienced a migratory process. It is also an opportunity to reinforce French language skills and an ideal way to build their first network of contacts in their host society.

During their adaptation process, the new arrivals will receive support, tools and accompanying in aspects such as

- assimilating the major life changes brought about by immigration;
-

- adapting to the life, interpersonal relations and communications habits of the host society;
- expressing their concerns regarding their socio-occupational integration;
- becoming familiar with trades and occupations in Canada, their new host country;
- exploring the Canadian reality (geography, economy, resources, climate, etc.);
- analysing the dynamics of the North-American organizational culture: employers' expectations and demands, organizational values, work habits, profiles of employers and various business cultures, etc.;
- assessing the region, labour market, activity sectors, industrial park, maps, transportation, school network, etc.;
- determining the role of attitude in the integration process;
- building a network (importance of forming a network, ways to make contact with people, locations for making contacts, volunteerism, etc.);
- exploring racism and cultural differences;
- determining a short-term work objective and validating an occupational project.

Finally, new arrivals will receive help to prepare an action plan to achieve their social and occupational integration.

ENJEU: L'ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship services are offered to young adults who wish to learn more about starting a business.

Young people may have a number of reasons for wishing to start their own business. Whether they are motivated to take advantage of a business opportunity, need to create their own job or are interested in identifying the steps involved in starting a business, *Enjeu : l'entrepreneurship* can provide support and tools to help them explore and develop their entrepreneurial skills.

Regardless of the stage of development of their project, clients will benefit from the advice they receive in dynamic workshops or during individual accompanying. The young entrepreneur candidates will be able to

- validate their entrepreneurial profile;
 - validate their business project;
 - develop their business project: market analysis, client profile, competition, marketing, business operations and budgeted financial statements;
 - receive information and advice in choosing the legal status of their business;
 - obtain advice in seeking funding;
 - receive guidance in developing a business plan;
-

- obtain referrals to more specialized services according to need, especially with regard to exporting, technological development, social economy, development of cooperatives or training.

Finally, they will receive assistance in starting their business.

ACCUEIL, INFORMATION ET RÉFÉRENCE

Hello! Welcome, what can we do for you? This is what we say to close to 7,000 young adults each year.

All young people who arrive at the CJEO have needs related to their social or occupational integration. They are welcomed, irrespective of their social or economic status.

Young adults come to the CJEO on their own initiative or they are referred through a community, institutional, governmental or private agency in the sector.

Upon their arrival at the CJEO, we assess their situation and direct them to the service that best meets their needs.

For those who initially choose an independent approach, a multitude of tools are placed at their disposal in a youth room, an open-air space located at the agency entrance. An advisor is also on duty to assist them in their independent initiative. The multifunctional room contains

- bulletin boards providing information about available jobs, a wide range of activities and very varied information on transportation, second-hand articles, community agencies, training, etc.;
- computers, printers, a fax machine, a photocopier, telephones and all technical equipment required to support a job search;
- newspapers, periodicals and collections specializing in school and occupational information.

For young adults who choose to be accompanied in a structured process, the Carrefour jeunesse emploi is able to offer the following specialized services depending on the objectives set by the young client. As always, all CJEO services are offered free of charge.

DESJARDINS JEUNES AU TRAVAIL (YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM)

Desjardins jeunes au travail is a Fédération des caisses Desjardins initiative; through this program, Fédération des caisses Desjardins undertakes to enable 30 young people in the Outaouais between the ages of 16 and 24 years to acquire a first enriching and meaningful work experience. It will thus allow them to break the vicious cycle of no experience/no job, no job/no experience. All in all, it fits in well exactly where our participants' needs lie.

The young person is advised by a CJEO mentor to help him or her target his or her employment objective, acquire tools and better job search techniques, and to determine potential employers. The employer also benefits from a wage incentive that facilitates hiring and the young adult receives a bonus when he or she has reached 180 hours of work. In order for this first job to be a success, the CJEO mentor will remain involved throughout the process to support the young adult's success.

This intervention program enables the young adult to:

- Acquire a first practical work experience
- Better understand job market realities
- Obtain support and advice from CJEO employment mentors
- Develop vocational skills

QUÉBEC PLURIEL

Québec pluriel is a mentoring service established to help newly arrived youth aged 16 to 35 years of age as well as youth from 16 to 24 years old belonging to visible minorities become integrated into the labour market. Job-seekers, also called “mentorees”, will have the opportunity to be matched with a volunteer mentor (adult worker or retiree who is active in the community).

