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Congrès ACJQ
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9^e Conférence internationale S'occuper des enfants / 9th International Looking After Children Conference

JEUNESSE EN TÊTE

Au-delà du risque
les besoins de développement

YOUTH IN MIND

Beyond risk:
the developmental needs



**YOUTH IN MIND
BEYOND RISK : THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS**

Call for Presentations

**Conference of the Association des centres jeunesse du Québec
and
the 9th International *Looking after children* Conference**

Montréal, Québec, Canada
October 25, 26 and 27, 2010

Main Theme

You are invited by the *Association des centres jeunesse du Québec* (ACJQ) to submit proposals for presentations at its biennial conference to be held in Montréal on October 25, 26, and 27, 2010. This edition of the ACJQ conference will incorporate the 9th International *Looking After Children* Conference. All *Centres jeunesse* staff members, as well as all partners and researchers involved in intervention with young people and families in need are welcome.

This event will bring together personnel of the *Centres jeunesse* network, researchers, students, managers, and representatives of the foster care milieu, as well as collaborators from the intervention and research milieus of Québec, other Canadian provinces, and countries from around the world. More than a thousand participants are expected to attend.

The conference's main theme will be "**Youth in mind. Beyond risk: the developmental needs.**"

- **Youth in mind**...because young people are everybody's concern and must be a central priority of Québec society.
- **Beyond risk: the developmental needs**... because we must protect children and youth while allowing them to develop optimally. At the same time, we must not lose sight of the developmental needs of the community, research, organizations with regard to clinical and administrative personnel, future practitioners, cutting-edge practices, and information systems.

This joint conference will be an opportunity to address specific issues related to assessing the needs of children and youth and the strategies for responding to these needs. Issues will be grouped under seven selected topics: approaches centred on the developmental needs of children and youth; parenting support; integrated approaches; participatory approaches; planning of intervention and services; quality of services; and organizational challenges. Issues of stability and continuity cut across all seven topics. Submissions may relate to intervention initiatives (approaches, programs, tools), research results, or administrative and support services.

On October 27, 2010, these topics will be examined specifically in the context of children in foster care. This day will be an opportunity to reflect on the achievements and experiences of the *Looking After Children* (LAC) approach, which is currently implemented in Québec and some fifteen countries around the world.

Looking After Children (LAC)

- Developed in England, the LAC approach aims to improve the well-being and development of children in foster care.
- In Québec, LAC is implemented by several *Centres jeunesse*.
- In a number of countries, the principles and foundations of LAC are now applied in other intervention contexts such as transition to independent living and services for families.

Selected topics

The selected topics are relevant to a variety of clientele. Submissions should fall under one of the seven selected topics:

1) Approaches centred on the developmental needs of children and youth

Children and youth in protective care have multiple developmental needs, much like those of the general population: they depend on the adults around them to develop optimally. Focusing on their developmental needs implies, in particular:

- Constructing a detailed and accurate picture of their needs;
- Situating developmental issues (education, mental health, identity, etc.);
- Taking into account the life conditions in which children and youth develop.

2) Parenting support

“Parent” refers to any significant parental figure that can fulfil the needs of children or youth. This may be a biological, foster, or adoptive parent, extended family member, practitioner, the community, or the state. Supporting the fulfillment of parental responsibilities implies:

- Focusing on parenting skills, the needs of parents as adults, the important role of parents, and the social integration of parents.

3) Integrated approaches

An integrated approach implies that responding to the needs of children, youth, and families is a collective responsibility. To achieve this, we must support a continuum of intervention in which every organization or practitioner plays a role according to their specificities. Encouraging an integrated approach implies, in particular:

- Sharing a common language;
- Building on the shared and complementary expertise, competencies, and resources of families, youth centres, health and social services centres, schools, daycare centres, community organizations, the community, etc.;
- Promoting community support and involvement;
- Encouraging cooperation among the resources that intervene among children and youth and that help adults with serious personal or social difficulties.

4) Participatory approaches

A participatory approach involves the cooperation of children, parents, and various professionals in assessing situations and implementing, monitoring, and reviewing interventions. Supporting a participatory approach implies, in particular:

- Fostering a broader and more active participation in the services provided for young people, parents, and partners;
- Encouraging the commitment of actors to work in a consistent manner.

