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In the kitchen at Chez Pops:
Father Johns with our chef and her assistant.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LA PRESSE



Dear Friends,

First of all, thank you to all our donors for their continued support in our annual campaign. An amazing 41% of our previous donors gave again, and many new ones contributed as well. The challenge will be to keep up the momentum and meet our goal for this year. Special events such as Taste of the Nation and Cirque du Soleil will help us through the Spring. The Chez Pops Day Centre is full to bursting with hungry, needy streetkids. Two other community organizations are no longer focusing on minors, and we therefore find ourselves almost alone to meet the needs of young runaways in Montreal. We will be starting a new day program for 12 to 17 year olds at the Bunker in order to respond to the need for more individual time and attention for minors. This means having

an extra team on hand at the Bunker during the day. As for the youths aged 17 to 24 who have been stuck in the cycle of the street for years, they are the ones we can offer school and work programs to at Chez Pops. Their numbers are on the rise as well. Our work goes on with your valuable support. This newsletter is our way to say thank you and to keep you informed on the work we do. I am so pleased and proud to share some of our success stories with you. Thanks to you, not only is Dans la rue growing, but our kids are too. Thank you and God bless,

Father Emmett Johns (Pops)
President and Founder

Kudos for Father Emmett Johns

Last December, Father Emmett Johns – Pops – received the **2001 Prix Droits et Libertés** human rights award given by the **Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse**. This honour was given in recognition of Father Johns' thirteen years of tireless dedication to helping young streetkids. The entire team of employees and volunteers congratulates you Pops. We are extremely proud to work by your side.

The latest news on the Butterfly project

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This past year has delivered its fair share of experiences and emotions to our young parents and our counsellors who work closely with them. Together, day in, day out, we have strived to overcome challenges and adjust our approach to accommodate specific needs. We help close to 25 young families. Our strategy is based on finding the right combination of personalized psychosocial follow-up, home visits, guidance and referrals. This recipe has produced a number of successful results – big and small.

We saw some marvellous things happen in 2001. Several of our

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 **Dans la rue's** new Web site is officially up and running. Why not take moment to check it out? You'll find a wealth of information on our work, get to know our streetkids a little better and even view a brief excerpt of "Cul-de-Sac", our highly acclaimed educational video. Happy surfing!

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A young father and the apple of his eye at the Christmas party we threw for our young parents and their children.

young mothers continued to work hard and found their wings – giving themselves and their children a real chance at a better life. Regardless of whether they've decided to go back to school, end an abusive relationship or start therapy, these young women are looking to the future and are eager to take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

This year, we organized a Christmas party for our group.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Dans la rue distributes more than 9600 emergency food bags annually. These bags are a temporary solution for homeless kids suffering from malnutrition, hunger and/or chronic sickness. Whenever possible, we also try to provide nutritional and high-protein snack foods. Organizing a drive for non-perishable food items is a great community or group activity. In particular, we would appreciate receiving **little boxes of cereal, canned tuna/ham/chicken, chunky soups, canned pasta products (e.g. ravioli), fruit cups, canned vegetables and granola bars.**

To donate goods, please contact our administration office at 514-526-5222. Financial contributions can also be made by calling this number, by sending a cheque by mail or by making an online donation on our web site.

THANK YOU!

DANS LA RUE DOES NOT SOLICIT DOOR TO DOOR

Thanks to the kindness of countless donors, a very generous Santa Claus showered a number of awestruck toddlers with special gifts.

The close-knit relationship we have built with these young parents makes it much easier for us to help and tackle sensitive issues such as isolation, the loss of a child or addiction. Our team's growing expertise in this field has made the Butterfly project one of the area's most highly regarded intervention programs for disadvantaged young mothers. Our workers have in fact been asked to train hospital professionals and present lectures to the university community.

We firmly believe that our caring approach and unique support system are some of the key building blocks to healthy, long-lasting relationships between these parents and their children. And from what we've seen so far, a number of these young mothers are definitely on the right track.

