



Convergence

Service d'aide aux hommes de la Gaspésie

ACTIVITY REPORT 2024-2025

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2024-2025

A YEAR OF TRANSITION UNDER NEW EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

STATISTICS OVERVIEW

517 active files and 184 new participants



New: We now welcome youth aged 16 and up. Currently, 6 teenagers are receiving our services



166 participants are experiencing a separation, either from a partner or within the family



Education: 31 % have completed Secondary V

Note: 148 individuals chose not to answer this question



42 % of participants, including 95 fathers, live in severe financial insecurity



309 participants are fathers, and our support work with them reaches 660 children, 608 of whom are minors



41 fathers are homeless



44 participants are part of an Indigenous community



170 have experienced a separation in the last 12 months



74 men have had suicidal thoughts in the past year and 22 have attempted suicide

INTRODUCTION

The 2024–2025 fiscal year marked a transitional period for Convergence, as we welcomed new executive leadership. Although Marie Hudon, our new Executive Director, had been with Convergence for many years, the responsibilities and dynamics of the role required a significant adjustment period. Jean-Jacques Élie, the outgoing executive director, agreed to remain in the organization as a psychosocial outreach worker and provider of clinical support at the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts point of service, as well as coordinator of special projects.

Maison Oxygène is now entering its fourth year of operations. Our team is nearly fully staffed, though certain shifts remain difficult to fill during the vacation season, highlighting the need to strengthen our on-call pool.

This year, we signed an addendum to our service agreement with the New Carlisle detention centre, establishing a dedicated presence for Indigenous clientele. This was necessary given that many of our programs are only available in French, while most Indigenous inmates speak English only.

We have undertaken a team-wide revision of our intervention tools related to intimate partner violence, as well as a review of several internal policies.

The new position in Rivière-au-Renard has proven more difficult to fill than anticipated. We continue to seek that exceptional individual who can become part of the community and help us more effectively welcome, assess and support those affected by the fisheries crisis. Convergence is the employer, but this role is part of a tripartite partnership with Public Health of CISSS de la Gaspésie and the Côte-de-Gaspé RCM.

We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to our employees, volunteers and board members for their exceptional commitment to advancing our work in the communities and reinforcing our presence throughout the Gaspé Peninsula.


Diane Dupuis, President


Marie Hudon, Executive Director

OUR MISSION AND VALUES

CONVERGENCE is a not-for-profit community organization dedicated to supporting men across the Gaspé Peninsula, particularly those in difficulty, fathers in vulnerable situations and spouses with inappropriate or violent behaviour. This year, we amended our Letters Patent to officially allow us to provide services to youth aged 16 and over. This change was made in response to requests from schools and from parents concerned about their teenagers' present and future wellbeing.

The name **CONVERGENCE** reflects a meeting place for men—a space for sharing and exploration, where they can develop nonviolent communication and assertiveness skills. **CONVERGENCE** also connotes the coming together of several factors in a person's life trajectory that are conducive to the initiation of a positive personal process.

Our work is grounded in contemporary, field-based approaches that consider each person's socioeconomic, cultural and personal context, as well as that of their family. We actively support the development of constructive and positive models of masculinity and fatherhood. We also remain attuned to developments in research, adapting our methods to increasingly complex realities—gender identity, a broader spectrum of relationship structures such as polyamory and open relationships, and evolving cultural contexts driven by immigration.

We oppose all forms of violence, regardless of the sex or gender identity of the aggressor or victim. Our intervention philosophy is based on equity, equality and mutual respect in interpersonal relationships, and on self-responsibility in addressing all forms of violent behaviour. We place strong emphasis on solidarity and gender diversity as a way to break free from the alienating effects of traditional gender norms.¹ Convergence's tools for responding to intimate partner violence have been updated to align with the philosophy of the reference guide developed by À cœur d'homme, our provincial association of organizations working in this field.

Note 1 : Violence conjugale et familiale, vers une Politique gouvernementale renouvelée [conjugal and family violence: toward a renewed government policy], Association à cœur d'homme, 2017

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Intervene and prevent the particular challenges faced by men by offering individual and group programs, workshops and support groups for men with violent behaviours as well as for men in distress facing difficult situations that may negatively impact their mental and physical health, as well as their personal and social lives.
- Promote education by providing training programs and workshops to the general public and to outreach workers on topics such as intimate partner violence, the prevention of family tragedies, parenting roles, and men's health and well-being.
- Offer shelter services for men in difficulty, with priority given to fathers and their children, including community-based and psychosocial support.
- Provide support, follow-up and intervention services to individuals who have committed sexual offences.
- Convergence serves individuals aged 16 to 99.



INTERVENING WITH MEN

The way men seek help has evolved in recent years. While this is not a universal observation, we are noticing a shift. Although many men still wait too long before seeking support—often only reaching out in times of crisis—some are increasingly attentive to their own warning signs, whether physical or psychological, of distress or discomfort.

Documentaries and series exploring masculinity and violence—such as *Alpha*, *À cœur battant*, the opening up of men's voices in *Les gars, faut se parler*, and conjugal separation in *Elle m'a quitté*—along with numerous widely available books by authors like Michel Dorais, Lise Plank, Mikaël Bergeron, and Joé Turgeon, offer a wide range of perspectives on men's health and well-being that previous generations might never have considered. Organizations that support men witness these changes every day. Younger men are accessing services. Young fathers, students, even grandfathers wanting to take a more active role in their grandchildren's lives. In short, shame is slowly giving way to a genuine desire for well-being and healthier relationships.



BOARD MEMBERS

Diane Dupuis
President

Nicolas Rannou
Vice-President

Guyline Castilloux
Treasurer

Catherine Chrétien
Secretary

Eric Archambaul
Administrator

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Marie Hudon
Executive Director, Sainte-Anne-des-Monts

Ghizlane Machmech
Executive Assistant, Sainte-Anne-des-Monts

Jean-Jacques Élie
Psychosocial Outreach Worker and Special Projects Coordinator, Sainte-Anne-des-Monts

Mathieu Michaud
Coordinator of Maison Oxygène Haute-Gaspésie



OUTREACH TEAM

Maude Carbonneau-Girouard

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Chandler

Danielle Cyr

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Caplan

Vanessa Rivière-Landry

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Carleton-sur-Mer

Rachel Savoie

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Pointe-à-la-Croix

Stéphane Beaulieu

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Rivière-au-Renard

Patrick Jacques

Community Outreach Worker, Fisheries Sector, Rivière-au-Renard

Mike Therrien

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Maison Oxygène

Maude Boucher

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Maison Oxygène

Cédric Lavoie

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Shelter Worker, Maison Oxygène

Jacques Soucy

Shelter Worker, Maison Oxygène

Kady Dao, part-time

Shelter Worker, Maison Oxygène

Léticia Fortier

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Maison Oxygène

Luc Riffou, part-time

Psychosocial Outreach Worker, Maison Oxygène

Alexandre Dugas

Shelter Worker, Maison Oxygène

GOVERNANCE

For the 2024–2025 fiscal year, up to October 2024, the Board of Directors was composed of five (5) members. One board member resigned due to a lack of availability to fulfill their mandate. Convergence successfully filled the vacant seat in April 2025, and the appointment will be ratified at the Annual General Meeting on June 16, 2025. All five (5) members of the Board come from the general public.

The Board of Directors met six (6) times during the 2024–2025 year, which corresponds to one meeting every two months.

During these meetings, board members were regularly briefed on major files and key issues affecting community life in the Gaspésie region, as well as on actions taken to strengthen Convergence's presence across its service territory. The new Executive Director is particularly committed to promoting concrete actions aimed at increasing visibility and deepening Convergence's roots in each of the RCMs we serve. In addition, the Executive Director provides the Board with regular updates on events, successes, emerging challenges, research developments, and more.

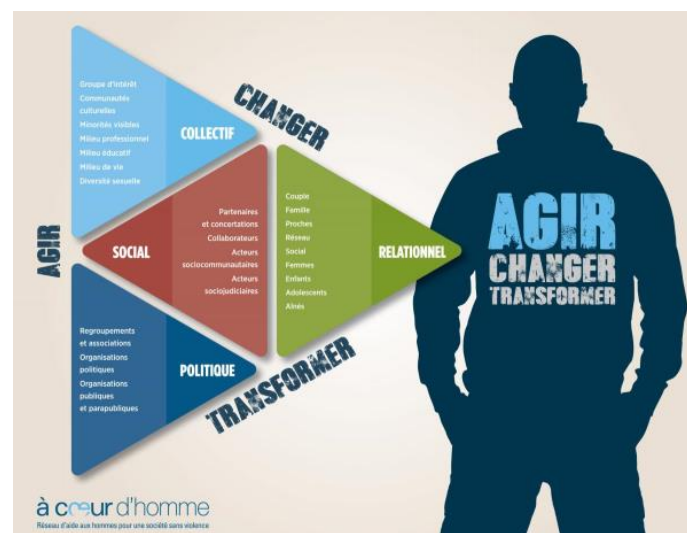
The following topics and updates were shared and discussed with Board members:

- A comprehensive financial overview, now better structured since the hiring of our Executive Assistant.
- A full revision of the human resources management policy, adapted to reflect new realities arising from the use of part-time and occasional staff at Maison Oxygène.
- Assessment and presentation by Sébastien Trudel from the Réseau des Maisons Oxygène (RMO) on our compliance status for the Maison Oxygène accreditation: Mr. Trudel provided a summary of his visit to Maison Oxygène Haute-Gaspésie and informed the Board of the adjustments required to maintain accreditation. The requested changes were implemented as directed by those overseeing the accreditation process, allowing Convergence to retain its official Maison Oxygène status.
- Discussions were also held regarding cybersecurity and compliance with Law 25. Cost estimates were submitted following our requests for quotes. Although the Board chose to defer the broader discussion, we nonetheless

proceeded with the implementation of a two-factor authentication system for all administrative and financial protocols of the organization.

- The Board of Directors was informed and actively involved in establishing the new pay equity policy, a required measure for any organization with more than 10 employees. The policy will be submitted to the DEMES before the November 2025 deadline. The work was carried out by permanent staff, with support from the non-profit Bénévoles d'Expertise.
- The final analysis and adoption of a major update to Convergence's General Regulations were ratified at the Annual General Meeting in June 2024.
- In response to the issue of access to justice for participating fathers in vulnerable situations, the Board approved and implemented an emergency legal assistance fund, limited strictly to safeguard order situations.
- Employee safety was also a topic of discussion at the Board level. The Caplan point of service was temporarily closed. Our outreach workers successfully arranged to use an office at the neighbouring CLSC. This change was necessary after an incident where one of our employees, working alone in a large building, was subjected to intimidation by a participant. Despite the safety measures in place, the situation posed a real threat to her physical and psychological well-being. The municipality of Caplan greatly facilitated our relocation to a more public, higher-traffic building.

*Men and Women,
We Are All Part of the Solution!*



POINTS OF SERVICE

In April 2024, the Executive Director, accompanied by Board President Diane Dupuis, conducted a tour of Convergence's points of service. This tour provided an opportunity to listen to employees' needs regarding training, equipment and workplace challenges and to give voice to the everyday realities they face at their point of service. It was a valuable opportunity for the President to observe the commitment of our outreach workers up close and to better understand the realities they face in their daily work.

Rivière-au-Renard Office

Located at 40-B Renard East Boulevard



Group Meeting Room



We are building strong ties with the fisheries sector

Stéphane Beaulieu has been the outreach worker based in Rivière-au-Renard since August 2023. The office can accommodate two to three outreach workers. Stéphane is deeply committed to building strong relationships with community partners and upholding Convergence's reputation. The office is open 35 hours per week. Its proximity to the fishing industry makes it a key location for ensuring timely, confidential access to services. Stéphane has also established a partnership with the Centre de pédiatrie sociale l'Équipage to organize group sessions for fathers.

