

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

DEAR MEMBERS, ALLIES, AND FRIENDS,



Jennifer Dupuis
President

This past year has been a year filled with challenges, adaptations and successes for the organization in the context of the pandemic. Covid-19 changed the way that our organization functioned and the team, despite their personal challenges due to the pandemic, remained committed to ensuring that our members continued to be supported during this most difficult and unprecedented period. Not only did our staff and board members rise to the challenge, but our donors and supporters also stepped up to the plate to **ensure our members had the financial, social and emotional support that they needed** to get through this time. Our board made up of Varda Mann-Feder, Jessica Dupuis, Nathalie Dube, Erin Hartle-Doiron, Anthony Taylor and Luise Massari invested countless volunteer hours to sustain the organization and the community that we serve. Thanks to the Pathy Family Foundation, we were fortunate enough to add to our team during the last year and hire our first Executive Director, Talina Henseleit, who jumped right in and continues to help the organization grow and support young people leaving care and who have left care. Throughout the pandemic our Meggie Bolduc has remained our frontline responder, to ensure that we were able to continue to serve and support our members during a pandemic that saw the world change in a way that has never been seen before.

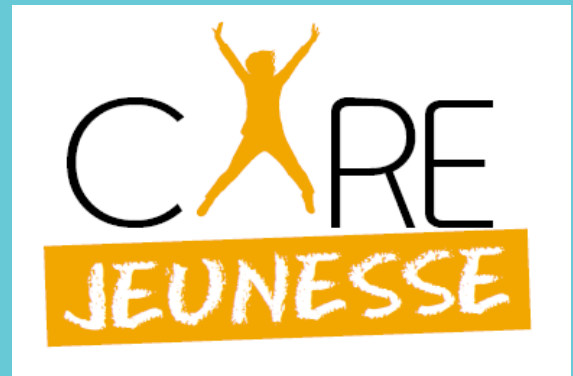
Thanks to our partnership with the Children's Aid Foundation and the Foundation of the Centre Jeunesse Montreal, as well as the Montreal Lakeshore University Women's Club, we were able to **provide financial support to our members who were struggling with job loss, isolation and other difficulties** related to the pandemic. I would like to express our appreciation for our individual donors as well as the Batshaw Foundation who helped ensure that no young person went without a holiday celebration, and even though we were unable to gather in person, every member and their children received a gift and all party attendees received a meal via UberEats. A special thank you to Carolyn Bouchard McNeil who graciously includes CARE Jeunesse members and their children in her annual Toy Drive.

A special thanks to our volunteers and donors who made sure that we were able to continue to offer our services, adapting to do so virtually by providing virtual tax services, delivering holiday gifts individually. The thousands of hours dedicated by our board members, staff and volunteers even on major holidays to ensure that the Covid-19 pandemic did not put a damper on our services demonstrated the strength of the organization, it's ability to adapt and meet the needs of our members no matter the challenges that presented themselves. I would also like to thank our members for their patience and understanding while we had to change the way that we operate and for their confidence in us. It was our utmost honour to continue to serve you and with the support of our allies, we look forward to continuing to expand our mandate and fill the gap that has existed all too long in supporting youth in care and alumni of care which CARE Jeunesse remains committed to filling.

With gratitude,

Jennifer

OUR STORY SO FAR



OUR MISSION

Centre Amitié, Ressources et Entraide pour la Jeunesse (CARE Jeunesse) is a provincial, bilingual non-profit organization founded by alumni of care that provides support to youth in care and alumni from care in Quebec. CARE Jeunesse was created by alumni of care to improve the quality of life in, and after, care by providing a safe environment for members to connect and form supportive relationships as well as providing advocacy, education and empowerment opportunities.

The organization connects youth to resources, examines policies related to youth in care and offers training and consultation to professionals on the issues relevant to youth in care.

C.A.R.E Jeunesse offers support to youth and alumni from all child protection placements, including but not limited to foster homes, group homes and a range of residential centres. C.A.R.E Jeunesse is widely inclusive and welcomes members from all backgrounds, abilities, cultures, religions, genders, sexual orientations and ethnicities.

OUR VALUES

- COMMUNITY
- EMPOWERMENT
- AUTONOMY
- ADVOCACY
- RESPECT
- INCLUSIVENESS
- WELL-BEING

1,200

YOUTH "AGE OUT" OF CARE
ANNUALLY IN QUEBEC

MANY ARE LEFT WITHOUT ANY
**GUIDANCE OR
SUPPORT**

WELCOME TALINA

From the beginning, CARE Jeunesse has been a volunteer-led organization, created by alumni of care and run without any full time staff.

As CARE Jeunesse continues to grow, we are pleased to announce the hiring of Executive Director, Talina Henseleit, who will help further our mission and objectives.

