

IT ALL STARTS RIGHT HERE.



For the things they love the most. And the things they want to discover about themselves and the world around them. For the things they want to do and the places they want to go. For all that they want to become, the most important lesson they'll learn is that learning never ends. We are their home away from home. Prevention. Education. Leadership.



Information Booklet 2018-2019
11991 Pierre Baillargeon. 2nd floor. RDP
H1E 2E5 Montreal, QC Since 1997
Non-profit youth community centre
(T) 514-648-6421 FB: Don Bosco YLC
Over 1000 youth and teens every year!

Supporting the potential and well-being of young people today.



Dear friends and families,

On behalf of the youth and teens and young adult leaders of our non-profit community organization, I invite you to learn more about the positive impact we are creating in the east-end of Montreal.

We hope our information document gives you a stronger insight on how and why we implement leadership, education and prevention objectives in all that we do. Your connection and support help us immensely in building positive leaders for our community and society.... *for the present and the future.*

You are always welcomed to visit, get involved and offer suggestions on how we can expand our outreach. And we're always on the lookout for financial support and partnerships that benefit both the benefactor and the young people of our community.

We hope you will be pleasantly surprised by the variety of our programs and the generosity of our volunteer team who believe in the mission of promoting positive values and community accountability. For a PDF version of our Information booklet, please visit dbylc.com.

In friendship,

Theo Vecera

Theo Vecera, Program Director

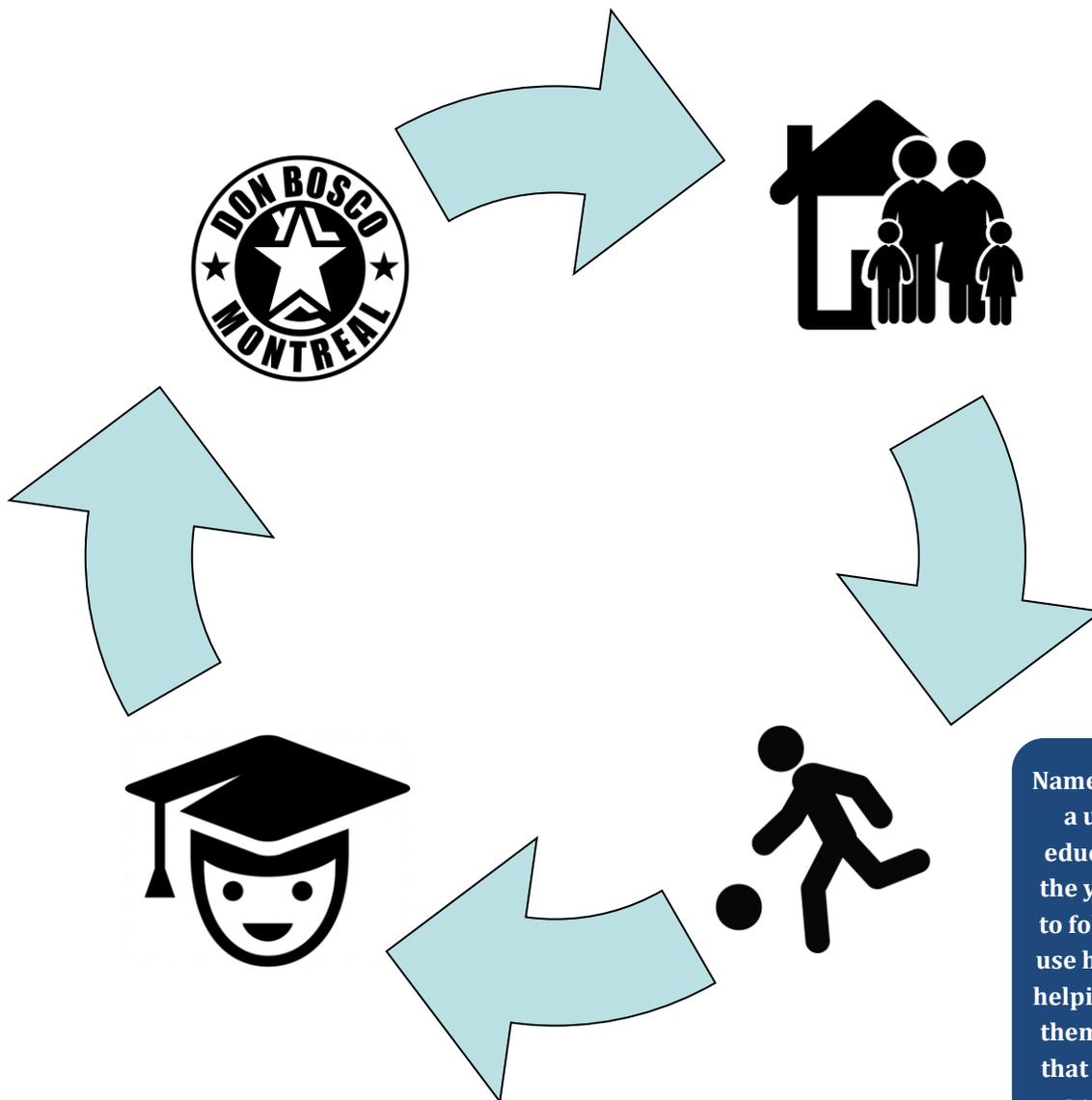
(W) 514.648.6421 (C) 514.928.7676 ylctheo@hotmail.com

