



# CPM Magazine

CANADIAN PARENTS FOR FRENCH

SPRING 2023

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**LANGUAGE AS  
INSPIRATION**

**YOUTH PROGRAMMING  
WITH AN EDGE**

**Je déteste la  
bouillabaisse :  
The Power of  
Imagination**





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Canadian Parents for French is a nationwide, research-informed, volunteer organization that promotes and creates opportunities to learn and use French for all those who call Canada home.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**L' Can you believe we are almost halfway through the year? Time flies and at the CPF Network we are working on exciting things to keep advancing FSL education. This issue includes updates on some important initiatives of the Network. As usual, we have also included resources to support French language learning at home and interesting articles from our partners.**

Exciting opportunities are fast approaching as the government recently launched the new Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028; and the highly anticipated modernization of the Official Languages will bring new challenges and opportunities, at the time of publication of this issue, Bill C-13 is being studied in the Senate after passing third reading in the House of Commons with near-unanimous support. We will continue providing updates as we keep advocating for more FSL learning opportunities.



As for updates from the National Board, we are preparing for the CPF Leaders' Networking Event which will take place July 7–9 in Gatineau, Québec. We are looking forward to meeting CPF Leaders from across the country to discuss the organization's priorities and strategic directions.

Stay tuned as CPF unveils new programming, volunteer opportunities and provides overall updates of the FSL landscape. To learn about the latest developments, make sure to follow us on social media. I wish you a great summer and as the end of the school year

approaches, *bonne fin de l'année scolaire !* ■

*Derrek Bentley*

DERREK BENTLEY  
CPF NATIONAL PRESIDENT

## Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028: Protection-Promotion-Collaboration

**O**n April 26, the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Official Languages, launched the new Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028: Protection-Promotion-Collaboration.

CPF attended the launch and was pleased with the new Action Plan as it builds on the Government of Canada's previously established objective to increase the bilingualism rate of the Canadian population to 20% by 2036.

The plan features investments that support French second-language learning and FSL teacher recruitment and retention, this will allow us to move forward with our mandate of furthering bilingualism by creating and promoting opportunities for youth to learn and use French. CPF was also pleased to see successful, existing programs expand their program scope to include immersion schools.

It is important to note that the provincial and territorial governments will receive significant amounts under this Action Plan for the delivery of FSL education. We look forward to being part of the conversation, to being consulted and to working with the provinces and territories to invest these funds effectively to meet the needs of the largest number of families possible. ■







# ***Je déteste la bouillabaisse :*** **The Power of Imagination and a Bilingual Journey**

BY DOUGLAS VANDOR, AUTHOR AND OLYMPIC ROWER

continued...

I have always believed that following one's passion leads to success. I was passionate about rowing, and that passion steered me for 13 years on Canada's Olympic Rowing Team. Writing is something that I am passionate about as well. I have been writing for as long as I can remember and I have always enjoyed the creativity that writing requires, as well as the process that it unleashes. Although it is a different form of exertion from rowing, it can be just as intense.

As an Olympic athlete, writing provided a balance from my heavy training schedule. It was also a pastime that gave my aching muscles a respite from the endless kilometres rowing up and down the lake. Writing during my downtime put my brain to work, a change that I welcomed.

When I hung up my oars, I traded them for a pen. Quite suddenly I found myself writing and getting paid to do so.

The lessons I learned on the lake inevitably found themselves onto the pages of my manuscripts. My first children's book, *Salmon on Toast*, was about perseverance. My second children's book, *I HATE BOUILLABAISSE!*, is about the mind and the power of our imagination. In sport, the mind can be our ally or our foe. It can be the difference between a podium finish or fourth place. In life outside of sport, this is no different.

***I HATE BOUILLABAISSE!***  
**uses food at the dinner table**  
**to demonstrate that a child**  
**can choose to interpret what**  
**the mind sees as an obstacle**  
**or an opportunity.**

Negative thoughts can trickle into our consciousness and dictate our paths. And when the mind gets stuck in some of these darker places, it can make us nervous, anxious and even scared. But if we learn to work with the imagination instead of fighting it, these perceived challenges can sometimes seem less daunting. They can even be converted into opportunities.



***I HATE BOUILLABAISSÉ!*** uses food at the dinner table to demonstrate that a child can choose to interpret what the mind sees as an obstacle or an opportunity.

Sophie's imagination always plays tricks on her when it comes to the unfamiliar dishes that her aunt makes. She doesn't recognize the names of the dishes nor how they look on her plate. Her imagination thus takes hold of her and changes her mood, it dictates her reactions. As the story progresses, however, Sophie starts to realize that the ridiculously yucky meals that she has been cooking up in her mind are the ones that she had been craving all along. She turns something that was initially negative into something that is positive by looking at it through a different lens. Her confidence and her self esteem are rewarded in turn; a lesson for us all. The situation didn't change, Sophie just chose to look at it in a different way.

