

equitas

Centre international d'éducation aux droits humains
International Centre for Human Rights Education



Young Women Young Leaders

STAND UP FOR CHANGE



Status of Women
Canada

Condition féminine
Canada

Canada

Congratulations Young Women Leaders in Montreal!

When we first launched Young Women, Young Leaders in 2012, we drew a map, filled a toolbox, and started talking with many partner organizations, key stakeholders and most importantly four extraordinary groups of young women from across Montreal.

Two years later, young women from United Sisters of Dawson Community Center, Fleurs de Force of Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi Côte-des-Neiges, Femmes d'abord of Maison d'Haiti and the Youth Committee of the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy NETWORK, have become young women leaders. Fifty (50) diverse women from four communities across Montreal are at the core of the Young Women, Young Leaders program, and their energy and enthusiasm has driven this project successfully forward.

Through their Action for Change projects, these women are: addressing the consequences of hypersexualization of girls and young women; increasing access to resources for young women who face discrimination and isolation, such as Aboriginal and immigrant women; and improving dialogue with child protection services.

It has been an honour and a pleasure to have accompanied these exceptional young women on this journey. One of the young women leaders put it best: "I thought community and participation was not for me, but maybe I was wrong 'cause look what we've done!" These young women are now leaders in their communities, working together to take on whatever that they set their minds to!

Equitas is proud of how these young women have become agents of change in their communities through participation in the Young Women, Young Leaders program. Together with local key partner organizations in Montreal, they now are part of a strong network of human rights defenders globally who are contributing to equality and social change. The continued support of programs such as Young Women, Young Leaders is needed to ensure that efforts to address barriers to young women's participation continue and ignite the leadership potential in more young women not only in Montreal but across the country and around the world.



Ian Hamilton
Executive Director, Equitas

And the Equitas Young Women, Young Leaders Project Team

Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education is a non-profit organization that works for the advancement of equality, social justice and respect for human dignity in Canada and around the world through transformative human rights education programs.

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Young Women Young Leaders

Young Women Young Leaders (YWYL) strengthens the active participation of young women in civic, political and community life in Montreal.

Rooted in action:

YWYL supports community action projects, led by young women that address issues that most affect them in their daily lives, with the collaboration of Equitas and a strong network of community organizations, mentors, municipal leaders and institutional partners.

Solidarity in numbers:

YWYL creates spaces for meaningful dialogue between young women, female role-models in decision making roles, civil society organizations, government bodies, and the media in order to dismantle societal barriers to young women's participation in community life.

Knowledge is power:

YWYL equips emerging young women leaders and organizations with the knowledge and skills to promote increased young women's participation and citizenship engagement in their communities.

Together we have:

Strengthened the capacity of **60** young women leaders to take action in their community

Learned from each other during **70** leadership workshops

Organized **8** community events to raise awareness about barriers to the participation of young women in community life

Inspired and engaged more than **800** community members

Published **4** resources to increase young women's participation

Strengthened networks and solidarity among organizations working with young women in **4** communities





Fleurs de Force

Aïchatou, Aïka, Allyson, Andrewnette, Bani, Cindy, Corrinne, Coumba, Deborah, Isra, Jahmeika, Julia, Katleen, Keisha, Naomie, Sabine, Sarah, Stephanie, Shemusa, Trisha, Sabine

Carrefour jeunesse-emplois Côte-des-Neiges
Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal

Carrefour
jeunesse-emploi
Côte-des-Neiges

Women lack access to information on how to participate and face discrimination.

What's needed

- ☀ Increased access to information about programs and services in the community for newcomer women
- ☀ Newcomer women in Côte-des-Neiges are better able to participate in their new community
- ☀ More support for newcomer women to reach their full potential as they integrate into Quebec society

What we did

- ☀ We created a resource guide for newcomer women who might feel isolated, intimidated or unaware of the services and organizations in Côte-des-Neiges that address their needs concerning rights, employment and education opportunities, health, etc...
- ☀ We organized a community event to help build knowledge, develop networks, and increase opportunities for newcomer women to participate in the community

The results

52 organizations consulted

200+ resource guides distributed

3 public events

300+ hours of workshops for young women leaders

500+ people reached and inspired

40+ people reached through facebook

“ Support us by getting more information out there so that women who need assistance know about the resources available to them. Women have a great amount of power in them and can make a positive difference in our communities.

“ I thought community and participation was not for me, but maybe I was wrong cause look what we've done!



Femmes d'abord

Réseau des jeunes parents: Anne-Marie, Hadjer, Isabelle, Juline, Laurie, Mamata, Marie-Josianne, Monique, Ntaïna, Natasha, Oluzia, Rose, Stéphanie, Victoria

La Maison d'Haïti
Saint-Michel, Montreal



Women lack access to information on how to participate and they face discrimination.

What's needed

- ✦ Young parents need to better understand the mission and work of the Director of Youth Protection
- ✦ A better understanding between the Director of Youth Protection and families with respect to the cultural characteristics of Haiti and Quebec
- ✦ Develop strategies for a better collaboration between the community and the Director of Youth Protection

What we did

- ✦ A day of discussions was held on the interventions of the Director of Youth Protection with families from the Haitian community: "From dialogue to action for better collaboration"
- ✦ The dialogue allowed us to speak candidly on the following topics:
 - Cultural heritage of the Haitian family in the education of their children
 - History and process of the Director of Youth Protection
 - Discrimination and racial profiling
 - Mental health of families
 - Our rights

The results

200+ community members (parents, professionals, representatives of youth protection services and organizations working with children) participated in the dialogue

20 women leaders

16 leadership workshops with women from Femmes d'abord

15 possible solutions developed

1 community event

“ Let young mothers speak up and give the hope to change their lives with their children for the better. Together, we will share and listen with empathy and openness. **”**



United Sisters

Darley & the Fab Five! Kelsey, Kheyra, Samantha, Shannon, Shimyka

Centre communautaire Dawson
Verdun, Montreal



Young women are hypersexualized and lack access to opportunities to participate in the community.