*On behalf of Fr. Richard Authier, Centre Salésien des Jeunes Director;
Anna Tafuto, Assistant Program Director;
Robert Leclerc, Activities Coordinator;
And our 84 volunteer leaders and 1000+ young people!
Note: French version will be available October 2018*

The Don Bosco Youth Leadership Centre was founded in 1997. It is a non-profit youth centre that reaches out annually to over 1000 children, youth and families in the East end of Montreal (RDP).

Education, leadership and prevention are not “buzz” words. They are our “raison d’être”!

Our focus is creating a strong link and accountability to our 4 “target groups” year-round (DBYLC & Families & School & Recreation).



Named after Saint John Bosco, a universally recognized educator and evangelizer of the young, the DBYLC strives to follow in his footsteps. We use his prevention method in helping young people express themselves in a positive way that promotes healthy living and accountability to the community.

What are the 4 building blocks to reaching our goal of providing an enriching experience for today's youth culture?

#1: "Increasing" *awareness and impact of youth*

programs, events and resources for the youth in our community (for both English and French speaking youth).

What is the best approach?

1. Understanding their specific needs and challenges.
2. Bilingual publicity and promotion and resources.
3. Encourage youth to develop an accountability and attachment to the DBYLC programs.
4. Communicate and promote youth needs to schools and city/government agencies.

How can we ensure success?

- Building caring and trusting relationships with youth.



All our programs and activities are supported by volunteers, stagiers and contracted staff. Contracted staff receive 600\$ for 25 weeks to lead youth programs. This money comes from our annual fundraisers organized by the young people of the DBYLC.

Many of our programs have special events, outings and a social justice project included to give the young people a wonderful YLC experience consisting of “SafeFun”, fun memories, friendships, mentorship and the opportunity to grow into a YLC leader!

#2: “Promoting” *healthy lifestyles and choices.*

What is the best approach?

1. Develop activities that achieve health and educational successful outcomes.
2. Encourage a strong link between the YLC, school and family and other organizations.
3. Experiences to enhance youth’s social and emotional well-being.
4. Implementing the YLC’s “Safe Environment” guidelines and regulations to all our staff.

How can we ensure success?

- Engage youth and leaders to share their gifts and talents for the betterment of others.



The DBYLC receives some financial support from the Municipal, Provincial & Federal Governments and benefits from free rent in its locale. But the DBYLC is not sufficiently financed to cover its annual operating costs. We rely on the generosity of the community and sponsors we seek out yearly.

The “Generosity Clause” during summer camp is the staff’s willingness to work 40 hours a week but only getting paid for 30 hours. This helps keep the camp rates low, so more children can register. During the DBYLC year, the leaders share their time and talents for a program they are not involved in.