I wrote the English version of the book first, but it was important to me for the book to be available in French as well (***JE DÉTESTE LA BOUILLABAISSÉ!***).

I have been surrounded by bilingualism my entire life. Growing up in a small town in Québec, I would switch from English to French then back to English many times a day. I was a part of both the English and French communities and effortlessly flowed in and out of each culture. Whether at hockey practice, boy scouts or in the school yard during recess, both languages were needed in order to thrive. Instead of resisting learning 'the other' language, the earlier one became bilingual the better one could navigate and experience the entire community, not just

a part of it. And, of course, food always provided an important gateway to sharing ideas between the English and the French communities. It was a way to create bridges between families and cement friendships that lasted generations.

Living in both Montréal and Québec City as a young adult, it never ceased to amaze me how people switched back and forth between French and English so effortlessly. It was very common to hear one person on the street speaking French and the other person answering back to them in English, carrying on a conversation as if it was the most natural thing to do in the world. That is life in a bilingual community.

In a way my wife and I are trying to recreate this experience for our own kids. They attend French school in Vancouver. They are completely bilingual and they were both born and raised on the West Coast! How cool is that? A testament to the importance of starting to learn languages at a young age.

We expose them to both the English and the French cultures in Vancouver, in addition to the many other cultures that surround them, and they are encouraged to soak up as much of it as they want. This is our little contribution to bilingualism (and multiculturalism) in Canada.

And, of course, I still make bouillabaisse every once in a while, for supper, with the hopes that one day they will enjoy it; they still hate it. And with copies of both ***I HATE BOUILLABAISSÉ!*** and ***JE DÉTESTE LA BOUILLABAISSÉ!*** on our bookshelf, they are now officially allowed to complain about my cooking, as long as they say it twice; once in English and once in French. ■

**Living in both Montréal and Québec City as a young adult, it never ceased to amaze me how people switched back and forth between French and English so effortlessly. It was very common to hear one person on the street speaking French and the other person answering back to them in English, carrying on a conversation as if it was the most natural thing to do in the world. That is life in a bilingual community.**

# For the Love of French

## Queen's FSL Multi-Session Teacher's Education Program

BY BRYTON MCKINNON, TEACHER CANDIDATE, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY (ONTARIO)





## For decades, Ontario, like much of Canada, struggled to recruit French speakers in schools. As French teacher numbers continue to dwindle due to the wave of baby boomer retirees, so too do recruitment numbers. In Kingston, a pre-existing yet uncommon model for teachers' college was adopted to address this provincial and national crisis.

**I**n May of 2022, the inaugural cohort of teacher candidates entered Queen's University's FSL multi-session B.Ed. Program. I, along with 24 other French speaking teachers, are part of this new wave of educators who are pioneering how teachers' colleges could operate.

Once per month, we attend a three-day weekend of classes, lasting approximately 22 hours. We also complete two one-month long sessions in July. Meanwhile, we are full-time teachers. Yes, full-time teachers and also full-time students. And yes, we're paid.

In fact, after the first two semesters of our program, we qualify for the Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration (TCoQR).

In short, this means that our salary changes to that of a recent graduate, as well as providing us job security; meaning, we can no longer be ousted by a fully certified teacher. With flexibility, we are able to have the best of both worlds: academia and work. Despite these self-evident perks, my cohort and I are often running at breakneck speed.

We are in the trenches, completing assignments, report cards, behavior management, and class readings. We balance our lives between families, our schooling, and our education, all the while working towards our Bachelor of Education.

Thankfully, we have had a plethora of flexible and compassionate professors who adapt to our challenges, and offer flexibility as we spin ten plates at once.

So how did this program come into

existence? Queen's partnered with the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network (EOSDN) which includes 13 school boards from Durham to Ottawa. This means that all of our teachers are completing long-term occasional vacancies across the province.

Interestingly, this program took flight quite quickly. In 2022, funding was secured in March with the green light being given. In April, school boards were contacted and administrators were tasked with nominating French educators in their schools who were working as uncertified teachers, supply staff and Early Childhood Educators. Personally, I received an email in mid-April, was on the phone with a EOSDN contact later that day, and was admitted into the program in the same phone call. Two weeks later in May, I started.

As previously mentioned, we are not the first group of teacher candidates to undergo this multi-session approach. Queen's began this model in the 1970s with the Technology Education program. This meant that people who had years of experience in their specific craft were able to transition into teaching without having to compromise the ability to make an income.

My cohort of French speakers, however, are the first of our kind, attempting to address a shortage of French teachers. Some of us come from Quebec; others graduated from French immersion secondary schools; others, like myself, are francophiles with degrees in French literature or have lived abroad in France.

Regardless of how French entered our lives, we have two things in common: we love teaching, *et on parle en français*.

Our levels of French differ, but all of us are dedicated to improving our own knowledge of the diverse cultures of French and the language itself. Our Teachers' College curriculum reflects this. We are expected to not only complete assignments and readings, but genuinely participate in French cultures. Many of our classes are in French, at least whenever there are available francophone professors.