We are still actively seeking a community outreach worker for the fisheries sector. We hired someone in March 2025, but the candidate did not complete his probationary period. We continue to work closely with the Côte-de-Gaspé RCM and the Association des Capitaines Propriétaires to integrate this mandate within the community.

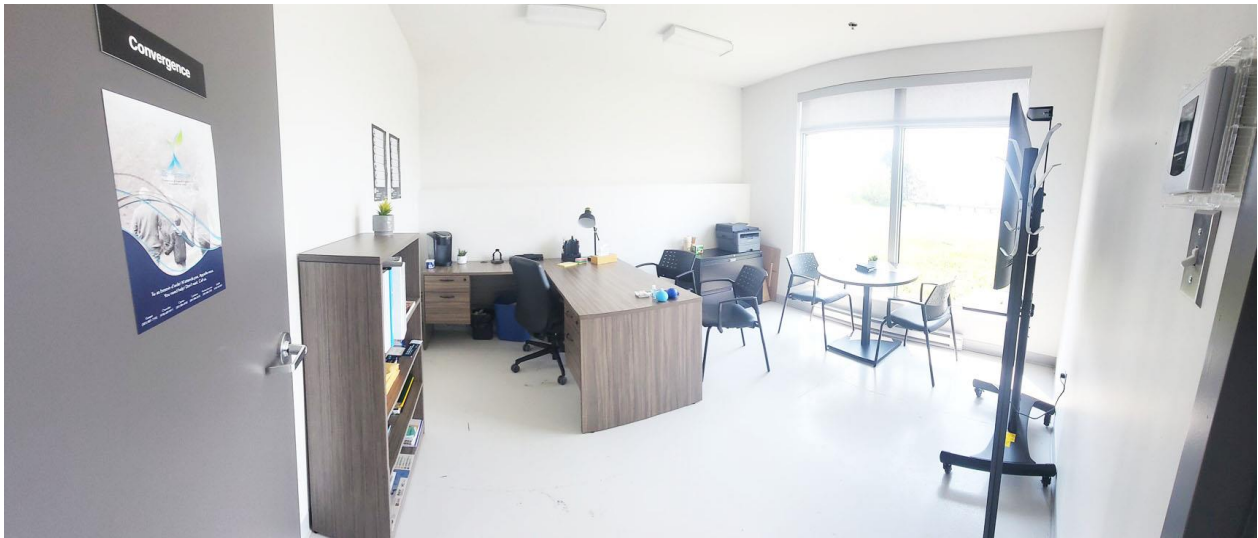
Chandler Office



The Chandler office is located at the Centre de Services partagés, at 163 Commerciale Ouest Street. Our outreach worker, Maude Carbonneau-Girouard, provides services on-site Monday to Friday, for a total of 35 hours per week.

Caplan Office

New Caplan office, located in the municipality's multipurpose building



Outreach office



Exterior of the building

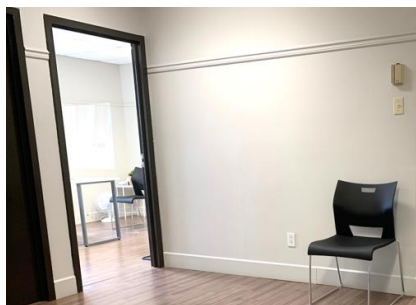


Convergence entrance

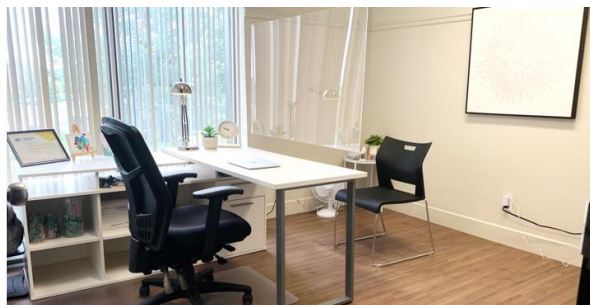
Our Caplan-based outreach worker benefited from appropriate accommodations during her pregnancy to continue her duties. She remained in her role until the end, working remotely for participant sessions and also lending a hand in preparing clinical documents for her colleagues. During her maternity leave, our team members in Carleton, Pointe-à-la-Croix and Chandler coordinated the sharing of her participant list by territory, to ensure no gaps in service delivery. Participants continued to receive support, even though this placed an additional workload on these outreach workers. In March 2025, she gave birth to the very first Convergence baby!

As mentioned at the beginning of our report, we had to relocate the Caplan office for staff safety reasons. The municipality and its general manager showed flexibility and efficiency in securing a new space that is much better suited to our operational needs.

Carleton-sur-Mer Office



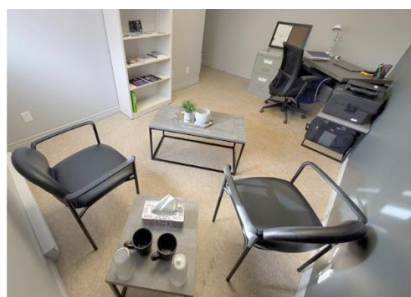
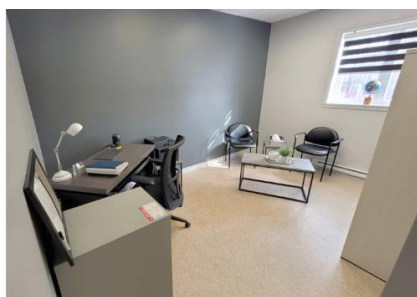
Outreach office



Waiting room

The office is located in the National Bank building on Route 132. Outreach worker Vanessa Rivière-Landry meets with participants Monday to Friday, 35 hours per week. Vanessa also welcomes participants on a rotating basis at the Pointe-à-la-Croix and Caplan points of service. Rachel Savoie alternates with Vanessa to meet with Indigenous and English-speaking participants.

Pointe-à-la-Croix Office



A brand-new outreach office was opened in Pointe-à-la-Croix in January 2024. The office is located at 64 Inter-Provincial Boulevard. Outreach worker Rachel Savoie welcomes English-speaking participants as well as those from the Gesgapegiag and Listuguj Indigenous communities. In addition, Rachel maintains a presence at the New Carlisle detention centre, meeting with English-speaking men and inviting them to continue their personal journey with us after their release.

Rachel is highly engaged across the Bonaventure and Avignon regions, working actively to raise awareness of our services among the English-speaking community. She has developed meaningful relationships with several partners, particularly within Indigenous communities. Alongside a volunteer outreach worker from another organization, she helped launch a support group for individuals experiencing social isolation. The group was a great success, with participants even requesting to continue the experience.

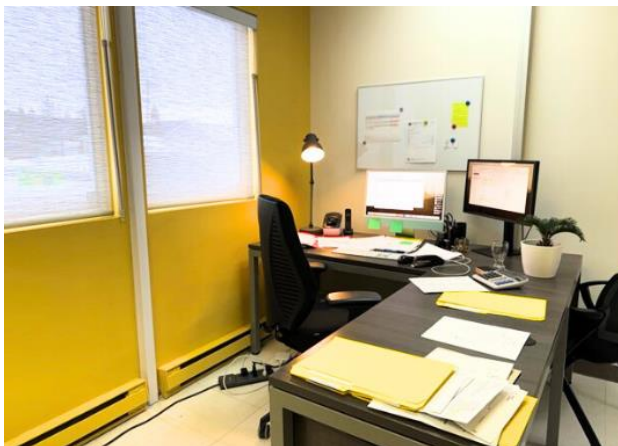
Head Office: Sainte-Anne-des-Monts



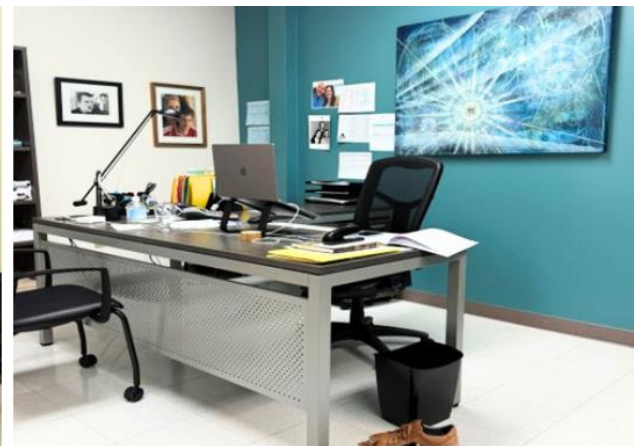
Entrance and waiting area



Group session space



Administrative office



Executive Director's Office

Located in downtown Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, the space includes three private offices, a fully equipped kitchenette, a waiting area, and a generously sized room for group sessions. The office is designed to meet the requirement of not mixing participants with those of Maison Oxygène. Since Convergence also supports participants dealing with domestic violence and sexual assault issues, it became crucial, for reasons of confidentiality, to keep the client groups separate.

MAISON OXYGÈNE HAUTE-GASPÉSIE

Accommodating Fathers and Their Children



One of the upstairs bedroom



A large family room



Dining room



Maison Oxygène in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts provides accommodation for fathers with their children, as well as external support and intervention services, individually or in groups. The premises offer a solid level of confidentiality, even though Maison Oxygène is, by nature, a communal living environment.

This year, we have been actively involved in various regional social development roundtables, particularly within the early childhood and family working group in Haute-Gaspésie, in collaboration with key partners, including Partagenç, Maison des Familles and Enfantaisie.

Outdoor play areas



Play area visible from the residence, with a bench and picnic table nearby so fathers can remain close to their children



Seaside hammock offering a relaxing way to rock the little ones.

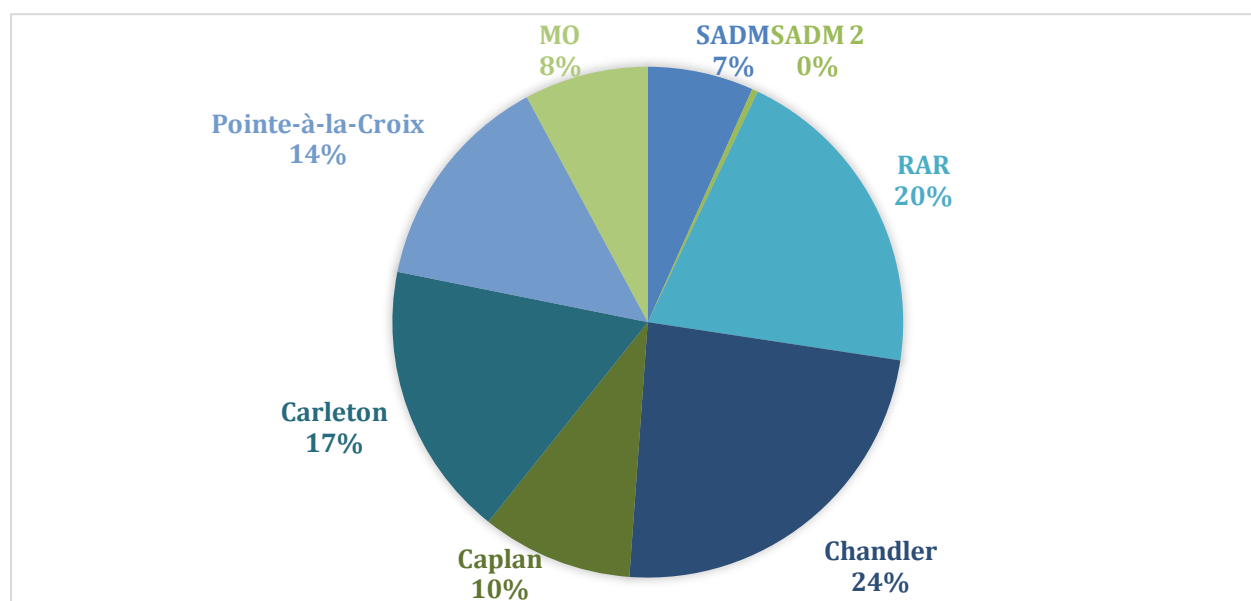
There was always something missing at Maison Oxygène: a play area for toddlers. Until recently, the only available option was bikes for older children. Now, with the addition of a dedicated play area, fathers can watch over and stay close to their young children while enjoying the seaside setting. The hammock is perfect for little ones, allowing dads to rock their children outdoors while enjoying the fresh sea breeze. Thank you to Gaspésie Bois Massif for these beautiful additions to our father-child resource.