A relationship of trust extending over time, i.e. 12 weeks, at the rate of one hour per week is how the mentor will be able to support and encourage the mentoree in the socio-professional integration process. *Québec pluriel* is presented as a mentoring initiative that enables young immigrants or visible minorities to:

- Benefit from the mentor's experience, advice and socio-professional network
- Have a rewarding experience focused on seeking, getting and keeping a job
- Put an end to isolation
- Become part of the world of the mentored job-search network.

This pilot project is a complementary measure to traditional job search services. Some will find jobs, others will encounter obstacles. *Québec pluriel* will thus provide another form of personalized support to those who are not able to find the way in to the job market.

ÉCOLE DE L'ARGENT

École de l'argent is intended for all young adults who wish to achieve their goal of returning to school, finding a better job or starting their own business. To that end, the Carrefour jeunesse emploi offers young adults a series of workshops to help them develop good financial habits and make better life choices.

Armed with its 20 years of expertise in accompanying young adults in their quest for KNOWLEDGE, SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS and KNOW-HOW, the CJEO has added a new dimension to its practice, namely, KNOWING HOW TO HAVE.

Young clients have an opportunity to learn how to

- develop a budget;
- implement practical ideas to avoid indebtedness;
- recognize the signs of excessive indebtedness;
- develop winning habits in managing their money;
- adopt good consumer habits;
- prioritize their goals;
- plan for large purchases;
- become responsible and regain control of their lives;
- discover their entrepreneurial aptitudes;
- remain positive, constructive and creative;
- develop an entrepreneurial attitude;
- transform their hobbies into business opportunities.

Finally, they will have an opportunity to imagine, create and invent wealth.

AVENUE INTERNATIONALE

Avenue internationale is a new development service aimed at providing encouragement, information and tools for young adults from 16 to 35 years of age who are seeking international experience. This experience may take various forms such as occupational internships, community projects, intercultural exchanges, language immersion projects, study visits, etc.

Avenue internationale helps guide young adults in the choice of a program that meets their personal and occupational needs. The assessment interviews enable young adults to

- take the time to reflect on their motives for wishing to have an international experience;
-

- identify their needs, interests, strengths and weaknesses;
- learn about the steps needed to plan such a project (personal, cultural, financial, administrative aspects, etc.);
- obtain support to carry out an action plan;
- learn about the various international mobility programs available to them (admissibility criteria, preparatory requirements, practical tasks, etc.);
- obtain technical assistance in seeking employment abroad (information registry, help in adapting letters and résumés, Internet sites, specialized documentation, work visa information, etc.).

Avenue internationale also offers a mobility project for young adults who do not have a post-secondary diploma and are experiencing obstacles to employment. This project known as *Jeunes-trotteurs* is designed to enable a group of 12 young adults to take part in intra-regional and international mobility experiences through concrete work projects in all parts of the Outaouais region and in another country. The 2006 version of this project is a group visit to Costa Rica.

TABLE JEUNESSE GATINEAU

La *Table jeunesse Gatineau* (TJG) is located at the CJEO and is a very valuable intervention program. Its role is to encourage young adults (18-35 years) to become involved in the various decision-making bodies in the community, take part in the decisions that involve them, create bridging tools between citizens, develop their feeling of belonging to the City of Gatineau, increase citizen participation and promote social entrepreneurship.

The *Table jeunesse Gatineau* has developed four pillars supporting actions for doing this:

1- The first pillar has to do with the claim for involvement in decision-making bodies. Young adults participate in public consultations, file various memoranda, sit on various boards of directors.

2- The second pillar is training and communication. Throughout the year, the young adults are invited to various lectures and discussion groups on a topic specific to the situation in Gatineau. The monthly communication tool is the monthly newsletter, *À Table!* TJG members remain in contact with all structuring and mobilization projects.

3- The third pillar is coaching community projects and development of social entrepreneurship. This pillar promotes citizen involvement through action and development of personal or community citizen development projects. Thus, young adults are helped to structure, develop and launch projects. The TJG research and development officer mentors these young adults in the search for funding.