For those who have a background in French, and have wanted to enter education, but were held back by the necessity to continue earning a living wage, this program is likely for you. Unfortunately, the days of getting admitted via a phone call are long gone. Just like everywhere else, prospective teacher candidates now need to apply to Ontario Universities' Application Centre. As well, it is encouraged to already have some experience in classrooms. And as a French educator, there are school boards across the province who will accept uncertified French speakers into schools.

If we as a country are dedicated to bilingualism, it needs to start in our schools. But unless our teacher education programs increase the number of French graduates, the French teacher shortage crisis is only going to widen until the conversation transitions from "How do we increase numbers" to "Which schools are going on the chopping block." Thankfully, universities like Queen's are leading the charge, and the FSL-Multi-Session program demonstrates how desperation breeds innovation. ■



# Language as *Inspiration*

BY JOANNE LECLAIR, COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR, LANGUAGE PORTAL DIVISION,  
TRANSLATION BUREAU PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT CANADA



THIS ARTICLE WAS FIRST PUBLISHED ON JUNE 13, 2022, IN THE LANGUAGE PORTAL OF CANADA'S OUR LANGUAGES BLOG. A TRANSLATION BUREAU INITIATIVE, THE LANGUAGE PORTAL PROVIDES CANADIANS WITH A WIDE RANGE OF RESOURCES TO HELP THEM COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH, AND PUBLISHES WEEKLY ARTICLES BY LANGUAGE LOVERS ON THE OUR LANGUAGES BLOG.

<https://www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca/en/blogue-blog/langue-porteuse-dinspiration-language-as-inspiration-eng>



In honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21st), meet Inuk singer-songwriter and producer **Elisapie Isaac**. Elisapie was a spokesperson of the *Rendez-vous de la Francophonie* last year. When we met her, she told us how the different languages she speaks inspire her and introduced us to the artists who have influenced her. Here's a glimpse into her creative universe.

## Benefits of speaking different languages

When she was very young, Elisapie's parents decided that she would learn French. She fondly remembers her elementary school teachers, who shared their passion for the language. Today, she lives in Montreal and speaks French by choice, out of love and out of respect for those around her.

"I speak French out of love and out of a desire to connect with others. It's not just about the language for me. Language brings with it enormous breadth and culture; it expands my world. I love speaking French. I love the different possibilities the language has to offer, because that's all I want to do, express myself! It's like I can never express myself enough! It's a yearning, a visceral need that is part of my personality. Speaking Inuktitut, French and English allows me to play with words. All the vocabulary that is available to me allows me to better express myself."

## The philosophy and culture behind Indigenous languages

If you want to learn an Indigenous language, Elisapie suggests you start by learning more about Indigenous Peoples and communities across Canada. She believes that learning a new language requires human interaction and cultural immersion. Elisapie also stresses the importance of humility, curiosity and the desire to connect with others. She explains that real human connection and knowledge transfer are essential to learning a new language.

"To be honest, learning Indigenous languages is challenging. It is far more meaningful and important to build relationships with people than to learn the language.... Just start by becoming aware of Indigenous culture and philosophy. For example, learn about the nation that lives where you grew up. I think that would be a good start."

## Language and inspiration

On her latest album, Elisapie sings mostly in Inuktitut, but also in English and French. Emotion drives inspiration, and Elisapie instinctively knows which language to use to express intensity, turmoil or tenderness. Allowing her instincts to guide her, she moves from one language to another with ease. Each language has its own unique purpose and energy. At first she found it difficult to blend pop music and Inuktitut, but over time she has found a comfort level and struck a balance between rhythm and language. She feels that French offers a more structured way of creating.

"I find French very complex. I'm instinctive, but it quickly becomes very clear to me what the subject is and which audience I want to reach. For example, in my French song *Ton vieux nom*, co written with Natasha Kanapé Fontaine, I felt the lyrics were for Quebec and French-speaking audiences. They were the ones I wanted to speak to and reach out to. The song provided a space

for dialogue with the people that know me and that I interact with every day."

The singer-songwriter doesn't spend hours thinking, with pen in hand. She admits that she creates instinctively, letting herself be carried away by what she's feeling at that very moment. Her songs take shape in the language that emerges.

"When I write, I ask myself: 'Does it come out naturally in English, French or Inuktitut?' I rely on instinct to tell me which language to choose. Lately, I often write in English or Inuktitut. These languages offer me a range of emotions that I find easier to make my own, a wider universe perhaps."

## Literature that inspires

When asked which writings or literary figures have influenced her life, the singer-songwriter took a moment to consider. "There have been so many!" The first person she names is author Frank McCourt, whose autobiographical writings caught her attention. In reading his work, Elisapie clearly saw a connection between the life McCourt describes and the lives of Indigenous Peoples.