What the art workshop means to me...

As part of the **Journées de la Culture** weekend in the Fall of 2001, we invited several of our budding artists to express what the art workshop represented for them. Here are some of their responses. (translations)

Imagine your heart being ripped out of your chest.

Imagine your soul chipped away by rage and anguish.

Imagine a man crossing the desert without a drop to drink.

Believe me when I say that for me, Ink is like blood coursing through my veins.

And the art room at Chez Pops is my oasis.

- Anya

Freedom for some

Decoration for others

Affirmation for many

Replenishment for the soul for all

- Billy

Help to open our minds

Support for new friends

Joie de vivre, human spirit

Creation, beauty, talent

Are just the beginning

Reasons why I love this place

Pops helps us reveal ourselves

And that's why the art room must be here to stay

- Shadow

Did you know there are less than 25 emergency beds for runaway minors in Montreal, and Dans la rue has 20 of them?



As part of the **Journées de la Culture** event, **Dans la rue** held an open house on September 29 and 30, 2001. The activity included an exhibit featuring 80 works of art created at the **Chez Pops** Day Centre art workshop throughout the year. Visitors were especially interested in talking to our budding artists about their creative experience, their overall approach to life and their sense of art. This was a one-of-a-kind chance for participants to learn more about one another. On Sunday, a group painting workshop led by **André Vaillancourt** gave streetkids, Pops, DLR workers and passers-by of all ages an opportunity to make their individual mark on our sprawling "sidewalk canvases."

Hope for the future

Thanks to the devotion and financial support of a generous benefactor, **Dans la rue** has successfully implemented a one-of-a-kind program to help young victims of drug abuse. Over the past 16 months, the **Hope Fund** has given concrete and direct support to youths trying to break free from the vicious cycle of addiction.

Isolation can be even more crushing for streetkids entering a detox program. Their solitude weighs heavily on them, and idleness and inactivity can lead them down a slippery slope to failure despite even the most promising start. We therefore focus our efforts on therapy preparation, accompaniment, reintegration and post-treatment support. This approach enables us to provide crucial help at the very time these youths need it most.

For example, we help arrange transportation to a treatment facility or lay the groundwork for the return to a family environment. When youths check into a therapy centre, we give them a care package with clothes, toiletries, writing materials and other items designed to make their arrival and their stay a little easier. And we provide moral support throughout the process. This is often a time when kids are at their most vulnerable and feel the loneliest – which is why we make regular visits and bring specific materials (painting kits, musical instruments, books, etc.) designed to give them something constructive to do with their time.

This helps them maintain the fragile balance they have discovered and find the motivation they need to go on and finish the program.

Our program takes care of much of the paperwork involved in obtaining proper identification and establishing eligibility for social assistance. We have even assisted some individuals in finding an apartment once they finished their program to help them avoid falling back into their old habits. In conjunction with the **Centre Dollard Cormier**, we also helped three youths find employment – wherein a local company agreed to hire them on a trial basis and the **Hope Fund** paid half of the training expenses.

Lastly, for the second year in a row, we took nine kids on a kayaking trip. With this second group, thanks to the **Hope Fund**, we expanded our criteria to include cocaine and crack users in addition to heroin addicts. As was the case last year, we worked in tandem with **Relais Méthadone** for the heroin cases, but this time we also teamed up with a youth worker from **Cactus** to provide quality follow-up services for the victims of cocaine and crack abuse. Over the long term, we are convinced that this expedition will have proven to be more than worthwhile. In fact, since their return, only one of the participants has started using again.

Thanks to the **Hope Fund**, several long-time struggles have been won. Granted, others are still on the horizon – but we are confident that these challenges will continue to be met head on.

