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The East Island Network for English Language Services Newsletter

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Community Portrait

In February 2011, REISA was invited to participate in the Community Development project, managed by the Community Health and Social Services Network-CHSSN and l'Institut National de Santé Publique du Québec-INSPQ. The CHSSN and the INSPQ will be developing portraits of six English-speaking communities across the province of Québec. REISA selected the community of Saint-Léonard within REISA's East Island territory for the portrait.

REISA's role will be the liaison between the INSPQ and persons of the community. These persons will include representatives of local associations, representatives of various community organizations, volunteer groups, religious institutions and school boards, and representatives of public institutions, l'Agence de Santé et des Services Sociaux, and Saint-Léonard elected officials of the three levels of government. REISA will organize a consultation grouping these individuals aimed to collect qualitative information about Saint-Léonard, including the community's assets, environment, economy, the personal health and well-being of its citizens, etc. The community portrait will prove useful when raising awareness about the state of the community, developing fitting local projects and shedding light on matters that may have not been well understood in the past.



(In Blue: Mary Richardson of the INSPQ presenting the Community Portrait project at a REISA network meeting in June 2011.)

REISA invited Mary Richardson of the INSPQ to present the project to network partners at a meeting in June. The organization of the community consultations will begin in the fall.

Family Violence Toolkit

In the fall of 2010, REISA was invited to participate in the Family Violence Toolkit, a project developed by the CHSSN and Éducaloi, with funding from Justice Canada. Other NPI's participating in the project are the OHSSN in Ottawa, 4Korners in the Laurentians, and CASA in Gaspé. The goal of the

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project is to create a toolkit and hold information sessions on the legal aspects of family violence.

In February 2011, REISA organized a focus group for service providers working in the field. Participants were asked what type of information they believe should be included in a family violence toolkit and provided at future information sessions held for service providers like themselves.

In early 2012, REISA will be organizing a series of in-person workshops for service providers, animated by the CHSSN and Éducaloi. The workshop will also be available to the CHSSN community networks via videoconference.

Friends for Life Evaluation

Dr. Bill Bukowski, Psychology Department, Concordia University, has evaluated the *FRIENDS For Life* pilot project coordinated by AMI-Québec and introduced in two elementary schools in the 2009-2010 school year.

FRIENDS For Life is a program that builds resilience and self esteem in children by teaching cognitive, behavioral and emotional skills. Based on more than 10 years of comprehensive research and evaluation, *FRIENDS For Life* is currently being used in eleven countries worldwide, and in hundreds of schools across Canada.

As a result of a collaboration between AMI-Québec, the English Montreal School Board-EMSB and REISA, the program was piloted at General Vanier and Gerald McShane Elementary schools in January 2010, and introduced to the province of Québec for the first time. 36 teachers and other school professionals received the training, and over 370 students from kindergarten to grade 4 benefitted from the training.

The evaluation showed that both parents and teachers of the students that participated in the program have noticed a *decrease in peer*

problems since its

introduction. Peer problems constitute as the inability to play with others and preference to be alone, the inability to have at least one close friend, being generally disliked by their peers, being picked on or bullied by their peers, and getting along better with adults than with other children of the same age. The children were also evaluated on four other elements including Prosocial Behavior, Emotional Well-Being, Conduct Disorder and Hyperactivity.



(Teachers and staff at General Vanier and Gerald McShane Elementary Schools receive FRIENDS For Life training.)

To learn more about the *FRIENDS For Life* program or AMI-Québec in general, call 514-486-1448 or visit www.amiquebec.org.

5-30 Health and Wellness Challenge

The yearly 5-30 Health and Wellness Challenge was a great success for REISA! Dietician Mina Mirtaheri promoted the challenge amongst the youth, adult and senior populations in East Montreal. Physical Education teachers at Laurier Macdonald Community Learning Centre recruited seventy-five students to participate in the challenge. REISA Dietician and REISA Communications and Projects Agent visited the high school one day per week during lunchtime for five consecutive weeks. Several games challenging the students on their knowledge of healthy eating and exotic fruits and vegetables kept the students stimulated during their lunch hour. Fruit-to-go's and fruit cups were handed out

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to over 250 participants, and weekly draws won participating students movie passes to a local theatre.



(L-R: REISA Communications and Projects Agent Claudia Maiolo, 5-30 Health Challenge Spokesperson Marie-Claude Savard, and REISA Dietician Mina Mirtaheeri, at the 5-30 Health Challenge Closing Event in May.)