"I felt like I could understand who the Irish were. This is an author who writes about poverty and his dysfunctional relationship with his alcoholic father, but he writes with a lot of humour at the same time. For me, it was like reading the words of an Indigenous writer who is also trying to survive in the dysfunction but who has a good head on their shoulders and the strength of mind to say, 'I'm going to get through this, I'm going to find a way.'"

Elisapie then mentions Joséphine Bacon's poetry, which moves her deeply and brings her a sense of peace. She considers the poet from Pessamit, Quebec, to be a wise woman. She is particularly fond of works that pay tribute to the Innu territory and loves those that deal with aging and the passage to the status of Elder.

"I think that anyone who is aging should read Joséphine Bacon because there is an incredible fear of aging in society. For Indigenous Peoples, it's the opposite. There's something beautiful about surrendering to time, becoming wise, guiding others. It's a wonderful role that is given to us. I feel that we should all learn from Joséphine Bacon ... She's had a big impact on me."

Another work that has moved Elisapie is *L'énigme du retour* [The Return] by Danny Laferrière.

"I felt like he was telling my life story. He speaks about exiles, but sometimes we can feel like exiles here in our own country."

We encourage you to read or reread the post **Elisapie: A woman who cherishes tradition**, which shows another side of Elisapie Isaac, and to keep up to date with Elisapie, an artist whose creative universe touches people from different backgrounds. ■

# CPF Network CEO Nicole Thibault Receives Knighthood in the *Ordre des Palmes académiques*

Canadian Parents for French Network CEO, Nicole Thibault's longstanding contributions to the advancement of French as a second language education in Canada were recognized last March with her investiture as a Knight (*Chevalier*) in the *Ordre des Palmes académiques*. The order is an honour that recognizes excellence in teaching and promotion of the French language and culture. It is bestowed by the French Republic and is one of the oldest civil honours.

Ms. Thibault strongly believes that learning French is a benefit for all Canadians and has over 30 years of experience

working to ensure all students in Canada have an opportunity to access and learn their second official language. From being a French immersion teacher, educational consultant and vice principal and continuing her career with leadership roles to advocate for FSL education, she has dedicated her life to the French language, as such, the honour is deeply personal.

CPF was delighted with the news as Ms. Thibault has led important initiatives to strengthen the organization and has meaningfully impacted the FSL learning landscape in her role.



His Excellency Michel Miraillet, Ambassador of France to Canada presenting the honour to Ms. Thibault.



“ I am humbled with this honour and gratified to join other notable Canadians who have received this distinction. Pursuing my passion of actively promoting French learning and education has allowed me to work alongside and be surrounded by passionate and inspiring leaders – and while my name is being decorated, I am receiving this honour as part of a collective work that I share with past and present Board volunteers and staff of CASLT, CPF as well as visionaries who have served the Official Languages Branch of Canadian Heritage. ”

– Nicole Thibault, CPF Network CEO

“We believe this prestigious honour and recognition of Ms. Thibault’s career are well deserved. We are very proud of this important achievement and all her accomplishments. Her contributions have made a long-lasting impact not only on our organization but on FSL education and the country,” said Derrek Bentley, CPF National President.

The honour of *Chevalier* (knight) was awarded to Ms. Thibault by His Excellency, the Ambassador of France to Canada, Mr. Michel Miraillet, in an official ceremony held at the Embassy of France on March 28.

The *Ordre des Palmes académiques* was originally established in 1808 by Emperor Napoleon I to honour distinguished members of the University of Paris. It became an order of merit in 1955.

The prestigious honour is bestowed on noteworthy individuals of the educational community, in France and abroad, who have made important contributions to education, science and universities, while also promoting the French language. ■



Betty Gormley (CPF Ontario), Michael Tryon (CPF Alberta), Nicole Thibault and Derrek Bentley (CPF National President).



Chantal Bourbonnais, Executive Director of the *Association Canadienne des professionnels de l'immersion* (ACPI) also received knighthood in the *Ordre*.



CPF Network office staff



# Youth Programming With An Edge: Over 55 Activities Offered Year-Round Both In-Person And Online

The TD-Blue Metropolis Children's Festival is supported by TD Bank Group.

The TD-Blue Metropolis Children's Festival runs all year long, offering young readers month after month of reading fun, along with the endless benefits of reading to boot! Between September and June, the Festival presents over 55 themed activities for children, youth, and families to enjoy in person and online. Discover all that Blue Metropolis has to offer!



## GO TO BLUE MET ON THE WEB

For a few years already, ecology and numbers have been on our mind at Blue Metropolis.

Our ***Numbers Spelled Out*** platform proposes rich content tackling themes related to math, money, saving, spending, and what things are worth, adapted for various age groups. What's more, our ***Young Ecologist Club*** series presents original content on the expansive subject of the environment. Both series feature quizzes, podcasts, and reading suggestions for the whole family, available via the Blue Metropolis website.

