



# Partnering for the well-being of Minority English-Language Youth, Schools & Communities



SCHOOL & COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
- working together is the key!



INCLUDING: AN ACTION FRAMEWORK FOR QUEBEC ENGLISH  
SCHOOLS AND THEIR PARTNERS – AND A SCHOOL WELL-BEING  
QUICK ASSESSMENT TOOL

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This guide was produced by the Leading English Education and Resource Network, the Community Learning Centre Initiative and the Community Health and Social Services Network.

A special thanks to the members of the Advisory Board on English Education for their input and support.



the Community Learning Centre  
initiative



With a financial contribution from Health Canada



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This document identifies some of the unique challenges, strengths and aspirations of English-speaking youth in Quebec and provides a school and community-based framework for action intended to have a positive impact on their well-being and educational success. It emerges from the collaboration of community health and social services networks, called (NPIs) – abbreviation for the Networking and Partnership Initiative and Community Learning Centers (CLCs) seeking to improve the overall well-being of minority language youth residing in the province.

### A focus on partnerships

Strategies implemented by NPIs and CLCs promoted an increase in partnerships between schools, families, local service providers and community organizations which brought additional resources into the school and increased the commitment that institutions and community organizations made to youths' health, well-being and educational success.

**CLCs:** The Community Learning Centres initiative supports Anglophone schools in Quebec to become hubs for education and community development. This school-community initiative provides a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of learners, their families, and the wider community. Their aim is to support the holistic development of citizens and communities, through relationships between schools, families and communities. There are 24 schools with CLCs in Quebec which offer elementary level grades and 22 CLC schools which offer secondary levels.

**NPIs:** The Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) support the development of NPIs. These 20 regional networks focus primarily on partnering with public health institutions, schools, and other community sector organizations as a way to improve the health and vitality of English-speaking communities across the province of Quebec. Their approach encourages inter-sectoral collaboration as a way to address the common issues and concerns of their target population.

NPIs and CLCs have been working together to support youth as well as their schools and larger communities. In many cases, they use *The Healthy Schools Approach* – a program of the Quebec Government, focusing on the educational success, health and well-being of young people<sup>1</sup>, and adapt activities to align with the reality of English-speaking youth in some 40 of Quebec's English-language public schools. Their practices and experiences are introduced in this document providing an array of exemplary approaches to school, community and institutional collaborations that have proven promising in improving the lives of English-speaking youth as well as the schools and communities with which they are engaged.

A number of research reports and consultations address the situation of English-speaking youth and make recommendations for designing policy and setting priorities for initiatives implemented on their behalf (see part 2). The present framework builds upon this body of knowledge with particular attention to the issues identified by the Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) in a report that elaborates the distinctiveness of the English-language school system, the diverse challenges of its clientele and the need for innovative and targeted solutions to enhancing their well-being and learning<sup>2</sup>. It embraces the idea that the role of English-language schools in a minority context goes beyond supporting academic success to include the transmission of Anglophone history and culture across generations and the safe-guarding of the life satisfaction and contribution of minority youth to the larger society in which they dwell<sup>3</sup>.



## CHALLENGES, STRENGTHS AND ASPIRATIONS OF QUEBEC'S ENGLISH-SPEAKING YOUTH

# 2

Quebec's minority language communities are widely dispersed and differ substantially in terms of their demographic, economic and socio-cultural characteristics. English-speaking youth across the province differ in terms of their socio-economic status, level of bilingualism, sense of identity, level of social engagement and health status. The range of challenges faced by English-language schools, a key institution for youth, varies in accordance with the priorities and resources among their enrolled clientele. While strategies that address the well-being and success of minority youth and their families must be mindful of these local particularities, there are challenges and aspirations that Quebec English-speaking youth generally hold in common and that offer a focus for collective mobilization on their behalf.

### Cultural and Racial Diversity

A noted characteristic of Quebec's English-speaking population, and especially in the greater Montreal area, is its high level of diversity in terms of ethnic origins, place of birth, religious affiliation and visible minority status<sup>4</sup>. When compared with the majority group, every English-speaking regional community shows a substantially higher proportion of individuals with visible minority status residing in their territory<sup>5</sup>. The capacity of the community to attract persons from different walks of life is in many ways its strength, but it also comes with challenges. Research tells us that English-speaking youth and families who are newcomers to Quebec and those who are members of its visible minority population often face barriers to their well-being due to low socio-economic status, a weak sense of belonging, lack of social support networks and difficulty accessing linguistic and culturally appropriate health and social services<sup>6</sup>.

### Challenges

Being part of a linguistic minority often results in increased barriers to communication, education and employment, a sense of exclusion and isolation, and low representation in leadership positions. Affirming one's identity and accessing resources also becomes more difficult for those living in a minority context. In addition, as the English-speaking community is diverse, many English-speaking youth who are visible minorities face additional challenges (Creating Spaces for Young Quebecers, 2009).

### English-French Bilingualism

During recent consultations with English-speaking youth they expressed their desire to stay in Quebec and contribute to Quebec society as full-fledged citizens<sup>7</sup>. Still, the pattern among young, educated, English-speakers to move to other parts of Canada and other countries attests loudly to the challenges they experience in establishing themselves in the province<sup>8</sup>. Despite the strength of fairly high levels of bilingualism among English-speaking youth (77.4% among those 15-24 in 2011) language barriers continue to be cited as a challenge in achieving their aspirations in terms of education, employment, social inclusion, community leadership and optimal health<sup>9</sup>.