5) *Planning of intervention and services*

The planning of intervention and services that focuses on the optimal development of children and youth must ensure that needs assessments can be translated into concrete actions. Supporting the transition from needs assessment to planning of intervention and services implies, in particular:

- Encouraging increased involvement of children, youth, and the adults around them;
- Prioritizing actions that foster the optimal development of children and youth;
- Following up on the results of interventions with children and youth.

6) *Quality of services*

Assessing the quality of services in response to the needs of children and youth should translate into the application of information systems, performance indicators, and strategies for utilizing evidence-based data. Reflecting upon quality of services implies, in particular:

- Documenting the life situations of children and youth; documenting practices and the conditions in which they are applied;
- Having a better understanding of the impact of intervention on the welfare of children and youth;
- Encouraging evaluative research and the use of evidence-based findings in the development of policies, programs, and services, so that “youth in mind” takes place collectively;
- Identifying and distinguishing management, quality, and performance indicators;
- Prioritizing performance evaluations that are adapted to social services.

7) *Organizational challenges*

The planning and continuity of services are also affected by workforce, informational, and administrative challenges. The development of effective strategies for staff retention and recruitment, communication, dissemination, and the analysis of available data, among other things, must be supported. Organizations must encourage the development of competencies among their employees. Organizational challenges imply, in particular:

- Creating optimal incentives for young people working in youth centres;
- Providing quality support and replacement for middle and senior managers;
- Providing better information for better management;
- Improving the quality of information and the current management of activities through information technologies (data quality, progress reports, etc.);
- Developing energy efficient projects related to development.

Types of presentations

90-minute and 45-minute oral presentations

90-minute oral sessions are reserved for the presentation of projects, programs, approaches, tools, and their evaluations. Presentations may also deal with improvements in work and support processes for practitioners. Sessions will consist of a 60-minute paper, followed by a 30-minute question and discussion period.

45-minute oral sessions are reserved for the presentation of projects, programs, approaches, and tools, including research results and concrete applications into intervention (transferability into

practice). Sessions will consist of a 30-minute paper, followed by a 15-minute question and discussion period. Two back-to-back 45-minute sessions will make up a one 90-minute workshop period.

Presenters are encouraged to prepare their material in PowerPoint format.

Poster presentations

Poster presentations are useful for highlighting important aspects of projects or research in a more graphic, concise format than oral presentations. This format allows exchanges with participants on a one-to-one basis. The exact dimensions of poster panels will be communicated by the conference secretariat at a later date. Poster presentations will take place on October 25 and 26.

Selection criteria for papers and posters

- Relevance to conference topics and for staff and partners of the *Centre de jeunesse* network.
- Generalizability of the clinical or administrative project or program presented.
- Projects or programs that are Innovative and original but sufficiently underway so that findings and conclusions may be drawn from them.
- Clinical or administrative projects currently being evaluated or having contributed findings or directions for further reflection.

Instructions for submitting proposals

- Authors may submit a maximum of two (2) presentations as principal presenter. There is no limit on the number of co-presenters.
- Notification of acceptance will be sent in mid-March 2010. Details of the sessions and the presentation will be included in this correspondence.
- **ALL presenters and co-presenters whose proposals are accepted and who will participate in the conference MUST PAY REGISTRATION FEES.** On-line registration will be possible on the ACJQ website at a later date. Registration fees are as follows:

	2 days ACJQ Conference October 25 et 26, 2010	1 day LAC Conference October 27, 2010	3 days October 25, 26 et 27, 2010
Students, foster families and community organizations	185\$	100\$	260\$
Others	375\$	200\$	540\$

- Please use the attached form to submit your presentation proposal.
- All submissions must adhere to the instructions provided in order to be considered.

Sending the form and requesting further information

Please e-mail your completed form before **February 15, 2010**, to Camille Reid, ACJQ at: creid@ssss.gouv.qc.ca.

An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to you.

Requests for further information in French should be addressed to Camille Reid at:

- E-mail: creid@ssss.gouv.qc.ca
- Tel.: 514 842-5181, ext. 326

Requests for further information in English should be addressed to Paule Campeau at:

- E-mail: paule.campeau@umontreal.ca
- Tel.: 514 343-6111, ext. 5369