Each platform features a rich lineup of authors, including **Bonnie Farmer, Fabienne Gagnon, Catherine Austen, Dominique de Loppinot, and André Marois** for ***Numbers Spelled Out***, and **Andrew Katz, Elise Moser, Sylvain Rivard, and Mireille Messier** for the ***Young Ecologists Club***.

**New in 2023:** Discover our various edutainment activity sheets, a series of playful and educational exercises that children can do on their own or with their parents to improve their academic skills while still having fun!







## BEAUTIFUL REGIONS

We're thrilled to present the inaugural edition of the new ***Simply Fabulous!*** series thanks to the support of the *Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec*.

Children's literature knows no borders, not even regional ones! All over Quebec, authors are living, writing and illustrating books for young people to devour. Their imaginations feed on the beauty of the landscapes around them, places often echoed in their novels and picture books.

Our new series aims to highlight the work of children's authors working across Quebec. For this first edition of the series, we asked three authors to write an original text about their corner of the province. **Amy Lachapelle**, **Carolyn Chouinard**, and **Keven Girard** wrote original pieces about their respective regions, the *Abitibi-Témiscamingue*, the *Chaudière-Appalaches*, and the *Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean*. Their texts were

then recorded by professional voice actors **Jeanne Bellefeuille**, **Élisabeth Sirois** and **Louise Portal**. The written and podcast versions of the texts are available on the Blue Metropolis website.

To mark the return of spring, the three authors also visited school children in their respective regions to present their texts, share a few thoughts with youths and to encourage them to participate in our exciting new contest: "Tell us about your region".

Set to officially launch on May 16, this contest includes two ways to enter: with written texts (texts must be submitted in French), and with photos.

Full contest details are available on our website: <https://metropolisbleu.org>. Visit us and follow us on social media for more info. We have lots more on offer as part of this special project, including a fun quiz and reading recommendations featuring regional authors!





## CPF PARTNERS

### CHILDCARE AND DAYCARE DAYS

Early childhood educators are superheroes. They work in childcare centres and daycares and play a crucial role in the life and general development of young children. Each year since 2016, the TD-Blue Metropolis Children's Festival organizes two Childcare and Daycare Days to highlight educators' contribution to the growth and wellbeing of preschoolers.

We invite educators to take part in theme-based days on social and educational issues that can be adapted to the very young. In 2022-2023, the themes were Numeracy and Ecology.

All an educator has to do is select a picture book from the daycare library, or from our suggested reading list, and read the children a story that deals with the day's theme. Naturally, we're always thrilled to get photographs and comments from their event!

Childcare centres and daycares that register for the event are automatically entered in a draw for 2 gift certificates worth \$300 each, redeemable at an independent bookstore in their region.

More importantly, the series helps increase children's awareness of various issues and promotes their academic success.



### TWO EXCITING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Blue Metropolis Foundation offers bilingual educational programs each year to raise kids' awareness of various issues and encourage them to speak out. This year, two programs were available to children and youth in French- and English-language schools across Quebec.

**Veggie Patch Adventurers** offered participating students a unique second-language learning experience based on literature, cooking, and ecology. Participants had the opportunity to team up to compose a bilingual song that was made into a professional video. The video will be launched in May 2023 on our website.

**Quebec Roots** was also in full swing for a 17th consecutive year. This always popular educational program was offered to young Anglo-Quebecers in seven classes from seven different schools. Last fall, participating students were mentored by professional writers and photographers who helped them express what they face in their own lives. The students' texts and photos have been gathered and published in a book and exhibition. The book can be downloaded on the project web page: <https://metropolisbleu.org/roots>.