WHO ARE THE MEN SEEKING HELP?

In 2024–2025, following the departure of two senior outreach workers, we had to close a number of active files. In most of these cases, participants continued receiving support from their regular outreach worker who either moved to another organization or chose to end the process for personal reasons. We received 184 new requests for help at Convergence alone this year, not including those from clients at Maison Oxygène.

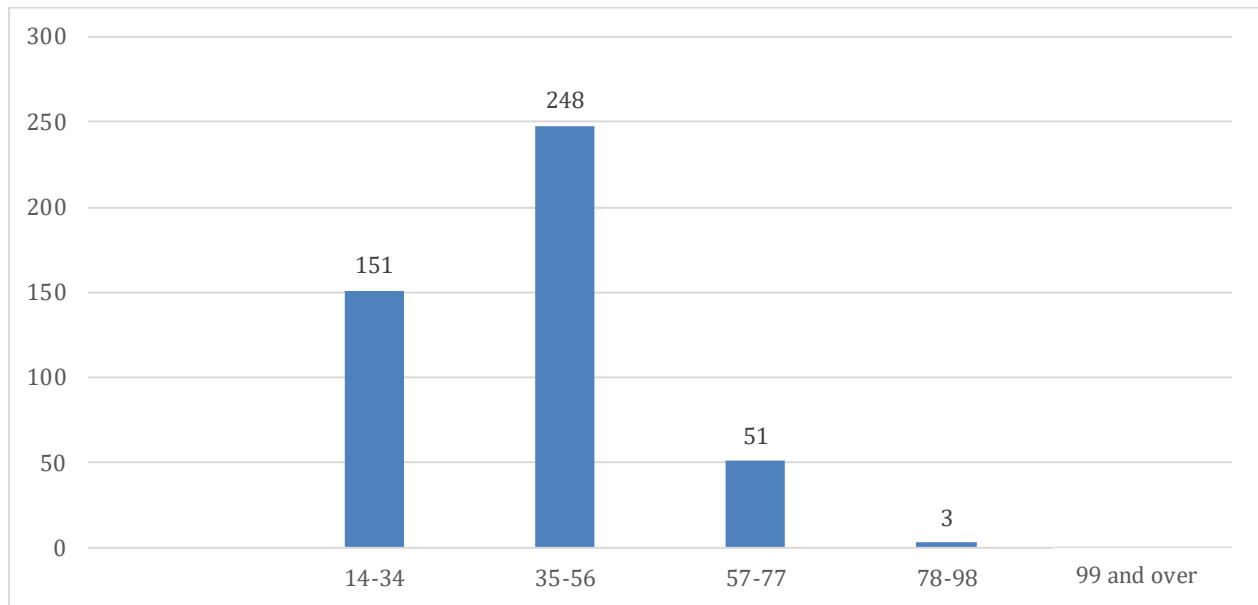
Here is an overview of our current points of service:

Client distribution by point of service



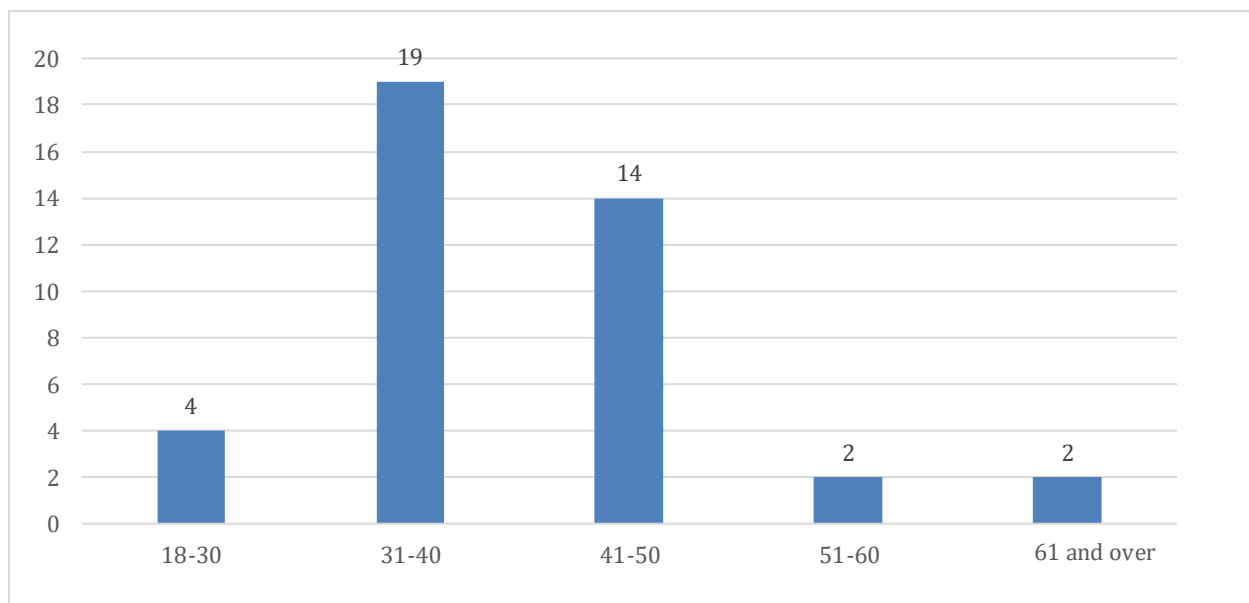
	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
Sainte-Anne-des-Monts	35	46	68
Maison Oxygène	41	43	24
Rivière-au-Renard	106	119	91
Caplan (formerly New Richmond)	50	147	139
Chandler	124	111	87
Carleton-sur-Mer	91	146	137
Pointe-à-la-Croix	73	23	n/a
	N= 520	N=635	N=546

Age Groups (All of Convergence)

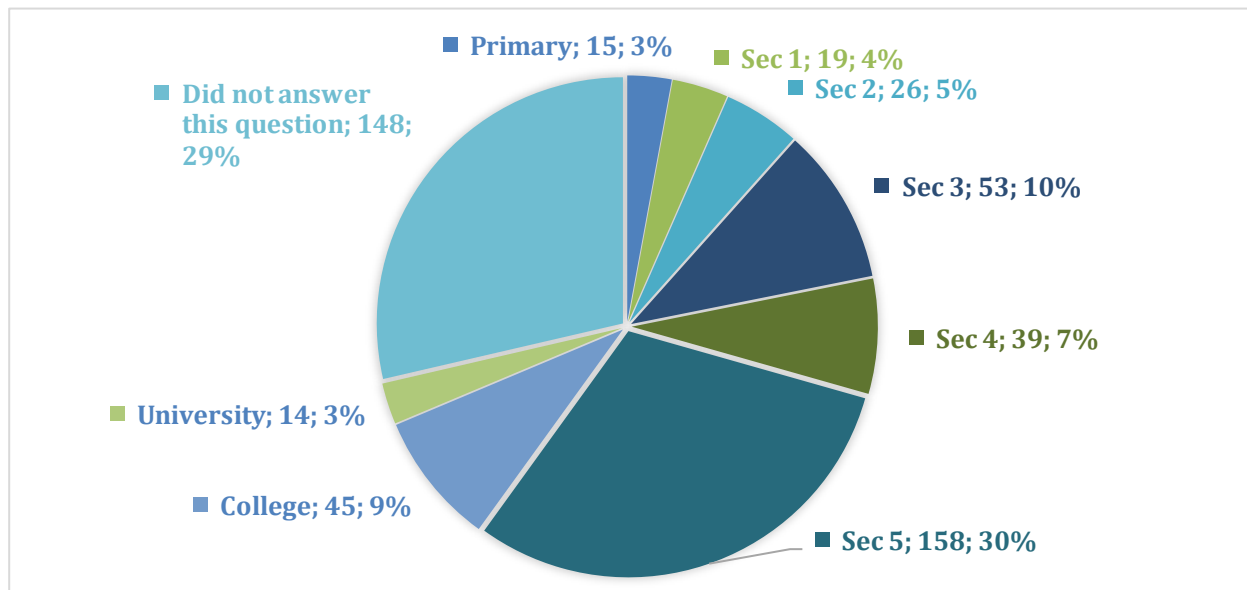


Note: Age group distribution has not changed significantly over the years. It is important to note that we are encountering some challenges in collecting certain data, particularly regarding age, education and income. This suggests that concerns about disclosing sensitive information remain present.

Age Groups (Maison Oxygène only)

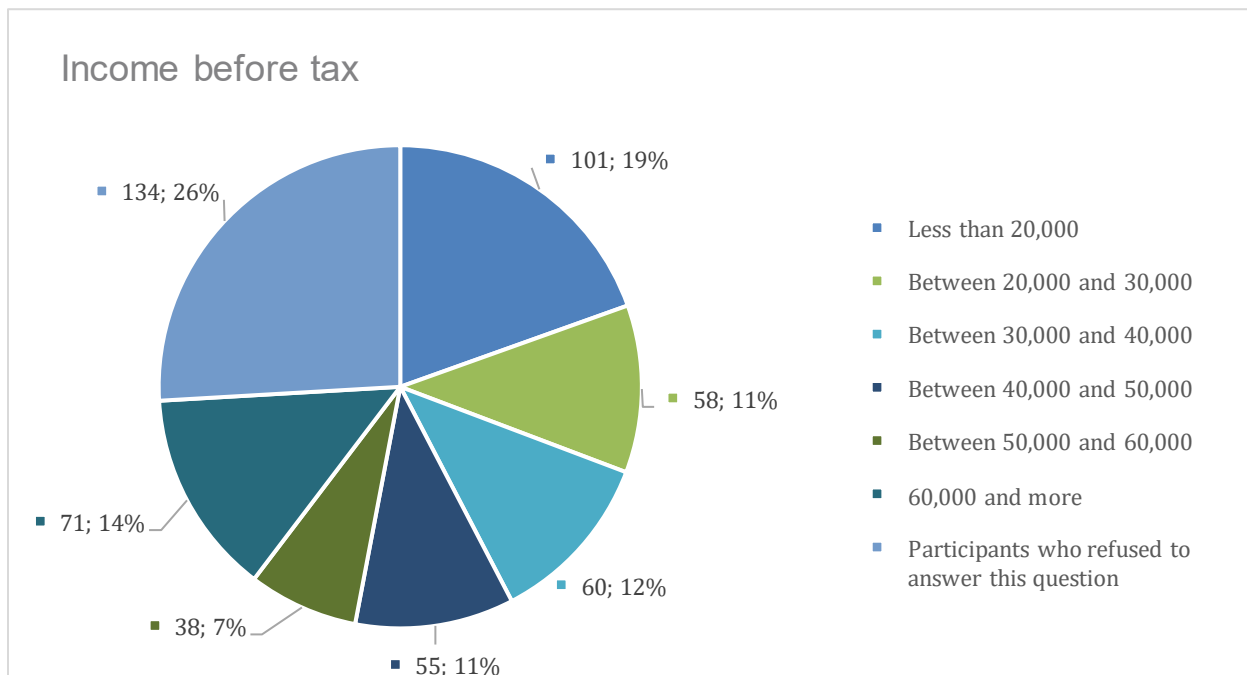


Education



Although this year's data shows a higher proportion of respondents with a completed high school diploma (30% vs. 13% last year), it's important to note that 29% declined to answer this question, compared to full response rates last year.

