

ACTIVITY REPORT 2015-2016

PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



ASSOCIATION DES GRANDPARENTS DU QUÉBEC

September 24, 2016

Presentation

The Association des grands-parents du Québec (A G P Q) was founded in 1990 as a local organization in Beauport. In 2004, it extended its scope of action to all of Quebec. As a result, it has changed its name. Since then, it has organized events and activities in the main urban areas of Quebec. Since 2004, it has maintained a toll-free crisis line for all grandparents and seniors.

Mission Statement

The AGPQ's mission is to defend the rights of grandparents and elders. It also defends the rights of children to maintain relationships with their grandparents and extended families. Its mission is also to help grandparents in difficulty and to accompany them on their journey.

Vision

Through its action, the Association makes it possible to improve the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren and thus help many children to grow better. It aims to make things more equitable for grandparents and seniors.

Our main services and activities

- Political representation, intervention with political authorities and the media.
- Toll-free crisis line in all regions of Quebec.
- Legal, psychological or political information sessions.
- Self-help, reflection and action group (coffee meetings).

Our contact details

The Association des grands-parents du Québec

Our office is located inside the Centre communautaire de Beaupré
20 Fatima Street East, P. O.
Box 2011
Beaupré (QC) G0A 1E0

Our postal address
Post office box
2011
Beaupré (QC) G0A 1E0

Administrative telephone: 418-702-3544

Montreal Crisis Line: 514-745-6110
Toll-free crisis line: 1-866-745-110

Website: www.w.grands-parents.qc.ca

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/grandparents.quebec>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/grandsparents>

Highlights of the year 2015-2016

Volunteers

We continued to focus on intensified collaboration with volunteer centres, particularly with the Centre d'action bénévole de Québec, Accès Bénévolat (Est de Montréal) and, to a lesser extent, with the Centre d'action bénévole de Montréal. This collaboration helps us a lot in our recruitment of volunteers.

The AGPQ is thus seeking to better manage its volunteers, but above all to recruit new ones. We focus on baby boomers and social work students. As you will see below, we have had a very good collaboration with a Swiss university institution, the Haute École de travail social de Sierre in the canton of Valais.

Partnerships

We had established a great collaboration with a Montreal seniors' organization, Présages de la Fondation Berthiaume-Du Tremblay. However, the organization's financial difficulties forced it to sell the building where it hosted many organizations like ours.

In 2015, our general assembly was held at the premises of another seniors' organization in Montreal, the Maison des grands-parents de Villeray. We thank this very dynamic organization very much for its collaboration.

We continue to participate each year in the Beauce Seniors' Information Clinic. The organizers of this activity are the Association québécoise des défenses des retraités (AQDR) de la Beauce and the former local MP, Maxime Bernier.

Crisis line

Our listening volunteers continue, of course, to offer excellent service to grandparents throughout Quebec.

We have worked hard to recruit new volunteers who are listening. Thanks to our partners, Accès Bénévolat, the Centre d'action bénévole de Montréal, the Centre d'action bénévole de Québec and Arrondissement. com, we have recruited several new people who will be listening.

We are proud to announce that we now have the invaluable collaboration of Ms. Tania Douville, who holds a Master's degree in guidance sciences, to improve our ongoing training program for our listening volunteers.

Here are some of the situations encountered by listeners:



- 1 Parents demand money or property to leave grandchildren to grandparents.
- 2 Parents threaten grandparents: "If you refuse to babysit on weekends, you won't see them anymore".
- 3 Children are neglected by parents. Grandparents compensate for this by taking care of and caring for the young people. Grandparents keep their grandchildren full-time with the consent of the parents. They pay for all the children's needs. But if they ask to receive social or tax programs related to children (Child Support Payment (Quebec) and the Canada Child Allowance), parents threaten them with never seeing the children again.