### GOOSEBUMPS FOR HALLOWEEN

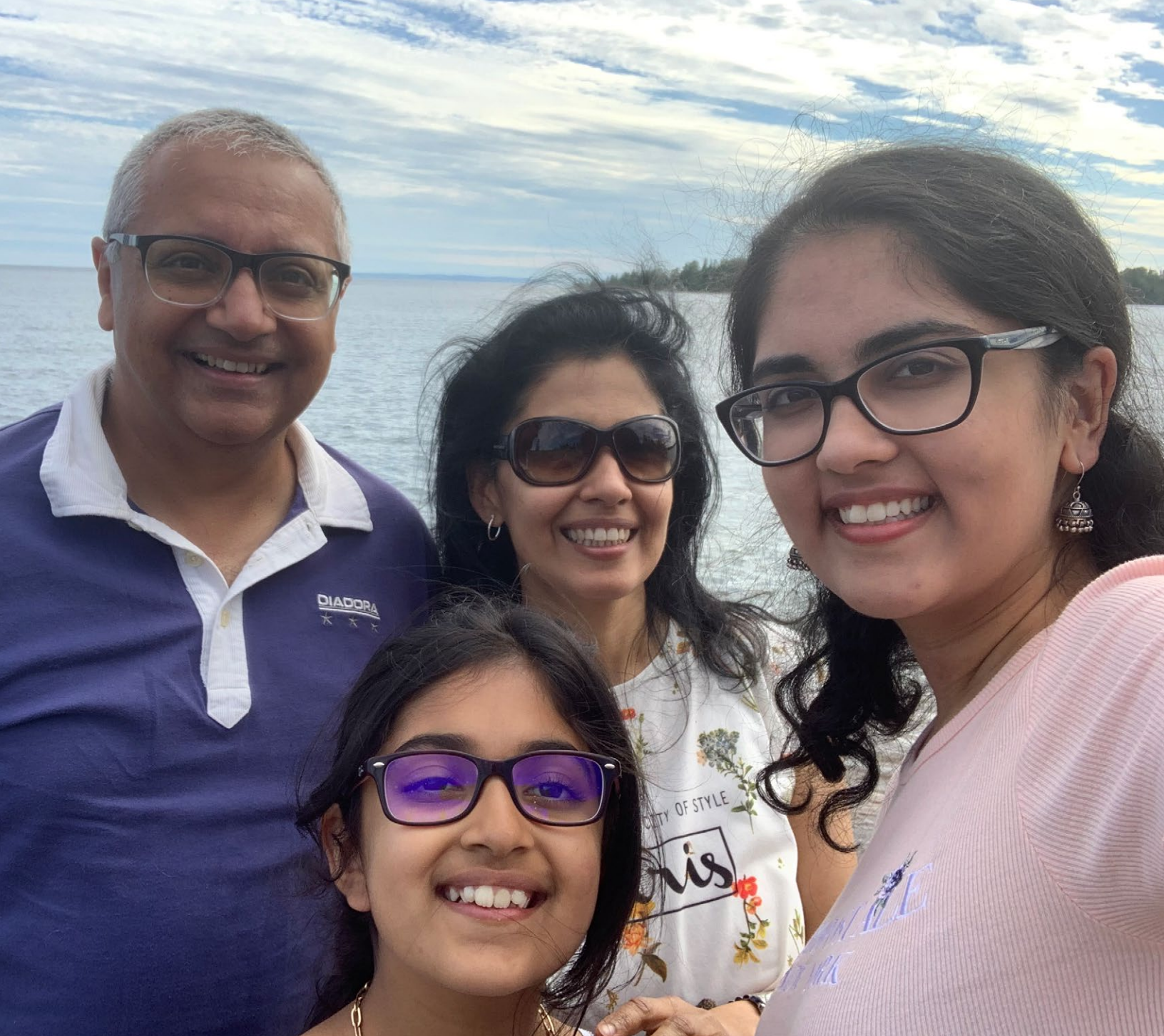
Each Halloween since 2020, Blue Metropolis has presented numerous activities on themes bound to pique the interest of parents and little ones alike. In fall 2023, Blue Metropolis will be adding new podcasts to its collection of spooky stories and will also offer a major writing contest for kids aged 9 to 12.



### THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES IN 2023-2024!

Follow us on our social media and check out our website regularly for the latest at Blue Met and for news on our 2024 programming. Visit [www.bluemetropolis.org/youth](http://www.bluemetropolis.org/youth)





Spotlight on a CPF Family:  
**Meet the Kumars!**

**“I highly recommend the services offered by CPF to other parents who wish to support their kids journey to bilingualism.”**

**S**umeet Kumar, a husband, a father, a parent, and now an avid CPF Volunteer has shared how Canadian Parents for French Ontario (CPF Ontario) played a significant role in advancing French learning for his daughter Aarohi. Sumeet and his wife Puja have been active in advocating for their daughter and supporting CPF Ontario's mission. They even drove the almost 15 hours from Thunder Bay to CPF Ontario's Blue Mountain Family Event and AGM last year!

In the middle of the pandemic, Sumeet and Puja wanted to put Aarohi, their youngest daughter, in French immersion but were hesitant. She was about to start Grade 3 at Elsie MacGill Public School in Thunder Bay, Ontario with zero previous French experience.

Believing strongly in their child's abilities and really wanting her to have this bilingual advantage, and the opportunities to come, these newly Canadian parents pushed for solutions.

Thinking that maybe a tutor could help, they started looking, and landed on the CPF website.

They called Rosemary Sutherland, CPF Ontario's Chapter Development and Outreach Manager asking about CPF programs and what could be done.

Aarohi started in **Reading Circle** and **Franco-Fun** so that she experienced French twice a week while starting FI.

"It was very helpful for her because it was learning through fun," said Sumeet.

"We spoke with Rosemary about possible tutoring on top of the CPF activities, so now she had French 3 times a week outside the classroom."

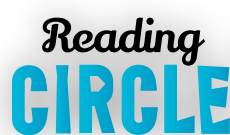
By the time June of that school year came along, Aarohi surprised even her teacher with how well her progress went from zero French to a level 18 reading!

"We were so happy with how much she learned in just 1 year," said the Kumars.

