



Le Fouineur: a program that supports academic success in the City of Repentigny

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Abstract:

Based on the natural link between access to books and academic success, this article describes the creation of a programme designed to support academic success; it was established by the public library of Repentigny, a suburb of Montréal. The article describes the pilot project set up in 2006-2007 with the help of two elementary schools located in disadvantaged neighborhoods. It also discusses the results. In order to foster interest in homework, the Fouineur encourages the use of quality resources and access to the specialists of the public library. To date, twenty thousand children have participated in the workshops of the Fouineur.

INTRODUCTION

Early in 2005, Quebec media were reporting on a series of issues including providing help with homework in elementary schools, the lack of modern collections in school libraries and the differences in reading skills between girls and boys. During the same period, the Ministry of Education¹ announced an action plan to encourage reading in schools: 60 million dollars were available for a period of three years for the acquisition of books and training staff to acquire skills in providing activities. With this action plan,

¹ Ministère de L'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport du Québec

Minister Reid announced that he wanted to introduce youth to the pleasures of reading, insisting that it was the best gift to them, since «academic success necessarily entails reading» (MELS, 2005). In 2003, a symposium of the APSDS (an association for the promotion of school library services), entitled «Reading mediation among youth, it's time to act!»² had brought to light the correlation between access to library resources and students academic success. It also stressed the importance of networking between school and municipal actors in order to work together on a common goal: promoting reading and books (Melançon, 2003).

At the Robert-Lussier Library in Repentigny, we were convinced that our library could intervene with the youth in the community without replacing the school library. Despite all the obvious connections between reading and academic success, the public library was almost deserted after school. Yet thousands of documents as well as a collection of reference books aimed at elementary school students were available. Didn't our young citizens need information to conduct their research, tools to do their homework and a quiet and conducive place to work?

The children that came on weekends and during holidays for leisure pursuits did not visit us during week days. Was it because they were unaware of the resources available to them? Because they had no means of transportation to come to their library during weekdays? Or was it simply lack of interest?

After statistical analysis of loans at the library, we rapidly made the observation that if collections for youth were underutilized in school work, it was because we were not doing enough to promote them. It then became imperative for us to share our resources and to demonstrate its relevance within an academic setting.

Taking into account that the mission of public libraries includes an educational component, we know there is a documented link between access to books and academic success. Hence, without an exhaustive review of literature, we can say not only that the link was evident throughout our findings but that several research results (Fryer and Levitt, 2004; Indramati, 2010) indicate that middle class children surrounded by books at an early age are more likely to succeed in school than a child of the same age who does not benefit from the same stimulation. Literature shows that certain risk factors make students from disadvantaged backgrounds more vulnerable in terms of success. Support, stimulation and supervision are not always part of the family structure (Hart, 2010). However, the Action Plan on Reading in School³ argues that «If the passion for literature is aroused in the early elementary years, it is likely that reading will be a hobby and that this attraction will continue throughout adult life» (Commission scolaire de Montréal, 2010). We would add that being an adult reader certainly has a positive impact on all spheres of our lives.

² La médiation de la lecture auprès des jeunes, le temps d'agir!

³ Plan d'action sur la lecture à l'école.

A PILOT PROJECT

In 2005, the Lanaudière “scoreboard” on the disadvantaged (Leclerc et al., 2005) illustrated out the socioeconomic profiles present in the Regional County of L'Assomption. We used this scoreboard to analyze the data specific to different sectors of Repentigny, as it became clear that there was a correlation between being disadvantaged and reading skills (Duke, 2000).

Repentigny, 12th largest city in Quebec, was, in 2005, a city of 76,237 inhabitants with a rather high average income of \$71 737⁴. But the results of the scoreboard clearly indicate that there are some neighborhoods in Repentigny that are less fortunate. These areas are actually located at the periphery of the Robert-Lussier Library. Two elementary schools are in the vicinity of the library.⁵ We met with the principals of these schools to offer them a pilot project which would invite them to explore the library and its resources with their students. The two principals have enthusiastically accepted our offer. The first steps of the programme Le Fouineur were in place.