Children are neglected by parents. Grandparents compensate for this by taking care of and caring for the young people. They get exhausted and ask the CLSC for help. The latter's interveners requested the intervention of the Director of Youth Protection. The latter places the child in a foster family. If the child is young or very young, he or she will probably be placed with a family that wants to adopt him or her. If this were to happen, grandparents would become foreigners within the meaning of the law.
- 5 Grandparents help their son or daughter who is going through a difficult divorce or separation. When one parent is demonized by the other and suffers parental alienation, it is not only the parent who is targeted, but also his or her parents and siblings. The big losers are of course the children.
- 6 The son or daughter of the grandparents, father or mother of the grandchildren has died. The surviving parent wishes to remove the lineage of the deceased parent from his or her life and that of his or her child. He wants to have his child adopted by a new spouse. If this were to happen, the grandparents would become foreigners within the meaning of the law.
- 7) Following any dispute between parents and grandparents, they are denied access to grandchildren. Yet parents were previously very happy with their dedication to child care.

Our demands to the political authorities

- 1 The AGPQ calls for the maintenance of article 611 of the Civil Code despite the recommendations to the contrary of the Advisory Committee on Family Law.
- 2 The AGPQ claims the right for grandchildren whose adoption is required and who have, prior to adoption, established a significant relationship with their biological grandparents, the ***right to maintain it even after adoption***.
3. That the federal Divorce Act take into account the role of grandparents in families.

Members of Parliament and ministers contacted to put forward our above-mentioned demands

	<p>The President of the AGPQ visited the Office of the Minister of Elders, Mrs. Francine Charbonneau. He met with Florence Thivierge, Director of the Acting Minister's Cabinet, and Chantale Demingue, his political attaché.</p> <p>The President of the AGPQ explained the issue of grandparents whose grandchildren are adopted.</p>
	<p>Mrs Marie-Chantal Demingue contacted the office of the Minister of Justice, Ms. Stéphanie Vallée, after the meeting. She called the President to suggest that she contact Kim Beaudouin, a lawyer in the Office of the Minister of Justice. She said she was the best person for this case.</p> <p>The President then sent a letter to the Minister and Me Kim Beaudouin to make them aware of the situation of grandparents whose grandchildren are adopted.</p>



Mr. Henri Lafrance, Minister Maxime Bernier and Luc Trudeau

Me Luc Trudeau making a speech to defend the rights of grandparents before a group of seniors and Minister Maxime Bernier



Intervention with the media

A member of the Board of Directors, Me Luc Trudeau, was interviewed by Ms. Isabelle Richer, journalist, to raise public awareness of the issues faced by grandparents. The interview was broadcast throughout Radio-Canada's RDI network.

In May 2015, interview of Ms. Monic Avoine and Mr. Luc Trudeau with Ms. Jacqueline Simoneau of the Revue Bel Âge on the responsibilities of custodial grandparents.

In June 2015, interview with the president at Radio Pointe-St-Charles in Montreal to explain the rights and importance of grandparents.

In June 2015, the Vice-President, Ms. Monic Avoine, was interviewed by a journalist from the Université du Québec à Montréal for the newspaper L'Atelier.

In September 2015, the President gave an interview to the newspaper L'Autre Voix to discuss the Association's activities and demands. The importance of international internships from Switzerland for the Association was also discussed.

In September 2015, the President, Mr. Henri Lafrance, gave an interview to the Bel-Âge newspaper to inform seniors in the Montreal area about the various services offered by the Association, the issues and demands of the organization and its future activities.

In January 2016, Ms. Avoine participated in the program "Deux filles le matin" on the importance of grandparents.

In January 2016, Ms. Avoine was interviewed by Radio FM

102.3. In April 2016, interview of Mr. Lafrance on Télé matin

TV 5.

In April 2016, Ms. Oats' interview with Ms. Linda Priestley of Journal le Bel Age.

In May 2016, Ms. Oats was interviewed at FM 93.



Interview of Ms. Monic Avoine on the program "Deux filles le matin"

Seeking allies in our political demands

At each meeting with our partners and with the national and regional organizations of which the AGPQ is a member, we seek allies in our political demands.

