

03

ON OUR OWN

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-2023

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A WORD FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

DEBBIE DOUGLASS

It has been a great honour to join the executive of On Our Own last June as Board President. I had always admired the organization, but it has been wonderful to play a role on the team. This past year has been very fulfilling, and I am looking forward to what comes next.

I would like to begin by thanking the O3 board members and associates. Thank you for your dedication, attention, and contribution to our organization, we could not function without each of you and your areas of expertise. At the board level this year, we began working with a consultant regarding board policies and structure. Amanda spearheaded the overhaul of our HR policies, including a formal salary scale and harassment and discrimination policies.

As some of you may know, this year has been an amazing year of rebuilding for O3. We have increased our staff, including Jade Parkinson-Gayle starting as our new Resident Development Coordinator (RDC), and Olivia Herron returning in a newly created position as wellness educator. Our bookkeeper Reyhane went on maternity leave in October and welcomed a lovely little boy. Joanne Wedlock stepped in to replace her and has helped the finance committee put our records in excellent order. Post-pandemic, it has been wonderful to see the return of our in-person programming. This has really re-established the importance of community, and underscores how committed the entire O3 team is to helping the residents fulfill their potential to become independent responsible parents.

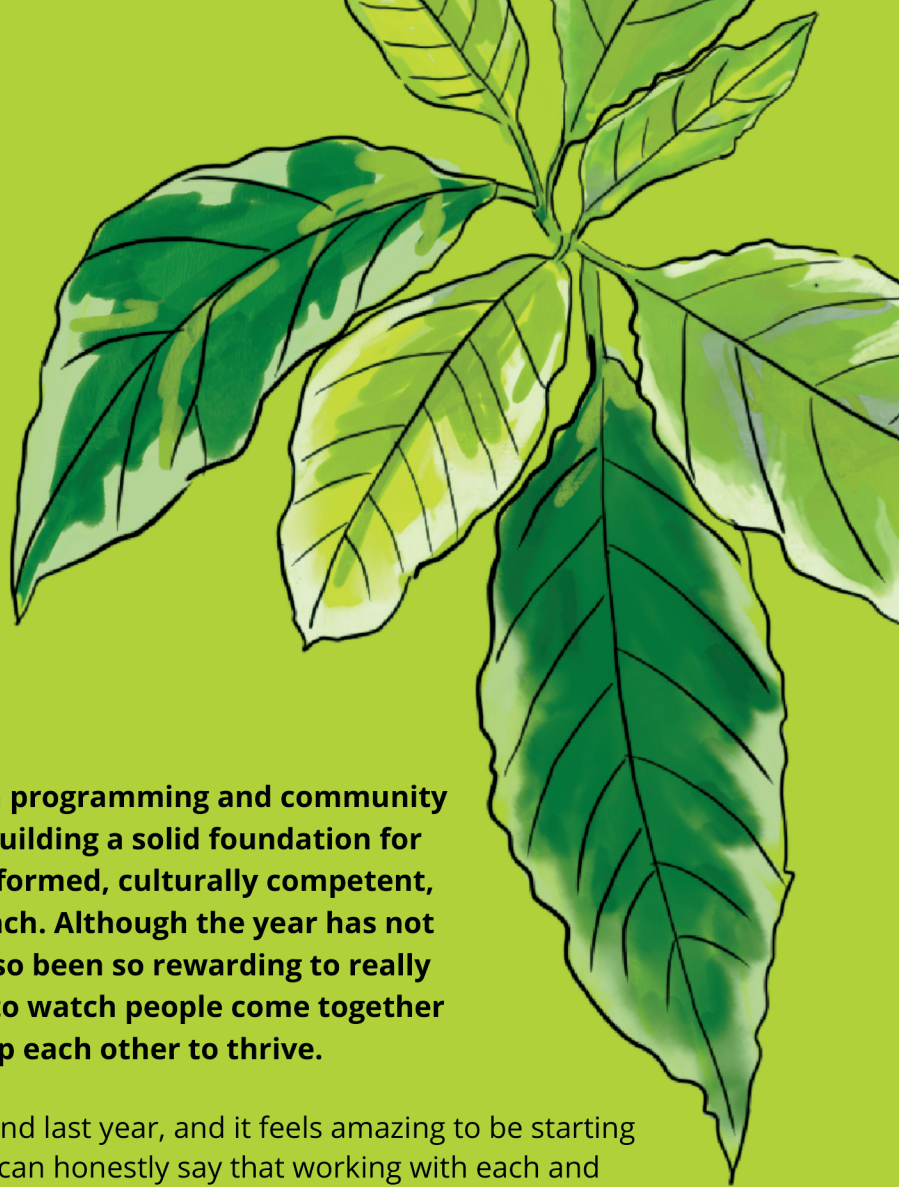
On a fundraising note, we were all so happy and excited to bring back the Comedy Show to Club Soda! Many thanks to Mark Sherman, Joey Elias and his comedians, Ian Maclean, the team from Media Experts, including Lexi Sherman, Robert Jenkyn, Flavia D'Orazio, Myriam Carrier and all the volunteers. A special thank you to all the Media Vendor sponsors as well. This year O3 was honoured to be chosen to receive many new grants and large donations, including the Strengthening Montreal grant from the Rossy Foundation.

Now of course news about the building. We finally got our new boilers for the heating and hot water systems! A huge kudos to Amanda for her tenacity and perseverance! There are still other building deficiencies, but there are plans in the works for next year to address these issues.

After working with the fantastic O3 team and our board members this past year, I'm looking forward to continuing our progress in the fall. I know that we have the right people and team in place to succeed, and I look forward to seeing what the future holds. Thank you to everyone and I hope you all have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely
Debbie Douglass





A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

AMANDA MURPHY

Over the past year we've regrown our in-person programming and community events after the lockdowns. We've focused on building a solid foundation for all our activities that is rooted in our trauma informed, culturally competent, two-generational and community-based approach. Although the year has not been without its challenges and setbacks it's also been so rewarding to really get to know the residents and community and to watch people come together again to build meaningful relationships and help each other to thrive.