Le Fouineur would first and foremost be a place within the library where all the resources aimed at elementary school students could be found. The space would also offer a climate conducive to study. The main question was where to get the funding to make it all happen? We found the ideal financial partner in the regional conference of elected representatives of Lanaudière (CRÉ)⁶. Chance being on our side, there was, at that time, a call for projects as part of a regional fund to implement programmes against deprivation⁷. The CRÉ is sensitive to anything that affects academic achievement, because in our region, unfortunately, dropout statistics are greater than the provincial average: in 2007-2008, the dropout rate was 32% in Lanaudière and 25,3% for the rest of Quebec⁸ and the rate keeps rising since 2004 (0,6% difference). Our pilot project was funded with a total budget of approximately \$40 000, including the contribution of the City of Repentigny and grants from various community partners, including the CRÉ. Thereafter, we informed the school board of our approach and they, through the Director of didactic materials⁹,

⁴ 2001 Census reports: statistic portrait of Lanaudière:
www.stat.gouv.ca/regions/recens2001_14/revenu14/revstrucfam14.htm (consulted on Internet on October 15th, 2010)

⁵ Pie-XII school and Emile-Nelligan school, both from the school board Les Affluents

⁶ Conférence régional des élus

⁷ Fonds de développement régional (FDR): Enetente spécifique sur le développement social, 2007.

⁸ Official statistics on Québec (BDSO).

http://www.bdso.gouv.qc.ca/pls/ken/Ken263_Liste_Total.p_tratr_reslt?p_iden_tran=REP ERRE5F6V45-202133024735kH9:&p_modi_url=1116113630&p_id_rapp=1805
(consulted on November 16th, 2010)

⁹ M. Fernand Lefebvre, director of didactic materials, Commission scolaire des Affluents

supported our efforts by providing guidance to facilitate the development of the programme and meet the concerns of teachers.

ORGANIZING THE PROJECT

At first, we had to define our overall objective. What did we want to achieve in the end? To this question a response imposed by itself: that our young citizens develop the habit of attending their local library on school days, with and without their class. We wanted to instill in children the love of books and encourage them to use library resources to do their homework.

Another aspect of our reflection was to make the space called Le Fouineur a destination in itself. To fully utilize the resources of the library, it was crucial that children would spend time within its walls. The idea was to develop a friendly and inviting space where children feel comfortable. A place with an image that they could relate to and that would attract them on a regular basis. We wanted to develop within them the desire to browse through books and to enable them to select the most relevant for the schoolwork at hand. Could we dare to hope that children would be enthusiastic about spending time at the library after spending a whole day at school? And how would we convince them that it could be a pleasure to come and do their homework at the public library? It was imperative that our offer to children be attractive and unifying. Our programme had to contrast with the one offered at school: not duplicating existing resources and adding a playful twist to it.

Knowing that children have a strong need for self, belonging and identification, we created a character with a preteen look. An animal was chosen, the weasel, with the idea of them seeking to learn, to dig for more information... The character's colors were carefully chosen, because we would also use them to decorate the space Le Fouineur.

Even though we lacked the financial means to create the space we wanted, we still had to develop an attractive and colorful area in the library in order to encourage children to study there. Everything was done within our organization. The designer, one of our town employees, created the character and proposed a layout. The carpenter, also a town employee, designed the furniture from recycled materials. We staked everything on the non-fiction collection. It was through books that we wanted to rally the children. It was a bold gamble. The main problem was that we did not just want to attract young readers, but we were focused primarily on those who did not read and who had not yet discovered their local library.

We relied on originality. Instead of shelves, the carpenter built school-like lockers and painted in a bold yellow. The collection was organized by subdividing it by main subjects as they are presented in school. Since we were speaking to a young audience, we thought about organising the collection based on their school reality and thus grouping books by subject. What were the subjects taught in school? What skills were involved, what knowledge is required for each grade? These are the questions we asked ourselves in addition to considering all of our normal selection criteria. So we read and reread the

Ministry of Education programme, as well as academic magazines and catalogs provided by publishers. It was important that Le Fouineur be complementary to the school objectives and not duplicate what existed already. As a result, we chose not to acquire textbooks and workbooks used in classrooms and opted instead for non-fiction on school subjects, reference books aimed specifically at elementary students, collections of books suitable for beginning readers (and classified by level of difficulty), an area for learning English and Spanish and educational magazines. The guideline for the development of our toolbox is simple: each book must be both visually appealing and have an even more attractive content.