Talina is here to provide support to our members from all youth protection placements. We invite our members to get in touch with her to share your feedback on how we are doing, your ideas and suggestions for member activities and events, or to get help with issues important to you. We also encourage our members to get involved on one (or more!) of our volunteer committees.

We would like to thank the Pathy Family Foundation for their generous support and confidence in our mission, who has made this opportunity possible.



Talina Henseleit
Executive Director

GET IN TOUCH

Talina can be reached at
talina.cj@gmail.com

TAKING ACTION

CARE Jeunesse is proud to have been able to pivot our habitual practices to be able to continue to offer our most popular events and services to our members despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Additionally, we were able to develop and offer new support programs to address the new and urgent needs our community was facing during the pandemic. Throughout the year CARE Jeunesse continued to participate in advocacy and awareness initiatives to highlight the challenges facing alumni of care. A few highlights from this year include:



Building a community...virtually!

Despite the in-ability to host in-person events and outreach activities, CARE Jeunesse was determined to **break the social isolation** many of our members experience. As a result, a series of virtual social events was organized to bring members of our community together, including trivia games and "Speed-Friending". These events will continue in the future; all alumni are invited to join us for these fun, no-cost events!

Bursary For Post-Secondary Education

Young people who have been in care graduate highschool at less than half the rate of their peers (44%), fewer still complete post-secondary studies. Through the Darcy McGee - CARE Jeunesse scholarship, we are pleased to have awarded this **\$2,000 scholarship** to a deserving alumni of care in support of their academic aspirations.

NEW Academic Advising

In order to improve academic outcomes for alumni of care, this year CARE Jeunesse launched a dedicated **academic advising program** for alumni of care. Current and prospective post-secondary students can now be connected at no-cost to a higher education professional who can advise them on the application process or other academic issues they may be facing.

Laptops

Access to technology has never been more important. During the pandemic it became essential in order to participate in online studies, work from home, apply for emergency funds, and break the isolation that social distancing magnified.

For the second year in a row, CARE Jeunesse was pleased to be able to provide laptops to our members in need. This year, the program was supported thanks to funding from the Fondation des Centres Jeunesse de Montreal. **10 brand new laptops and computer supplies were provided to members in need.**



Thanks to you, we are now able to finish school projects and connect with loved ones. This has relieved a lot of stress.



CARE Jeunesse member, laptop recipient

TAKING ACTION (CONT'D)

*This has been the best
Christmas I have ever had.
Thank you for everything!*

CARE Jeunesse member, 19 yrs old

Home, But Not Alone, For The Holidays

The holidays can be a particularly lonely time for our members and the CARE Jeunesse holiday dinner party has become one of our most eagerly anticipated events of the year. Although the pandemic prevented us from gathering in person to celebrate, this year's virtual edition did not disappoint.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters, **all participants received an UberEats voucher to enjoy a special meal** of their choosing during the online celebration. Additionally, **74 members and their children received surprise gifts/gift cards delivered by our volunteer elves!**

Encouraging dignity and self-worth through luggage

CARE Jeunesse is committed to supporting the dignity of youth and young adults from all child protection placements. Youth are regularly shuffled between placements and are forced to transport their possessions in garbage bags. Additionally, young adults leaving care often have nothing to transport their belongings in. CARE Jeunesse is pleased to offer free luggage to our members and youth centers across Quebec. This year, **48 youth or alumni received luggage** through this program.



Advocacy & Support

Often our members face diverse issues and do not know where to turn. CARE Jeunesse provides **support and assistance with navigation of resources** for the individual needs of our members. Whether related to food insecurity, housing, employment or another concern, CARE Jeunesse is here to help!

Additionally, CARE Jeunesse is committed to **representing the voice of alumni of care**. We regularly participate in **public consultations, focus groups and engage with the media** to bring awareness and reform to issues important to our community. We would like to thank CBC Radio, CityNews, The Canadian Presse, and all our media partners for helping to highlight issues facing youth and alumni of care.

TAKING ACTION (CONT'D)

Covid-19 Emergency Fund

The pandemic caused many people to find themselves in financial difficulty this past year.

Thanks to the support of our partners CARE Jeunesse was able to launch an **emergency relief fund to provide food, rent, and other essential supplies** to our members.

Helping Make Ends Meet

In addition to the funds distributed through the Covid-19 emergency fund, CARE Jeunesse was also able to offer additional support through the distribution of gift cards thanks to donations provided by our community partners. Collectively **\$2,350 was distributed to 47 members for food, toiletries and essential supplies.**

Income Tax Clinic

Figuring out how to file your income tax can be a daunting task. Luckily, CARE Jeunesse members can get assistance in filing their returns through our no-cost tax clinic. For the second year in a row, this spring clinic was held virtually with enormous success. This year we had a nearly **300% increase** in the number of participants!