## Income and Labour Force Participation

According to the 2011 census, English speakers (15 years and over) residing in Quebec with low levels of income (no income or less than 20K) represent a substantial 44.9% of Quebec's English-speaking population<sup>10</sup>. This is a larger proportion than found among the comparable majority language group. They represent an even larger proportion in some regions such as 54.6% in Gaspésie-Iles-de-la-Madeleine and 47.5% in the Centre-du-Quebec region<sup>11</sup>. Generally, individuals or groups living in low-income situations experience lower rates of educational success, reduced health and well-being and an increase in family violence and neglect<sup>12</sup>.

At 9.4%, the proportion of unemployed in 2011 was notably higher for Quebec's English-speaking (15+) population when compared to the French-speaking majority. The unemployment rate for English-speaking youth (ages 15-24) was 16.9%, which is much higher relative to Francophone youth (12.8%)<sup>13</sup>. When queried as to their reasons for planning to depart from Quebec, 72.9% of those aged 18-34 cited education or economic opportunity<sup>14</sup>.

## Student Engagement, Perseverance and Success

In 2011, the proportion of the English-speaking population, all ages considered, without educational certification ranged from a high of 45.8% among the Côte-Nord regional population and 35.1% in Gaspésie-Iles-de la-Madeleine to a low of 10.6% in the Capitale-Nationale and 12.7% in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean regions<sup>15</sup>.

The presence of a complete English educational system from kindergarten to the third cycle of university represents an important asset for the English-speaking community in Quebec. Still, English-language school boards face the challenge of declining school enrollment due primarily to patterns of demographic change and language policy, specifically Bill 101, which directs the children of immigrants to the French-language school system<sup>16</sup>. Also, English-language school boards in the Greater Montreal region for example, do not score as well as their francophone counterparts in terms of pass and fail rates and average marks on provincial examinations, although, they perform well in terms of overall graduation rates<sup>17</sup>.

According to the *Tell Them From Me* (TTFM) student survey (2012-2013), a high proportion (81%) of Quebec's CLC secondary school students reported positive behavior (not breaking school rules) and the score for being regularly truant (skipping class) was down relative to the previous three years. CLC schools of all sizes - small, medium and large –showed lower levels of truancy than indicated by the Canadian norm. The percentage of CLC secondary students planning to go to college or university (64%) in 2012-2013 was the highest recorded among all four years included in reported findings (2009-2013)<sup>18</sup>.

As a measure of positive school engagement, an average of 48% of elementary CLC school students participated in school clubs in 2012-2013 with many schools surpassing the levels recorded for the Canadian norm and they were spending more time doing moderate physical activity outside of gym class than in previous years<sup>19</sup>. Generally, the proportion of Quebec's elementary school students who report "trying hard to succeed" is very high at an average of 92%. The TTFM survey tells us that CLC schools perform well in this area with phase 1 CLCs (the most longstanding phase) reporting the highest level among all the phases at 95%.





## Identity, Social Engagement and Volunteerism

English-speakers, and youth in particular, have expressed a weak sense of belonging to the province and many see the future of their community in Quebec as threatened<sup>20</sup>. This is accompanied by low levels of trust in various public institutions and low levels of awareness of community organizations serving the interests of the English-speaking regional communities<sup>21</sup>. When social participation among English speakers in the Greater Montreal area was assessed, the lowest levels were found among youth, those of low-income households and those born outside of Canada<sup>22</sup>.

In the midst of these challenges, a noted long-standing strength of Quebec's English-speaking communities is their high level of volunteering also an indicator of social participation and community attachment. English-speaking Quebecers tends to show higher levels of volunteering (often through schools) than their Francophone neighbors and many regional communities exceed the national average for volunteering<sup>23</sup>. Quebec Anglophones cite participating in team sports, youth groups and having volunteered at high school while school-age as key formative experiences in lifelong volunteering. Many report having had parents who volunteered<sup>24</sup>. When today's English-speaking youth (15-24) volunteer, it is primarily through their school<sup>25</sup>.

While English-speaking youth report feeling excluded and lacking a legitimate place in today's Quebec society they are unified in their aspiration to maintain a distinct identity, celebrate their diverse cultures and take pride in the contribution of their communities to Quebec's heritage<sup>26</sup>. To this end, the Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) recognizes that the schools of Quebec's minority language communities play the critical role of protectors and transmitters of culture<sup>27</sup>.

## Health Status and Health Information

Residing in a Canadian province where French is the sole official language means minority language youth, by definition, face unique challenges in accessing information provided by Quebec's public health and social service agencies and as a result are at risk of low levels of health literacy<sup>28</sup>. According to a 2010 provincial survey, English-speakers aged 18-34 showed the lowest levels of access to information concerning public health prevention and promotion programs offered in their region<sup>29</sup>. The capacity of youth and their families to access, understand and use information for health is essential for a wide-range of tasks such as making healthy lifestyle choices, finding and understanding health and safety information and locating appropriate government services<sup>30</sup>.

Among health challenges, the Quebec Social and Health Survey (ISQ) reveals that English-speaking respondents display a greater prevalence of mental health problems compared to French-speaking respondents and survey respondents aged 15-24 reported the highest levels of psychological distress<sup>31</sup>. The *Tell Them from Me* (TTFM) 2012-2013 student survey revealed that a substantial proportion of students attending English language secondary CLC schools reported moderate or high levels of depression (27% in grade 11). Among elementary CLC schools, 21% of students reported moderate and high levels of anxiety (30% in Cycle 3). Also, secondary students are spending less than one hour per day doing moderate physical activity and while time spent in moderate physical activity has increased among CLC elementary school students 21% of this group report being overweight or obese<sup>32</sup>.