Our main attraction to entice children to come and work at Le Fouineur is our collection. All the books in this carefully chosen collection are new and recent. Once the project had been fully developed, we approached the principals of elementary schools of Repentigny.

A THREE PART PROGRAMME

Within the first few days of the school year, a document explaining our programme is sent to school principals. Afterwards, several of them invite us to present our services to their team of teachers.

Activities in the classroom

The programme has three components which aim to provide the library resources from various angles: books for leisure, for exploration and discovery and as working tools. In addition to material resources, we put great emphasis on human resources. The quality of our programme is possible through the expertise of specialists who are all employees of the City of Repentigny. These specialists have the support of a team of volunteers.

During the pilot project, the first contact with students was done via an activity within the classroom. Students from twenty groups coming from two elementary schools, Emile-Nelligan and Pie-XII, attended these presentations. More than 400 students took part in the pilot project. A coordinator from the public library provides an activity promoting Le Fouineur and its resources in the classrooms. Our main challenge at this point in the project was to find a formula that would undoubtedly encourage students to visit their local library.

Finally, it is through a display of books carefully selected for each school level that the coordinator captured the attention of the students and communicated her passion for all kinds of books. Of course, books with intriguing titles were very popular. Examples of titles enjoyed by children: All the answers to questions you'd never ask yourself¹⁰,

¹⁰ Nessmann, Philippe. 2006. *Toutes les réponses aux questions que vous ne vous êtes jamais posées*. 2, (Paris): Palette, 128p.

Encyclopaedia of the strangest animals¹¹, or Dragonology: encyclopaedia of dragons¹². The coordinator did not hesitate to reach out to students who reacted less than their companions: You do not like to read? Why don't you try a book on jokes? A compendium of statistics on hockey? After this introduction, she distributed to each student a binder with a drawing of Le Fouineur, with a membership form from the library, a brochure for parents and a bookmark. The promotional material was designed to be attractive for both students and parents and thus are therefore colorful, professional-looking and concise. For instance, the document intended for students is not a pamphlet or a letter, but rather a bookmark with a cartoon indicating that they can do homework at the public library after school. This promotional formula has been very popular with students.

The coordinator encountered success every time she met a class. That very day, students would request the same books at the public library. It was therefore necessary to purchase multiple copies to meet the demand and not risk losing these new subscribers. Up to five copies per title were purchased, which is rather unusual for our youth collection.

Once the coordinator completed her visits in the two schools, the other components of our programme were implemented.

Learning to find books

Teachers have the opportunity to work with their class at Le Fouineur during school hours and enjoy the resources. In addition to the space and the tool kit, we could, when requested, prepare a selection of books on specific topics. Classes are welcomed by a professional librarian who trains them how to find information in the library. The librarian demystifies our various classification systems, the use of the OPAC and encyclopaedias. She helps them with their research. A series of workshops integrating these specific concepts is presented to teachers at the beginning of the school year.

Learning takes place through games and challenges. For example, the librarian has developed a game for third graders in which they take on the role of an editor. This activity introduces them to the different parts of a book. Another example is an activity in which the students learn to identify countries and cities by consulting an atlas and its index. Information such as «C9 on page 30 » is thus assimilated. These games demand speed on behalf of children which earns their interest and enthusiasm. The librarian dedicated to the programme Le Fouineur has developed six different workshops. These workshops are offered to teachers and their students in order to develop specific skills using various tools (atlas, encyclopedia, OPAC).

¹¹ Zeltoun, Charline. 2005. Zarbi!: l'encyclopédie des animaux les plus bizarres.

¹² Drake, Ernest. 2005. Dragonologie: encyclopédie des dragons. Toulouse: Milan Jeunesse, 29p.

To facilitate the integration of these new concepts, a beginner's guide is handed out to students at the end of the activity.

Teachers who participate in workshops of Le Fouineur with their class have access to a library card. This card has several advantages, allowing them to borrow a greater number of documents for an extended period. They can borrow up to fifty documents for a two month period. The purpose of these privileges is to enable the research started in Le Fouineur to be continued in class.

After school workshops

The space dedicated to the programme is filled with fun educational materials during homework workshops. Mediators (retired teachers who are dedicated to our homework workshops) and librarians have acquired a number of resources specifically designed to help children with their homework. For instance, students have access to a clock to learn time, a cardboard pizza cut into pieces to comprehend fractions, flash cards to practice and memorize times tables and cards to learn to draw letters and numbers. Mediators also have developed material to meet student needs.