4- The fourth pillar is research and consultation. This pillar is for getting the young adults in Gatineau better known, from a socio-demographic perspective as well as through their tastes, preferences and social concerns. To do this, the TJG establishes a public consultation website (discussion forum and Wiki platform) and conducts large-scale surveys that are representative of young adults' concerns.

❖ Client Follow-up

Several features distinguish a Carrefour jeunesse emploi from all other intervention environments. It stands apart through its interest in its clients and in the cause it supports. It is more than a service, it is a commitment.

This commitment is translated throughout the young adults' action, even after their departure, by follow-up that can extend over two years, and even longer, at the young clients' request.

Follow-up takes many forms depending on the clients' course of action during their period at the Carrefour jeunesse emploi.

MEASURES:

- Follow-up may consist of a telephone call from the clients' support worker to inquire about their new situation, an invitation to a meeting of their training group to share their progress and obtain support and comfort, or a visit from the clients to update their résumé and take advantage of the opportunity to obtain support or advice.
- Systematically, all clients who have been involved in a course of action are contacted three to four times a year to provide reinforcement. Support workers use the opportunity to update the results that will be used as information to readjust their various projects. Are the clients working or continuing their school project? For how long? What are the working conditions? How are the young entrepreneurs organizing themselves? And so on. Depending on their situation, they are invited to return to the centre, where they can obtain assistance and access the services of a support worker as well as the various tools the centre has at its disposal.

❖ Evaluating Services

Results assessment is conducted primarily in terms of the young adults' progress. It should be remembered that the individuals are the makers of their own progress; their evaluation is their own and the results are theirs. Results in terms of job placement, return to school, or the number of small businesses launched provide additional data that are valid but non-exclusive in terms of performance or efficiency.

Analysis of the results is conducted mainly on the basis of the young adults' satisfaction. It is reflected in their comments expressed during evaluation sessions in which they are able to realize the progress they have made in breaking out of their isolation and/or taking the action required for successful integration. The young clients' project or the service they have received is never an end in itself. It is merely one element in their self-empowerment process.

Young clients are associated with the evaluation of services dispensed in a Carrefour jeunesse emploi. Measures such as group interviews or questionnaires at the end of a workshop provide an opportunity to express their opinion. To foster ongoing improvement in services, this evaluation also includes consideration of client expectations and results, and various reflection activities bringing together staff members and resource persons. The centre also initiates a number of action research projects with the collaboration of university faculties (see bibliography).

The result is a constant adjustment that helps the Carrefour jeunesse emploi avoid rigidity in a practice that was designed to be progressive and unceasingly innovative, while remaining faithful to its intervention philosophy and mission.

The Carrefour jeunesse emploi Raises Awareness

While the main function of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi is to provide a service to youth, and most of its time and energy is devoted to this service, the second function is to raise awareness in the sector where a change in solidarity is required to achieve greater equality and justice for young adults. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi, which emerged from the community, is constantly in touch with its environment. With a positive, constructive approach, the centre finds in the community the necessary support for young people.

This support results in a greater sense of responsibility on the part of all socio-economic sectors that are invited to make concrete gestures of solidarity. The formulas must be new and the gestures avant-garde, since past models no longer suit new socio-economic realities.

A single action will not succeed in positioning young adults in winning conditions by giving them more opportunities. Change must come through better coordination of numerous community actions combined with the indispensable support of governments. Carrefour jeunesse emploi is one of the workers in a field that must have a place on task forces dealing with a region's socio-economic issues, and it must act as a special interlocutor with the government on the issue of young adults.

A Carrefour jeunesse emploi and its clients possess interesting features that can stimulate community innovation in terms of experimenting with new employment integration and job creation models: creativity in establishing new projects, dynamism and the will to

succeed, flexibility in ways of doing business, commitment, an ability to adapt rapidly, and reasonable expectations regarding employers and partners.

Each new endeavour, as small as it may be, must be evaluated, and if conclusive, undertaken on a larger scale. Each successful experiment must be promoted. Each commendable action by a member of the community must be recognized. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi also has a responsibility to inform citizens and the various authorities (mayor, the minister or government concerned) in order to publicize any praiseworthy action.

It is basically the “*small steps*” philosophy that is applied by a Carrefour jeunesse emploi. Waiting until governments tie all the strings, until policies and laws are adopted, until programs are developed, puts a community on hold unnecessarily. In the meantime, we seize the opportunity to take action, to experiment! We must not miss an opportunity to encourage our young people to develop their life project, and to raise awareness among employers about their reality and their responsibility.