"The virtual one-on-one sessions, **Franco-Fun** activities, **Reading Circles**, Baking workshops, and the **WebPals Program** organized by CPF, along with constant encouragement provided by the instructors, were key enablers that have been instrumental in my daughter's ability to learn French," said Sumeet.

"I highly recommend the services offered by CPF to other parents who wish to support their kids journey to bilingualism."

## Programs offered by CPF Ontario:





## About Their Involvement with CPF

When asked about his and his wife's volunteering and involvement with CPF, Sumeet took no credit. "Well, I don't do very much, but my wife Puja joined the school as a lunch supervisor and made a really positive impact and connection with everyone there," he said.

"Puja is like a liaison between the school and Rosemary from CPF." He explained that through a great communications tool called "Seesaw" the school was able to communicate with teachers, students and parents and keep them up to date with any programs CPF Ontario was offering for students online.

"So, I would get the CPF Ontario Communiqué and then give it to Puja to share with the school," said Sumeet.

"Then the principal often posted CPF posters to promote these opportunities for the parents to register their kids in French practice." That's a great thing to do as a volunteer, to act as a conduit to the school so more CPF opportunities reach more parents and students! ■

**If you would like to find out more about volunteering or CPF programs, visit <https://cpf.ca/en/participate>.**



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# This Summer, Host a Youth!

## The YMCA Summer Work Student Exchange Program In a Nutshell

Do you know a 16 or 17-year-old who needs a plan for this summer? The YMCA Summer Work Student Exchange (SWSE) program offers the opportunity to travel to a new community in Canada, gain paid job experience and practise a second official language. Our program staff will find accommodations for youth participants in their new community, organize and arrange all the travel tickets, and secure a paid job position in a non-profit organization for precious work experience.

## How the Program Can Shape a Teen's Future

Sanjana has been involved with the SWSE program since 2015, first as a youth participant and then as a SWSE staff member. We asked her to share what made her want to join and, eventually, work to support this program.



*When I was 16 years old, a poster changed my life. My eleventh-grade French teacher put one up in our classroom that promised the "experience of a lifetime." And as someone who absolutely loves a good adventure, I knew I had to sign up. Before I knew it, I was on my way to Montreal with the SWSE Program!*

*For six weeks, I had the most exhilarating and indescribable adventure full of laughter, challenges, and amazing memories I will never forget. My favourite activity of all was our last one, where our coordinators told us all to dress up and took us on a boat cruise! We danced the night away, and even years later, I remember it as one of the best nights of my life.*

*Eventually, my family became a host through the program. And when my sister was old enough, she went on an exchange too. We went to two completely different cities, but she had the same unforgettable summer I did.*

*Knowing how SWSE could change entire families' lives, I decided to apply as a local coordinator. Three years later, I can honestly say it has been the most rewarding job I have ever had. I met some of my closest friends through SWSE and I feel like this program and the people I met through it shaped who I am today. I learned to be more confident in myself, to take chances, and most importantly, to be open to new experiences and challenges.*

**If you know a teenager who could be interested by the SWSE program, share the program homepage: [swse.ymcagta.org](https://swse.ymcagta.org)**





## Newfoundland Family Opens Its Doors to Quebec Teens

During six weeks in July and August, families with teenagers participating in the program welcome one another in their home. Unfortunately, not all families with youth in the program can host due to accessibility reasons such as health, work schedules or language barriers. To allow teenagers from different backgrounds to participate, a network of families called “Alternate Exchange Hosts” generously welcome participants in their home and make the SWSE program accessible.

Melissa, Paul, and their two daughters Scarlett and Carrie from St. John’s, Newfoundland participated in the program a few years ago as one of the SWSE Alternate Exchanges Host. They had a wonderful experience opening up their home during summer to two exchange students from Quebec. Hundreds of families like Melissa and Paul decide to support the program by welcoming youth in their home. Often, the young participants become part of the family and they create bonds with their hosts that last for a lifetime. Here’s what Melissa wanted to share:

*In spring, I heard about Alternate Exchange Hosts for the YMCA Summer Work Student Exchange program in St. John’s. We have a spare bedroom in our house so I thought to myself, “why not?” We have a little girl named Scarlett who will be starting French Immersion in September and one day, maybe she’ll want to participate in these types of programs.*

*We started looking into how we could help. The thing that really sealed the deal was that we’d be giving youth in our community a chance to travel. Signing on as alternate hosts meant there would be a space available here to welcome a student on exchange from somewhere else – which meant a youth in our community would have an opportunity to explore somewhere new. It felt great knowing we were doing the right thing!*

*The excitement really kicked in when we went to the student and parent meeting, where we got to meet the other families and youth participating in the exchange. We also received the profiles of the youth we’d be hosting: Édouard and Mayika.*

*The profiles said Édouard was a star soccer player, so I got him a volunteer coaching position with our local soccer club. It was nice to be*