The homework workshops take place outside of school hours: Monday to Thursday, from 3:30 pm to 6 pm and Sundays, from 1 pm to 5 pm. Upon arrival, children write their name on the attendance sheet; this allows us to collect statistics on the number of participants and the schools they attend. Aside from the mandatory registration upon arrival, homework time is on a voluntary basis. The students ask for help from the mediator and volunteers, depending on their needs. Volunteers act as «super parents»: they are entirely dedicated to the needs of children since they do not have to cook dinner at the same time! The team consists of six volunteers and a mediator. They were selected based on their interest in homework workshops, work experience and availability. At the beginning of the school year, volunteers take part in a half-day training session, hosted by the mediator and the librarian and which explains the basics of the workshops, the needs of children who attend as well as tips and tricks. A presentation of our different documentary resources and educational material is also offered.

In order to encourage students to return to our homework workshops, we implemented a reward card. Each visit to Le Fouineur entitles them to a stamp on their card. After three consecutive visits, the student can choose a little surprise (for example a pencil or an eraser). We adopted this form of encouragement, which was suggested by a teacher. The sense of belonging, that is to be part of this group of regular users, certainly encourages the child to come to the library. The child is welcomed to the library by someone who knows his name and helps him with his homework. We can say that it is a service specifically tailored to our young members.

Of course, before the programme, it was possible for elementary school students from Repentigny and elsewhere to do their homework at the library. However, the workshops at Le Fouineur are innovative, allowing the student to benefit from a new form of help that is complementary to what is offered in school or at home. Unlike other after-school

programmes, homework workshops at Le Fouineur are available to all, regardless of their academic success. Our goal is to stimulate and motivate children in addition to helping them solve a math problem. The mediator encourages the students to develop the habit in looking information up in books to confirm the answer to a question or any other school related work. The mediator also encourages students to seek help from the librarian in order to pursue a structured research.

FIVE YEARS LATER: TANGIBLE RESULTS

RECOGNITION

From the beginning, Le Fouineur has attracted children and enthusiastic parents. Word of mouth alone has done its own work, so that by the end of the pilot project, several schools have indicated their intention of participating to the programme. Some of them even asked for a presentation to parents at meetings at the beginning of the school year. We believe that the dedication and professionalism of our team has a lot to do with our success. To this day, more than 10,000 attendances have been recorded at our workshops. In 2007, the Union of Municipalities of Quebec awarded the public libraries of Repentigny with a prestigious prize, recognizing the library's role in linking books to academic success. In 2009, the programme received another prize, The Grand Prix Desjardins culture award, for the region of Lanaudiere. There is a desire to regionalise the programme and a project has been submitted to the MCCCCF (minister of culture).

To meet the growing demand in Repentigny, in 2008 we created a second space, this time in the Edmond-Archambault Library, in the Le Gardeur sector of the city. At the Robert-Lussier Library, an extension of the workplace is also being considered because it is more and more crowded. Some children have been unfortunately turned away because there were no more seats available when they arrive.

EVALUATION

Contrary to our initial concern, transportation poses no problem for attending homework workshops. During school hours, as well as after school, children benefit from carpooling by parents. Our attendance lists show that students from 18 schools located on our territory attend Le Fouineur. We were also apprehensive that the homework workshops would turn out to be a form of day care but with few exceptions we have fortunately not been confronted with this situation. The parents of the attending students settle in to help their child or take the opportunity to browse for some books or magazines in the café zone.

Children who participated in the programme Le Fouineur over the past five years have been in contact with a librarian on numerous occasions (workshops on information seeking in the library, promotional events, homework workshops). Thus our young Repentignois know there is a professional in the library whose job is to guide them in their search for information. Several students have developed the habit of asking help

from our librarians who have pointed out that they now have more questions and demands from the children.