Income Status



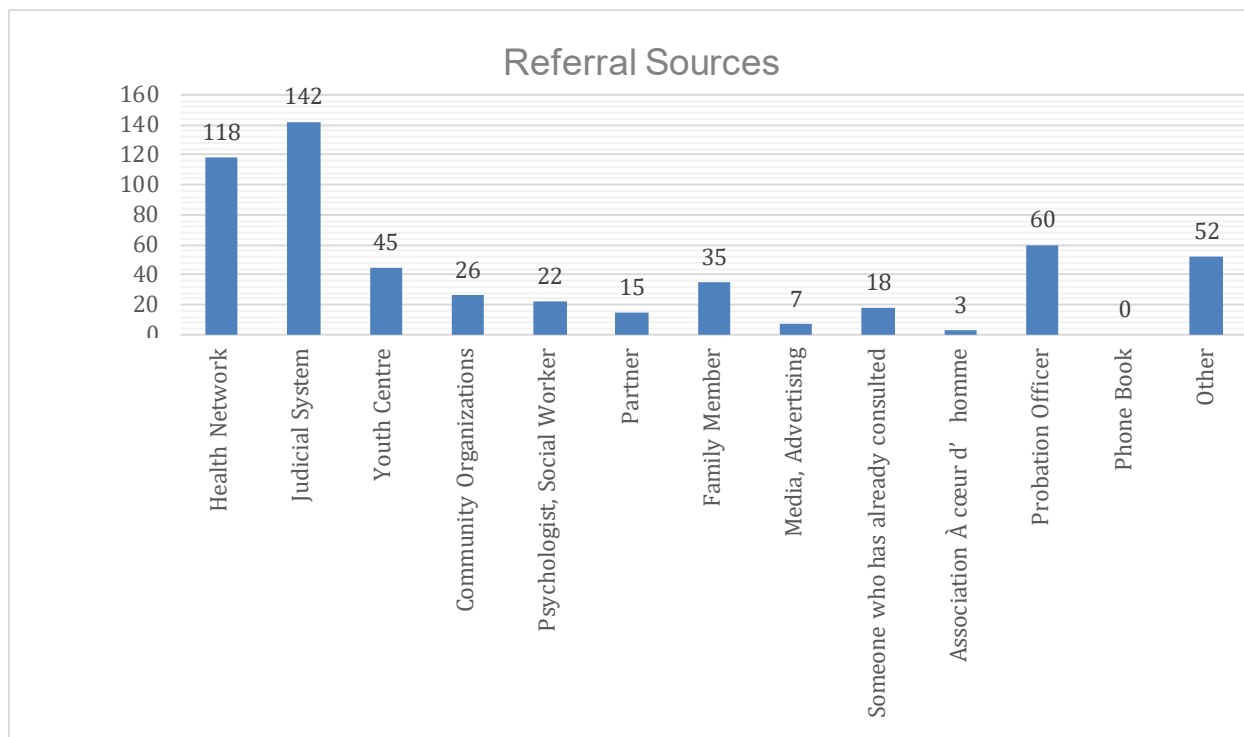
Once again, we see reluctance or discomfort among participants when it comes to disclosing income. As in previous years, at least 30% of the clientele earn under \$30,000 annually. Will this number evolve over the course of the year, as more participants feel comfortable sharing this information? In the meantime, we continue to welcome and support every individual without judgment. With over 180 new participants this year, we expect more complete data to emerge as time goes on.

Education and income are undeniably sensitive topics. Given the number of people who chose not to respond, is it possible to conclude that there is a general mistrust toward services? Or might this reluctance be specific to Convergence? These are important questions we could explore further with our partners. Is there a correlation between the disclosure of sensitive information and the level of vulnerability of the individuals seeking help?

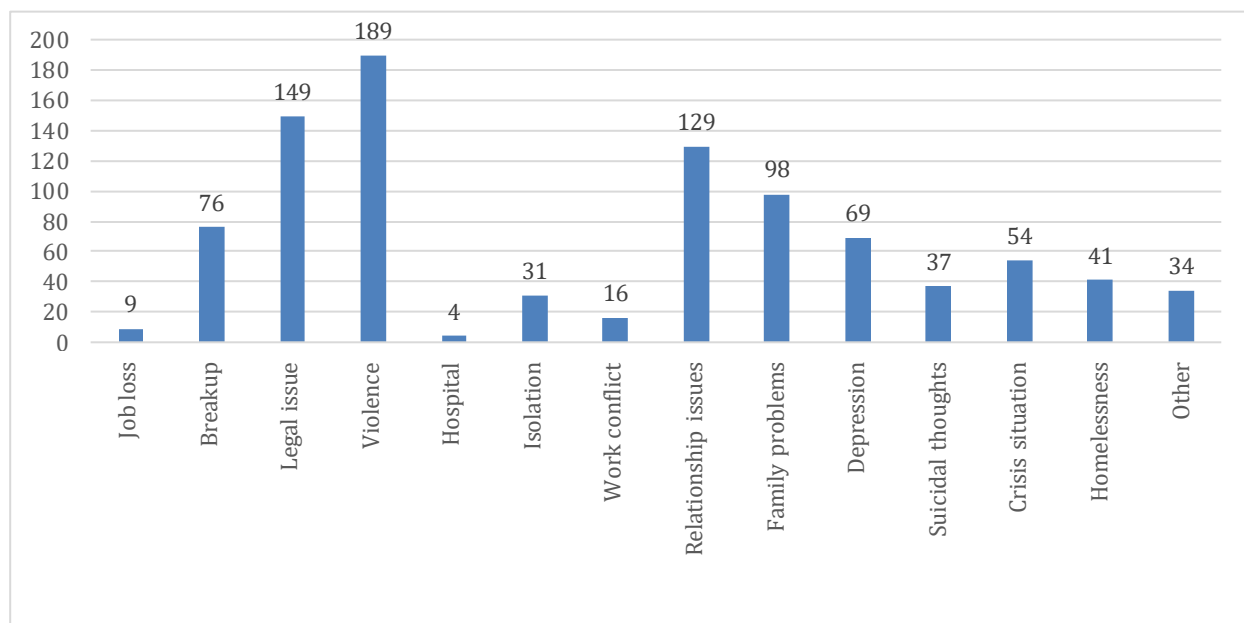
Referral Sources

Unsurprisingly, our main referral sources are institutions and organizations within the health and justice systems. The DYP is also a significant source of referrals, as we will see later. It is important to note that the figures below do not include DYP follow-ups directed to Maison Oxygène but rather illustrate what occurs across our other points of service. This distinction matters because, at Maison Oxygène, we would not see such high numbers related to judicial referrals and probation services.

Conversely, follow-ups involving the DYP have historically been proportionally much higher at Maison Oxygène. We want to highlight the excellent collaboration with probation officers and social reintegration workers from Arc-en-soi. Information exchanges are based on mutual trust and are duly authorized by our participants. These exchanges help us better understand issues related to release plans and the underlying motivations for ongoing progress.

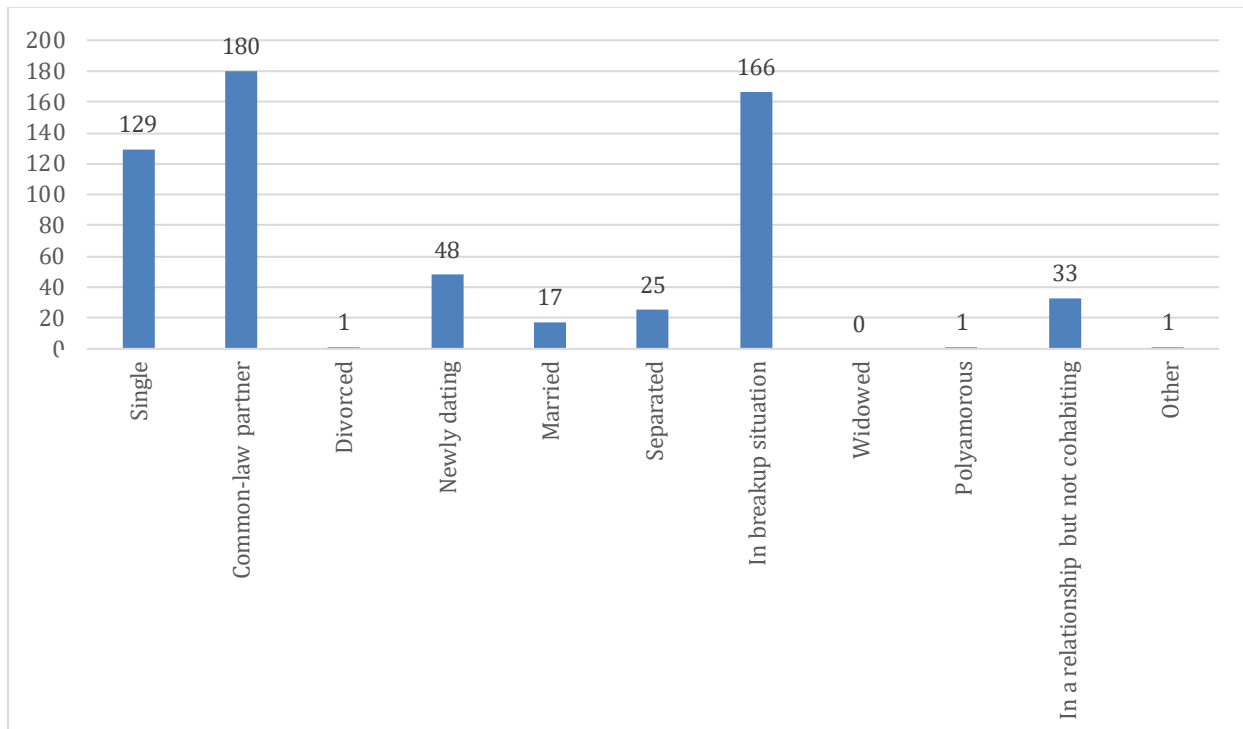


Reasons for Seeking Help



It is evident that many reasons prompt requests for help, but relationship breakdowns, legal matters and violence stand out as the primary issues, as well as family-related challenges.