As a notable strength in terms of health status, in 2012-2013 only 12% of CLC secondary school students reported being tobacco users. This represents a substantially smaller proportion of smokers than in previous years (2009-2013) and a smaller proportion than recorded for the Canadian norm.

NPIs and CLCs have supported English schools and their community and institutional partners in working closely together to address the unique challenges facing English-speaking youth in their schools and communities. The following section offers an abridged overview of their approach and some of their activities.

### Promising Approaches

Their approach often began by acquiring a better understanding of the emotional, social and physical health needs of English-speaking youth as well as their aspirations. Consultation with youth and their advocates helped to not only involve students and teachers in designing activities to address their local needs but also to increase their commitment and interest in taking a lead (volunteering) in the implementation.

Whole school and community approaches were piloted that had proven to support classroom instruction; engage students, teachers and families in activities that seek to enhance student connectedness to their local institutions and; promote emotional well-being and school perseverance among youth<sup>34</sup>. These approaches encourage inter-sectoral partnerships between schools, community organizations and public institutions that otherwise may not come together to address common issues. The NPI and CLC partnership served to increase awareness among these players of their distinct roles, resources and programs as they relate to the younger English-speaking generation.

In light of health concerns reported by English-speaking youth<sup>35</sup>, particularly high rates of obesity, promoting healthy lifestyles became a priority for many partnering NPIs and CLCs. In some cases, health promotion programs, campaigns and resources were accessed at public health and social service agencies and through school boards. In other cases, access was gained through participation at local partnership tables.



## 5-30 HEALTH CHALLENGE

NPIs partnered with CLCs and other English schools to encourage students, their families and school staff to participate in the 5-30 Health Challenge (Défi 5-30), a provincial health promotion campaign offered every year in Quebec. Teachers used translated material in English to complement their school curriculum about healthy eating and physical activity and organized events during and after school. These events were aimed to support students, teachers and their families in eating the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables and in completing the necessary minutes of physical activity per week. Students had fun with teachers, challenging and supporting each other, as they came up with various activities on their own. Parents also enjoyed participating in something that motivated them to become healthier with their children.





A positive approach to youth development lies in teaching and supporting children and youth in: acquiring specific assets and attributes to make healthier lifestyle choices; bettering their chances of succeeding in school; and in becoming contributing members within their communities<sup>36</sup>. In adopting this approach, NPIs and CLCs worked with English schools to help their clientele develop resiliency skills to persevere and thrive in their local minority language context both in, and outside of, their school. This approach often required schools to reach out to community and public partners in order to secure a continuum of activities linking school, community and family environments. It also served to align youth needs with the priorities, programs and services provided by Quebec's public health and social services agencies. An important link between well-being and achieving the schools' success plan (MESA)<sup>37</sup> was made in some schools. This enabled teachers and school administrators to draw the link between educational successes and improving student health status in their school.

## MESA

An example of a school success plan (MESA) integrating aspects of well-being and perseverance particular to the distinct needs of their English-speaking students:

- Access to health and social service professionals in the English-language (nurse, psychologist, social worker)
- Leadership, volunteerism and student involvement
- Literacy and reading
- Healthy lifestyles
- Links with community partners

Both health and education outcomes can be compromised when students feel socially excluded, unsafe or are lacking interest and motivation at school. Factors such as these are associated with risky behavior among adolescents such as substance abuse and bullying<sup>38</sup>. The presence of such factors among English-speaking youth were assessed and activities were designed with the objective of reducing social isolation and enhancing positive relationships between teachers, students, their family members and, importantly, between English-speaking and French-speaking youth.



## FUN FRIENDS

Some NPIs and CLCs supported schools in piloting a series of workshops called Fun Friends, to improve students' mental health and resiliency skills. In the program, children and youth learn how to relax, to regulate their emotions, to be kind and empathetic and to deal with conflict - particularly in their friendships and at home. This program was piloted in English schools where students struggle with a sense of belonging and connection to their school and broader community. Parents report improved communication with their children, and teachers report improved behavioral outcomes in the classroom<sup>39</sup>.



## Successful Initiatives

Examples of successful initiatives supported by the collaboration of NPIs and CLCs are described in the case studies below.

### CASE STUDY 1 Partnering for well-being

Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary CLC School in Gatineau took the initiative to join a local partnership table called the *Comité Hull en santé*. Initially, it started off as a way for the school to inform local partners of the well-being needs of its students and families and to learn more about local resources and organizations that could help them. After a few meetings, the *Comité* offered the school the services of a facilitator to deliver activities that increase physical activity and coordination (*psychomotricité*) to students.

Another organization participating on the local partnership table, *La Maison de l'amitié*, became aware of the needs of English-speaking youth and responded by offering a program of afterschool sports and games involving both English and French-speaking students. CLC coordinator, Dermot Guinane, stressed the importance of his participation on this table noting that if he was not making the school and its needs known to community partners, the students would not be benefiting from either of the programs. Ongoing partnering continues to grow at Pierre Elliot Trudeau CLC School as initial success in supporting the well-being of students has led to a more recent partnership with their local NPI called *Connexions*. Together, they are offering healthy nutrition workshops.

Partnering with community organizations and public institutions will no doubt continue to be a part of the school's approach. As supporting student well-being is showing results in improved health, social participation, school engagement and community cultural exchange.