*able to help him make further connections in areas he was interested in outside of his work.*

*Hosting Édouard and Mayika in our home during July and August was wonderful. They really became part of our family and we loved spending time with them. One of the fun little moments was taking them grocery shopping. We’d have them pick out things they liked to make their experience more familiar and welcoming.*

*We also liked to tag along and participate in the weekend activities that the local coordinator had set up for the youth. It was a great opportunity to spend more time with them and include our own children as well. We went along for visits to museums, summer festivals, nature parks, and more. We also took them to our local amusement fair and to a traditional kitchen/deck party. Our girls got to make so many great memories with Édouard and Mayika.*

*Overall, our YMCA Summer Work Student Exchange experience was exciting and fulfilling. We made many memories together and had a wonderful summer.*

**Do you want to host a youth and help them learn French this summer? Welcome a SWSE participant into your home! This year’s exchange dates are July 1 to August 12.**

**For more information and apply, visit the SWSE program family & hosting webpage. If you want to contact our team please email [info-swse@ymcagta.org](mailto:info-swse@ymcagta.org) or call +1-877-639-9987.**

# KEY CPF CONTACTS ACROSS CANADA

## Network Office

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T: 613.235.1481  
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## Quebec Office & Nunavut Support

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## Northwest Territories

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info@on.cpf.ca on.cpf.ca

## New Brunswick

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## Nova Scotia

8 Flamingo Dr., Halifax, NS B3M 4N8  
T: 902.453.2048 TF: 1.877.273.5233 (in Nova Scotia only)  
cpf@ns.sympatico.ca ns.cpf.ca

## Prince Edward Island

PO Box 2785, Charlottetown, PE CIA 8C4  
T: 902.368.3703 ed@cpfpei.pe.ca pei.cpf.ca

## Newfoundland & Labrador

PO Box 8601, Stn A, St. John's, NL A1B 3P2  
T: 709.579.1776 ed@cpfnl.ca nl.cpf.ca  
TF: 1.877.576.1776 (in Newfoundland & Labrador only)



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# Introducing French to our Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

**There is no downside to being bilingual – and the best time to start is early!**

Research has shown that babies raised in bilingual environments develop stronger core cognitive skills like decision-making and problem-solving – even before they speak. Executive brain functions are key to success in school, and academic success is a big indicator of long-term wellbeing. Prepare your child for successful experiences as they grow, learn and transition to school.

**The best part is that you can raise a bilingual child even if you are not bilingual:**



- Incorporate French into your daily life. Normalizing hearing and using French at home will increase everyone's comfort level. Play French radio stations. Watch French or bilingual children's TV programming or cartoons (mini-TFO, *Passe-Partout*, change to French in Netflix and Disney). Listen to French podcasts for bedtime stories (Bododo on Ohdio, CBC/RC). Make a sensory bin filled with items for your child to explore – practise naming items in French.



- Treat bilingualism as an asset. Lots of French words make their way into English. Point out these words as you encounter them. Introduce common expressions and commands. *Bravo! Attention! Bon appétit! Bon voyage! À la mode...* Celebrate moments when French pops up in daily life!



- Introduce French through music. Singing, counting, and simple nursery rhymes help to introduce sounds, words and patterns as well as build the ability to process other auditory input, thus helping retain new words and structures.



- Visit your public library regularly. Sign out and read French or bilingual audio picture books. Attend French story times as a family. Read the stories aloud in your home language and then again in French. Explore your community. Look for French on signage or complete a neighbourhood scavenger hunt to learn vocabulary in French. Visit: [amelieisabelle.com/cherche-et-trouve](https://amelieisabelle.com/cherche-et-trouve)



- Download French apps (*Boukili, Idélio*) or play games on French educational websites. Many apps are free and make learning French fun using a game-like approach. These types of tools do tend to require reading, but also incorporate visual and auditory cues.



- Encourage other adults in your child's life who speak French – friends, neighbours, youth leaders, relatives – to strike up simple conversations with your child, reinforcing basic greetings and sharing on a few commonly enjoyed topics. Look for a bilingual babysitter proud to share their French with your child.



- Follow and read parenting blogs and magazines focused on raising bilingual children in Canada.
  - [bilingual-babies.com/multilingual-living-magazine/](https://bilingual-babies.com/multilingual-living-magazine/)
  - [multilingualmatters.com/page/bilingual-family-newsletter](https://multilingualmatters.com/page/bilingual-family-newsletter)  
(an archive of past issues of the Bilingual Family Newsletter, which ceased publication in 2010)
  - [developpement-langagier.fpfcb.bc.ca/en.html](https://developpement-langagier.fpfcb.bc.ca/en.html)



- Treat bilingualism as an investment. When planning your child's transition to school, consider French or bilingual playgroups, day cares, preschool and French immersion kindergarten programs. Attend parent information sessions and ask questions. Get a feel for how French language development will be supported.

● read. ● write. ● speak ● understand



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