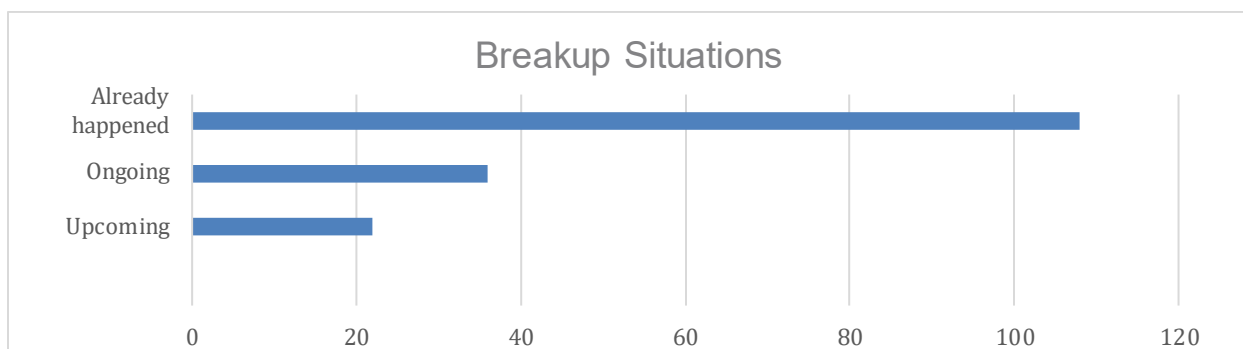
Relationship Status

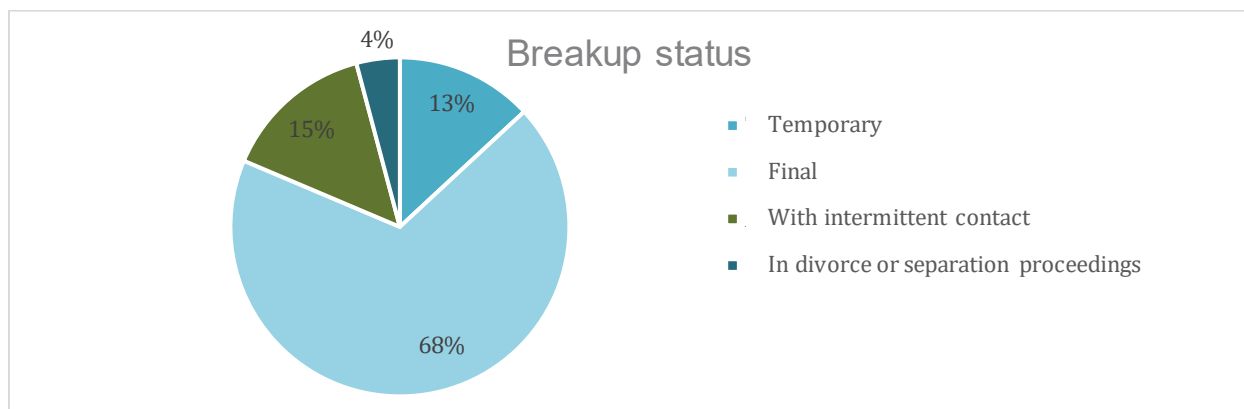


37% of our participants are in a relationship, either common-law or married. An additional 6% are in a relationship but not cohabiting.

Our data shows that 25% of participants are single, and over 32% were experiencing a breakup at the time of their request for help. This indicates that a relationship breakdown is a significant trigger for initiating a request for support.

To illustrate this, see the following two charts.

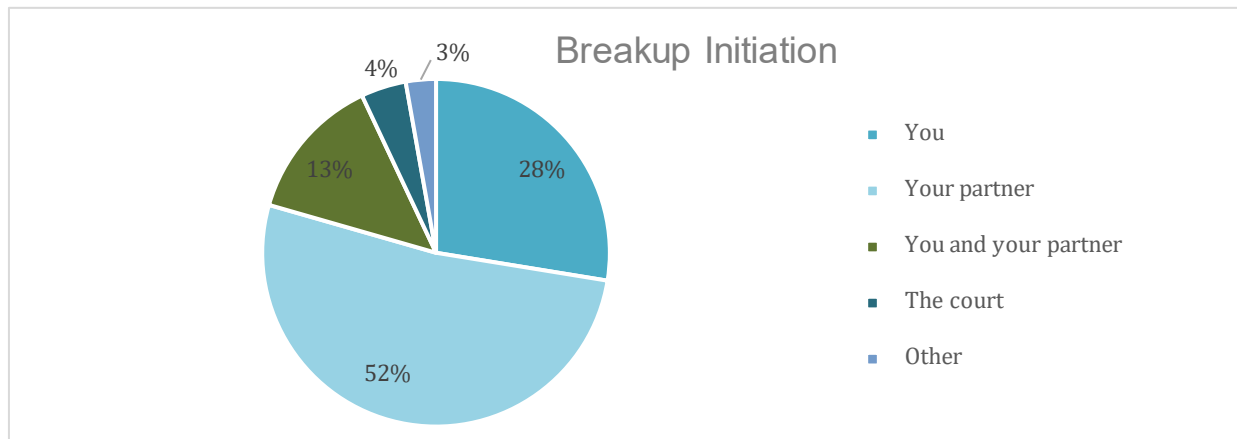




The high percentage of “definitive” breakups is clearly one of the main factors prompting individuals to seek help, often in response to a crisis situation. However, with the introduction of tools for personal accountability and emotional regulation, we can now say that participants are less likely to wait as long before seeking help in the future. We have also observed an increase in the number of participants returning to our services when they begin to feel a loss of control over their lives or notice physical or psychological signs of distress as a crisis or emotional breakdown approaches. This is, in itself, very good news for men.

Finally, regarding relationship and family breakups, it’s worth noting that in more than 50% of cases, it is the female partner who initiates the separation. These numbers are consistent with broader societal trends. It should be noted, however, that, in many cases, breakups unfold amicably. In such cases, the individuals involved typically do not feel the need to seek help.

“Less emotional work in the relationship. The degree to which a breakup is anticipated plays a major role in how individuals experience and adjust to the separation. While the initiator of the breakup is more likely to foresee or influence the transition, the person being left may be blindsided and face a more destabilizing experience. The notion that female partners tend to express lower relationship satisfaction than their male counterparts remains prevalent, although the empirical difference appears to be relatively modest.⁹ Beyond the well-known issues of inequality in child care, domestic responsibilities, and decision-making power, the concept of emotional work¹⁰ appears to highlight differences in the psychological engagement of partners based on gender. Women often put more effort than men into monitoring and managing the emotional dynamics of the relationship; they tend to be more attuned to the emotional climate and to the support they receive from their partner. This may help explain, at least in part, why women are more likely to name relationship problems, initiate counseling, and take the first step toward separation.¹¹ In short, men’s lower level of involvement in the emotional maintenance of the relationship may contribute to their difficulty anticipating a breakup. For the partner who “didn’t see it coming,” the surprise adds to the emotional destabilization. “ Dr. Richard Cloutier, Psychologist <https://www.ordrepsy.qc.ca/-/rupture-conjugale-et-detresse-masculine>



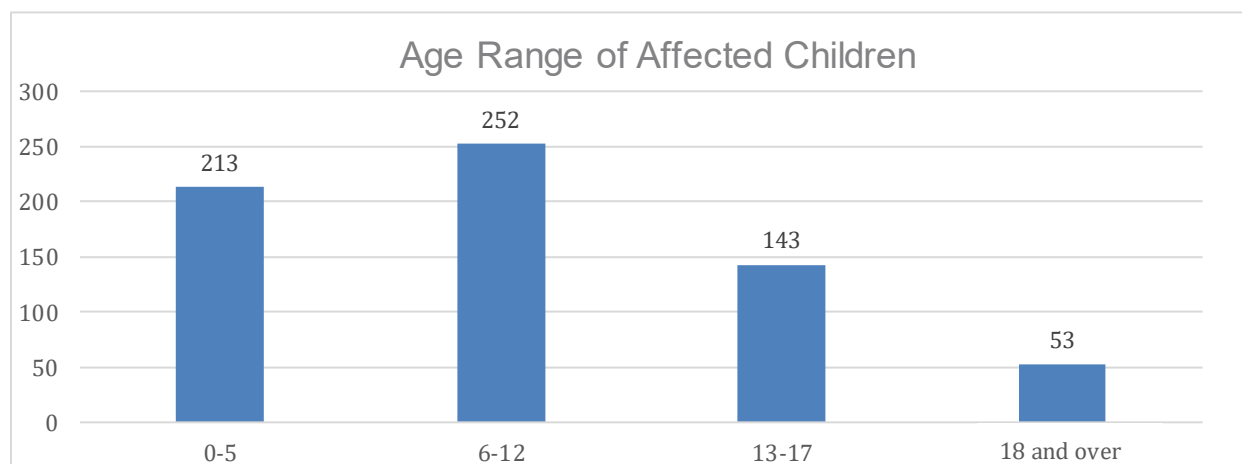
Fathers in Our Services

Concerns and issues related to fatherhood are ever-present among the fathers who seek our support and they are increasingly relevant in today's context. Many fathers express a strong desire to remain close to their children, whether through custody, developing parenting skills, or providing direct care.

We do not hesitate to recommend and accompany fathers toward the appropriate parenting, family, health, or legal support services. At Convergence and at Maison Oxygène, we are particularly attentive to maintaining strong, collaborative relationships with our key partners across the health and social services network, community organizations and the legal system.

The Many Faces of Fatherhood Outside Maison Oxygène

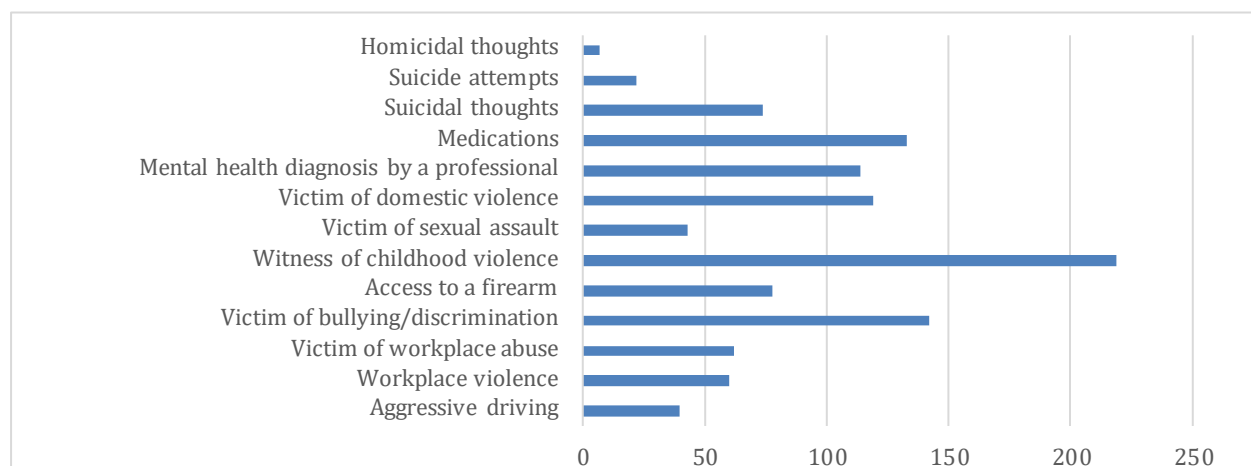
- 309 fathers are currently receiving our services
- Our interventions directly affect 661 children, including 608 minors



- 95 fathers earn under \$30,000 annually—a significant number (for those who responded to the income question)
- 46 fathers reported suicidal thoughts, and 15 have attempted suicide—a particularly concerning statistic
- 17 fathers are experiencing homelessness, which is also a matter of concern.
- 77 fathers have been diagnosed with a mental health condition by a healthcare professional
- 58 fathers are dealing with breakup or family breakdown
- 129 fathers sought support related to domestic violence; of these, 99 are involved in legal proceedings
- 70 fathers have a no-contact order with a spouse or ex-spouse
- 60 fathers are under a court order for follow-up with Convergence
- 104 fathers are working with the DYP, affecting a total of 205 minors
- 78 of these children have witnessed domestic violence
- 63 fathers have restrictions regarding child custody
- 29 have committed acts of violence against their children

We understand the urgency of early intervention for fathers, who may be vulnerable in many areas of their lives. Our work is aimed at helping participating fathers become positive role models for their children. While we recognize that traditional male roles can reflect valuable traits (such as resourcefulness, resilience and providing for the family), it is crucial to establish clear goals that help break the intergenerational cycle of learned behaviours that can be harmful to children.

Associated Risk Factors



We view these data points as associated risk factors because they help us build a much more complete profile of the men who come to us for support.

THE COOPÈRE GESPEG PROJECT IS BACK

For the fourth consecutive year, the Coopère team visited us as part of the Gespeg Project—a wonderful initiative that offers fathers and their children the opportunity to camp outside of Montreal. Once again, they chose the Gaspé region, specifically Forillon Park. The trip traditionally ends at Maison Oxygène Haute-Gaspésie, where the group stops on their way back to Montreal. After exploring some of the region's attractions, the children received fishing lessons on local rivers from Alex Dubert, Director of Coopère. They also enjoyed the zipline at Ruisseau-Castor, run by Eskamer, and some of the more adventurous participants even tried canyoning. Every year, the City of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts generously lends us picnic tables to enhance the visit. Last year, we welcomed 28 visitors.