#3: “Offering” *community, leadership and personal development formations, workshops and leadership experiences.*

What is the best approach?

1. Developing strong relationships between youth and YLC leaders.
2. Instill an understanding of Don Bosco’s prevention methods and philosophy.
3. “Generosity Clause” activities and opportunities that extend beyond their individual program.
4. Support youth and leaders yearning to explore their place in the world today.

How can we ensure success?

- Invite youth to assist in the design, direction and delivery of the DBYLC’s mission in our community and beyond.



We are all aware that the future of today’s society lies in the preparation of youth today. The YLC is an investment for the present and future to help develop the necessary skills for youth to become productive members of our community.

Our focus is to develop and maintain a healthy relationship with our young people, so they can find comfort and joy that they have a “Big brother / Big Sister” that cares and wants the best for them. Many of our leaders today were once kids and teens in our programming.

#4: “Encouraging” *youth to persevere and become people of change, honest citizens and positive leaders.*

What is the best approach?

1. Motivate youth and leaders to give back to the community.
2. Develop responsible youth and leaders to be engaged in social justice causes.
3. Support youth in increasing their social experiences through interaction with different cultures, languages and beliefs.
4. Help youth believe that they have a future in Quebec (family and career wise).

How can we ensure success?

- Provide opportunities that bring value and accountability.



Our ongoing objectives are;
(1) The continued growth of YLC programming. (2) Continued training of effective community leaders. (3) Increasing the “Montreal” profile of the YLC’s importance and impact. (4) Seeking program funding and sponsorship for security and prosperity for the present and future.

“The Big Cheese” ...Theo Vecera:

514.928.7676

ylctheo@hotmail.com

Celebrating 28 years of joyful community action in RDP! Theo is actively involved in many community and city initiatives and social causes. He founded the Don Bosco Youth Leadership Centre (YLC) in 1997. He is the Program Director and is responsible for the day to day management of the center and the direction of all the programs and services offered.

A resident of RDP since 1980 and a father of 4 young children, Theo's greatest joy is seeing young people share their gifts and talents for the betterment of others. His personal motto at the YLC is, "No one is invisible. Everyone is someone."



“Friend of the Young” ...Fr. Richard Authier:

514.648.4348

richardylc@hotmail.com

*A joyful and vibrant presence among the young people of the DBYLC and our community! Fr. Richard is the Executive Director of the building "Centre Salésien des Jeunes" (for where the DBYLC is located) and the DBYLC. His congregation provides **free rent** to the DBYLC as it's values and mission is relevant to the Salesians of North America. Always ready to listen and offer guidance, we are truly blessed to have him as our friend and mentor.*



“The glue that binds us all together” ...Anna Tafuto:

514.648.6421

ylcanna@hotmail.com

Celebrating 18 years at the YLC! Anna's role as the Assistant Program Director consists of supporting the DBYLC programs, leading the important Tutoring services and maintaining a solid structure of the popular summer camp program. The DBYLC is truly blessed to have a joyful, humble and energetic person whose passion and service to the community is truly admirable!

“Authorized coolness” ...Robert Leclerc

438-993-9007

ylcrob@hotmail.com

We are happy to welcome an experienced and committed youth worker to the YLC team! Robert has a great talent and skill in connecting with today's youth culture. His background is communication and working with youth in distress. Robert will be an active leadership presence with our youth leaders, youth and teens that frequent the youth community center.



TO OLD FOR SUMMER CAMP?
TO YOUNG TO WORK?

DON BOSCO YLC
dbylc.com

Teen Spirit (sec 1 and 2)
Animator-in-training (sec 3 and 4)
Go on cool outings. Make friends. Learn skills. Help with the campers.

Ball Hockey!

For kids
(gr. 3 and up)
and
Teens
(boys and girls)

Friday nights
Friendly games
Leagues
Tournaments
Special events
More!

DON BOSCO MONTREAL

Boys Club!

It's awesome! (cool discussions)
It's cool! (fun outings and events)
It's memorable! (help out the community!)

Just like you!