However, while national strategies on employment issues are discussed, negotiated, modified, oriented, planned, organized and taking shape, somewhere there is a Carrefour jeunesse emploi that is preparing the groundwork for acceptance of the necessary changes to the habits and behaviours of the various sectors concerned.

MEASURES:

- Along the way, support workers meet with business leaders to invite them to welcome a young adult into their organization as an employee, or to sponsor young entrepreneurs who have been carefully assisted in their preparation by a Carrefour jeunesse emploi. A written agreement specifies the responsibilities and sets the conditions for each of the parties. Systematic follow-up is carried out to enable both parties to function harmoniously.
 - A Carrefour jeunesse emploi may be instrumental in convincing a business leader to create a new position. The centre can provide assistance in developing the new job description, recruiting the new employee, and in mentoring and preparing a training plan for the young adult.
 - An association or group of professionals and entrepreneurs may adopt a Carrefour jeunesse emploi to share the social and economic discourse on youth with the centre. During its associative life activities or on positions adopted by the government, the adoptive group takes a stand in favour of its young adult protégés.
 - A Carrefour jeunesse emploi establishes a business consortium to raise awareness among the key players in its community. It encourages them to play a leading role in
-

the changes that must take place in favour of young people and to contribute to the development of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi.

- Membership on a board of directors of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi should not be viewed as an honorary title. It is instead a major responsibility that is practised as well in public awareness and taking stands. Members are meticulously chosen according to their capacity for community leadership and act as agents of change.
- Youth also has a role to play. A Carrefour jeunesse emploi makes arrangements to allow them to represent themselves and participate both in collective reflection and positions to be adopted.
- A Carrefour jeunesse emploi cannot remain silent about the youth profile it witnesses on a daily basis. The centre has a duty to raise awareness among the population and institutions about the obstacles linked to the integration of young adults into the labour market, and must use its influence to promote and implement corrective measures.

For a community, adopting an instrument such as a Carrefour jeunesse emploi means ensuring that the youth issue will remain a priority for the community. It is to ensure that it will be at the centre of the community's concerns, on the agenda, every day! The advantage for a Carrefour jeunesse emploi, whose mission is exclusive to young adults, is to avoid having the youth issue diluted among all the issues of a region. Ultimately, when the time comes to discuss action regarding the plight of young people, the presence of a Carrefour jeunesse emploi ensures that the issue will not be shelved through lack of time and money. In this way, the community avoids neglecting thousands of young adults.

Roadmap of the Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais (CJEO)

Emergence and Development Conditions - the CJEO Case:

❖ **An Authentic Sector Response**

Consultation – Vision – Values – Principles – Mobilization

The introduction of the CJEO was based on the genuine needs of young adults and their dynamics. From the outset, young people were questioned about their needs, problems and solutions, and they participated in the reflection activities. They were subsequently invited to serve on the Board of Directors of the agency, which had reserved a minimum of two seats for young participants.

From the beginning, a profile of the situation of young adults helped shed light on their realities and demonstrated the need to offer them one-stop integrated services aimed at developing their employability and promoting their insertion into the labour market.

The founding members agreed from the start on a common vision of the CJEO concept, the values conveyed and the principles on which development should be based. This framework remains and to date is still adhered to in its entirety.

The type of project focusing on “*the cause of young adults*” and the strategy of planning a building specifically for young people attracted the attention of the municipal, union, business and public sectors, as well as the entire population of the Outaouais. At various levels, there was a recognition that something had to be done to solve the employment problems of young people. The CJEO succeeded in creating true cohesion in the area by proposing to unite the economic and the social in a novel experiment.

❖ **Professionalism of Working Groups**

Calibre – Creativity – Commitment – Formation – Collaboration – Development

Rapidly, via the social and economic context of the period (1984,1985...), young university graduates took the CJEO by storm by occupying support worker and coordinator positions. The high level of training and the creative, committed profile of staff members led to unique, remarkable and rapid development. It is very clear that the CJEO evolved in a large measure through the marked professionalism of its employees.

The hiring criteria for support staff are in many respects more demanding than the average criteria for members of the Quebec public service working in insertion programs.