Coopère outreach workers and Jean-Jacques Élie from Convergence: we have just pitched tents by the sea.



Children help their dads cook dinner in the Maison Oxygène communal kitchen. Jean-Jacques lends a helping hand.



River trout fishing lessons—and why not a little swim?



Supper, then time for a soccer game! It rained, the sun came out and a rainbow followed—we played anyway!



Father and daughter prepare to face off on the field. No mercy will be shown.



The dads are losing, so they try to distract the kids ... But it won't work—the kids are too strong.



Time to head home. See you next year. Safe travels, everyone!



Kids always win. An unbeatable team spirit, with referees clearly on their side...

CONVERGENCE'S INVOLVEMENT AND COMMITMENTS

Community Plans

Convergence has expanded its presence within the community planning efforts across various RCMs. This year we were invited for the first time to take part in the social development process of the Côte-de-Gaspé RCM. Our involvement is growing, and we are increasingly engaged in discussions, particularly around the fishing sector. Our Executive Director and the point of service outreach worker from Rivière-au-Renard attended the Côte-de-Gaspé Forum en Développement social in September 2024. With around 80 participants present, the event initiated early discussions with Sylviane Pippon about the possible establishment of a Men's Shed in the RCM.

The Haute-Gaspésie DIDS Grand Assembly took place in October 2024, at the Jude Drouin Hall in Mont-Louis. The assembly was facilitated by Véronique Henry from RH Lambert (New Richmond). The DIDS was supported in drafting a new strategic plan aligned with the priorities that emerged from this day of reflection. As a result, Convergence is now involved in the new EDI working group, after a complete restructuring of the "adult" working group. Our Maison Oxygène coordinator continues to collaborate with the early childhood and family working group and also sits on the food security roundtable and the local homelessness committee.

In the Rocher-Percé RCM, Convergence has implemented various strategies to meet the needs of men in crisis. Our efforts this year were anchored in a multifaceted intervention strategy, combining individualized support, collective engagement, and strong partnerships with community resources.

- A cornerstone of our services was the provision of telephone-based listening and support. We responded to numerous calls from men in acute distress, offering a space where they could voice their struggles and feel heard. We conducted regular follow-ups by phone to provide reassurance and assess individuals' needs in order to better guide and support them toward appropriate services. In this regard, we played a key role in facilitating access to specialized services that adequately address the needs identified.

- In tandem, we hosted service orientation sessions with the Aire Ouverte team to help outreach workers enhance their understanding of available resources.
- We also extended support to the loved ones of participants, equipping them to better understand and assist men navigating difficult circumstances.
- Simultaneously, we met with representatives from the Suicide Prevention Centre to strengthen our knowledge of their services and improve referral pathways for men in suicidal crisis.
- Where local capacity was limited, we facilitated referrals to external organizations.
- To encourage help-seeking and raise awareness among men about Convergence's services, we organized several group sessions hosted in the facilities of partner organizations. These sessions featured informational presentations, emotional regulation training and discussions on key issues such as intimate partner violence and social inclusion.
- Given that many of the men we support face precarious living conditions, we also implemented food assistance measures to help meet their most basic needs. Thanks to our partnership with *Le Garde-Manger*, we distributed food vouchers and provided regular support in the form of essential food staples. In addition, we contributed to the dissemination of the documentary *Meilleur avant*, which explores the issue of food insecurity. This project was developed in collaboration with the Rocher-Percé RCM and *Le Garde-Manger*.

Convergence also played an active role in community engagement and public awareness by collaborating with various organizations and participating in several key events. We contributed to the work of the Rocher-Percé RCM's social inclusion working committee, where we exchanged ideas with other local stakeholders on the challenges faced by men experiencing social exclusion and on potential solutions.

Collaborative Efforts

Convergence also continues to show leadership in collaboration with the GIM Professional and Correctional Services Department by coordinating the Regional Round Table on GIM Men's Realities, despite the discontinuation of funding for men's health and well-being initiatives related to this concerted effort. This year marked the first in-person meeting since the pandemic, held in Caplan. All subsequent sessions were conducted via videoconference.

We also remained active participants at the Baie-des-Chaleurs mental health round table (attending three meetings), represented by our English-speaking outreach worker Rachel and Vanessa Rivière-Landry, who both cover the region in the absence of Danielle, currently on maternity leave.

In addition, we participated in the Apéro du réseau en développement social, a networking event focused on improving access to local services. Our attendance at the Réseau en développement social annual general meeting allowed us to stay informed about new priorities related to social inclusion and support for vulnerable populations. We also took part in the “Angle mort” panel, which addressed the social issues underlying climate change, and contributed to discussions during the regional social development AGM for Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Finally, our participation in the Petite Assemblée of the Réseau en développement social, which focused on education, enabled us to reflect on strategies to better equip fathers and their children.

Partnerships

In June 2024, our Executive Director and the Baie-des-Chaleurs outreach team were invited to a meeting with L'Émergence, a shelter and support organization for women experiencing violence, located in Maria. The meeting aimed, among other things, to explore the potential impacts of implementing the Passe program in local businesses in the Baie-des-Chaleurs. This initiative also helped strengthen previously tenuous relationships with women's support services. We came to better understand one another and gained a deeper appreciation for each other's mission. The meeting was cordial, allowing us to exchange on our respective realities and to highlight some of our intervention practices with men who display violent behaviour. We observed a shift toward greater openness. It is worth noting that we now have three women delivering services through Convergence in the Baie-des-Chaleurs. Relationships appear to be genuinely improving.

Our outreach worker Rachel Savoie has established and maintained strong ties with CASA, where she presented Convergence's services to a group of seniors. She also collaborates closely with one of their outreach workers to offer group sessions for men experiencing social isolation.

Stéphane Beaulieu successfully reactivated our partnership with the Centre de pédiatrie sociale en communauté in Rivière-au-Renard. A constructive dialogue was initiated, and a joint initiative is underway to offer support groups for fathers.

Session planning is currently in progress, and the first groups are expected to launch in September.

We are also actively engaged with the Association des capitaines propriétaires de la Gaspésie. Stéphane welcomes a number of fishers into our services. We remain attentive and ready to support their needs.

Maison Oxygène maintains strong partnerships with a number of community organizations, including:

- Récupération alimentaire de la Haute-Gaspésie
- Partagence
- Carrefour Ressources
- Centre Louise-Amélie
- Transit, service d'aide à l'emploi
- Loisirs Cap-Chat
- Maison des Familles de la Haute-Gaspésie
- Maison l'Essentielle
- La Démêlée
- L'Aide juridique
- Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi
- Centre de justice de proximité
- Enfantaisie
- DYP
- CLSC
- CISSS de la Gaspésie and the CRD
- OMHs of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and Cap-Chat
- City of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts

National Networks

Since its inception, Convergence's permanent team and outreach workers have remained actively engaged at local, regional and national levels through various institutions, organizations, and associations. This involvement allows us to stay informed on emerging research, contribute to ongoing studies, and network with partners across Quebec—including similar organizations—so we can better understand shared challenges and enhance the services we provide to our populations.

The À cœur d'homme Association



À cœur d'homme is an association that brings together 32 autonomous community organizations across Quebec that support men struggling with violent behaviour in intimate and family contexts.

In May 2024, part of our team attended À cœur d'homme's clinical seminar. It was an important highlight of the year. Topics such as adapting services for people dealing with mental health issues, or better responding to clients from sexually diverse backgrounds, were hot-button issues.

The Executive Director also travelled to Québec City to take part in À cœur d'homme's Annual General Meeting— an event of great significance for the Association and its members. This year was especially pivotal, as the new framework, *Intervention auprès des auteurs de violence en contexte conjugal et familial* [intervention with perpetrators of violence in intimate and family contexts], was officially adopted. This foundational document is the result of extensive member consultation and plays a critical role in sharing, preserving, improving and strengthening our unique practices. It now serves as the cornerstone for all organizations under À cœur d'homme.

Convergence also sits on the CRIPCAS research committee in partnership with À cœur d'homme. Our organization has been actively involved in this data collection protocol for several years, allowing us to better understand the men who reach out to us and to tailor our support using the intake questionnaire interpretation tool developed through this research.

RIMAS



Convergence has been a member of the Regroupement des intervenants en matière d'agression sexuelle since 2021.

In 2020, the CISSS de la Gaspésie asked us to take on this area of service, as there were no outreach workers in the region at the time available to work with this clientele. Intervening with individuals who have committed sexual violence is a particularly delicate field. Our team benefits from clinical supervision through a contract with the organization Ex-Equo, which has assigned us a sexologist and psychotherapist.

It is important to stress that even though these individuals have committed serious acts, respecting their dignity is crucial in supporting sustainable change. The intervention aims to support a process of change—without moral judgment, but with clear boundaries. Our primary goal is to prevent reoffending by helping perpetrators understand and modify their behaviours. We promote accountability and self-awareness of the acts committed.

CRIPCAS



The Centre de recherche interdisciplinaire sur les problèmes conjugaux et les agressions sexuelles is a strategic research group funded by the Fonds de recherche du Québec since 2002. Since 2020, Convergence has participated as a partner—through our national association À cœur d'homme—in the collaborative research project: *Hommes en démarche d'aide pour la violence conjugale au Québec : une étude collaborative sur les facteurs de risque et l'évolution au sein des services* [men seeking help for intimate partner violence in Québec: a collaborative study on risk factors and evolution within support services]. We fully

support this initiative. The data analysis tools and resulting intervention strategies are highly valued by our team and allow for a better understanding of participant profiles.

It is worth noting that our partnership with CRIPCAS gives all our practitioners access to highly relevant research webinars that inform both intervention practices and the interpretation of assessment results. Our team remains in regular contact with the research community on intimate partner violence and sexual violence. Furthermore, discussions initiated during webinars often lead to improved service delivery.

Convergence's management also sits on the CRIPCAS partnership research committee. This year, among other topics, there was a focus on indicators of therapeutic change in female perpetrators of intimate partner violence.

Réseau des Maisons Oxygène (RMO)



Convergence takes part in networking activities organized by the RMO. Maintaining the RMO accreditation requires member organizations to participate in a certain number of annual activities. This year, our coordinator attended the RMO's fall conference in November, accompanied by our new outreach worker, Maude Boucher. At the winter event, our Executive Director participated in a crisis management session led by Marie-Josée Gauvin—an exercise that was highly appreciated by all leadership present.

In addition, both the managers' and general practice communities of practice help sustain a strong, active connection within the Réseau.

Regroupement provincial en Santé et bien-être des hommes (RPSBEH)



The values upheld by the Regroupement align with a cross-sectoral approach, recognizing that helping men also means helping women, children and society as a whole.

Since October 2022, the Executive Director has served on the Board of Directors of the RPSBEH. Additionally, for the National Men's Health and Well-being Week, Marie Hudon accepted the role of co-spokesperson as part of the national awareness campaign, alongside Mélodie

Beaudoin from the Centre de ressources pour hommes de la Haute-Yamaska and Edmond Michaud from Hommes Sept-Îles. Each of us gave media interviews to raise public awareness about the importance of supporting men. For the 11th Quebec Men's Health and Well-being Day, the message focused on communication: *Parler, ça fait du bien* [talking feels good]—an exercise in freeing one's voice and opening a meaningful dialogue. This theme aims to normalize asking for help. Seeking help also strengthens social and family ties. We advocate for preventive action, standing firm against risks and avoiding tragedies. The overall message the spokespeople tried to convey was somewhat overshadowed by the release of the documentary Alpha, which premiered on November 11 during the awareness campaign. Nonetheless, we succeeded in securing a large number of interviews:

- 11 radio interviews
- 4 television interviews
- 59 print media articles

With the RPSBEH team, we engaged in collective reflection on the Alpha documentary. Despite its unsettling message, the discourse it promotes is relatively easy to identify and deconstruct. Moreover, when faced with radical discourse, provoking confrontation is dangerous, as radicalization feeds on opposing radicalization. It is important to understand that trying to crush their discourse is actually the best way to encourage it.

