The CRCF: 2021 Activities at a Glance

Who we are

The Centre for Research on Children and Families, is comprised of a thriving academic community with 37 faculty members and 19 associate members from diverse McGill departments, as well as from other Canadian and international universities. The Centre also counts on 2 outstanding staff members that bring invaluable support to the Centre’s activities.

Dr. Delphine Collin-Vézina

Director of the Centre for Research on Children and Families since 2014 & member since 2007.

Our mission

We aim to conduct and disseminate research on effective programs and policies for vulnerable children and youth and their families. What makes the CRCF so unique is the members’ deep involvement and unceasing collaboration with practice and policy milieus allowing the research to make a true impact for children and families who live in vulnerable contexts.
What we do

In 2021, we ran 38 national and international projects. Centre activities ranged from assisting agencies with program development and program evaluation activities, to conducting clinical studies, providing governments with policy advice, and leading provincial and national epidemiological studies. Our partners span the world.

Our projects addressed many important social issues: maltreatment, violence, trauma, disability, poverty and homelessness, paying particular attention to issues related to systemic violence, structural inequalities, and cultural safety among Indigenous peoples, Black communities, refugee and immigrant populations, the LGBTQ+ community, and other marginalized groups.

The Centre research activities have had program and policy impact at all levels, from local agencies, to departments of social services in several provinces, to Federal agencies and NGOs.

Our project highlights

1st The Children’s Service Data Lab

The Data Lab housed the most important collection of child welfare research datasets in Canada, including a Quebec-wide administrative data base tracking over 400,000 children who have received Youth Protection services over the last twenty years. Data has allowed researchers to investigate key research questions: how many children are in care? Who is more likely to reunify with their family after an initial placement? Who are the children more likely to re-enter care?
The Canadian Consortium on Child & Youth Trauma

2nd

This is a network of researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, professionals, community representatives, and students from a diversity of key institutions and child, youth, and family service sectors. This pan-canadian network aims to bridge provincial, sectoral, and language barriers that often create divisions and splinter progress. We hope to strengthen our capacity to advance research, practices, policies, and laws to improve the lives of children and youth impacted by trauma.

One of the key activities we organize is a yearly symposium on Child & Youth Trauma. In 2021, the virtual event brought together 1400 participants and we will be hosting a similar event this year, May 18-19.

3rd

The COVID Rapid Response projects

Many CRCF members have been actively battling the COVID-19 pandemic by spearheading research initiatives that explore the social dimension of the crisis with the aim of providing valuable insights into its impacts on individuals and communities. Through these projects, we hope to provide evidence and solutions to inform decision-making and address pressing challenges resulting from the rapid spread of COVID-19. For example, we are investigating the impact of the pandemic on women experiencing conjugal violence, on refugee families, on expectant mothers, on children and youth served by child protection services, and on frontline health workers.

Who we train

Students collaborate closely with organizations and professors to create transformational changes to our communities. In 2021, we provided training to 6 postdoctoral fellows and 37 students. We offer training opportunities to students, through the RBC Fellowship fund and other sources, to prepare them to undertake productive careers as practitioners, policy-makers, teachers, and researchers. These opportunities allow students to collaborate with community professionals to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services and to promote the use of data within agencies so as to improve service efficiency and outcomes for children and families.

Our dissemination activities

The Centre’s dissemination and knowledge mobilization activities include a bi-monthly research seminar series and two monthly journal clubs. The Centre’s reach across Canada and internationally is supported by the Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal, Canada’s most extensive child welfare research and policy clearinghouse.

We hope that our work can continue supporting prevention initiatives, early intervention, specialized services and effective policies to shift positively the trajectories of vulnerable populations.

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