The AGPQ is constantly looking for allies to support its political demands. We are proud to have obtained the support of an organization as important as the Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale (AFÉAS) in our adoption demands. Indeed, here is an excerpt from AFÉAS' demands

which is now available on its website: <http://www.w.w.w.afeas.qc.ca/>.

It is in this context that we went to a meeting of AFÉAS in May 2016.



Adoption: Code of Civil Procedure

We ask the Minister of Justice to provide in the Code of Civil Procedure for the summons of grandparents when there is an application for adoption with a breakdown of parentage.

Adoption: standard

We ask the Minister of Justice that adoption without severing the parent-child relationship be the norm in the case of adoptions placed under the Youth Protection Act, unless it is not in the best interests of the child.

Adoption: origins

We ask the Minister of Justice to grant all adopted children the right to know their origins, without exception.

Adoption: parent-child relationship

We ask the Minister of Justice to make much more room for the unbroken adoption of parentage."

In its argument, AFÉAS quotes verbatim from the Brief prepared by the Association des grandparents du Québec and presented to the Minister of Justice, Ms. Kathleen Weil, December 10, 2009.

"... for grandparents, adoption relegates them, within the meaning of the law, to the status of strangers for their grandchildren. Grandparents are rarely notified or invited by the court to make their views known. The members of AFÉAS believe that it would be important for the court to be able to hear all parties in order to be able to make a fair decision in the best interests of the child. It should be recalled that the Youth Protection Act requires grandparents to report cases of negligence to the youth protection authorities. However, they risk losing all contact with their grandchildren if they are placed in foster care and then adopted. When grandparents lose their granddaughter or grandson, this child is also deprived of his grandparents with whom he may have forged better ties than with his parents."



**Monic Oats Respondent
to a grandmother in trouble**

Crisis line

The crisis line is still widely used by grandparents and still represents the "gateway" to the Association for many grandparents experiencing difficulties. The crisis line, as last year, was maintained over 4000 hours of availability thanks to a few dedicated volunteers.

Thank you very much to our volunteers for their hard work. I would particularly like to thank Mr. Luc Trudeau for his highly appreciated lectures. We also thank Mr. Richard Langevin, psychologist, for giving us the psychological point of view of the problems related to grandparents and grandchildren. Once again this year, we would like to acknowledge the exceptional contribution of our warmest second-line service workers, Monic Avoine, Micheline Drouin, Monic Godin and Céline Reuzé. It should be noted that grandparents' calls come from all regions of Quebec. The number of calls is still close to 1000 this year.

Information sessions

Legal information sessions with Luc Trudeau were held in Montréal, Québec City, Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville, Saint-Jérôme, Sainte-Marie de Beauce, Lévis and L'Ancienne-Lorette respectively.

An information booth was also held in Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce and L'Ancienne-Lorette.



Me Luc Trudeau

During these meetings, Me Trudeau informs grandparents about the right of grandchildren to maintain relationships with their grandparents. It also discusses the psychological aspects and political issues surrounding the exercise of rights.

These meetings are highly appreciated by members and greatly strengthen our members' sense of belonging and the organization's community life.



During these meetings, Mr. Henri Lafrance, President (or other members of the Board of Directors) presented the Association and its main political and social demands. Supporting members are encouraged to raise awareness and denounce to elected officials the unfair or problematic situations experienced by grandparents. This year, we organized **eleven** of these meetings.

Sometimes, groups of seniors, families or women invite us to meet their members to explain the difficulties experienced by grandparents. This year, we responded to the requests of three seniors' groups, in Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce, Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville and Lévis.

The AGPQ: international internship environment



Following the success of this first collaboration with the Haute École de travail social de Sierre (Switzerland), it was agreed to repeat the experience. This is how we had the pleasure of welcoming a new intern, Mylène Rossier, last August. She left in December 2015.