We welcomed many new staff members this year and last year, and it feels amazing to be starting a new fiscal year with a full and stable staff team. I can honestly say that working with each and every member of our staff is a dream, and one of my favorite parts of the position. Everyone is dedicated and collaborative and together we are building a space of genuine support for our residents and for each other.

The greater NDG community sector is also another factor in my success. It's been great to feel so supported and anchored in the community and to be able to participate in so many joint initiatives trying to create meaningful change in the community.

For the upcoming year, I'm looking forward to tackling big structural and strategic pieces, such as finalizing our O3 'curriculum' and clinical manual with the staff, refining our governance structure through our continuing board renewal process, looking to measure the impact of our Theory of Change through phase two of our consultancy process, and developing a sustainable fundraising strategy with our new Director of Development.

Sincerely,
Amanda Murphy



03 On Our Staff



Amanda Murphy
Director

Reyhane Khoushbin
Finance Coordinator



Jade Parkinson-Gayle
Resident Development
Coordinator

Jo Wedlock
Finance Coordinator
(maternity leave replacement)



Millicent-Ann Castillo
Community Development
Coordinator

Howard A. Johnson
Cooking Program Coordinator



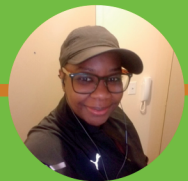
Jean S. Lama
Father Engagement
Coordinator

Destiny Rosenberg
Admin Support and Records
Management



Brittany Sweet
Parenting Attachment
Educator

Martine Wagnac
Building Manager



Olivia Herron
Wellness Educator

Ishmael Marshall
Building Repair



Judy Battista
Childcare Educator

Kimberly Huard-Jones
Summer Student



03 On Our Stats

14

Number of trainings or professional activities geared towards developing and practicing a Trauma Informed Approach that 03 staff participated in

7

Number of CHSSN networking and community building events that we attended, including 2 conferences as well as our ongoing Community of Practice participation

15

Number of residents who benefitted from one-on-one parenting support with our Parenting Attachment Educator and/or our Drama Therapy Intern

9

Number of fathers who benefitted from one-on-one and group support from our Father Engagement Coordinator

8

Number of residents who benefitted from one-on-one mental health support from our Wellness Educator

75

Approximate percentage of 03 residents who are enrolled in an educational program

13

Number of guest facilitators we welcomed this year.

34

Number of study nights (with tutors from Frontier College).

47

Number of collective kitchens.

12

Number of Info Sessions our CDC hosted to introduce potential new residents and community and social services workers to our programming

97

Percentage increase of our programming funding from the 2020-2021 fiscal year



O3 On Our Board

President: Debbie Douglass
Vice-President: Raeanne Francis
Treasurer: Sissy Duong
Secretary: Elizabeth McPhedran
Clarinda Daley
Jennifer Douglass
Nora Jean-Baptiste
Elizabeth Kabbash
Joanna Kolb
Tina Pallotta

Associate Board Members:

Sabi Hinkson
Ria Rombough
Sharon Rossy
Marilyn Rowell



Greg-Nathan Carpel-Souvenir

This past year, we had the pleasure of welcoming Greg-Nathan from Dawson College's Social Service program. Greg-Nathan has set himself apart by demonstrating compassion, empathy, and an easy-going approach to our younger residents. He worked at O3 from last September to the end of May. Greg-Nathan brought a lot to the organization. He was able to lead a workshop on various subjects such as toxic masculinity and self-awareness for the participating fathers. He also used his creativity to set up various ice-breaking workshops. Furthermore, by working one-on-one with residents, Greg was able to put intervention procedures into practice by observing and assessing the residents' needs and developing intervention tools that the residents could use in their daily lives. Greg also facilitated a French workshop to help parents support their children's studies.

Greg-Nathan was always attentive, respectful and passionate about what he did. We are delighted with Greg's stay at O3 and wish him every success in his future endeavours.



Sarah-Doreen Dadzie

Learn more about Sarah-Doreen's work in the Parenting Attachment Report.

O3 On Our Interns



Nina Gentile

During the Fall semester of 2022, we had the pleasure of hosting an intern from Concordia's Recreational Leisure Studies program. Nina completed her internship from September to December. She quickly became an integral part of our team. Nina was best recognized for her ability to connect with residents, her engagement and contributions, and her ability to add creativity and organization to every opportunity she could at O3. Nina organized several fun activities, such as our Halloween event, Holiday Hang out, and even our staff Holiday party. Nina was instrumental in supporting the ACDPN Kids Like Us Program. She also worked with individual families experiencing high-levels of stress to support them to incorporate leisure into their routines. Nina also created a program about leisure and goal-setting which she presented to residents before completing her studies. Nina was consistently compassionate, understanding and generous. We are incredibly proud of Nina and her success, and miss her dearly!

O3 Origin Story

O3 started as an initiative from Maison Elizabeth House which recognized a need in the community for transitional housing for young vulnerable mothers.

It is a four building structure with 29-unit apartments constructed with the assistance of Société d'habitation du Québec, and the Office Municipal d'habitation de Montréal to provide rent subsidies for its residents.

Buildings were official opened December 2005. In 2012, O3 became an independent organization with its own charitable status and board of directors. Today, O3 continues to create a circle of support to young families.



What We Do

O3 is a small non-profit organization that offers support services coupled with transitional housing to young vulnerable parents aged 16-30 years old with at least one child 0-5 years old.

Each family can stay for up to 5 years, during which time they work on goals relating to mental health, financial literacy, education and career, parenting, healthy relationships, and healthy living.

Our Core Beliefs

We believe that strong family systems are key to reaching success. We support the primary parent, co-parent and the child to be able to leave O3 Independently.