Social sector professions are also very varied, thus creating the dynamics of a multidisciplinary approach.

Over the years, the agency has invested considerable effort in developing a number of modern human resources development tools: a framework governing employee working conditions, recognition policy, training plan, ethics guidelines, succession program, etc.

The contribution and mobilization of all employees helps the agency to constantly renew its intervention tools and develop new programs and services. This attitude, which is strongly encouraged by the management, makes this centre a genuine research and development laboratory for new approaches and alternatives.

❖ Institutionalizing the Work Organization

Structure – Continuity – Results – Recognition

The CJEO rapidly moved from an informal practice to a structured, organized, formal practice recognized by the community and its partners. Its approach has nonetheless remained friendly, warm and accessible for young adults who visit the centre. Behind the scenes, however, the institutionalization of the CJEO has been taking place throughout the years. This helps the agency to grow and ensure its durability. It also ensures that the CJEO is recognized by all sector partners. Its expansion throughout Quebec has meant that this type of community organization is included in public orientations and policies of social and economic insertion. This effect has given CJEO access to government programs it can offer and support.

Its results, statistical reports, activity reports and marketing strategies have demonstrated to its partners the quantitative and qualitative impact of its action on young adults. Discipline is the order of the day.

Through its growth throughout the years, the CJEO has developed a clearly defined work framework that nonetheless allows a certain number of constructive arrangements. It is a community organization that displays a high standard of quality, effectiveness and efficiency. When employees leave the agency, information is passed from one staff member to another or from one volunteer to another through a number of written guidelines, thus ensuring continuity of services. Several meetings for exchange and follow-up also ensure respect for the mission, its values and organizational culture.

❖ Partnerships and Funding Procedures

Expectations – Approach – Mission – Values – Results – Autonomy

The external view of the CJEO exerts pressure on the organization in terms of its performance in achieving a certain type of results. Over time, the CJEO has adopted

exceptional instruments, programs and services that have elicited investments from a number of public and private financial partners. These partners have accepted the CJEO as a risk worth taking and they have major expectations for specific results.

The CJEO mission and its alternative community approach conclusively provide new ways to address the issue of reaching young adults who are isolated and excluded and supporting them in their social and economic insertion process. The course of action proposed by the CJEO in relation to the young adults' environment during their process of reflection and launching of their personal action plan is in part a pledge of success in their integration.

The challenge for the CJEO is to ensure that it remains in charge of the evolution of its practice and expected results, while appealing to a series of partners, including the government. The CJEO's objectives are very close to the reality of its young adults and its community. The government's objectives are not necessarily the same. For example, improving the living conditions of a young adult may mean withdrawal treatment, a change of address, or discharging a major debt. In terms of progress, for the CJEO it is a tangible, remarkable result. As for public financial backers, and depending on the objective sought, the real result could be that young adults are employed, and the working conditions matter little as long as they no longer receive government benefits.

The CJEO must constantly defend its global approach, provide information about the reality of young people and remain focused on its mission, values and principles. The agency must continue to be critical and independent in the choice of its approach and results indicators. A number of experiments show that it is possible to reconcile the CJEO's concerns with those of government departments in terms of convincing results, while respecting the CJEO approach and its managerial autonomy. The results must be defined both at the qualitative and quantitative levels.

In the pursuit of its objectives, the CJEO must constantly call on all its public and private partners to commit to financial support for the CJEO on a recurring basis. Over the years, the CJEO has seen its funding progress from a few months to an approach in which the terms of the agreement vary between two, three and five years, depending on the programs and services. This situation has very positive effects in relation to continuity of service and the agency's managerial autonomy.

❖ **Interface with Public Authorities**

Managerial Autonomy – Negotiations – Solidarity – Credibility – Continuity

To date, the CJEO has demonstrated its capacity to negotiate agreements and innovative accords with government authorities that allow it to maintain managerial autonomy. Watchful of this autonomy, the agency is always vigilant in negotiating agreements by ensuring that it is fully aware of the terms and conditions, and accepting only those

projects that are consistent with its mission, values and managerial autonomy. Solidarity with and respect for the roles of its Board of Directors and senior management have ensured cohesion and collaboration during negotiations. This strategy has allowed it to demonstrate community commitment and the determination to protect the alternative approach at all costs and avoid wall-to-wall formulas.