## CASE STUDY 2 SNACS

The social integration and skill building of English-speaking students with disabilities is at the core of SNACS (Special Needs Activities and Community Services). This innovative initiative is undertaken by Quebec High School and CLC, their local NPI, Jeffery Hale Community Partners and other community and institutional health partners in Quebec City. As part of this initiative, English-speaking youth and adults are encouraged to volunteer to support students with special needs in participating and integrating into community-based recreational, social and cultural activities.

Warren Thomson, principal at Quebec High School, explains that “we needed to rely on English-speaking volunteers as it is very hard for our special needs students to receive any kind of support in English.” Many of the youth volunteers are supported by adults, which insures a safe, caring and social environment. It is also a great way to connect English-speaking families to health and social service professionals. Warren explains that “the success of SNACS lies in the interest and involvement of English-speaking community volunteers and institutional partners who want to make a difference in the lives of their special needs English-speaking youth as they support them in overcoming their challenges and enable them to succeed during and after their school-age years”.

## CASE STUDY 3 Voices and choices

According to Kim Buffitt, coordinator for St. Paul's CLC on the Lower North Shore, when a student is engaged in bullying, substance abuse, or other kinds of anti-social or destructive behaviors, it is not effective to find one cause or one solution to the problem. “We need to understand the complex and unique needs that young people have, such as in our case, living in an isolated region of Quebec in which many of our youth are unilingual Anglophone and do not see a future here”, she explains. This philosophy of care begins with the principle of giving youth “voices and choices”, a method that allows youth to more openly express their challenges and concerns, and involves them in identifying a variety of positive choices they can make that support their educational success and overall health and well-being.

Many of the local solutions identified involved in-school and out-of-school activities, engaged teachers, families and a diverse team of community partners. “In many cases, youth seemed bored and had nothing to do after school, and in other cases, they did not feel encouraged by family members to learn the French language”, explained Kim. With support from the local NPI called the Lower North Shore Coalition for Health, the school slowly became a center for activity for the youth and their family members offering more sports, music, culture and heritage related activities. Initiatives to sensitize parents and children to the importance of becoming bilingual and seeing a future in Quebec were also designed with involvement from students. Another important solution was promoting future employment opportunities and exposing youth to the possibilities of staying in their communities after graduation. Kim goes on to explain that they have noticed dramatic changes in their youth and in the community. Students are more excited about their future, about graduating and about volunteering in order to improve their English-speaking community.





## CASE STUDY 4 Fit club for girls

A big challenge at La Tuque High School is finding ways to motivate young girls to participate in fitness programs. The *Tell Them from Me* (TTFM) student survey results indicated that although athletic programs exist at the school, girls were participating at low rates and sometimes not at all. Students were also developing problems with drug and alcohol use at an early age and requiring a lot of support and coaching in learning how to make choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. An entrepreneurial program emerging from the local French high school, College Champagneur, has made waves in La Tuque by encouraging girls to get fit and make healthier choices. Some students at Champagneur decided to launch a program called Filles Active (Fit Club for Girls) as part of a service learning project and invited students from La Tuque High to get involved.

The program is designed to help teenage girls build a sense of community and team spirit as they discover the advantages that come from taking part in physical activity with a group of friends and motivating adult mentors. The environment is meant to be positive, promote a healthy self-image and is open to any girl who wishes to participate. The girls are motivating each other to achieve this goal, and some of them will travel to Quebec City in the spring to represent La Tuque as competitors in a 5K race. Three staff members are involved in the program and Jeff Reid, CLC coordinator, remarks that these women are highly physically active in their own lives and excellent mentors and role models for the girls. As part of the program, the girls participate in weekly fitness classes and travel to College Champagneur to hear motivational talks from athletes like Olympian Caroline Lapierre-Lamire and learn about healthy eating choices from a registered dietician. It has been a great way for English and French-speaking girls to build relationships and break down the linguistic divide that often exists between the two schools.

## CASE STUDY 5 Small garden, big effects

At St. Willibrord School and Community Learning Centre in Chateauguay, efforts to transform the physical environment have impacted the way students use school space, their interaction with others who share the space and the choices they make towards good health. CLC coordinator Anthony Spadaccino observed that students' oral health at the school was problematic – an increase in tooth decay, tooth loss and even early signs of gum disease – and this prompted teachers and administrators to look for opportunities to encourage healthier eating habits. In doing so, they invited the students to help brainstorm possible ideas to address this issue.

The idea of creating a school garden was proposed as a hands-on way to involve and educate the entire school on how vegetables are grown and encourage them to incorporate fresh produce into their diet. Soon parents and other community volunteers expressed their interest in helping to build the garden and solicit donations for materials. Teachers began noticing a change in their students and not only because of new gardening skills. A sense of pride for their garden and the school was slowly being nurtured as students and families started coming by the school more often, even on the week-ends, to check on progress in the garden. Some cycle three teachers even linked the garden into their french and science class curriculum. This inspired the development of other complementary activities around healthy eating - further supporting students' and teachers' interest in making healthy lifestyle changes.





## Youth Success Stories

This section provides six success stories of English-speaking youth. In many ways, it is a representation of the significant role and contribution English schools, teachers and communities make to the education, career and life success of their youth. Also, their stories provide ongoing support for continued efforts in helping English-speaking youth achieve and persevere amidst their potential challenges and needs.

### Success Story 1

### School and community volunteering



Amy Bilodeau is a native English speaker from Quebec City who attended Ste Foy Elementary and Quebec High School. She later pursued studies at CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence and received an undergraduate degree in Psychology and minor in Professional Writing from Concordia University.