Program Domains

Parenting Skills



Mental Health



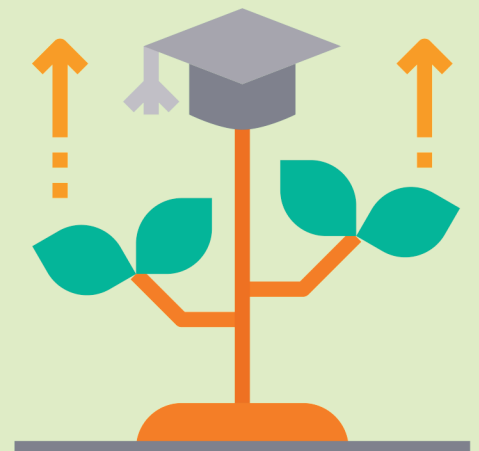
Financial Literacy



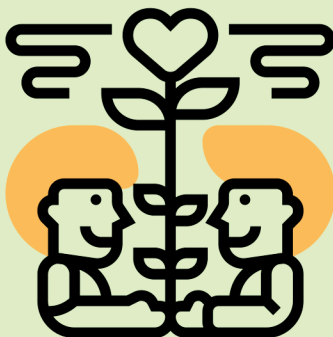
Healthy Living



Career & Education



Healthy Relationships

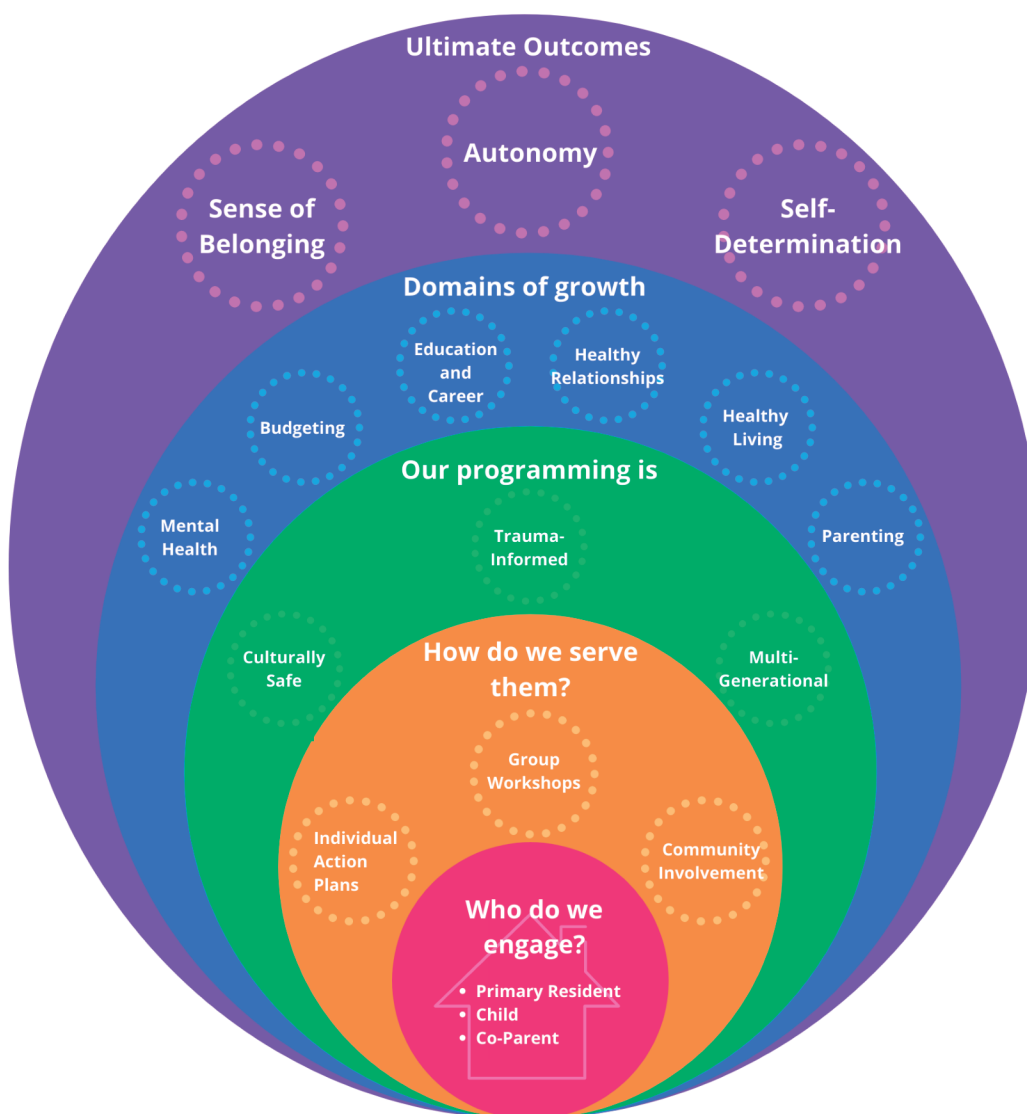


Theory of Change and O3 Approach

Over the past few years we have been lucky enough to work with strategic consultant Stephanie Garrow of Garrow&Evoy thanks to funding from the Innoweave granting program of the McConnell foundation.

Through this process we constructed our Theory of Change, which defines how parents in our program move from surviving to thriving through work in six different domains, via supportive interventions on an individual, group and community level.

This year Stephanie and her colleague Veronique led the new staff through a refresher of the Theory of Change and related materials so that we could make sure all staff felt knowledgeable and comfortable using our approach, and to update our work based on the changed reality post COVID lockdowns.



Thanks to a donation from the Rossy Foundation's Strengthening Montreal Fund, we're looking forward to welcoming Stephanie back in the fall to begin an Impact Measurement process so that we can make sure we are tracking the implementation and influence of our approach and model.