Furthermore, REISA registered eleven members of the staff of the Leonardo Da Vinci Centre, who took weekly 45-minute walks during lunchtime. The REISA Dietician

presented an evening lecture on Nutrition at the Laurier Macdonald Community Learning Centre, where 15 attended.

Remote Diabetes Monitoring



(Diabetes software training on Blackberry for patients of CSSS Saint-Léonard/Saint-Michel.)

Spring 2011 marked the end of the phase II trials of the Remote Diabetes Monitoring project. If you are unfamiliar with the multi-regional project, DISQMEC (Diabetes

Intervention Strategy for Québec Minority English-speaking Communities) was initially developed in 2007, with a focus on the Prevention and Management of Diabetes. In 2009, DISQMEC took on a new direction, concentrating on Distance Telemonitoring of Blood Glucose via Blackberry, with the goal of increasing disease management and nutritional knowledge of active diabetic patients.

Since April 2011, the DISQMEC coordination team has been working on the evaluation of results of phases I and II. The Researchers from the McGill School of Nursing have compiled the data gathered from the 41 patients monitored over the two eight-week periods, belonging to two urban and two rural communities in the province of Québec. They will be conducting user satisfaction surveys amongst the patients as well as interviews of the CSSS Nurses. Post-tests were conducted by the Servizi dietician to measure the patients' advancement in their knowledge on nutrition. The team will complete the Public Health Agency of Canada's Project Evaluation and Reporting Tool-PERT by the end of the summer.

DISQMEC brought on various challenges throughout its development. The coordination team had to deal with inevitable setbacks such as dysfunctional software and hardware, staff turnover at the CSSS' and the hard-to-reach patients' living in rural areas, because of work conflict or low connectivity.

The PHAC Program Consultant has offered advice and shared useful information with the coordination team throughout the duration of the project. She has urged them to develop a strong communications strategy for the dissemination of results, which the team will put into place in the fall.

Brainy Boomers Lectures Turnout

Health professionals presented on six different topics during a lecture series organized by the McGill Centre for Studies in Aging-MCSA, the Laurier Macdonald Community Learning Centre and REISA in March and April 2011. An average of thirty participants attended each lecture, including NPI's and CLC's across the province of Quebec who

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connected via videoconference.

Participants were asked to fill out evaluation forms measuring their satisfaction with the presentations.

The large majority of attendees *strongly agreed* or *somewhat agreed* that the topics were appropriate for the audience chosen,



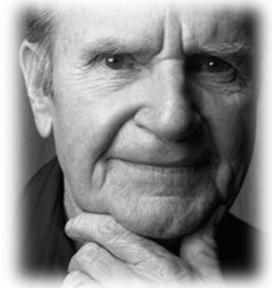
that audiovisual and printed material were appropriate and easily accessible, that the conferences expanded their knowledge of the subject and finally that the conferences met their expectations. Moreover, most of the attendees answered that the speakers were either *excellent* or *very good* in their organization, delivery and ability to involve the audience.

Most of the attendees asked to be placed on the MCSA's mailing list so as to be informed of upcoming conferences or events.

Consultation for Seniors

REISA participated in the organization of a consultation on health and social services for seniors in the East Island of Montreal, which was held on March 22nd 2011 at the CLSC Saint-Michel. The organizing committee, made up of HelpAge Canada, Almage Senior Centre, CCS, the Italian-Canadian Community Services of Québec and REISA, held a de-briefing of the consultation at the end of March. Partners discussed the positive and negative feedback of the attendees.

Service providers representing community organizations and public institutions present at the consultation expressed their interest in the topics discussed. Topics included food and financial security, premature placement, respite, day centres and caregivers, and abuse, depression and suicide, amongst others.



They also voiced that the consultation was a great opportunity for public relations and networking with others servicing seniors in the East end of the city. Critical feedback pointed out that the objectives of the consultation should have been more focused. Participants agreed that there were too many objectives for a half-day consultation and that they were too vague.

A letter thanking participants will be sent out to attendees in the fall. Thereafter, the organizing committee will decide on the method of dissemination of the conclusions established at the consultation, as well as the next steps to ensure that proper action is taken to improve access to health and social services for seniors living in the East Island.