Coffee meetings (self-help group)

Coffee meetings are used to:

- meet other grandparents or elders;
- share difficulties, worries, but also happiness and accomplishments;
- find a space for mutual support and exchange;
- address themes related to family situations;
- strengthen the organization's associative life;
- identify the problematic and unfair situations they are experiencing. These are used to raise awareness among politicians and the media.

A facilitator is present at each meeting to ensure that it runs smoothly, in a confidential setting and with respect for all. Here is the list of coffee meetings held.

2015-04-08	Café rencontre - Montreal
2015-04-29	Café rencontre - Maison de la famille Québec
2015-05-27	Café rencontre - Maison de la famille Québec
2015-06-03	Café rencontre - Montreal
2015-09-17	Café rencontre - Montreal
2015-09-30	Café rencontre - Quebec City
2015-10-28	Café rencontre - Quebec City
2015-10-29	Café rencontre - Montreal
2015-11-19	Café rencontre - Montreal
2015-11-25	Café rencontre - Quebec City
2015-12-10	Café rencontre - Montreal
2016-01-27	Café rencontre - Quebec City
2016-02-10	Café rencontre - Montreal
2016-03-09	Café rencontre - Montreal
2016-03-30	Café rencontre - Quebec City
2016-04-06	Café rencontre - Montreal
2016-04-27	Café rencontre - Quebec City

Festive event of September 27, 2015

We organized for you the 27th anniversary and prepared 2015 a festive event to highlight the 25th anniversary of the AGPQ's anniversary. September 13 was Grandparents' Day and October 1st was Seniors' Day. That is why we took the opportunity to highlight these two days. The festive event took place at Maison de Villeray in Montreal.

This was an opportunity to make the AGPQ's services and demands known to the members and managers of the Maison des grands-parents de Villeray, which does a lot to help young people.



**The Centre d'action bénévole Aide 23 honoured the AGPQ through its president
Mr. Henri Lafrance and its Vice-President Mrs. Monic**

Avoine

Meetings of the Board of Directors

Date	Event
2015-09-19	AGPQ Board of Directors
2015-10-14	AGPQ Board of Directors
2015-11-30	AGPQ Board of Directors
2016-03-31	AGPQ Board of Directors
2016-05-15	AGPQ Board of Directors
2016-09-01	AGPQ Board of Directors

Members of the Board of Directors 2015-2016



From left to right: **Luc Trudeau, Monic Avoine, Micheline Drouin, Henri LaFrance and Bernard Schroeder**

Annex

Legal or political information sessions 2015-2016

Member of the following national organizations:

- ✓ Inter-agency grouping for family policy in Quebec
- ✓ Réseau québécois de l'action communautaire autonome (RQ-ACA)

Member of the following regional organizations:

- ✓ Table de concertation des aîné-e-s de l'Île de Montréal (via its regional chapter)
- ✓ Table de concertation des personnes âgées de la Capitale-Nationale
- ✓ Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDC-Beauport)
- ✓ The Centre d'information et de référence de la Capitale-Nationale et de la Chaudière- Appalaches, 211 service
- ✓ Les Aînés Solidaires (AS) de Centraide Capitale-Nationale
- ✓ Centre d' action bénévole de Québec
- ✓ Centre d' aide et d' action bénévole de Charlesbourg (CAABC)
- ✓ Volunteer Centre Help 23
- ✓ Centre d'action bénévole de Montréal
- ✓ Volunteer access (Montreal East)
- ✓ Regroupement des organismes de base en santé mentale (ROBSM)

Partnership and collaborative relationships with the following organizations:

- ✓ The Beauport Borough
- ✓ The Town of Beauport
- ✓ FADOQ - Mouvement des Aînés du Québec
- ✓ The Association de défense des droits des retraités (AQDR)
- ✓ AFÉAS (Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale)
- ✓ Omen
- ✓ Grandparents' house in Villeray
- ✓ The University of Social Work of Sierre HES-SO (Valais Switzerland)