Our Field Trips & Special Events

Those with a sweet tooth were happy to go to the
Sugar Shack



We explored the greenhouse and learned about
diverse plants including many from Africa at
Hamidou Horticulture



les
maisons
transitionnelles

03

Our Field Trips & Special Events

Fun & arts-and-crafts go hand in hand for Easter



Santa Claus paid us a visit with gifts right before Christmas





RESIDENT DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR JADE PARKINSON-GAYLE

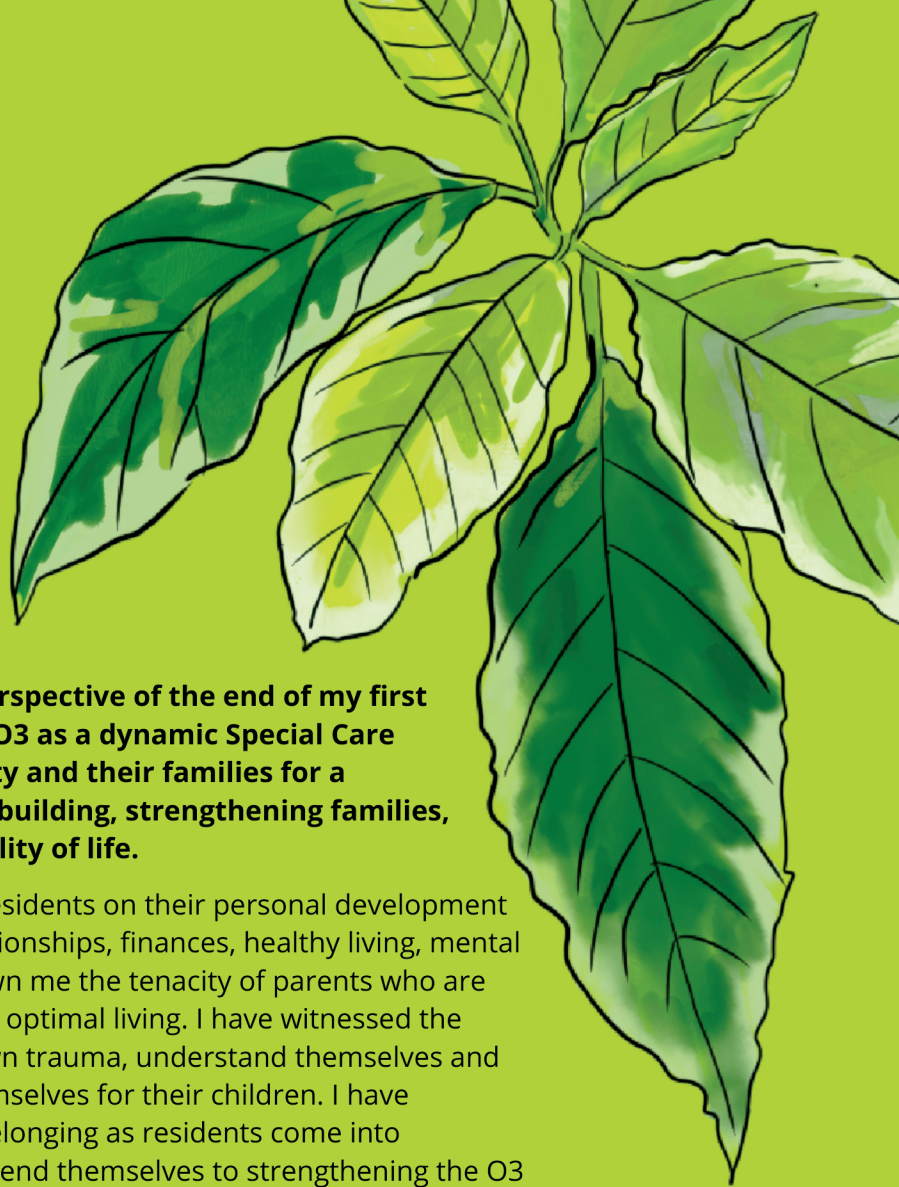
I'm super excited to be writing to you from the perspective of the end of my first year as a core member of the O3 team. I came to O3 as a dynamic Special Care Counsellor who has worked with youth in difficulty and their families for a number of years. I have a passion for community building, strengthening families, and empowering individuals to live their best quality of life.