Le Réseau Sentinelle en prévention du suicide

In April and May 2011, REISA organized two *Sentinelle suicide prevention* training sessions for network partners. A group of thirteen staff members and volunteers from Almage Senior Centre, the Italian-Canadian Community Services and Toxicology Stop Detoxification Centre participated.

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Le Réseau Sentinelles en prévention du suicide de l'Est de Montréal is a program developed by le CSSS Lucille

Teasdale, le CSSS St-Léonard et St-Michel and le CSSS Pointe-de-l'Île. A sentinel is an adult who voluntarily engages him or herself to act as an intermediary between suicidal persons and the resources available for them. During the one-day training, sentinels are trained to understand their role and limits, develop abilities in aid relationship, develop an ease in talking about suicide, recognize the precursory signs of suicide and be aware of the resources out there.

Ms. Dora Cesta, Assistant Director of Student Services at the English Montreal School Board, has since been in communication with Sentinelle Project Manager Michel Lefebvre, with the aim of training teachers and other staff members of high schools. The feasibility of the training being offered in September is being looked into.

REISA Monthly Featured Articles

In April 2011, REISA entered into a partnership with TDG Computers, a Saint-Léonard-based company specializing in the sale and servicing of computers. TDG Computers has sponsored monthly, full-page featured articles in the Suburban community newspaper, East End Edition, in April, May and June, and will be sponsoring three more articles that will appear in the paper in August, September and October 2011.

The Suburban community newspaper offers a gateway to the English-speaking population of the

East Island of Montreal, being REISA's target population. Not only does the monthly spread offer visibility, REISA is pleased to be partnering with the private sector, because of the possibility of attracting other institutions toward the network in the future and receiving further sponsorship.

Please email me for a copy of the featured articles or for more information on TDG Computers!



TYZE

In May 2011, the Community Health and Social Services Network-CHSSN introduced a networking tool to its partners and members. TYZE is as a personal networking site, unlike social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, and has been in existence for just over two years. TYZE is ideal for the sharing of qualitative information since it is private, secure and ad-free, and because the information posted is not owned by TYZE. The site allows a registrant to upload events on a calendar and invite guests to view and confirm their presence to a particular event. Registrants can upload tasks on a virtual to-do list, which friends and colleagues can claim. The virtual to-do list proves to be ideal in a work setting. Furthermore, one can send private or

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network messages, and can upload photos, stories, and documents for sharing.

NPI's were invited to create networks on the TYZE website; REISA will be creating two separate TYZE virtual networks. The first will be catered to NPI partners and showcase information pertinent to the NPI community. The second will be catered to local community organizations and public institutions who partner with REISA on various projects.

Along with all other NPI's, REISA is working to have the virtual networks in place by the Fall. Stay tuned for your invitation!

MCSA's First Annual Walkathon



On September 15th, the McGill Centre for Studies in Aging will be holding its First Annual Walkathon. The goal of the event is to *raise awareness regarding the Benefits of Exercise and Healthy Living in Preventing Dementia.*

The walkathon will be taking place at the MCSA, situated at 6875 Lasalle Boulevard in Verdun, between 1:30pm and 5:00pm. Subscription is \$15, and this includes a t-shirt and refreshments. For more information, please contact Silvana Aguzzi or Marta Bachetti at 514-766-2010.

AMI-Québec Support Groups

AMI-Québec provides year-round support for persons suffering from a mental illness and the people around them, including caregivers, family

and friends. Education programs, recovery workshops, teleworkshops, telehelp and support groups are offered. Beginning in the month of July, a series of support groups are taking place at the JGH Institute for Community and Family Psychiatry, located at 4333 Cote Ste-Catherine Road. , on Monday evenings, 7:30pm Registration is not required.

Please call AMI-Québec at 514-486-1448 for details on dates and topics.

Almage Corn Roast



Almage Senior Community Centre has organized a Corn Roast that will be held on Tuesday, August 23rd 2011

between 11:45am and 3:00pm. The cost for members is \$8 and the cost for non-members is \$11. Tickets are on sale until August 19th. The meal will consist of hot dogs, corn, coleslaw and other goodies! Come and support the only Community Centre for English-speaking seniors in the East Island of Montreal!



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The East Island Network for English Language Services
Le Réseau de l'Est de l'Île pour les services en anglais
Community and public partners work to develop and promote access to English-language health and social services in the east-end of Montreal.

If you would like to learn more about any of the projects mentioned, please feel free to email me at claudiam@scciq.com. Thank you for reading!