What's needed

- ✦ Mobilize young women to become active participants within their community and in their own lives
- ✦ Create new spaces (physical & virtual) for young women to learn, share and openly voice their opinions on issues that matter to them and support each other through the process.
- ✦ Improve self-esteem of young women in the community

What we did

- ✦ We developed a series of innovative & interactive workshops that support young women to become active participants within the community
- ✦ We launched a digital magazine #NextLevel written by and for young women about issues that matter to them

The results

- 1 eMagazine #NextLevel live online (more issues to come!)
- 3 workshops developed to inspire young women
- 15 future young women leaders inspired to become contributors in our next issue
- 10 mentors (local politicians, business leaders, community leaders) engaged

“ I'm a girl, so what? I'm valuable because I am who I am. Not because of my looks, or my gender, but because I'm skilled, I have a voice, I work hard, and I can do the job.



Youth Committee of the NETWORK

Alexandre, Andrée-Yanne, Audrey, Bérénice, Élise,
Widia, Nahka, Mélanie, Sylvain

Youth Committee of the Montreal Urban Aboriginal
Community Strategy NETWORK and
Quebec Native Women Inc.
Greater Montreal



Aboriginal women live in isolation and face discrimination and racism. They lack access to resources, have language barriers, and do not know the city.

What's needed

- ✦ Help for young Aboriginal women to adapt to city life
- ✦ Facilitate involvement of young Aboriginal women in Montreal city life
- ✦ Dissemination and centralization of resources available in Montreal for young Aboriginal women

What we did

- ✦ Design and launch of an interactive online platform to centralize and disseminate resources available in Montreal for young Aboriginal women

The results

1 interactive platform

Available to: **11** First Nations in Quebec,

54 communities,

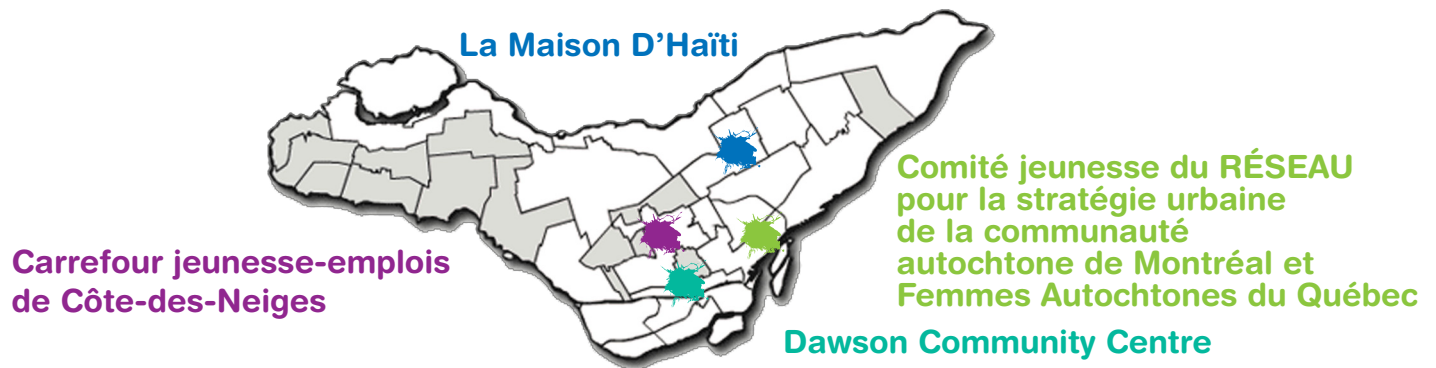
141 000 indigenous people

10 young people trained to ensure the sustainability of the online tool

“ Provide better visibility of young Aboriginal women, ensure representation of young Aboriginal women, and initiate a respectful dialogue. To do this, mobilize existing resources, such as the NETWORK.

Thank you to everyone who supported YWYL!

Main partner organizations



Other participating organizations

Apathy is boring
Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse de Québec
ENSEMBLE for the respect of diversity
Équipe RDP
Girls Action Foundation
LOVE: Leave Out Violence
YWCA

Mentors

Orly Bensoussan, Stéphanie Casimir, Déborah Cherenfant, Gail Dalgleish, Monique Dauphin, Mary Deros, Sharna Dey, Ilona Dougherty, Margaret Guest, Darline Jean-Simon, Cathy Keslin, Jillian Kilfoil, Michelle Lalonde, Mikhala Lantz-Simmons, Aïka Mathelier, Natalie Miron, Sue Montgomery, Marie-Louise Mumbu, Katleen Paul Roc, Lisa Olmstead, Patricia Ottley, Andréanne Paquet, Darley Polony, Julie Ranger, Cathy Wong, Jakki Zelman, Tammy Zimmerman and many other women leaders in our communities!

and special thanks to our many volunteers!



My commitment

To support women's participation I will ...