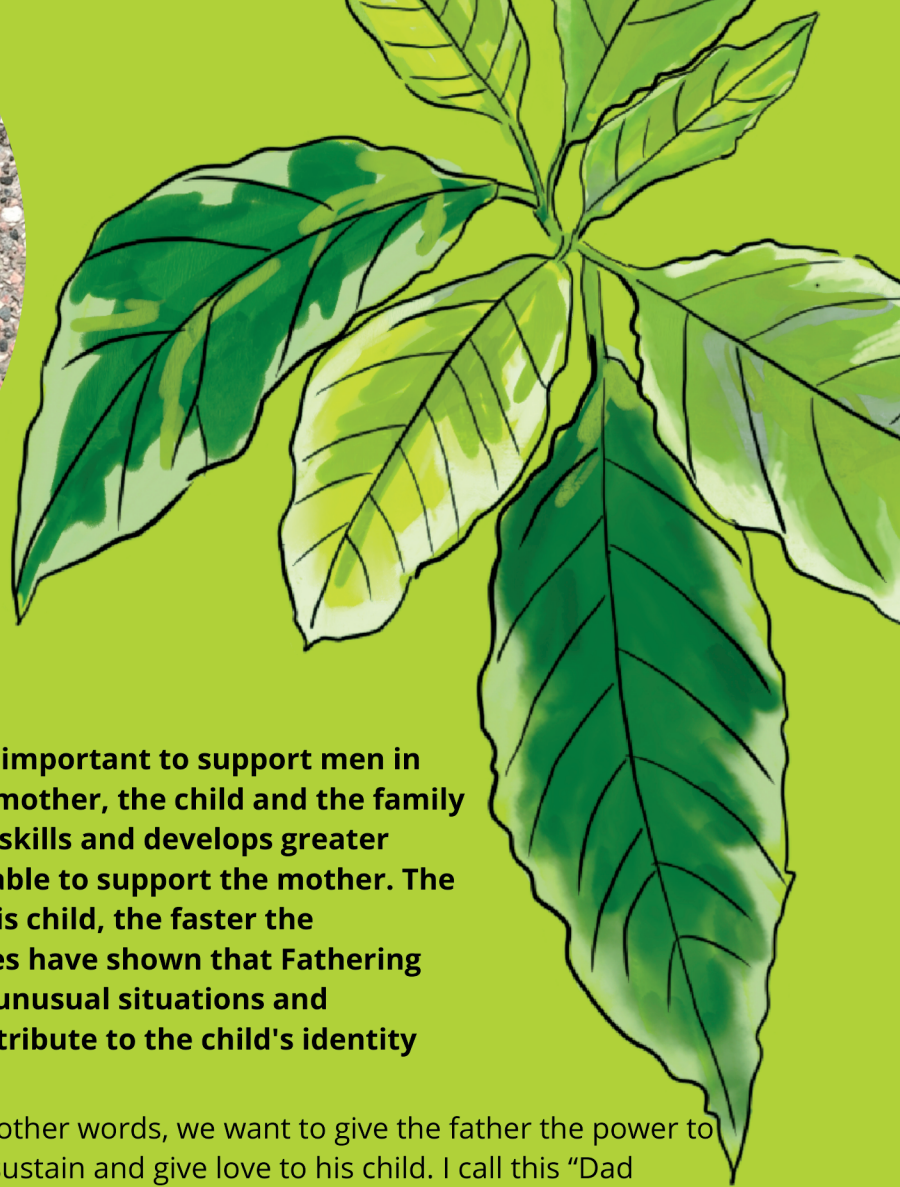
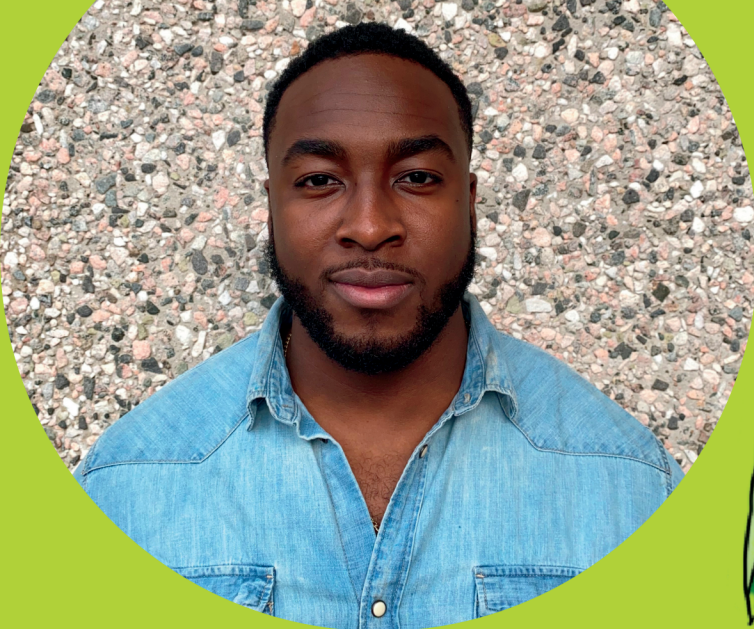
In this role, I have the pleasure of working with our residents on their personal development goals in a variety of domains: parenting, healthy relationships, finances, healthy living, mental health, education and career. This past year has shown me the tenacity of parents who are consistently breaking barriers and facing obstacles to optimal living. I have witnessed the perseverance of parents aiming to heal from their own trauma, understand themselves and their reactions, and become the best versions of themselves for their children. I have witnessed the power of community and a sense of belonging as residents come into themselves, discover talents, passions and skills and lend themselves to strengthening the O3 community. I have also witnessed the determination of our residents as they return to their education path, and integrate or re-integrate into the workforce. We have been so fortunate to be able to partner with local community organizations that have helped empower our residents to achieve their goals.

One of the most difficult challenges for our residents is creating healthy balance as they aim to create optimal situations for themselves and their children. The expectations when you are a student, a mother, an employee, a family member, a community member can be overbearing, all this while trying to stay in shape, study, prepare healthy meals and provide meaningfully for your child (to name a few). Sometimes, all this can be so daunting for our residents. The impact on their mental and physical health are significant considering the continuous lack of effective services and care in the public health and social service sector. Our residents have had to develop a keen sense of resilience, resourcefulness and stress management skills.

Despite all this, it has been a pleasure to witness our residents establish safety and security for themselves and their children, dream and plan for a meaningful future, go out and achieve their goals, seek out help and services when needed, and ultimately develop a sense of pride and determination. I often tell residents that they are in the driver's seat, and I am their enthusiastic co-navigator. It is a continued privilege to sit, walk and stand side by side with residents as they take their lives into their own hands and become the best of themselves right before my eyes. I offer a huge thank you to every resident I have met in the past year who has allowed me front seat access to their most difficult moments, and their proudest moments. I am looking forward to many more milestones here at O3.