DON BOSCO YLC
dbylc.com

*Come check it out anytime during the school year
every Friday night from 7pm to 9pm.
Secondary 1 and 2*

A HERO IS SOMEONE WHO, IN SPITE OF WEAKNESS, DOUBT OR NOT ALWAYS KNOWING THE ANSWERS, GOES AHEAD AND OVERCOMES ANYWAY.

DON BOSCO YLC
dbylc.com
Future Leaders Project

Music will save your soul.

DON BOSCO YLC
dbylc.com
Bosco Beats

ALWAYS BE A FIRST-RATE VERSION OF YOURSELF, INSTEAD OF A SECOND-RATE VERSION OF SOMEBODY ELSE.

DON BOSCO YLC
dbylc.com
Girls Teen Club

**You fit in with us.
You have a friend here.**



Make the first step.
Reach out.
Call us.
Visit us.
Email us.
We will catch you.
We will listen.
We will help you.
You are unique.
You are awesome.
You are loved.
It's true :)
yvctheo@hotmail.com



Express yourself.



Funky Dance Academy
Ages 4 to 17yrs
Professional and fun :)

**Fun in the sun!
All ages. Low cost. Certified.
Awesome summer experience :)**

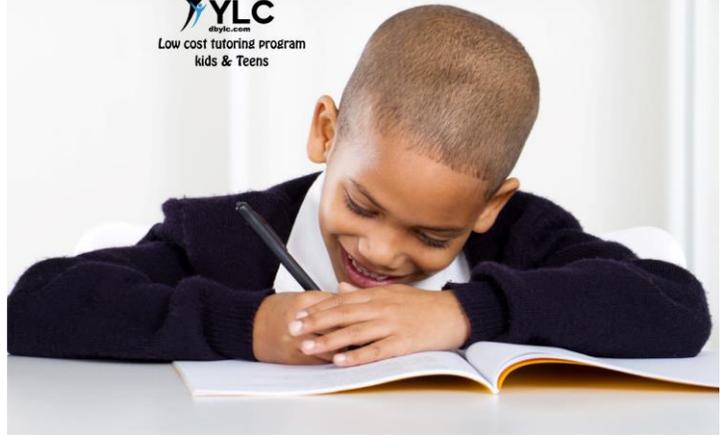
Camper registration in May. Staff Applications in March.
Call us 514.648.6421 for more info.



**WE WILL HELP YOU
SUCCEED.**



Low cost tutoring program
kids & Teens



Memories made here.



Halloween family day, Don Bosco Youth Festival, Retreats, Outings. So much more.
Visit dbylc.com to find out our next big event :)



Your home away from home.

Share your skills and talents and make the ordinary extraordinary!

“Vecera’s vision for a community centre was born in the early 1990s after he noticed a lack of services for English-speaking Italians in east end Montreal.”

“Vecera ha avuto l’idea di aprire un centro sociale all’inizio degli anni ’90 dopo aver notato la carenza di servizi rivolti agli italiani anglofoni della zona est di Montreal.”

THEO VECERA

by / di SARA GERMANOTTA

Passion and conviction

The Don Bosco Youth Leadership Centre (DBYLC) is housed on the second floor of a nondescript brick building just off Maurice-Duplessis Boulevard, in Rivière-des-Prairies. With its brightly painted walls, ping pong and pool table, and a huge wall decorated with photos of the hundreds of young people who have passed through its doors, the DBYLC is, for many, the heart and soul of this east end neighbourhood. Theo Vecera is the man at the helm of this RDP institution – and the big hand-painted sign on his office door makes that very clear: “Theo Vecera aka The Big Cheese.”

Proudly displayed on Vecera’s desk is a gold Quebec National Assembly President’s medal. The 45-year-old received the award this past November in recognition of his 25 years of community service. “The first thing that came to mind when I heard that I would be presented with an award was the old Italian expression ‘Buon principio fa buon fine’ (A good beginning makes a good ending),” says Vecera. This award is a testament to all those who believed in a dream and helped me make it a reality.”