Regroupement pour la Valorisation de la paternité (RVP)



Convergence serves predominantly fathers within its programs. Moreover, through services at Maison Oxygène, our membership in this network is vital to our intervention practices as well as to keeping up with research advances on fatherhood, co-parenting and changes in laws governing marital and family statuses.

Our outreach workers regularly consult the tools provided by the RVP and consistently attend offered training sessions. Fatherhood Week is also a key event of the year, and Maison Oxygène's staff always participate in the Course de Papas [dads' run] at the Cap-Chat outdoor centre. This year marks our third participation, and the event is one of the RVP's highlights to promote activities across Quebec.



GASPÉSIE PROFESSIONAL AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Service Agreements

In 2024–25, we had an addendum to the closed custody service agreement. Our outreach worker Rachel Savoie was mandated to conduct 60 meetings with Anglophone and Indigenous inmates. We also have an agreement for open custody services in the Rocher-Percé sector.

Details of meetings held in closed environment

Individual meetings	For English-speaking and Indigenous inmates 22 participants · 94 hours of contact hours
	For all other inmates 23 participants · 81 hours of contact hours
Workshops (3 groups) “Inside the line”	18 participants · 9 full days
Workshops (2 groups) “Multiple facets of violence”	15 participants · 2 full days
Workshops (2 groups) “Non-violent communication”	16 participants · 2 full days
Workshops (2 groups) “Fatherhood”	14 participants · 2 full days

Open environment (Chandler)

The outreach worker met with 38 different participants (former inmates and accused persons) for a total of 151 meetings and 226 hours of intervention.

MAISON OXYGÈNE SERVICES



This year, we hosted eight different fathers and 11 children in our residential services. Fathers were supported in the community and received psychosocial follow-up and assistance.

- Food recovery: 46 deliveries from the Récup alimentaire de la Haute-Gaspésie
- 8 food, clothing, toy and school supply aid interventions through Partagence
- The Maison Oxygène Foundation, thanks to the *Un hiver bien au chaud* [a warm winter] fundraising campaign, provided a pair of winter boots to a child in residence
- 53 supervised child custody exchanges took place at Maison Oxygène
- 10 workshops with the program *Avec Papa C'est différent* [with Dad, it's different] were completed
- 6 dads' dinners, including the Christmas lunch for resident participants with their children
- Children residing at Maison Oxygène always receive a small gift for Christmas, their birthday and chocolates for Easter.

External services

- We supported 25 fathers in our external services. These fathers come to acquire parenting skills, learn to be better co-parents and better manage family stress related mainly to separations. These follow-ups also include post-residential care. We also assist some with administrative and legal issues.

In the community

1. La Maison Oxygène started father-child woodworking workshops this year. In total, 12 workshops took place: Sixteen fathers and 21 children took part. These workshops provide learning opportunities for both fathers and children. They learn workshop safety rules and risks related to tools.

Projects completed include small boxes, birdhouses, bird feeders, games, decorative boards, etc.



**ATELIERS DE MENUISERIE ET
D'ÉBÉNISTERIE PÈRES-ENFANTS**

Les samedis de 9h à midi

Maison
Oxygène
Haute-Gaspésie

**Venez construire des moments marquants
avec vos enfants!**



-
- COURSE DES PAPAS**
- 4e édition
- OBSACLE SURPRISE
- JEU GOMFLABLE COURSE
- DEPART
- PHOTO BOOTH
- JEU GOMFLABLE
- ESPACE MAGIQUE TOM PAUM
- SPRIS BALL
- SERPENT ECHELLE GEANT
- BINGO
- ZONE ALLIEMENT
- PAINEMERS SOROUS
- TOLS-TTES
- ARRIVEE
- LE MUR
- LA GLISSADE
- POMPE CAP CHAT
- LA BRIGLETTE PROCHETTE
- LE TROUS DE BROQUETTE
- ZONE DE NET TOURNANT
- LES EPRIEVES MOULTEURS DE L'ORM
- L'EPIEUVRE BALLE MOULE CO
- L'EPIEUVRE HOCKEY FUN
- LA TYROLIENNE
- LE PONT EN FLEUX
- LE GRAND FILET
- LE PONT DE BOIS
- 1KM 23 OBSTACLES
EN FORET POUR LES 2 A 102 ANS

3. A father-child hike in Gaspésie National Park was organized at the fall equinox. This hike is coordinated across Quebec as part of the Côte-à-Côte event, organized by the Réseau Maisons Oxygène.
4. The owner of L'Arnak du Cap generously welcomed our fathers with their children, as well as community fathers, for a game night. The activity was much appreciated and both Maison Oxygène and the residents are grateful for such generosity.
5. Our coordinator initiated the establishment of a Neutral Zone for child custody exchanges. This action was concluded in collaboration with Centre Louise-Amélie, the City of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, the CISSS de la Gaspésie and the Sûreté du Québec. A radio interview was conducted to promote this new location, and another interview was given to the regional newspaper with the same goal.



Neutral Zone inauguration

6. Maison Oxygène facilitated six meetings supporting fathers with the DYP. There were two supervised visits between children and their father, overseen by the DYP.
7. We also accompanied three fathers to the courthouse during their hearings before the judge.

At the Réseau des Maisons Oxygène



Our coordinator, Mathieu Michaud—front row, centre—is pictured here with members of the Board of Directors of the Réseau.

Each year, the Réseau holds national training days (three times per year), including one in November dedicated to foundational training for new staff. In November, our coordinator accompanied our newest outreach worker, Maude Boucher, to attend the training days. Among other things, she completed her suicide prevention training there.

The Réseau also offers training on intimate partner violence prevention and the impact of violence on children. Our new practitioner completed these foundational trainings.

APPENDIX 1 - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Clinical Support and Coordination Activities

Our independent clinical coordinator was hired by the Association À cœur d'homme. She holds the title of Research and Clinical Support Coordinator. In this role, she is mandated to support organizations in need. Convergence continues to rely on her for clinical support as before, but we no longer have to cover her fees, as this is now part of her official duties. Convergence is fortunate to have access to such a valuable resource at no additional cost.

We continue to retain the services of a clinical coordinator in sexology from the organization Ex-Equo. She provides two-hour clinical supervision sessions with our team trained in ATS (authors of sexual transgressions).

- **Number of individual sessions related to intimate partner or family violence:**

2278 individual sessions were delivered as part of intervention activities at our various points of service. We conduct two to four assessment sessions before developing an intervention plan with each participant. As always, new participants are required to complete the CRIPCAS questionnaire in order to access our services. This questionnaire is mandatory, even when the person is not seeking support for intimate partner violence issues. The only exception to this requirement is for fathers staying at Maison Oxygène. All other services include this intake measure.

- **Number of individual follow-up sessions for sexual violence:**

170 individual sessions were delivered through the program for individuals who have committed sexual transgressions. While a few participants are self-referred, most are referred by the judicial system. Our approach involves a long-term process, generally lasting between 18 and 24 months. We are also in the process of translating the entire participant workbook, both for general sexual violence and for issues related to juvenile pornography.

- **Number of individual sessions for men facing challenges:**

539 individual sessions were conducted. These sessions cover issues such as family or relationship breakdown, job loss, grief, disability caused by accidents, etc. Some of the men are even victims of intimate partner violence themselves. As our statistics show, the number of male victims continues to rise (119 this year, compared to 71 last year).

- **Support groups for men in difficulty:**

14 two-hour group sessions were held in the Avignon RCM. These groups were co-facilitated by our English-speaking outreach worker and a partner organization colleague (CASA). Participants expressed strong appreciation for this activity and asked for more. New groups will be offered in fall 2025.

- **Number of phone calls for service information:**

360 phone calls were answered regarding service information and one-time help requests. Many of these calls do not necessarily result in a formal request for support.

- **Number of telephone calls for support to relatives or friends:**

97 phone calls were made by relatives or friends. These individuals often reach out on behalf of a son, partner, father, or friend, sometimes uncertain whether their loved one actually needs support. These calls are often used to better understand our services and assess their relevance for the person in question. (Note that our website was in the process of being redesigned).

Our outreach workers also make a significant number of follow-up calls between in-person sessions, in order to maintain contact and act as a bridge to other support services.

- **Clinical coordination sessions in sexology:**

42 hours of clinical coordination in sexology were provided by Cloée Fournier, sexologist. These meetings include case reviews and discussions on appropriate courses of action, with a constant focus on recidivism prevention.

- **Clinical coordination sessions in intimate partner violence:**

202 hours of clinical coordination on intimate partner violence were offered. These sessions are used to discuss cases and develop intervention plans. This year, an organizational stance on the safety of our intervention workers required thorough reflection following an incident in Caplan. As a result, we made the decision to review our safety policy.

2. Conferences, training sessions and forums:

- In May 2024, outreach workers who had not yet received the GIM rapid intervention Escouade training were able to join a second cohort in Bonaventure. An outreach worker from Maison Oxygène, along with management and team members from Baie-des-Chaleurs, participated in this important update, led by Christine Drouin, criminologist and member of the domestic homicide review committee.
- The RPSBEH conference was held virtually this year, which allowed all of our outreach workers to attend. The theme of the conference was: *Les forces et les défis auprès des hommes en contexte de vulnérabilité [strengths and challenges in working with men in vulnerable situations]*.

We attended the following presentations and workshops:

1. Responding to adversity: masculine coping strategies
 2. Fathers and the DYP: perspectives from fathers and community organizations to improve collaboration
 3. Virtual networking activity for members and researchers
- May 2024, *Forum petite enfance Baie-des-Chaleurs* :
Our outreach workers from Baie-des-Chaleurs were invited to participate in the early childhood forum to raise awareness of our services and speak specifically about father-focused interventions. They created a PowerPoint presentation and shared testimonials from two fathers who had received services from Convergence. Highlights of the presentation included:

1. Faire Raising awareness about Convergence's role in the community, especially its work with fathers
2. Emphasizing co-parenting as part of our approach when working with fathers
3. Paying closer attention to fathers (their perspectives) in order to improve intervention and better support families
4. Committing to showing greater compassion toward fathers
5. Acknowledging and listening to fathers' needs during the perinatal period
6. Organizing more father-child activities and developing projects aimed at breaking men's isolation A great opportunity to build a strong partnership between the CISSS and community organizations.

Forum participants greatly appreciated the presentation given by our outreach workers. It's worth noting that, at the last minute, we carried out a simultaneous translation exercise with our English-speaking outreach worker. This had not been planned by the organizers, but was very well received by participants. Our team was awarded the Forum's *Coup de Cœur* special mention. It was the most concrete and relevant presentation in relation to the work of many of the people attending the event.

- We took part in the launch of Fatherhood Week in June—an event that highlights the role and the challenges fathers face in today's society. The 2024 theme focused on fathers and separation: Always there for you.
- In September 2024, our outreach worker from Rivière-au-Renard and our outreach worker from Carleton participated in the train-the-trainer program led by Pierre L'Heureux and Gilles Tremblay. Since we had lost one of the trainers, and the Gaspé CISSS was planning to send two new individuals, we felt it made sense to join them for this cohort.
- In fall 2024, our outreach worker in Carleton completed the STAT-Stable-Aigu training led by Ian Barsetti, which focuses on follow-ups in cases of sexual transgression.
- Over the course of the year, we also attended a number of webinars organized by CRIPCAS. These opportunities allowed for exchanges on best intervention practices and helped deepen our knowledge in supporting men in difficulty and men with violent behaviours.