A helping hand when it is needed most

The supplementary financial assistance provided by scholarships, distributed via our *School Fund*, gives streetkids the chance to regain hope and ambition as they acquire knowledge and grow as individuals. The results speak for themselves – following is a brief description of what has been made possible by the generosity of **Caisse de bienfaisance des employé(e)s et des retraité(e)s du CN**. Over the past six months, we have helped youths focus on their studies by helping pay for things like tuition, books, supplies, food and bus passes.

Among those who are currently benefitting from this program are:

- 21 high school students – enrolled either at our school or another establishment
- 4 vocational school students
- 4 college students
- 4 university students
- 2 have completed high school and are evaluating their options for September 2002

Moreover, five others have completed their studies and are now gainfully employed.

We are so proud to be able to be there for these youths as they pursue this avenue towards a better life. And some of them are so eager that they plan on going to school all summer!

Did you know that there were more than 1,500 visits to our medical clinic last year?



On November 27, *Dans la rue* welcomed a very special volunteer to its kitchen. André Caillé, president and chief executive officer of Hydro-Québec, came to lend a hand to Father Johns. All in all, he served up over 200 lunches to young, hungry streetkids. Mr. Caillé chairs our 2001-2002 fundraising campaign. We thank him for his help, his support and his commitment to our youths.



Beyond the report card

The year is shaping up nicely at the *Dans la rue* school. Our "wall of fame," the bulletin board where the grades are posted, clearly shows that several of our students are making a great deal of progress with their schoolwork and exams. But marks are not the only measurement of success here. All our discussions on drugs, sexuality, perseverance, motivation and other important topics help students gradually take control over their lives. As Pierre-Stéphane (P.S., to his friends) points out, the first step towards social responsibility is deciding to take action: (translation)

When I was younger, I gave up on school. But the older I get, the more I realize I should have worked harder then. Just to get a job as a dishwasher, you need experience, and to work as a garbage collector, you have to have a high school diploma. So, at the age of 20, with a sixth-grade education, I went back to school with the goal of getting my Secondary V and then a diploma in welding. I never appreciated how important school was before, but today I've found the motivation and my place in the classroom too! Pierre-Stéphane



Learning through creativity

Last spring, **Concordia University** approached *Dans la rue* with an innovative partnership proposal aimed at providing the students from our school with an opportunity to learn graphic design and create a specific project. The goal of the undertaking was twofold: to provide **Concordia's** design students with teaching experience and to enable *Dans la rue's* youths to acquire valuable skills in a stimulating environment.

As the project advances, participating *Dans la rue* students are asked to plan and carry out a project – from developing the basic concept and drafting texts to carrying out complex technical operations. The **Concordia** students/tutors each work with a group of two or three of our kids. The university provided guidance and full access to its computer graphic design facilities.

Through this initiative, our youths are able to:

- Improve their written French
- Learn a new technology

- Develop their interpersonal skills in a new, stimulating environment that helps bridge the gap between fringe and mainstream communities
- Foster their creativity and talent
- Pursue new interests (technology, university studies, career options)
- Earn credits equivalent to a Secondary IV graphics course, for which a computer studies teacher from the school board joined our team.

Participants from both *Dans la rue* and **Concordia** are able to discover another world, establish new relationships and grow from the experience of working together. The initiative is so successful that **Concordia** is now considering formally integrating the project into the art design curriculum.

One of our students has chosen to share her reaction with you:

*I thank **Dans la rue** for letting us take part in the **Concordia** project and giving us the chance to explore today's technology. Computers are a vital tool that allow us to be imaginative and creative, and express ourselves freely.*
Eugénie, participant

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More than 20 of our kids got free eye exam and/or glasses – thanks to LensCrafters and their VisionMobile.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DANS LA RUE! On December 8, 2001, Father Emmett Johns blew out thirteen candles on the Dans la rue birthday cake. Employees and youths were on hand to share in this joyous occasion. Here we see Pops surrounded by friends: (from left to right) Valérie, Véronique and DLR executive director Toni Cochand.