Cheers,
Jade





FATHER ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR JEAN LAMA

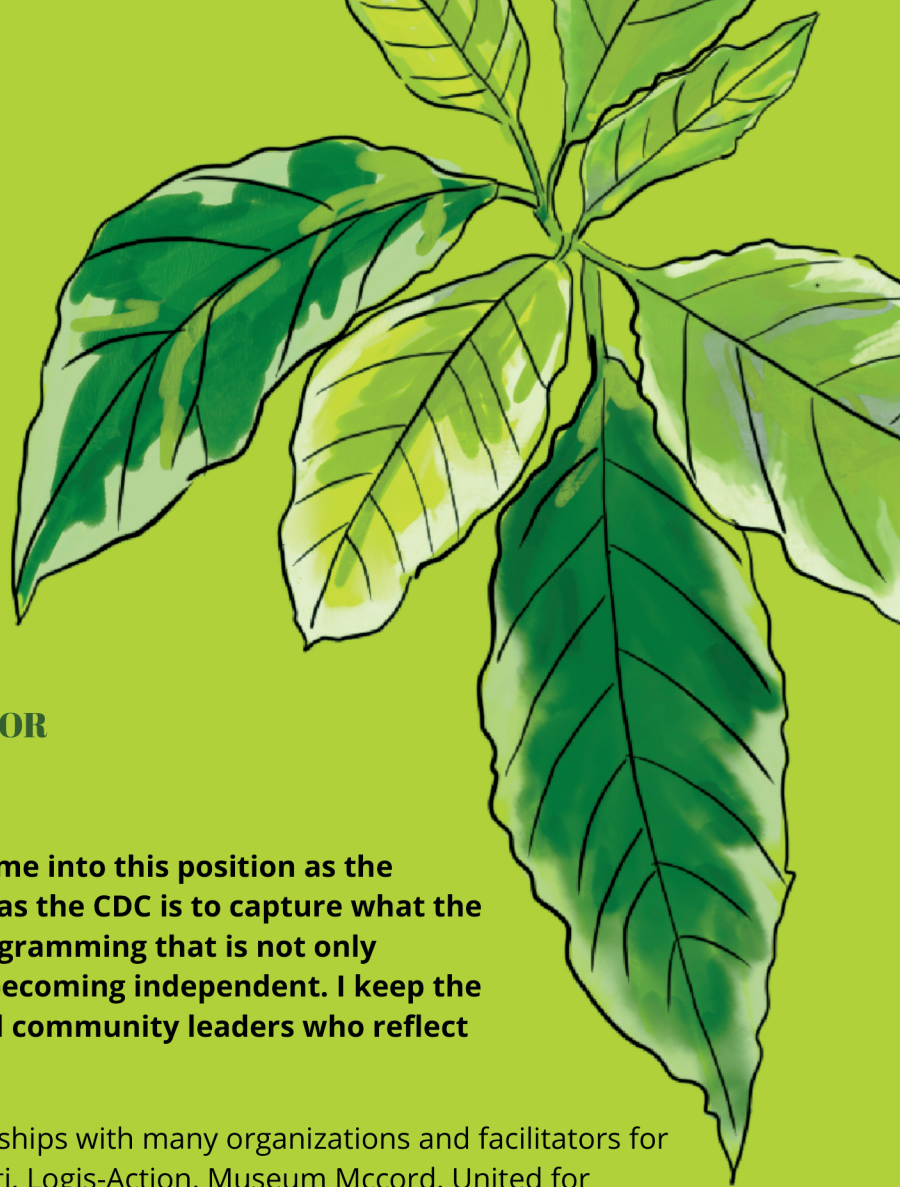
At O3, we believe that, wherever possible, it is important to support men in their journey to fatherhood. This benefits the mother, the child and the family unit. When a father strengthens his parenting skills and develops greater confidence in himself as a father, he is better able to support the mother. The more time and attention a father devotes to his child, the faster the attachment between them will develop. Studies have shown that Fathering helps children to take risks, show initiative in unusual situations and overcome obstacles. These characteristics contribute to the child's identity and eventual role in society.

At O3 we advocate fatherhood empowerment. In other words, we want to give the father the power to change his life for the better in order to support, sustain and give love to his child. I call this "Dad Power". We use a humanistic approach to build an environment of trust and security, so that fathers can develop and achieve their full potential. In my role as the Father Engagement Coordinator, I work with each father and co-parent in setting up an individual action plan to meet needs that we have established together according to the different domains at O3. Throughout the process I accompany them, and we explore different themes in our workshops, for example "Self-awareness" where fathers become aware of their needs, their values, the problem of domestic violence, communication etc. Some of the fathers showed a great amount of growth in naming and expressing their emotions and having an open mind. These men were able to positively influence the rest of their peers by having leadership and being less anxious to connect with different organizations.

This year, with the lifting of restrictions, was a busy one for workshop participants. We set up a series of workshops on themes such as masculinity, emotions, defining my identity, etc., all of which enabled fathers to understand and make the choice of how they wanted to be as fathers, and to understand that our actions are influenced by our emotions, and to ask themselves what they would like to pass on to their children.

I am proud and privileged to be able to help and be a tool in the development of healthy family dynamics. O3 is an organization that takes into account the realities of our families and with this in mind, it allows us to create a bond of trust from the start to better intervene in the acquisition of skills that will be beneficial to the well-being of the child and the family.