Amy's involvement in local community events and groups early on cultivated an enduring sense of belonging and appreciation for the value and cultural uniqueness of English-speaking Quebecers. In 2007 she became a recipient of the Quebec City Women's Club bursary for her community volunteerism. Amy attributes her success to school and community-based volunteer opportunities that helped her develop strong leadership skills and motivated her to give back to her community.

She is currently a project coordinator for Voice of English-speaking Québec where she contributes her passion and skills to the development of the English-speaking community in her region.

### Success Story 2

### Teacher and coach relationships



Born and raised in the Eastern Townships, Rachel Hunting attended Lennoxville Elementary and Alexander Galt Regional High School. Rachel obtained an undergraduate degree in Honours Sociology from Bishop's University and was awarded the University Prize in Sociology.

From her elementary years onwards, Rachel's passion for sports led her to participate in numerous school and community-organized teams. She attributes much of her community orientation and self-confidence to the years she spent interacting with peers, teachers and community volunteers.

In particular, Rachel credits exceptional teachers and coaches along the way who made efforts to build a caring and supportive relationship with her. In 2010, she was recognized by Townshippers' Association, the regional organization she now manages as Executive Director, as a Young Townships Leader for her dedicated work in the area's youth sector.



### Success Story 3

### Youth led and designed activities



David Hodges is a Montreal-based hip hop artist and youth worker. He has visited English secondary schools across the province as a way to engage students through music and discussion on important topics such as bilingualism, identity, community leadership and volunteerism.

David acknowledges his initial passion for music and fostering cross-cultural exchanges through his years at John Rennie High School in Pointe-Claire. He recalls how the principal of the school gave permission for him to organize open mic rap contests during lunch hours. This later led to inviting students from a neighboring French school to participate.

Music has been a way for David to express his feelings and experiences growing up as an Anglophone youth in Montreal. He is most recently working with the Cree Nation Youth Council and provides young Cree with musical aspirations and encourages them to open up and share their feelings as well.

### Success Story 4

### Awareness of available resources



Ana Osborne was born and raised in Chevery, attending Netagamiou School until Secondary 3 before completing her high school studies at C.E. Pouliot Polyvalente in the Gaspé. She obtained a DEC in Fine Arts at John Abbott College as well as a BA Specialization in Therapeutic Recreation and later a Masters in Education at Concordia University. Early on and throughout her studies, Ana learned the importance and advantages of seeking out and making use of the available school and community resources for students. She credits her confidence and determination with navigating the student resource landscape to supportive Guidance Counsellors, teachers and school staff that offered many helpful suggestions about where to look and supported her along the way.

Ana is currently a Community Learning Centre Development Agent at the Commission Scolaire du Littoral where her passion for creating links to match school and community needs with the available resources is happily put to use every day.





## Success Story 5

## Career and educational opportunities



Prior to graduating from Baie Commeau High School, Max Côté recalls receiving support from a particular guidance counselor and a variety of teachers that exposed him to the range of educational and career opportunities available to him. He remembers how they helped him discover his strengths and interests and encouraged him to benefit from his bilingual skills.

Max explored his education and career choices by attending Cegep Champlain St. Lawrence in Social Sciences and LaSalle College in hotel and restaurant management. He went on to return home and attended Cégep de Baie Commeau, receiving a diploma as a registered nurse. Max attributes his strong connection to the English-speaking community to his time spent at Baie Commeau High School. In fact, Max is currently working for his hometown high school as a Community Learning Centre Coordinator. He enjoys encouraging youth in his school and community to become bilingual and promoting both English and French culture and heritage from his region.

## Success Story 6

## Education, life experiences and mobility



Mario Clarke was born and raised in the small fishing community of Grosse-Ile on the Magdalen Islands. He has always had an innate curiosity about how things work and now considers himself as a lifelong learner. Coming from a bilingual family, his parents chose for him to attend the only English Elementary and High School on the islands, Grosse Ile School.

When selecting higher education, his path was a little less clear as he considers each accomplishment as a reaction to a certain challenge or phase in his life. He pursued his studies at Dawson College to discover his interests and then received an undergraduate degree in Political Science from Concordia University. This led him to attend the University of Uppsala in Sweden for a Master's in Development Studies. Although finding employment in this field has been challenging, he worked in South Africa, in Bosnia-Herzegovina and then returned back to his hometown to work on a rural tourism development project.



After the completion of the project, he secured his current position as a Regional Project Manager at YES (Youth Employment Services) in Montreal, where he works towards increasing entrepreneurship in the province. Again, this leads him to return once more to his studies at John Molson School of Business where he received a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration.

He considers his education and mobility the key reasons for his success and the ability to continue to work towards strengthening the vitality of communities.

## Introduction

This framework (see accompanying model) integrates the challenges, strengths and aspirations of English-speaking youth identified in part 2 and the efforts undertaken by CLCs and NPIs to support the well-being of youth, schools and communities across Quebec. It also builds upon specific research and evidence-based activities linking health, educational outcomes and student perseverance. It is developed as a school and community-based approach, which in essence, provides ideas and strategies to support English schools and their partners in their continued efforts to have a positive impact on the well-being of English-language youth, families, schools and communities.

This approach is conducive to the English-community minority situation in Quebec as it aims to strengthen the visibility and vitality of the school and the English-speaking community served by the school.

