



MAKING ROOM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Questionnaire and steps to follow in paving the way for the integration of young people

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FOREWORD

The mission of the Réseau de l'action bénévole du Québec (RABQ) is to bring together a multisectoral representation of the key volunteerism sector stakeholders in Quebec in order to favour dialogue, and representation and promotion of volunteer commitment. The sharing of tools and expertise in order to overcome the difficulties relating to, for example, the recruitment, training and mentoring of volunteers is also part of the RABQ's action plan.

The recruitment of new volunteers is at the heart of the concerns of organizations, both here and elsewhere. It was therefore obvious that we had to approach that issue in our standing committees. Hence, in February 2005, we decided to tackle the recruitment of young people as a priority, since, according to the *2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, the rate of participation of young Quebecers between the ages of 15 and 24 in volunteer work is 38% below the Canadian average.

The RABQ's board of directors decided to invest in a consultation of young Quebecers. With the help of an outside consultant, we organized a number of focus groups throughout the province in order to determine young people's motivations for becoming involved in volunteerism and what prevents them from doing so.

After hundreds of hours of discussion and a rigorous analysis of the comments of the 142 participants, the RABQ developed a tool for enhancing awareness regarding the integration of young people into organizations. The tool is designed for boards of directors, executive directors and managers of volunteer resources—in short, any person interested in recruiting and benefiting from the vitality of young volunteers.

The RABQ is proud to present this tool, which we hope will fuel much thought and discussion among the members of your team.

Enjoy your reading!

BACKGROUND

Confident of the support of its members and board of directors, the RABQ decided to meet with young Quebeckers and gather their opinions on volunteerism.

Aiming for representativeness and with a view to highlighting clearly the realities of each individual, the RABQ team initially targeted youth organizations in seven administrative regions of the province. In reaching young people in various environments, it had the collaboration of local organizations with a variety of missions. We met with young people from Quebec's large urban centres, such as Montreal, Quebec City, Sherbrooke and Gatineau. Young people from rural areas were also surveyed. Youth from Shawinigan, Rimouski, le Bic and Beauceville agreed to discuss their motivations in volunteering and what prevents them from volunteering. In all, the RABQ gathered the opinions of 142 participants from 15 to 30 years of age, 68 of whom were male and 74 female.

The young people questioned all had different profiles and were in different situations. Students, drop-outs, mothers, workers—whether volunteers or not—all agreed to express their views frankly and openly. It was also of primary importance for the RABQ that Native youth, young people from a variety of cultural communities and Anglophone youth be consulted.

QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUCTIONS

To chart a course ...

This questionnaire is designed to guide volunteer managers wanting to recruit young volunteers to chart a course of action. It must be clearly understood that the RABQ does not claim to provide a magic formula for integrating young people.

The topics to reflect on and the action proposed are based on the conclusions of the 14 focus groups composed of young Quebeckers between 15 and 30 years of age.

Before you begin ...

Before you take any action, we recommend that you fill out the questionnaire. This exercise will, to a certain degree, enhance your awareness regarding the action directed toward young people. The questionnaire applies to an organization as well as to a special project or a program.

Prerequisites ...

In order to get the most out of this guide, you must be sure that:

- You have the support and commitment of your board of directors and of the principal managers of your organization to increase the participation of young volunteers
- The authorities agree that the process will require time and resources: tangible results may be achieved only in the long term
- You are available and committed; the success of the project requires your knowledge, openness and ability to adapt

The process ...

This tool contains six fact sheets, each representing a step in the recruitment and integration of young people. To ensure the success of the project, it is important that each step be successfully taken before going on to the next one.

Lastly ...

Enjoy the process! Change and the recruitment of young volunteers can only be of benefit to your organization.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Meaning of points:

- 4 = Fully applies to the organization, program or project**
3 = Sometimes applies to the organization, program or project
2 = Rarely applies to the organization, program or project
1 = Does not apply at all to the organization, program or project

A. Awareness of young people				
Points	4	3	2	1
1. Our organization is aware of young volunteers.				
2. The board of directors of our organization has begun to think about the commitment of young volunteers.				
3. A resource person has been mandated to find information and/or develop tools for the recruitment of young people.				
4. Our organization's volunteers and staff are very receptive to the integration of young volunteers.				
5. Our organization is prepared to invest the resources needed to recruit young volunteers.				

Subtotal: _____

B. The realities of young people's lives				
Points	4	3	2	1
6. Our organization currently offers young volunteers flexible schedules.				
7. We give young volunteers latitude in carrying out their own projects within the organization.				
8. Our organization realizes that young volunteers are more interested in the cause than the task.				
9. We take into consideration the fact that the term "volunteerism" is not viewed favourably by young people.				
10. Our organization seeks to make use of the vitality of young people and their new ideas.				