Despite this positive context, our work has limitations. When a child has serious problems with his homework, we find that we are less able to help him. Instead, we inform the parents and encourage them to seek appropriate help. Since last year, our team also faced a new problem: special needs for newcomers. Young immigrants have discovered our homework workshops. This delights us but it can be difficult to reach these customers and offer them appropriate services. These children sometimes need specific help with homework, for instance, with learning French. Unfortunately we do not have the expertise to properly help them. Furthermore, communicating this problem to immigrant parents is not always easy if they themselves do not speak French or English. To remedy this situation, we asked for help offering activities to newcomers from an organization for immigrant families in the region. We believe that the public library, in our case the programme Le Fouineur, is a perfect introduction for newcomers, as well as for us to meet them and offer our different services and resources. Our programme plays an important part in making information available and integrating new residents.

We use our statistics to assess the programme. Since the programme began, the number of children who attend our activities has increased by 26%. As for the sense of belonging, we think we have succeeded. The students speak of the programme as if everyone knows about it.

Survey

To understand the level of satisfaction of our users, we recently conducted a survey with students attending our homework workshops on a regular basis. 75 children agreed to answer our survey in class or at the library. We wanted to know what motivated them to attend Le Fouineur. These were their answers:

- Read books in the library
- Learn to find information
- Meet my friends
- Do my homework
- Teamwork

The survey demonstrated out a student who visits Le Fouineur with his class is often his first contact with the public library. 30% of students responded this way, which confirms results of the Ministry of Education analysis on habits and practices by Quebec students over the past 10 years (Rodrigue et al., 2009). Moreover, in 2006, we were surprised to find the same results with several students from Emile-Nelligan, a school which is near the library. Several of them had never set foot in the library. We thus had to revise our programme and redefine our introductory workshop to offer a simpler version, introducing the library environment and the resources available to students.

Another interesting point is that the more active users were in fifth grade and are fairly autonomous in their work. The second largest group of students that attends our workshops are the first graders. They usually visit Le Fouineur with family to learn reading skills. Parents are delighted to discover the multitude of resources that are available to them and they appreciate the motivational effect of working in a neutral place such as Le Fouineur. Thus, they can focus on this special time with their child during which the household chores, telephone and television do not interfere. This does not mean that Le Fouineur is a silent place as there is almost a buzz of activity. It should be noted that the constant presence of the mediator since the beginning of the programme is a motivation in itself. In 2006, we had visited a class of third grade students to shoot a promotional video (Pie-XII school). As the same question as our survey was asked («Why do you like to come to do your homework at Le Fouineur?»), the students answered that's quiet (which translates to no TV or no baby crying) and to be with Mrs. Lorraine (the mediator). Five years later, the same observations are clear.

Twenty students indicated that they attend Le Fouineur because of the help they receive from adults. After all, isn't a personalized greeting an essential ingredient to excellence in customer service? The mediator, who has been working for the past five years at our homework workshops, has given a personal twist to our services and added a human dimension. To the question «What do you like most when you come to Le Fouineur?», a child checked all the answers, and added «See the smiles of the adults...». In fact, to feel welcomed seems to have an undeniable impact on our students. A recent study in the UK on behalf of Museums, Libraries & Archives (MLA) recognizes that the key elements to properly reach out to youth in a learning environment is the quality of library resources, a stimulating environment and a friendly contact with staff (Ipsos MORI Socail Research Institute, 2010). There is also a significant intergenerational link that has been developed between the children and volunteers. Children and seniors benefit from this relationship of trust, which adds to the favorable climate of Le Fouineur. Some volunteers are there since the beginning and know each student by their name, including those who return to visit once in high school.

Among the spontaneous feedback from children, we found a few gems that are representative of the general sentiment:

«The adult support is precious because instead of having problems, we learn and understand.»

«I'm good now and intelligent, Congrats! You help me a lot!»

«Le Fouineur is the best place for homework/study because we have lots of books!»

Some teachers mentioned the positive effects on parents whose children attend our programme. A teacher at Emile-Nelligan school describes le Fouineur as « A little paradise for our students: quiet, peaceful and resourceful. It develops the love of reading and the good habit of going to the library. It is a tool that supports my work and my various projects.»

NEW PROJECTS

Le Fouineur +

The Edmond-Archambault Library is governed by a memorandum of understanding between the City of Repentigny and Les Affluents School Board. The library serves a dual purpose, open to students attending Horizon High School during morning and open to public the rest of the day. When the homework workshops were set up at the library, students from junior high showed interest. Some of them worked in teams, others sought help for their research. Over time, some have offered their services to help the younger children by doing volunteer work, under the supervision of the mediator.