ANNEX

The networking of the Grandparents Association

DATE	EVENT
April 2, 2015	Grandparents' meeting in Beaupré
April 3, 2015	Beaupré Community Development Centre
April 12, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Beauport (Help 23)
April 13, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
April 15, 2015	Information booth in Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce
April 20, 2015	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDC)
April 21, 2015	Table de concertation des aînés de la Capitale-Nationale
April 27, 2015	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDC)
April 29, 2015	Point Québec Family
May 4, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
May 25, 2015	Maison de la Famille Québec
May 26, 2015	Table de concertation des aînés de la Capitale-Nationale
May 30, 2015	Action by new wives
June 1, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
June 9, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
June 12, 2015	Centre d'aide et d'action bénévole de Charlesbourg
June 16, 2015	Volunteer access (Centre d'action bénévole de Montréal-Est)
June 17, 2015	Family. Point Québec to Boucherville
June 22, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
August 24, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
September 8, 2015	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDC)
16 September 2015	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDC)
September 21, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
September 27, 2015	AGPQ Annual General Meeting
29 September 2015	Table de concertation des aînés de la Capitale Nationale
October 3, 2015	Point Québec Family
October 26, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
November 11, 2015	Point Québec Family
November 24, 2015	Table de concertation des aînés de la Capitale Nationale
November 30, 2015	Réseau québécois de l'action communautaire autonome
November 30, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
December 22, 2015	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
January 5, 2015	Meeting a grandparent
January 13, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
January 21, 2016	Meeting a grandparent
January 25, 2016	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDCB)
January 27, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec

DATE	EVENT
January 28, 2016	Centre d'aide et d'action bénévole de Charlesbourg
January 28, 2016	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDCB)
March 9, 2016	Daughters of Isabelle
February 10, 2016	Point Québec Family - Boucherville
February 10, 2016	Volunteer access (Centre d'action bénévole de Montréal)
February 18, 2016	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDCB)
March 16, 2016	Table de concertation des aînés de la Capitale Nationale
March 23, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
March 30, 2016	Family House
March 31, 2016	Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale (AFÉAS) - Lévis
April 7, 2016	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDCB)
April 14, 2016	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDCB)
April 19, 2016	Table de concertation des aînés de la Capitale Nationale
April 22, 2016	Meeting with the Minister of Family Affairs - National Assembly
April 27, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
May 4, 2016	Point Québec Family
May 10, 2016	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDCB)
May 17, 2016	Réseau québécois de l'action communautaire autonome
May 18, 2016	Réseau québécois de l'action communautaire autonome
May 23, 2016	Centre de développement communautaire de Beauport (CDCB)
June 1, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
June 9, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
June 14, 2016	Table de concertation des aînés de la Capitale Nationale
June 15, 2016	Family House
June 21, 2016	Point Québec Family
June 22, 2016	Point Québec Family
June 29, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
August 31, 2016	Centre d'action bénévole de Québec
September 9, 2016	Salon des aînés at L'Ancienne-Lorette

Legal or political information sessions 2015-2016

NB.	PLACE	DATE	TYPE
	Club Richelieu de Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville	May 15, 2015	E
	St-Hubert Restaurant, Montreal	May 24, 2015	M
	Entraide Agapé, Quebec	October 18, 2015	M
	Ambassadeur Hotel, Quebec City	November 5, 2015	E
	Saint-Hubert, rue Lajeunesse, Montréal	November 15, 2015	M
	Collège Maisonneuve, Montreal	February 21, 2016	M
	Collège Maisonneuve, Montreal	March 20, 2016	M
	Manoir St-Jérôme (Chartwell Group), Saint-Jérôme	April 17, 2016	M
	Centre St-Pierre, Montreal	May 24th	E
	Entraide Agapé, Quebec	May 29th	M
	Ambassadeur Hotel, Quebec City	June 9	E

M = Organize mainly for members

E = Organize at the request of external groups to inform their members