*It was a lifeline to remind me
that someone cares*



*CARE Jeunesse member,
after receiving a gift card for groceries*



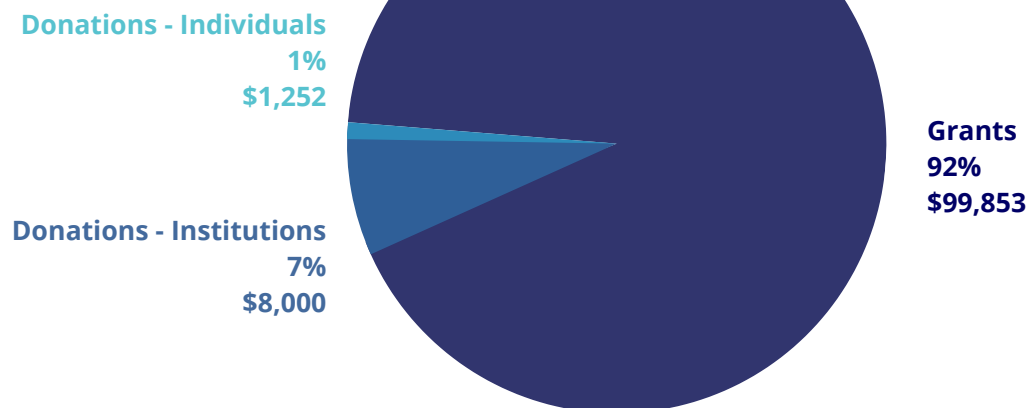
FINANCIAL UPDATE

CARE Jeunesse is very thankful for the incredible support we have received from the community this past year. New grants received in this fiscal will be used to grow programs, outreach and support services in support of our mission.

Additionally, CARE Jeunesse is thankful for the incredible amount of in-kind donations we have received that provide crucial support to alumni of care.

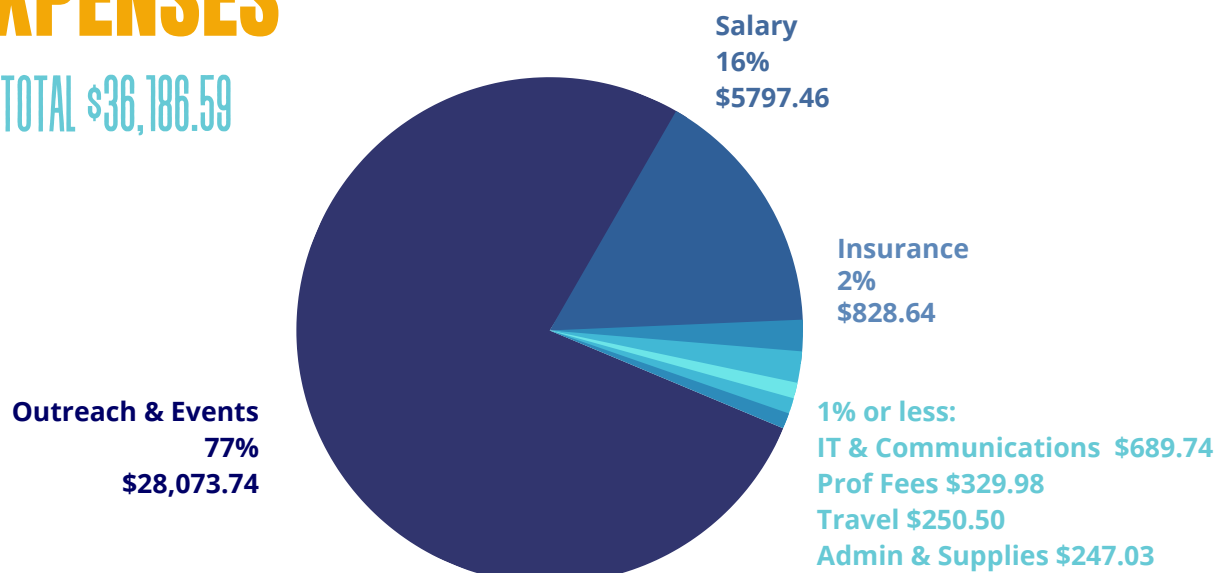
REVENUE

TOTAL \$109,104.71



EXPENSES

TOTAL \$36,186.59





GET INVOLVED

Need more info? Whether you'd like to become a member, volunteer, donate or suggest idea for future activities, we want to hear from you!

Contact us at carejeunesse@gmail.com



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our members, donors, volunteers, partners and sponsors for your commitment to youth and alumni from care.

We would like to acknowledge the support of the below community partners:

Batshaw Alumni Association
Batshaw Foundation
Canada Revenue Agency
Child Welfare League of Canada
Concordia University
D'Arcy McGee - David Birnbaum
Fondation de Centre Jeunesse de Montréal
Green Shield Canada
Montreal Lakeshore University Womens Club
Pathy Family Foundation
Quebec Association of Educators
Revenu Québec
Weredale Foundation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Varda Mann-Feder, *Vice-President*
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WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION