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Editorial

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Actes du Colloque *Participation à la vie éducative, apprentissages et transitions*

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[See table of contents](#)

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Editorial

The *International Network on the Disability Creation Process (INDCP)* held an annual conference **April 7, 2011** with the theme “**Participation in educational life, learning and transitions**”. This conference brought together teachers, parents, professionals, policy makers and organizations defending the rights of people with disabilities. Interesting discussions on the principles of inclusive education were on the agenda. Furthermore, key players offered presentations aimed at sharing best practices in terms of reception, integration and support to students with disabilities and from kindergarten to university. The speakers explained the need to create partnerships and collaborations for the effective development of learning communities. Three areas were addressed in the symposium :

- 1) **Training, equipping and preparing educational et training environments** : theory and implementation of inclusive education;
- 2) **Welcoming, integrating and supporting students with learning difficulties or disabilities** : challenges in ensuring a smooth transition and continuity of service form one level of education to another;
- 3) **Establishing real learning communities** : challenges and partnerships for the actors.

This conference was full of promise and the lectures should not become dead letters. Generosity was such that several speakers have accepted our invitation to collect the texts to ensure the continuity of their ideas and ensure that all documents are communicated to the scientific community in an effort to advance knowledge, in Quebec’s education system and elsewhere, which will allow inclusion to transform from a dream to a reality.

The authors of this journal wanted to share their knowledge, and some of their successful experiences of inclusive education for youth and adults with disabilities. They showed that

successful inclusion is both possible and beneficial to the school and its clients. Successful inclusive teaching strategies will allow students the opportunity to benefit from “*lifelong learning*”, a guarantee of full participation in their communities, to benefit from economic and technological progress associated with “*society of knowledge*” as do others. In fact, schooling, the student’s full commitment to the educational process and the presence of professionals devoted to education are predictors of the student’s success. All admit that in the “*lifestyle*” list, school attendance plays a major role as the person in search of independence and social participation will spend many years there. It is important that the shared learning experiences are significant for the “*Special needs students – Students of the regular classroom - Teacher*” trio.

It is with great pride that we proceed to the layout of the texts provided by the various authors. Some time ago, we had the chance to be the first two people to have access to manuscripts. What a pleasure it was for us to search, analyze and even teach ourselves about what school could be in the coming years.

Daniel Ducharme recounts the historical events and principles which should govern the implementation of inclusive education for all students with disabilities so that they actually have access to school. He analyzes the national and international legal texts that serve as beacon to the creating this dream school.

Daniel Ducharme and Karina Montminy explain how there is a need, in educational settings, to accommodate students with special needs. This requirement will enable students to have access to education while respecting their rights to equality.

Julie Beaumont and Carole Lavallée recount an experiment conducted in a CEGEP that has welcomed more than 250 students with disabilities. This unusual experiment uses a training project where “*a teacher talks to teachers*” to raise awareness of students’ personal experiences.

Geneviève Girard, Annie Plourde, Caroline Morin, Nathalie Martel and Cynthia Gagnon explain the importance of providing training to professionals in the field of education with regards to the reality of the inclusion of students with traumatic brain injury. They present the kit they have developed to safely conduct the courses offered in the school when TBI students are admitted regular school in order to begin or continue their education.

Sylvain Letscher, Ghyslain Parent and Rollande Deslandes explain how, in high school, a deaf person goes from resilience to liberation, thanks to inclusive education.

Louise Sauvé, Godelieve Debeurme, Nicole Racette, Marie-Michèle Roy, Denise Berthiaume and François Ruph propose the SAMI-Perseverance of screening tools and other tools designed specifically to improve retention of students diagnosed with a "*learning disorder*" attending CEGEPs and universities.

Rollande Deslandes explains why it is urgent to implement real learning communities as well as the ins and outs of these collaborative practices.

Sylvie Tétréault, Gascon Hubert, Pascale, Marier-Deschênes, Andrew Freeman, Pauline Beaupre, Monique Carrière and Marie-Eve D'Aragon analyzed the impact of the Complementarity Agreement between Services in the Health, Social Services and Education Network.

Julie Ruel and Andrew C. Moreau discuss the need, for the academic world, to overcome the challenges in welcoming young children with special needs and their families when these kids leave the home and transition into pre-school.

Delphine Odier-Guedj and Sylvie Normandeau discuss the effects of a pilot project which supports teachers using learning communities to ensure the enrollment of students with developmental disabilities.

Francine Julien Gauthier, Colette Jourdan-Ionescu and Jessy Héroux had the chance to meet young adults with intellectual disabilities and their parents. They tell us how parents were able to contribute significantly to the social and professional integration of their children so they can play a valued role.

Sébastien Rojo discusses how outdoor adventure therapy can help youth in Special Education to persevere in their studies.

Charles Paré, Ph.D. and Ghislain Parent, Ph.D.
Guest Editors