- To strengthen the skills of outreach workers working with men in distress, our outreach worker in Chandler co-facilitated the Working with Men training in partnership with a trainer from the CISSS. This training was delivered at Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi-Option emploi and to outreach workers from the Rocher-Percé CISSS. The rich discussions fostered a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in supporting men. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive.
- We also took part in several conferences and complementary training sessions, including the webinar on violent masculinist ideologies, the Helping Men Get Back on Their Feet training led by Brigitte Lavoie, and Dominic Morneau's conference titled Touch the Ghost to Make It Disappear.

3. Cultural Mediation

A cultural mediation project titled *Fishing Stories* was a great success in the Rocher-Percé RCM. The initiative highlighted the stories and lived experiences of men from the region through art and personal testimonies. The project received media coverage, including radio and television interviews, helping to raise broader awareness about the realities of more traditional men who make their living from the sea.

In recognition of its significant impact, *Fishing Stories* was awarded the Living Memory Recognition Award, highlighting its contribution to preserving intangible heritage by shedding light on the lived realities of men in the Rocher-Percé RCM. The clear link our outreach worker made between this initiative and her work with men was a key factor in encouraging help-seeking, particularly among more traditional men. This participation in the cultural mediation project was offered voluntarily by our outreach worker, on behalf of Convergence.

4. The Fisheries Crisis

The fisheries crisis in Gaspésie is having a major impact on our local communities, both economically and in terms of psychological well-being. The emotional toll is being felt by those affected, and Convergence plays a leading role in supporting and assisting individuals facing difficult circumstances. This crisis is affecting not only fishers, but also their families, local businesses, and the regional economy as a whole.

Convergence has committed, in partnership with Public Health and the Côte-de-Gaspé RCM, to creating a community outreach worker position dedicated to the fisheries sector. We had two different employees in the role over the past year, but unfortunately, neither was able to complete their probation period for various reasons. This was not due to a lack of effort—we posted the position multiple times, but the applicants did not align with our needs or those of the community. We remain hopeful that we will be able to fill the position soon.

Jean-Jacques Élie, Special Projects Coordinator, took part in several meetings with partners, including the Association des Capitaines propriétaires de la Gaspésie (ACPG), which expressed a need for support in welcoming the men who visit their facilities. A meeting was also held at the ACPG offices with Isabelle Goupil Sormany, community health physician and researcher at Université Laval, to further explore short-, medium-, and long-term solutions.

5. Workshops: With Dad, It's Different

This year, Convergence decided to offer the workshops in the eastern part of the Haute-Gaspésie RCM. This area of the region has very few family-focused activities. To make this possible, we met with David Gingras, Director of Maison L'Essentielle in Gros-Morne, to arrange the use of their facilities. Mr. Gingras was very pleased that we committed to offering this valuable program in his establishment,

The coordinator of Maison Oxygène distributed posters and bookmarks in all willing businesses from east of La Martre to Rivière-Madeleine. Facebook posts and interviews on the local radio enthusiastically announced the launch of the workshops in January.

Our contract outreach worker, Michèle Doran, was in charge of facilitating the workshops. She also carried out significant outreach to promote the program. Meetings with school, daycare, preschool, and CLSC administrators. Messages were sent to fathers to inform them about the workshops and the great opportunities they offered for fathers and children.

Ultimately, only five of the 10 planned workshops were held, as by the halfway point, only one participating father-child pair remained. The purpose of the workshops is also to reduce isolation and foster connections and camaraderie between dads. Despite extensive efforts such as advertising, sending messages home in children's lunch bags and backpacks, etc., we received no registrations from the village of Gros-Morne. In Mont-Louis, we had a few registrations, but there does not appear to be an established network of parents who regularly connect and support one another.

Testimonial from a father (from the previous year, workshops ending in June):

"I had the chance and the opportunity to take part in the With Dad, it's Different activities. At first, I thought: I know my daughter, I already do activities with her—why do more?

But I asked myself: Do I really know my child, especially when she's with a group? Do I truly know what she likes? What she enjoys less? Her strengths, and her limits, as well as mine? "



APPENDIX 2 – HISTORY

May 2011: Convergence held its founding General Assembly, during which its first Board of Directors was elected. The organization's charter specified its regional mandate: to organize intervention services across the five (5) RCMs of Gaspésie.

March 2012: Convergence received accreditation from the Agence SSS GIM and begins receiving funding through the PSOC (*Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires autonomes*).

April 2012: Outreach activities began in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. Jean-Jacques Élie, outreach worker, was appointed Executive Director and began regional representation work throughout Gaspésie. Marie Hudon was hired as Assistant Director.

Winter 2013: The hiring of outreach worker Hughes Bujold made it possible to open a point of service in New Richmond. A partnership agreement with La Passerelle provided office space. Additionally, Geoff Clayden was hired as Clinical Director and outreach worker, leading to the opening of a point of service in Gaspé. The office is located on Chrétien Street in the former CEGEP student residence.

Spring 2013: The Sainte-Anne-des-Monts point of service was strengthened by renting an apartment in the heart of the city to house both an outreach office and the administrative office. A meeting room was also set up to host partner organizations.

Fall 2014: A new point of service opened one day a week in Chandler. Geoff Clayden delivered this service for nearly two years. The point of service remained precarious for over a year due to a lack of space, funding and the travel required to offer services. It was closed at the end of summer 2016.

Fall 2017: After being closed for over a year due to lack of funding, the Chandler point of service reopened thanks to a service agreement with the Professional and Correctional Services Department of Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Monelle Grenier was hired as an outreach worker for two days per week. She also took over for Geoff Clayden in Gaspé while he was on sabbatical.

In fall 2017, Manuel Pratts from the Réseau des Maisons Oxygène met with our Board of Directors to explain the mission of a Maison Oxygène and how to comply

with requirements to obtain the accreditation. The presentation was very well received, and the Board unanimously decided to adopt the mission and amend the organization's letters patent to include the housing component. This amendment was completed.

Winter 2018: Convergence officially obtained the Maison Oxygène accreditation. With Board approval, efforts began—with the support of Groupe Ressources en Logements Collectifs GIM in Carleton-sur-Mer—to present a Maison Oxygène project to the Société d'habitation du Québec.

Summer 2018: Acquisition of four family units from the SHQ and approval by the FAQ for interim funding to purchase the building located at 526, 1st Avenue West in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. In addition, a favourable ruling from the Municipal Commission granted a property tax exemption for the Maison Oxygène resource.

Fall 2018: Émilie Berthelot, a social outreach worker, was hired to provide additional support in New Richmond and Saint-Omer. Acquisition of the Maison Oxygène property in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts Marie Hudon, Assistant to the Executive Director, also took on the role of project coordinator. The notarial signing took place in December 2018, followed by the relocation of Convergence to 526, 1st Avenue West.

Winter 2019: Nancy Turcotte, a specialized educator, was hired. She took over service delivery in Chandler, succeeding Monelle Grenier, who moved into a full-time role in Gaspé following Geoff Clayden's retirement.

Summer 2019: First visit from CoopÈre as part of the Gespeg Project. Upon learning that the Montreal-based organization had carried out the Gespeg Project the previous year (2018), we reached out and invited them to return the following year. Since then, Convergence has become a key stop on their itinerary.

Fall 2019: Pascal Soucy, one of Convergence's founding members, was hired. Following the departure of Ms. Grenier, Mr. Soucy offered to fill the position of outreach worker in Gaspé. Shortly after joining the team, he was appointed Clinical Coordinator in recognition of his expertise in psychotherapy.

Spring 2020: Hiring of Maude Carbonneau-Girouard, psychosocial outreach worker at the Chandler point of service. Maude arrived from a region far from Gaspésie during the height of the pandemic. She is now our senior outreach worker.

Fall 2020: The CISSS approached Convergence to ask whether we would be willing to provide outreach and follow-up services for individuals who have committed sexual transgressions in Gaspésie. The CISSS offered to provide training for the outreach team to ensure the acquisition of relevant tools for this type of work, along with ongoing clinical supervision. Financial support was secured for the first year to cover associated costs. An annual budget was also allocated to maintain competencies, ensure clinical supervision and continue follow-ups with the individuals concerned. Our outreach workers were trained by Cloée Fournier, sexologist with the organization Ex-Equo.

Winter 2021: Final commitment from the SHQ for the renovation work at Maison Oxygène. Due to the extent of the renovations required, Convergence had to temporarily relocate in order to maintain its services. It was also agreed that future clients of Maison Oxygène could not be in contact with Convergence clientele.

Spring 2021: Historic recognition by the Government of Québec regarding services for men who exhibit violent behaviours. A major funding increase accompanied the public announcement. At the time, Minister Guilbault publicly acknowledged the importance of the work carried out by members of À cœur d'homme to support men—with the broader aim of protecting families, women, and children.

Fall 2021: Maison Oxygène Haute-Gaspésie officially opened its doors on November 15. We welcomed our first father just a few days after opening. Two new outreach workers were recruited to support this new service offering.

Fall 2021: Opening of a new point of service in Carleton-sur-Mer. Émilie Berthelot now has her own office.

Fall 2021: All outreach workers trained to work with individuals who have committed sexual transgressions also received training in STAT-STABLE-AIGU tools to better assess the risk of reoffending.

Spring 2022: 10th anniversary of Convergence's accreditation by the CISSS de la Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Fall 2022: in October 2022, the management of Réseau des Maisons Oxygène informed us that all unfunded residences would receive an emergency fund of \$450,000 at the start of January 2023. A historic moment! The emergency fund was made possible thanks to the advocacy efforts of the RMO with Minister Carmant. Until then, Maison Oxygène Haute-Gaspésie had never received any

dedicated funding since opening. This emergency fund later formalized into a “specific agreement” with the Gaspé CISSS, securing \$440,000 in funding over five years and marking the launch of 24/7 services.

Fall 2022: Marie Hudon was elected to the board of directors of the Regroupement provincial en santé et bien-être des hommes

Summer 2023: Three new staff members were hired in the region: Rachel Savoie, to support the English-speaking clientele; Danielle Cyr, who succeeded Hughes Bujold following his departure in June 2023. Danielle took over service delivery in Caplan. Stéphane Beaulieu, based in Gaspé, succeeded Pascal Soucy.

Fall 2023: The Côte-de-Gaspé RCM and the CISSS de la Gaspésie invited Convergence to reflect on issues related to the fishing industry, particularly in Rivière-au-Renard. A tripartite agreement resulted from these discussions and Convergence made every effort to hire a community-based outreach worker. This work remained ongoing, despite challenges in retaining someone in the position.

Winter 2024: A new point of service opened in Pointe-à-la-Croix. Convergence had already been offering services there from a borrowed office at the organization L’Accalmie. In February 2024, Rachel Savoie successfully secured a suitable space to deliver Convergence services.

Winter 2024: Marie Hudon was appointed executive director. Marie succeeded Jean-Jacques Élie, who had served as director since Convergence’s founding. Marie has been part of Convergence since the very beginning.

Winter 2023 and Spring 2024: All psychosocial workers at the various points of service took part in training offered by the Alliance des Maisons d’hébergement for the GIM rapid intervention Escouade. The training enabled our organization to participate in collaborative protocols in situations involving risk of homicide.

Spring 2024: Ghizlane Machmech was hired as the new executive assistant, replacing Marie Hudon following her appointment as executive director.

Winter 2025: The first “Convergence baby” was born. Our outreach worker in Caplan gave birth to a baby girl in early March. We are all looking forward to meeting her!



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