*What do we want to achieve?*  
outcomes

In delivering systemic approaches that support the well-being of English youth, there is no doubt a direct impact on the environments in which they learn (schools) and live (communities). This framework makes this link, and encourages schools and its partners to develop strategies to have positive impacts in these areas. The model specifically identifies three joint outcomes: youth well-being; school well-being; and community well-being. This approach is conducive to the English-community minority situation in Quebec as it aims to strengthen the visibility and vitality of the school and the English-speaking community served by the school. An emphasis on partnerships helps create awareness among other organizations of the issues facing youth and encourages their participation in lending resources and developing joint activities with the school. This framework further encourages youth-led activities, parent engagement and community volunteerism - all supporting the well-being, educational success and perseverance of youth.

*How do we do it?*  
building blocks

The model presents four building blocks that together, form a systemic approach for English language schools: increasing awareness of available resources to English-speaking youth; promoting healthy lifestyles; offering whole school and community approaches; and encouraging English-speaking youth to persevere (in school and into adulthood). These building blocks can be seen as strategies that offer youth and those who support them an approach to collective action that is responsive to the unique needs of the students of their school.

*What is the best approach?*  
lessons learned

Much can be learned from past experiences but one lesson that stands out is that *no one approach fits all*. The best approaches presented by the accompanying model are drawn from lessons learned and provide a basic guide to stimulate discussion between schools and their partners as they determine what best suits their situation. Four activities per building block are illustrated in the model.







*How can we ensure success?*  
**being strategic**

In supporting the additional well-being needs of English-speaking youth, there are many challenges facing English schools and their partners (such as adequate time and resources). Fortunately, there are best practice examples and evidence based approaches to help guide actions in this area. To this end, the model identifies four strategic considerations which are: build caring and trusting relationships with youth; engage youth in the design and delivery; transfer of Anglophone culture and heritage; and expose English-speaking youth to opportunity.

School and community-based partnerships appears at the bottom of the model. It serves as a final reminder (guiding principle) for English schools and their partners to be strategic by working together in supporting the well-being and learning needs of English-speaking youth in their school and community. IT TAKES A VILLAGE – and all its assets and resources to make a positive impact on our youth and their communities.



**How can we ensure  
success?**

# ACTION FRAMEWORK

Supporting the Well-Being of Minority English-Language Youth, Schools and Communities

*What do we want to achieve?*  
**outcomes**

**Youth Well-Being**

**School Well-Being**

**Community Well-Being**

*How do we do it?*  
**building blocks**



**increasing**

**Awareness of resources to English-speaking youth**

Understand their specific health related needs and challenges

Transfer available information and resources in English to them

Encourage youth to seek professional support and resources

Communicate youth's needs to professionals (nurses, social workers)



**promoting**

**Healthy lifestyles**

Consider activities that achieve health and education outcomes

Support the school in achieving its school success plan

Education and experiences to enhance youth's emotional well-being and resiliency

Enhance and promote the schools' physical and social environments



**offering**

**Whole school & community initiatives**

Enhance relationships between students, teachers and families

Recruit English-speaking parents and volunteers to support

Comprehensive activities that extend beyond the classroom

Support teachers involvement in extracurricular activities



**encouraging**

**English-speaking youth to persevere**

Motivate youth to become bilingual and develop a sense of belonging

Support youth in increasing their social and linguistic connections

Encourage youth to take pride in their distinct identity

Help youth in realizing a future in Quebec (education, careers)

*What is the best approach?*  
**lessons learned**

*How can we ensure success?*  
**being strategic**

## Build

**Caring and trusting relationships with youth**

## Engage

**Youth in the design and delivery**

## Transfer

**Anglophone culture and heritage**

## Expose

**Youth to opportunity**

Guiding Principle - School and Community-Based Partnerships

This quick assessment tool is designed to support schools in evaluating their efforts to implement the framework: <b>SUPPORTING THE WELL-BEING OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE YOUTH, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES.</b>	1. NOT AT ALL	2. RARELY	3. SOMETIMES	4. OFTEN	5. VERY OFTEN
Our school regularly conducts student surveys to support our understanding of existing needs and challenges.					
We offer specific and adapted activities and services to respond to our students' unique and diverse needs.					
We often organize out of classroom activities that encourage participation from all students, teachers and family members (such as contests, events, campaigns, projects).					
We keep abreast of existing community information/resources available in both languages (French and English) and promote them to our students					
Our school is represented on community resource and networking tables as a way to promote the needs of our students and to access additional resources, programs and services.					
<b>There are many initiatives taken by staff in our school to promote the following health goals:</b>					
Students eat well.					
Students are physically active.					
Students have positive self-esteem.					
Students have a sense of belonging to their school.					
Students have a sense of belonging to their community.					
We encourage our students to participate in community-based volunteer and leadership opportunities.					
We recruit <u>diverse</u> parent volunteers to support various school initiatives.					
Teachers are recognized for their efforts in extra-curricular activities that support the well-being of our students, school and community.					
Student well-being is part of our school success plan.					
We are aware of and implement health-related resources provided by our school board and CSSS (such as healthy schools or bullying).					
Our school staff is familiar with school policies relating to student well-being.					
Our school promotes Anglophone heritage and culture.					
Our school offers after-school programs that support the needs of our students' families.					