Subtotal: _____

C. The recruitment of young people				
Points	4	3	2	1
11. Staff is available to meet with young people in their environments (schools, youth centres, parks and so on).				
12. Our Website has a section reserved for, and geared toward, young people under 30 years of age.				
13. Our organization encourages a personalized approach to recruiting young people.				
14. We regularly receive applications by young people under 30 who want to volunteer in our organization.				
15. If a young volunteer is not at home with us, our organization will see that he or she is referred to another organization.				

Subtotal: _____

D. Support for young volunteers				
Points	4	3	2	1
16. Our organization sees to it that the young volunteers are properly trained for their duties.				
17. Our organization provides young volunteers with support and sees that they progress in their duties.				
18. The person in charge of volunteers is well aware of their skills and objectives so as to give them responsibilities in keeping with their aspirations.				
19. We base our action on materials (produced by Volunteer Canada, Imagine Canada, etc.) and information about recruiting, welcoming and monitoring of young people.				
20. It is of paramount importance that the participation of young people be recognized and that they be given an important role in the organization.				

Subtotal: _____

E. The integration of young people				
Points	4	3	2	1
21. Young people under 30 years of age sit on the board of directors of our organization.				
22. Our organization has a working group (or resource person) developing projects that require the involvement of young volunteers.				
23. We intend to use mentoring as a way of integrating young volunteers.				
24. A number of employees and volunteers in our organization are under 30 years of age.				
25. Our organization would be prepared to give young volunteers the task of revising the procedures for the recruitment of young people.				

Subtotal: _____

FACT SHEET 1 – Where do we begin?

Compared with the rest of Canada, young Quebecers engage in 38% less volunteer work. Source: 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (2000 NSGVP).

An important fact:

the number of volunteers has declined. Over the last three years. Quebec has lost 165 000 volunteers! The good news is that the trend can be reversed, given that there are solutions to the problem that volunteer organizations face. Let's get our resources together and act quickly!

Let's harness the strengths of all sectors!

(1) Mobilize your team!

- Inform your board of directors, managers and influential decision-makers of the problem so that they can find out more and take action.
- Incorporate the development of young volunteers into your activities as a whole.
- Develop short-term, medium-term and long-term action plans for the development of young volunteers.

(2) Get moving!

Determine the people in charge of the development of young volunteers in your organization. Look for key players in your field.

- Give them a mission with the obligation to achieve results, as well as the means and the latitude to act effectively.
- Prioritize new ways to involve young people as soon as possible in the planning of action.
- To provide them with the proper support, you can give them this tool and all information available on the recruitment of young volunteers.
- You must pay attention to the action that volunteer organizations in your field take to make young people aware of volunteerism and to integrate them into it (special events, open houses, briefings for young people).
- Collaborate with partners in your field in order to capitalize on everyone's expertise.

To begin with:

- To clearly highlight the realities and motivations of volunteers, visit the Website of the *National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, at www.givingandvolunteering.ca/pdf/reports/understanding_volunteers.pdf
- Consult the references concerning young volunteers that you find in the library: John Hodgson of Imagine Canada, at www.nonprofitscan.ca
- Read the report on the RABQ's focus groups, at www.rabq.ca

NOTE: For each step, we refer you to a series of resources that can be of assistance in implementing your plans for integrating young people. The problem of recruiting and managing young volunteers is obviously not new. There is considerable material in which it is discussed accurately and intelligently.

FACT SHEET 2 – Think “young”

Fifty percent of young people do no volunteer work because they have not been asked to do any (2000 NSGVP).

(1) Awareness:

Your team must engage in stimulating discussions about the relations your organization could have with young volunteers. Take all the time required.

- Above all, your objective should be greater awareness of the realities of young people's lives.
- Your organization must begin to accept that it must change certain ways of doing things and innovate: your entire organizational structure must be attuned to this.

(2) Field work:

It is important to become familiar with the daily lives of young people in your environment.

- Don't hesitate to go and meet with organized groups in secondary schools, Cegeps and universities.
- Don't forget drop-outs, those who return to school, young entrepreneurs and members of social clubs. In short, try to get off the beaten track!
- Try to determine the cultural communities in your area. Be open to new ideas!