When I was a little girl



Jessica Lowenfeld joined our team of volunteers in June 2001 as a crew member of the Sunday night team on

the Roulotte. Her enthusiasm and determination are appreciated by her team mates. Moreover, her dedication was recognized last December by the Montreal Community Council on Volunteerism. We asked Jessica if she would kindly share her thoughts on what it means to her to be a volunteer.

When I was a little girl, I lived in the West Island where there were no street kids. Downtown Montreal was where homeless

4 people stood on street corners and asked the people walking by for money. I saw their drawn faces, and their tattered clothes. I used to ask my parents if they gave money to those people when they

saw them, and they told me that sometimes they did, but explained that it was impossible to give to everyone.

Then I moved into downtown Montreal, where people live on the streets just blocks away from my home. I soon realized that I could donate in a random pattern and try to ignore the people who made a home of the streets the rest of the time. If I didn't do this, the problem of Montreal's homeless seemed overwhelming to me and I wondered, "Why them and not me?"

But then, I had an inspiring revelation: I don't have to justify what I already have, only to use it to the best advantage. From there, it was easy to realize that volunteering my time at Dans la rue was the right thing to do. On the Van, I have the opportunity to give my time and my attention to kids very much like me, but who have suffered through things I've never known. They come to the Van for food, but more than that they need a friendly ear, someone to care and listen. If nothing else, this is what my life has taught me to give.



A group of employees, volunteers and youths joins Pops for the 2001 Christmas dinner at the Day Centre.

Thanks!

To all our cherished donors who, once again this year, put their trust in us and made our annual holiday giving campaign a success. Your gifts are a symbol of love and hope for all those who come to us for help. THANK YOU!

To our amazing team of dedicated volunteers who continue to give, and give, and give! We are so very lucky to have you.

To **Kelly+Aylen, Jack Zolov, Quebecor l'Eclaireur imprimeur, CJAD and Global** for their invaluable advice, creativity and assistance in producing the promotional material for our fundraising campaign. Their talent and generosity helped get our message straight to you.

To the **J. Armand Bombardier Foundation** for the \$50,000 contribution made in October. This is the second installment of a three-year commitment totalling \$150,000.

To **Canadian National**, whose three-year commitment enables us to continue to offer quality front-line health care at our medical clinic.



Words of wisdom on display at the Day Centre

The young people who come to us for help often prove to be a source of inspiration as well. "Puce" and "Pinky" wrote the following on one of the walls of the Day Centre. Located on the second floor, near the classrooms, these words are a constant reminder for us all never to give up. (Translation)

Life is full of obstacles - the street, dope, prostitution, etc. When you feel like you just can't go on anymore, let someone else take you by the hand and point you in the right direction. Give yourself time and don't give up hope.

Puce & Punky

Open your agenda to May 1

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL.



The Cirque du Soleil is in town!

Once again this year, *Dans la rue* is lucky enough to be benefiting from the generosity of **Cirque du Soleil**. A total of 300 tickets for the May 1 show have been given to us to sell as a fundraiser. Each ticket is \$125, for which a \$60 income tax receipt will be issued. All proceeds come to us - representing a potential total of \$37,500. Please join us for a magical evening at **Cirque du Soleil** for friends of *Dans la rue*. If you cannot attend, why not purchase a ticket to send one of our kids to the circus instead? Call us at 514-526-5222 for your tickets.



Taste of the Nation

If a gourmet feast is more your style, do we ever have the event for you! **American Express** and **Share our Strength Foundation** have chosen *Dans la rue*, yet again to be one of the recipients of the proceeds from their annual "**Taste of the Nation**" event. You do not have to be a connoisseur to appreciate the cornucopia of culinary delights from many of Montreal's trendiest eateries. What better way to indulge in some of Montreal's finest foods while helping a very worthwhile cause? This event is scheduled for May 1.

Regular tickets are \$85 (receipt \$60.). Patrons tickets are \$125 (receipt \$95.) Call 514-637-TABLE to reserve your tickets.