Sincerely
Jean Souakoly Lama



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR MILLICENT-ANN CASTILLO

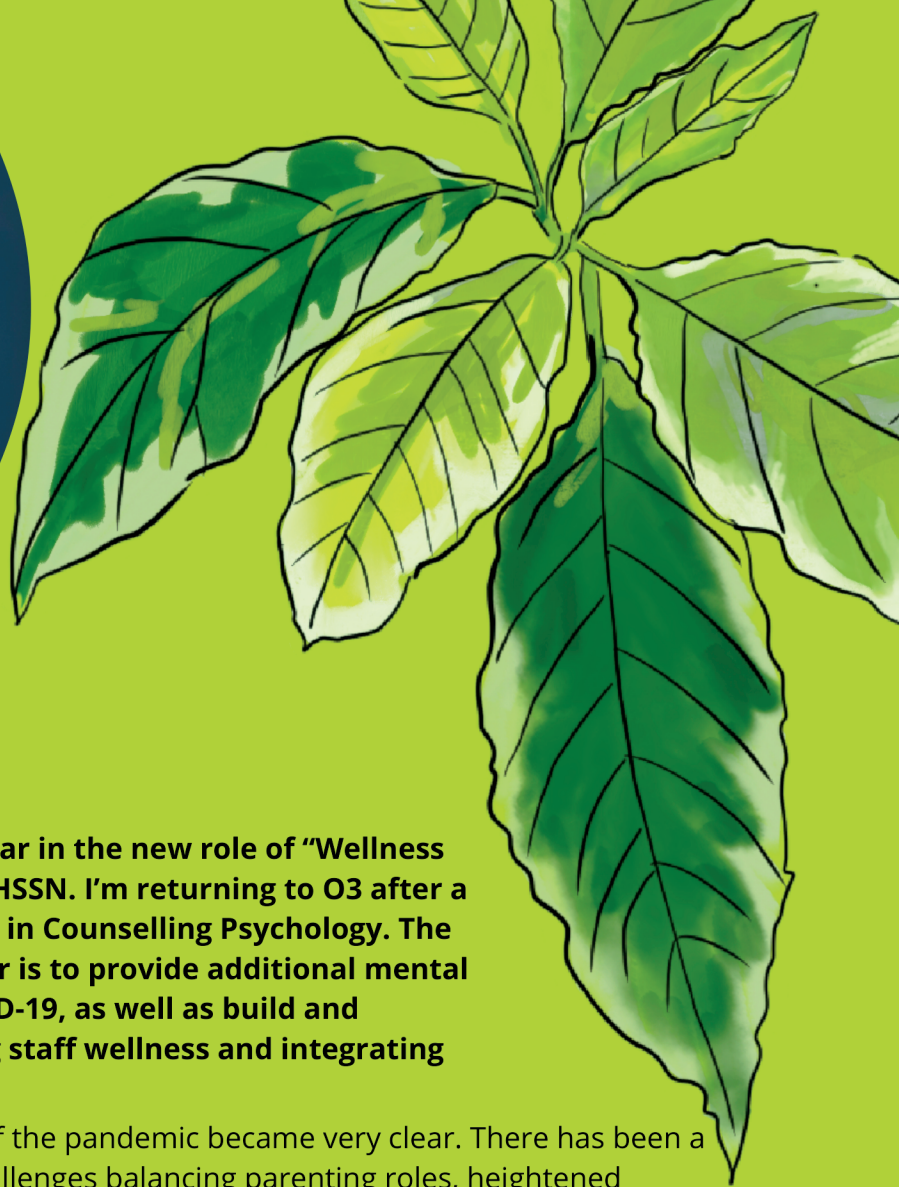
What a full year of growth it has been since I came into this position as the Community Development Coordinator! My role as the CDC is to capture what the community needs as a whole, and to curate programming that is not only engaging but also guides our young parents in becoming independent. I keep the community's pulse and seek out facilitators and community leaders who reflect our residents' identities.

In this past year, I have been able to create partnerships with many organizations and facilitators for our O3 community such as the BCRC, Maison d'Haiti, Logis-Action, Museum Mccord, United for Literacy, PEP, Svens Telemaque & When the village meditates to name a few that have offered their services and time and helped us to create engaging monthly calendars with lots of amazing programming for residents to attend. I am beyond grateful to all of our partners!

Currently, I am facilitating a 3 part workshop called "Practicing rest with Millicent" as a response to hearing parents say they did not know how to rest. In these workshops, residents get to explore different ways of resting to find one that resonates for them. I am also working on sharing my passion for gardening and all it has to offer from Mental Health to Parent-Child Bonding to simply having fun in dirt. This summer, I will be organizing a field trip to Parc Safari and I cannot wait to see all the smiles on everyone's faces!

O3 is truly a special place where young parents are given the time and space to be able to flourish and achieve the goals they set for themselves. I am so honored to be welcomed into this small community where young parents are able to thrive and become full versions of themselves. I'm hearing, seeing and learning so much from our O3 residents and discovering what this community needs. And I'm looking forward to our next community round table where I get to hear all about their solutions and the changes they would like to see happen!

Millicent



WELLNESS EDUCATOR

OLIVIA HERRON

It was a pleasure to rejoin the O3 team this year in the new role of “Wellness Educator”, a temporary initiative funded by CHSSN. I’m returning to O3 after a few years away spent completing my Master’s in Counselling Psychology. The intention of this new role of Wellness Educator is to provide additional mental health support to residents impacted by COVID-19, as well as build and facilitate staff trainings focused on promoting staff wellness and integrating the Trauma Informed Care approach.

During my first months in this role, the impacts of the pandemic became very clear. There has been a noticeable increase in social isolation, greater challenges balancing parenting roles, heightened symptoms consistent with anxiety and depression, themes of loss and grief, family conflict, resurfacing of past traumas, as well as overall challenges due to lack of services and long waitlists. In this position, I’m able to find creative ways to address some of these challenges through the provision of on-site, adapted support. In my role I am able to get creative and offer a coaching style of support which allows residents to practice the integration of the skills we work on in real time. I am also able to connect them to external community and mental health resources, and explore alternative therapeutic methods like physical activity and artistic modes of expression, and walk-and-talk style meetings.

Beyond my role as Wellness Educator, It has been a gift to watch this organization blossom and grow into what it is today. When I started here in 2017, we were a tiny team with limited resources and we were highly constricted in our ability to meet the complex needs of our residents. Now as I look at where we are in terms of our ever-expanding multidisciplinary team and our implementation of the Theory of Change action plan, I am proud to see where our program is today. The increased funding which has led to the expansion of our services has allowed us to equip residents with additional tools they require to navigate an increasingly challenging world, especially considering the increased costs of living due to inflation, the worsening housing crisis, and loss of community organization services due to the pandemic. Despite increasing challenges in the world around us, I have had the honour of seeing residents who arrived five years ago are now leaving our doors with greater levels of self confidence, independence and tools to allow them to be the best parents they can be not only for themselves, but the next generation.