We then had the idea of using the resources of Le Fouineur to facilitate the integration of students in their first year of high school. Therefore Le Fouineur at Edmond-Archambault Library includes a special feature: the toolbox in place includes a collection dedicated to students in junior high. Le Fouineur + has its own signature and brings together resources that have been selected not only for academic subjects, as we do for the regular collection, but with the objectives of the high school curriculum. Obviously, it is not always easy to combine children who are learning to read and adolescents within the same space, if only from a social perspective. One of our goals is to eventually divide the space into two different work areas.

Dissemination

Our homework workshops also include a lively aspect since we offer conferences on academic achievement and on homework coaching. These conferences are given by professionals recognized for their expertise. During the conference, an activity is offered to children in the space Le Fouineur. Last year, we offered a conference by Louise St-Pierre, author of «How to motivate children to do homework». The conference took place in the library, while the children were enjoying an activity called Brain Gym. In addition, at strategic moments of the year (just before the holidays, during spring break, at the end of the school year), homework time is set aside to give room to celebrating festivities. Students efforts throughout the year are rewarded with an invitation for a special activity (a show, a movie, a workshop with an artist), combined with lunch. This is an opportunity to spend quality time in Le Fouineur... and perhaps read a book with family.

CHALLENGES WITH FINANCING

The only downside to our programme is the precariousness of its funding. Maintaining the programme represents an annual cost of \$40 000. It is obvious that the programme cannot be absorbed within the operating budget of a municipal library. Its success lies in the specialization of resources, both human and documentary, which requires additional staff and money. Even with a dedicated team of volunteers, the stability of the

programme relies on the expertise, professionalism and leadership of paid mediators. Since the beginning, the CRÉ and the MCCCCF (ministry of culture, communications and the Status of Women)¹³ have financially supported the programme. The various private partners, even without great visibility in exchange for their financial contribution, have funded over \$20 000. The major problem is the operating costs. We are able to finance the programme only on a year-to-year basis. The sustainability of the programme is never ensured. Instead of focusing on development, our efforts are put into searching for funding. We must find a major financial partner to take part in the project.

One interesting avenue would be a partnership between municipal and school spheres. If students receive additional help in Le Fouineur programme, schools benefit from exclusive services that can be defined according to their needs. In 2007-2008, six schools in the West Side of Repentigny contributed financially to the programme, with the help and willingness of a principal who strongly believed in the benefits of our homework workshops. He felt that access to our resources was a valuable asset to students at his school. But not all principals are comfortable with financing a municipal project.

CONCLUSION

The year 2011 marks a positive outcome to our financial impasse. We are currently developing an agreement with Les Affluents School Board: it will participate financially to our programme in order to ensure services for all schools in Repentigny. The school board recognizes that our initiative contributes to academic success. André Thibault, professor at the University of Quebec in Trois-Rivières, points out that «today there is an urgent need for concerted action in order to deal with old and new problems such as dropout and continuity of services. Concerted municipal/ school (...) is far beyond the exchange of equipment and premises.» (Thibault, 2008). Thibault cites the programme Le Fouineur as an example of successful partnership with the community. Principals have also cited the programme Le Fouineur as means for training students to find information and to research in a report on the action plan on reading in school¹⁴ (Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de L'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2009). Indeed, by sollicitating financial support from the school board, our concern goes beyond the search for funding. Rather, our desire is to be associated to this major community player and become allies and partners. Research shows that collaboration between teachers and librarians has a positive impact on academic success (Melançon, 2003). This collaboration results in privileged access to resources; by complementing what is accomplished in school, the library becomes a «natural extension of the classroom (...)» (Bougé, 2006). Ideally, we will form a committee Le Fouineur which will gather librarians, animators, mediators, teachers, principals and parents, all working together to ensure that the project evolves and stays grounded with the needs of the children. One of the first consequences of the partnership with the school board is that the library will be visiting students in their own

¹³ Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition Féminine

¹⁴ Plan d'action sur la lecture à l'école

school yards next spring: a coordinator of the library will be offering activities with books.

Several projects are still to be implemented before Le Fouineur reaches maturity. And there are thousands more children to meet and accompany... With our new partnership, the future of the programme seems very promising. In addition, several cities surrounding Repentigny have expressed their interest in implementing the programme.

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