This determination and will to protect the CJEO mission have helped the agency to survive the passage of time and obtain the credibility necessary for its development. To date, the CJEO and the CJE network throughout Quebec have received substantial recognition from the various governments elected to the National Assembly.

The Quebec government's youth action strategy positions the CJE network as a place of indispensable intervention for young people and proposes partnership agreements over periods varying from three to five years.

❖ **Current and Future Challenges**

Visionary – Novel Approach – Managerial Autonomy – Partnership – Dynamism

The CJEO is a novel experiment in community economic development and its involvement goes beyond the mandate of occupational insertion negotiated with the government. To continue as an alternative resource used primarily by young adults in an urban milieu, the agency must remain vigilant about the potential risks of losing focus. Current and future challenges are significant and require unprecedented vigilance

- to maintain its vision by encouraging the participation of all personnel and volunteer administrators in strategic planning activities;
 - to maintain the approach through which young adults continue to control their progress and results;
 - to further diversify its funding by developing recurring financing package formulas drawing on the private, public and community sectors;
 - and finally, to maintain the dynamism, creativity and desire to exceed expectations of all personnel and the Board of Directors.
-

Conclusion

Young adults will visit a Carrefour jeunesse emploi if they feel at one point that they need to change some aspect of their lives or improve their situation. No one should feel under any obligation. In the long run, more is gained in terms of changing attitudes and behaviours by raising awareness and making individuals more accountable. The invitation from a Carrefour jeunesse emploi to young clients in its community is made on a voluntary basis. Thus, the two parties make a mutual commitment while respecting their reciprocal responsibilities.

It is imperative to avoid complicating this relationship of assistance between the support worker and the young client. The relationship between a Carrefour jeunesse emploi and its financial or other partners must be one of collaboration, not submission. The Carrefour jeunesse emploi, autonomous in its intervention, acts as a partner on a one-to-one basis with various institutions. The financial tools of one partner and the other partner's capacity to intervene judiciously with young adults must be placed at the service of young people throughout their area.

A Carrefour jeunesse emploi serves as a GATEWAY between the undesirable situation of young adults and the realization of their life projects.

The major challenge for a Carrefour jeunesse emploi is to respond, above all, with commitment, originality and efficiency to the needs of young adults in a constantly evolving cultural, social and economic context while maintaining its freedom to act and to speak publicly.

Since there are no simple explanations or solutions for the complex situation of YOUNG ADULTS EXCLUDED from the labour market, the Carrefour jeunesse emploi chooses ACTION.

Bibliography

Assogba, Yao. *Les pratiques alternatives d'insertion socio-professionnelle des jeunes. Le cas du Carrefour jeunesse emploi dans l'Outaouais*. Hull: Université du Québec à Hull, 1991.

Assogba, Y. and D. Turcotte. *Insertion de l' « autre jeunesse » dans l'Outaouais : le cas du Carrefour jeunesse emploi*. Hull: Université du Québec à Hull, Université Laval, 1996.

Beaudoin, Lucie and Louis Favreau. *Pratiques communautaires d'insertion auprès des jeunes au Québec. Itinéraire du Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais : les années d'émergence et d'affirmation 1985-1995*, vol. 1, 2000.

Beaudoin, Lucie and Louis Favreau. *Pratiques communautaires d'insertion auprès des jeunes au Québec. Le Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais : les années de maturité et de mise en réseau 1996-2000*, vol. 2, 2000.

Beaudoin, Lucie and Louis Favreau. *Le Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais : Analyse et mise en perspective d'une pratique communautaire d'insertion auprès des jeunes*, vol. 3, 2000.

Blanchard, M. and F. Vincelette. *Éléments de réflexion pour une approche alternative et communautaire*. Montréal: Regroupement des ressources alternatives en santé mentale, 1989.

Gauthier, Madeleine. *L'insertion de la jeunesse québécoise en emploi*. Québec: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1990.

Morissette, M. and G. Groleau. *La pratique du Carrefour jeunesse emploi au quotidien : une mission partagée, une philosophie intégrée*. Gatineau: Carrefour jeunesse emploi de l'Outaouais, 1991.

Laville, Jean-Louis « *L'insertion par l'économie en France* », *nouvelles pratiques sociales*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1990.

Parazelli, Michel. « *Être jeune aujourd'hui* » *nouvelles pratiques sociales*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1989.