(3) Don't be afraid of change:

Adapt to the realities of young people's lives by imagining:

- New ways of recruiting, welcoming and integrating young people
- More flexible schedules
- Special projects implemented by young people

For inspiration, here is some reading material:

- *Youth volunteers: What's in it for Your Organization?*

www.kdc-cdc.ca/attachments/fs_coop_organization_eng.pdf

- *Attracting and Keeping Youth Volunteers*

www.kdc-cdc.ca/attachments/manual_canadian_workers_coop_eng.pdf

- *Why do Youth Get Involved in Community Volunteering?*

www.kdc-cdc.ca/attachments/fs_froment_motivations_eng.pdf

- *Fact Sheets for Effective Volunteer Involvement*

www.volunteer.ca/volcan/eng/content/vol-centres/ontario.php?menutrail=

- *Volunteer Connections: New strategies for involving youth*, distributed by Volunteer Canada at

www.volunteer.ca/volcan/eng/content/youth/involving.php?display=4,0

FACT SHEET 3 – Take action!

Ninety-four percent of young people do volunteer work because they believe in the cause (Statistics Canada)

This is the crucial stage of recruitment. Discussions with young people have demonstrated that it is generally the way recruitment is viewed and approached that are neglected by organizations. They must succeed in approaching young people directly:

- through sincere presentations by committed spokespeople
- by pointing out the opportunities and options you offer, and showing your openness

(1) Recruitment of the next generation of volunteers:

Focus on the individual. The most promising type of recruitment is person-to-person, which implies that:

- Your organization must have a team that can convince young people to try volunteering, to make a commitment, to militate, to do something, to act ... to the extent that they wish to do so
- The people in charge of recruitment must visit groups of young people in order to describe their organization, the volunteering opportunities available and the steps to take to become a volunteer
- Every opportunity (organized meetings, open houses, telephone calls, e-mails) is used to draw up contact lists of future volunteers

(2) Mass communication in order to recruit:

- A poster or advertisement will only reach young people who are already convinced; so that must not be the sole action taken.
- Young people demand clear and precise volunteering opportunities (date, availability needed, place, duration of work, special requirements and so on).

(3) The course to follow in revitalizing the field of volunteering:

Your organization could share its recruitment resources and activities with other organizations in the region. That way, concerted action and combined efforts would develop a new approach to the next generation of volunteers.

- Youth seem to be unaware of the existence of Websites on which organizations post their requests for volunteers (the CAB de Montréal, the RABQ, the Forum jeunesse de l'île de Montréal). The proliferation of these sites on a regional scale and broader dissemination of these central gateways would have the advantage of serving young volunteers with experience and eventually all young volunteers.

To guide you in your approach to recruiting:

- *Understanding Canadian Volunteers: Using the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating to Build Your Volunteer Program*

www.givingandvolunteering.ca/pdf/reports/understanding_volunteers.pdf

- Tell all the young people you know about *The Action Zone, Take Charge and Connect with Your Community!*

www.pch.gc.ca/special/Cyberstation/html/azone_e.htm

FACT SHEET 4 – Listen carefully

Eighty-one percent of people engage in volunteer work in order to make use of their skills and experience (2000 NSGVP).

(1) The secret: Welcome and integrate young volunteers properly

- Welcome young volunteers by providing guides, i.e. people to whom each youth can go for help.
- Encourage sponsoring, mentoring or other forms of coaching.
- Take the time to discuss with each youth his or her tastes, interests and objectives.
- A frank and open discussion will enable you to determine the level of supervision required by each youth: some want more, others little.
- If a young person does not really feel at home in your organization, try to find alternatives or other opportunities for him or her in the region.

(2) Effective but highly flexible supervision

- A minimum of documented and supervised training must be given for each task.
- Young people themselves have a perception of the tasks to be accomplished. You can only gain by remaining open and listening to their proposals about how things should be done.

(3) The proactive involvement of young people

- Issues dealt with in projects should be described to young people (Internet projects, recruitment issues, workshop activities and so on).
- In implementing these special projects, young people need to be supervised by attentive volunteer managers who provide them with adequate guidance.
- Young volunteers in your organization could be placed in charge of follow-up for certain projects.
- Greater involvement on their part means they will be responsible for overseeing activities, but also that they must be accountable ... for results.

To help you get started:

- *Volunteering Works! A facilitator's guide to youth volunteering*
www.volunteer.ca/volworks/library/facilitator.eng.pdf
- *Volunteering Works! Be part of shaping your future.* (Guide for young people)
www.volunteer.ca/volworks/library/youth.eng.pdf
- *Youth Works! Creating and developing youth-led volunteer projects*
www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/pdf/youthworks.pdf
- *Tant de façons de prendre sa place!*
www.forumjeunessedeliledemontreal.org/v2/ptp/guides/guide_engagement.pdf
- Examples of projects set up by and for young people
www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/hip/lld/olt/Resources/toolkit/YouthOne.shtml and
www.vsi-isbc.ca/fr/imit/youth-one.cfm

FACT SHEET 5 – You won't be disappointed

In Quebec, nearly a million youths are between 15 and 24 years of age (Statistique Québec).