Olivia Herron,
Wellness Educator



CHILDCARE COORDINATOR JUDY BATTISTA

This past year has been a great success. We have recovered from the pandemic and as a staff we have all come together to provide an amazing environment both for the residents and their children. I feel honoured to be part of such an amazing team. Since the pandemic, this past year finally feels as though it has resumed as usual and it feels nice to be able to connect with the children and learn and explore in a group again.

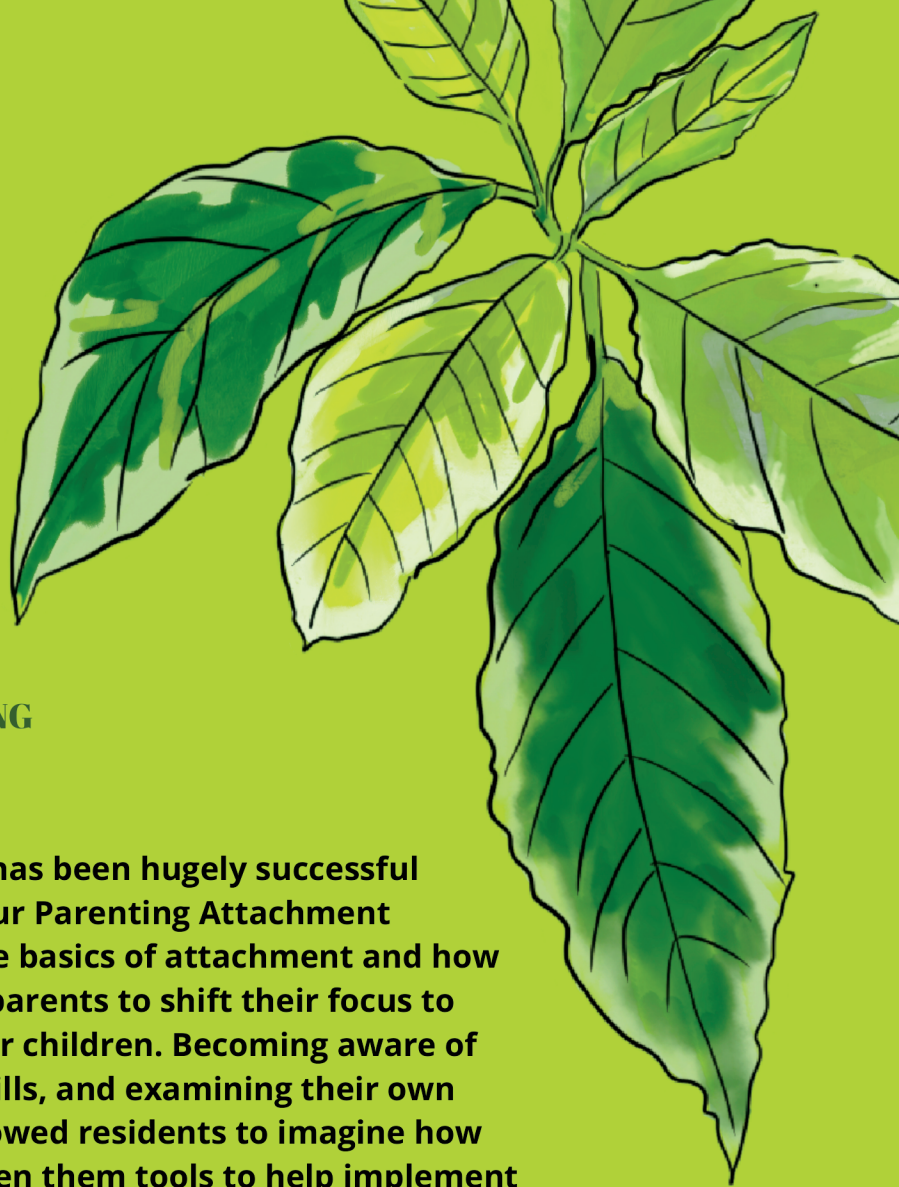
I was happy to provide childcare during all the programs that were provided throughout the year including a few Drop off respite times for the residents to have a bit of time for themselves once or twice a month. I also provided childcare during study periods and tutoring as well as during Jean's programming with the Dads.

It was another successful year in the playroom and I look forward to another year of exploring and discovering with the children and to many more sweet moments!



Judy Battista
Childcare Coordinator O3





PARENTING ATTACHMENT PROGRAMMING

BRITTANY SWEET

So far our Parenting Attachment program has been hugely successful despite logistical challenges arising from our Parenting Attachment Educator taking a leave. Learning about the basics of attachment and how it is a core need for a child has helped our parents to shift their focus to building attachment and bonding with their children. Becoming aware of their own reactions, triggers and coping skills, and examining their own relationships with their caregivers, has allowed residents to imagine how they want to be as healthy parents and given them tools to help implement these changes in parenting style.

With Brittany on leave for the second half of the year, our intern Sarah-Doreen began working individually with a small cohort of parents. She used a Drama Therapy lens to provide one-on-one support to parents that allowed them to creatively explore parenting struggles and strategies for building attachment.

We're very excited to welcome Brittany back from leave this summer and to continue our Parenting Attachment programming. We are overall very grateful for our Bell Let's Talk funding, and for the flexibility to shift the project timeline so that all our families can benefit from one-on-one support and help integrate the skills and concepts they've learned in workshops over the last two years.



Thank You To Our Donors and Funders!



A very special thank you to

MEDIA  EXPERTS

and to **STONEHAVEN** productions

Along with Mark Sherman, Ian Maclean & Joey Elias
for their help with our comedy show fundraiser



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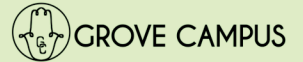


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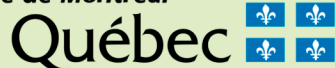
Agence de la santé
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And to everyone else who made a private donation this year!
Your contributions are greatly valued and we are so thankful for your support.

Thank You To Our Partners !



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