	1. NOT AT ALL	2. RARELY	3. SOMETIMES	4. OFTEN	5. VERY OFTEN
<b>We encourage caring and trusting relationships between:</b>					
Peers (student-to-student).					
Peers (teacher-to-teacher).					
Staff and students.					
Teachers, staff and parents.					
Students and community members.					
Teachers, staff and community members.					
We engage students by offering student-led/designed activities and opportunities.					
We enhance and promote the school's physical and social environments.					
We actively communicate the health and learning needs of our students to our school board, health and social services professionals and community partners.					
We incorporate formal and informal curriculum and associated activities that are known to have positive outcomes on student's well-being (such as improving emotional and social well-being, mental health and school perseverance).					
We promote our school as an important English institution to students, teachers and families.					
We promote our school as an important English institution to the broader community.					
<b>Number of marks in each column:</b>					
<b>Multiplied by the appropriate value:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Sub-Totals:</b>					
<b>Grand Total:</b>					

Once completed, tally your scores in order to have a score out of a possible 150:

**80 and below** = not achieving;

**80 to 90** = barely achieving;

**90 to 100** = achieving with lots of improvement necessary;

**100 to 110** = achieving with minor improvements necessary;

**110 and up** = achievement is high with little improvements necessary.

- <sup>1</sup>The Healthy Schools Program was developed by the Quebec Government for the education community and its partners particularly in health and social services. It focuses on action that promotes educational success, health, and well-being; improving school and community environments; and creating harmonious relationships between school, family and the community.
- <sup>2</sup>Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE), Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS). (2013). *One Size Does Not Fit All: Distinct Solutions for Distinct Needs*. Montreal, Quebec: The Advisory Board. [www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/abee](http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/abee)
- <sup>3</sup>Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE), Ministère de l'Éducation du Loisir et du Sport. (1999). *Culture and English Schools in Play*. Montreal, Quebec: The Advisory Board. [www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/cela/pdf/culture\\_a.pdf](http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/cela/pdf/culture_a.pdf)
- <sup>4</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2013). *Building Youth Resiliency and Community Vitality with Montreal's English Language Population. The YES Experience with Youth seeking to Improve their Work Situation*. [www.chssn.org](http://www.chssn.org)
- <sup>5</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2012). *Baseline Data Report 2011-2012 Socio-economic Profiles of the English-speaking Visible Minority Population by Quebec Health Region*. [www.chssn.org](http://www.chssn.org)
- <sup>6</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network(CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2012). *Health Challenges, Needs and Priorities of Quebec's English-speaking Communities 2011-2012*. Also, Community Health and Social Service Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2012).*Baseline Data Report 2011-2012 Socio-economic Profiles of the English-speaking Visible Minority Population by Quebec Health Region*. [www.chssn.org](http://www.chssn.org)
- <sup>7</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN). (2009). *Creating Spaces for Young Quebecers: Strategic Orientations for English-speaking Youth in Quebec*. Institut national de santé publique (INSPQ). Gouvernement du Québec. [www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)
- <sup>8</sup>Floch, W. and Pocock, J. (2008). "The Socio-economic Status of English-speaking Quebec; Those who left and those who stayed". In Bourhis, Richard (ED.) *The Vitality of the English-speaking Communities of Quebec: from Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montreal.
- <sup>9</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN). (2013). *Socio-demographic Profile of Quebec's English-speaking Seniors Section 2*. Prepared by J Pocock, Ph.D., using 2011 Census and National Household Survey Information. Also, Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2013). *Building Youth Resiliency and Community Vitality with Montreal's English Language Population. The YES Experience with Youth seeking to Improve their Work Situation*. Also, Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) (2009). *Creating Spaces for Young Quebecers: Strategic Orientations for English-speaking Youth in Quebec*. Institut national de santé publique (INSPQ). Gouvernement du Québec.
- <sup>10</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN). (2013). *Socio-demographic Profile of Quebec's English-speaking Seniors Section 2*. Prepared by J Pocock, Ph.D., using 2011 Census and National Household Survey Information, p.24. <http://www.qcgn.ca/seniors-about/>
- <sup>11</sup>Ibid, p.24.
- <sup>12</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2012). *Health Challenges, Needs and Priorities of Quebec's English-speaking Communities 2011-2012*. Pp.19, 20. [www.chssn.ca](http://www.chssn.ca) Raphael, D. (Ed.). (2008). *Social Determinants of Health: Canadian Perspectives*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press; Raphael, D., Labonte, R., Colman, R., Macdonald, J., Hayward, K., & Torgerson, R. (2006). Income and Health Research in Canada: Needs, gaps and opportunities. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 97 (Supplement #3), s16-s23. Abernathy, T., G. Webster and M. Vermeulen. (2002). *The Relationship Between Poverty and Health among Adolescents*. *Adolescence* 37 (145): 55-67.
- <sup>13</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN)/ Soutien aux initiatives visant le respect des aînés (SIRA). (2013). *Socio-demographic Profile of Quebec's English-speaking Seniors Section 2*. Prepared by J. Pocock, Ph.D. 2011 Census and National Household Survey Information, p.19,20. <http://www.qcgn.ca/seniors-about/>
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- <sup>14</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network(CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2008). *Baseline Data Report 2007-2008. Health and Social Survey Information on Quebec's English-speaking Communities*, Community Health and Social Services Network [www.chssn.org](http://www.chssn.org)
- <sup>15</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN)/ Soutien aux initiatives visant le respect des aînés (SIRA) (2013). *Socio-demographic Profile of Quebec's English-speaking Seniors Section 2*. Prepared by J. Pocock, Ph.D., using 2011 Census and National Household Survey Information, pp.12-13.
- <sup>16</sup>Bourhis., R and P. Foucher. (2012). *The Decline of the English School System in Quebec*. Moncton, New Brunswick: Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities (CIRLM). Also, Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS). (2011). *Educating Today's Quebec Anglophone*. Montreal, Quebec: The Advisory Board. [www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/abee](http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/abee)
- <sup>17</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative (GMCDI) 2007. *Building upon Change and Diversity within the English-speaking Communities of the Greater Montreal Region: Pursuing shared Development Goals and Strategies*. Report of the GMCDI Steering Committee. Montreal, Quebec. See specifically Discussion paper #3 *Education and the Long-term Development of the English-speaking Communities of the Greater Montreal Region* (April 2007) prepared by KSAR & Associates. [www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)
- <sup>18</sup>Findings from the *Tell Them From Me* student survey (2012-2013) were drawn from tabulations prepared for the 2012-2013 CLC evaluation presently underway with permission from the CLC Initiative. <http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/clc>