(1) The art of providing for the next generation of volunteers:

The organization must plan on making significant room for its young volunteers by:

- Giving them seats and real power on the board of directors
- Ensuring that they serve as staff at headquarters
- Inviting young people to play a greater role in determining the issues to be resolved in your organization. Don't hesitate to give them mandates!

(2) It's time to pass the torch:

- To see that the next generation is a dynamic one, you can entrust a seasoned team of young people with the recruitment of young volunteers.
- Ask yourself whether it is worthwhile setting up and integrating a youth section in your organization.

(3) And above all ...

- Have a good time! By taking pleasure in your involvement in this promising project to bring in and integrate young people, you will be the winners!
- Young people seek and need frank and open relations. So don't hesitate to discuss your expectations and ask your questions.

To see what the future holds in store:

- *Lumière sur la place des jeunes dans les lieux décisionnels sur l'île de Montréal*
www.forumjeunessedeliledemontreal.org/v2/ptp/guides/ETUDEplacedesjeunes.pdf

- *Youth Volunteers: What's in it for Your Organization?*
www.kdc-cdc.ca/attachments/fs_coop_organization_eng.pdf

- *Supporting and Recognizing Youth as Community Volunteers*
www.kdc-cdc.ca/attachments/fs_froment_support_eng.pdf

FACT SHEET 6 – Obstacles and possible solutions

This fact sheet lists a number of obstacles that organizations may encounter in integrating young people. Solutions are proposed for overcoming them.

Keep an eye out for obstacles and solutions!

Obstacle	Possible solution
Resistance to change	Steps to follow to avoid resistance to change: www.multivolley.com/pages/entrainement/management/management/dir01.html
No action plan	See the strategic planning training offered at the Centre St-Pierre (www.centrestpierre.cam.org) and the Centre d'action bénévole de Québec (www.cabqinc.net/pages/cabqpag.html), and by the Regroupement des organisations volontaires en éducation populaire (ROVEP) (www.rovep.org).
No description of duties or an inadequate one	How to recruit volunteers (Volunteer Canada): www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/francais/pdf/CSCrecruterFre.pdf
Insufficient information about the realities of young people in your field	To clarify the socioeconomic profile of young people, visit the Website of your neighbourhood CLSC, at www.clsc-chsld.qc.ca/fr/accueil.aspx , and talk with caseworkers and street workers who deal with young people. The Carrefours Jeunesse-Emploi are also good sources of information: www.cjereseau.org/fr/index.asp .
A lack of recognition or appreciation of young volunteers in your field	Passeport jeunes bénévoles: www.adogatineau.ca/passeport/index.asp Hommage bénévolat-Québec awards, “Young Volunteer – Claude Masson” category: www.benevolat.gouv.qc.ca/prix/dollard_morin/index_en.asp Dollard-Morin recreation and sports volunteering award: www.benevolat.gouv.qc.ca/prix/dollard_morin/index_en.asp

The project implemented by the young volunteers of the CHSLD Foyer du bonheur/La Pieta is an example of a successful endeavour.

For about ten years, the CHSLD de Hull has called on 75 young people between the age of 13 and 17 to provide certain services for the elderly residing at the Foyer du bonheur and La Pieta. **The dynamic nature** of the project was the main component in attracting young people: two young coordinators were hired to manage the program. Meetings in classrooms and word-of-mouth were the keys to success.

For any additional information, call Hélène Cotnoir, volunteer manager for the CHSLD de Hull, at (819) 771-1112.

CONCLUSION

Since this guide does not claim to solve all your recruitment and retention problems, you must monitor the project very closely. The RABQ is available to answer any questions about this guide. You can visit our Website, at www.rabq.ca, where new information will be added regularly. To facilitate the distribution and use of this tool, the following versions will be available:

- a summary leaflet will be widely distributed
- a paper version (of this guide)
- a PDF version
- a Word version that can be changed and adapted to your organization's needs
- a Power Point presentation

This tool would not have been possible without the participation of the young Quebeckers who generously agreed to give their time and share their views about volunteerism. All of the young people with whom we met showed great interest in our project. We therefore dedicate this guide to all those who took part in the focus groups. We thank you!

Too often we hear it said that young people are lazy, uninterested, naïve or egotistical. We can assure you that is not so! All the young people we questioned are ambitious and dynamic, and dream of a better world. We need only make room for them and integrate them into our organizations, and time will do its work. In a collective world founded on human exchanges, we owe it to ourselves to welcome young people with open arms.