- <sup>19</sup>Findings from the *Tell Them From Me* student survey (2012-2013) were drawn from tabulations prepared for the 2012-2013 CLC evaluation presently underway with permission from the CLC Initiative. <http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/clc>
- <sup>20</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2006). *Social Support Networks in Quebec's English-speaking Communities: Building Community Vitality through Social Capital Strategies*. Community Health and Social Services Network. [www.chssn.org/Document/Download/Social\\_Capital\\_Report\\_202005\\_2006.pdf](http://www.chssn.org/Document/Download/Social_Capital_Report_202005_2006.pdf)
- <sup>21</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2006). *Social Support Networks in Quebec's English-speaking Communities: Building Community Vitality through Social Capital Strategies*. Community Health and Social Services Network. [www.chssn.org/Document/Download/Social\\_Capital\\_Report\\_202005\\_2006.pdf](http://www.chssn.org/Document/Download/Social_Capital_Report_202005_2006.pdf) Also Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2006). *Baseline Data Report 2005-2006 English-Language Health and Social Services Access in Quebec*. Based on 2005 CHSSN-CROP Survey on Community Vitality. [www.chssn.ca](http://www.chssn.ca)
- <sup>22</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative (GMCDI). (2007). Discussion paper #6 *Social Participation and the Long-term Development of the English-speaking Communities of the Greater Montreal Region*. Prepared by KSAR & Associates, Montreal, Quebec.p.20. [www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)
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- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., p.24
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., p.39
- <sup>26</sup>Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN). (2009). *Creating Spaces for Young Quebecers: Strategic Orientations for English-speaking Youth in Quebec*. Institut national de santé publique (INSPQ). Gouvernement du Québec. [www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)
- <sup>27</sup>Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS). (2011). *Educating Today's Quebec Anglophone*. Montreal, Quebec: The Advisory Board. P.13. [www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/abee](http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/abee)
- <sup>28</sup>The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) defines health literacy as the ability to « access, understand and use information for health ». [www.ccl-ca.ca/ccl/Reports/HealthLiteracy.html](http://www.ccl-ca.ca/ccl/Reports/HealthLiteracy.html) See also, Canadian Council on Learning (CCL), (2007). *Health Literacy in Canada. Initial Results from the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey*. Ottawa, Ontario. <http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/HealthLiteracy/HealthLiteracyinCanada.pdf>
- <sup>29</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock,J. (2011). *Baseline Data Report 2010-2011 English-Language Health and Social Services Access in Quebec*. Based on CHSSN-CROP (2010) Survey on Community Vitality [www.chssn.org](http://www.chssn.org)
- <sup>30</sup>Canadian Council on Learning (CCL), (2007).*Health Literacy in Canada. Initial Results from the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey*. Ottawa, Ontario. <http://www.ccl-cca.ca> See also, Centre for Literacy (2012). *The Literacy and Essential Skill Needs of Quebec's Anglophone Adults*. <http://www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca>
- <sup>31</sup>Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)/Pocock, J. (2008). *Baseline Data Report 2007-2008. Health and Social Survey Information on Quebec's English-speaking Communities*. Community Health and Social Services Network, p.117. [www.chssn.org](http://www.chssn.org)
- <sup>32</sup>Findings from the *Tell Them From Me* student survey (2012-2013) were drawn from tabulations prepared for the 2012-2013 CLC evaluation presently underway with permission from the CLC initiative. <http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/clc>
- <sup>33</sup>Findings from the *Tell Them From Me* student survey (2012-2013) were drawn from tabulations prepared for the 2012-2013 CLC evaluation presently underway with permission from the CLC Initiative. <http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/clc>
- <sup>34</sup>Glover, S., Patton, G., Butler, H., Di Pietro, G., Begg, B., and Cahir, S. (2002). *Promoting emotional well-being: Team guidelines for whole school change*. The Gatehouse Project: The Centre for Adolescent Health. Parksville, Australia.
- <sup>35</sup>Findings from the *Tell Them From Me* student survey (2012-2013) were drawn from tabulations prepared for the 2012-2013 CLC evaluation presently underway with permission from the CLC Initiative. <http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/clc>
- <sup>36</sup>[www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-asset](http://www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-asset)
- <sup>37</sup>In order for the school/centre and the school board to comply with the Education Act article 209.2(1) (2) (3) (4), the school board and school/centre must sign a Management and Educational Success Agreement. This Agreement outlines the commitments made by the school board and the school/centre to achieve their mission of successfully instructing, qualifying and socializing students. The Management and Educational Success Agreement defines the school/centre role in supporting the school board objectives and targets for student success, within the school board strategic plan and in line with the Ministère de l'Éducation, des Loisirs et du Sport goals.
- <sup>38</sup>Zins, J., Bloodworth, M., Weissberg, R., and Walberg, H. (2007). The Scientific Base Linking Social and Emotional Learning to School Success. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* Vol. 17, Iss. 2-3, pp. 191-210.
- <sup>39</sup>The scientifically validated FRIENDS for Life program has been recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) as best practice for the prevention and treatment of anxiety and depression in children and adolescents.