Vecera’s vision for a community centre was born in the early 1990s after he noticed a lack of services for English-speaking Italians in east end Montreal. With the backing of the local Salesian parish, the then 20-year-old got to work creating a space that would provide after school programs and evening activities for young people and families in Rivière-des-Prairies. “I’ve always wanted to do something that was not a job but an extension of my life,” explains Vecera, who says watching his parents juggle two jobs while raising a family taught him the importance of serving something bigger than himself. “That’s what I try to model for the young people that come here. Anything that you do in life, you have to do with passion and with conviction.”

Some of the services offered at the DBYLC include a tutoring program, after-school activities such as a video game club, ball hockey, and a very popular summer camp program. But over the years, the DBYLC has become much more than just an after-school hangout; the community has adopted Vecera as their go-to man in RDP – whether it’s a personal family problem or an issue in the community, Vecera is often the one people look to for direction. “Parents saw me as a psychologist or a youth worker. When we started having gambling, drugs and drinking problems in the community they started coming to me,” explains Vecera. “I’m not trained to deal with any of this stuff so my job is to listen. It takes a lot of courage for a young person or a parent to come and see

Passione e convinzione

Il Centro giovanile Don Bosco (DBYLC) si trova al secondo piano di un comune edificio in mattoni a pochi metri dal boulevard Maurice-Duplessis, a Rivière-des-Prairies (RDP). Con le sue pareti dai colori vivaci, i tavoli da ping pong e da biliardo, ed una enorme parete decorata con le foto delle centinaia di ragazzi che sono passati per quelle porte, il DBYLC rappresenta per molti il cuore e l’anima di questo quartiere della zona est. Theo Vecera è l’uomo a capo di questa istituzione a RDP – ed il grande cartello dipinto a mano sulla porta del suo ufficio lo mette bene in chiaro: “Theo Vecera alias Il Pezzo Grosso.”

Sulla scrivania di Vecera si trova, esposta con orgoglio, la medaglia d’oro del Presidente dell’Assemblea nazionale del Québec. Il 45enne ha ricevuto questo riconoscimento lo scorso novembre, per i suoi 25 anni al servizio della comunità. “La prima cosa che mi è venuta in mente quando ho sentito che sarei stato insignito di una medaglia, è stato il vecchio modo di dire italiano ‘Buon principio fa buon fine,’” dice Vecera. “Questo riconoscimento è una testimonianza per tutti coloro i quali hanno creduto in un sogno e mi hanno aiutato a trasformarlo in realtà.”

Vecera ha avuto l’idea di aprire un centro sociale all’inizio degli anni ’90, dopo aver notato la carenza di servizi rivolti agli italiani anglofoni della zona est di Montreal. Con l’appoggio della parrocchia salesiana locale, all’ora 20enne si è messo al lavoro per creare uno spazio che offrisse programmi dopo scuola ed attività serali per i giovani e le famiglie di Rivière-des-Prairies. “Ho sempre desiderato fare qualcosa che non fosse un lavoro, ma un’estensione della mia vita,” spiega Vecera, il quale afferma che l’aver osservato i suoi genitori giostrarsi tra due lavori, mentre crescevano una famiglia, gli ha insegnato il valore di adoperarsi per qualcosa che andasse oltre se stesso. “È questo il modello che cerco di offrire ai giovani che vengono qui. Qualunque cosa si faccia nella vita, bisogna farla con passione e convinzione.”

Tra i servizi offerti dal DBYLC ci sono programmi di tutoring, attività extra-curricolari, come un club di videogiochi, hockey con palla e un campo estivo molto popolare. Ma, nel corso degli anni, il DBYLC è diventato molto più che un semplice punto di ritrovo dopo scuola; la comunità ha adottato Vecera come la persona di RDP a cui riferirsi – che si tratti di una questione familiare o di un problema all’interno della comunità; Vecera è spesso colui al quale le persone si rivolgono per avere consigli. “I genitori mi vedono come uno psicologo o un consigliere per i giovani. Quando nella comunità abbiamo cominciato ad avere problemi legati al gioco d’azzardo, alla droga e all’alcolismo, si sono rivolti a me,” spiega Vecera. “Non sono qualificato per gestire questo tipo di cose, quindi il mio lavoro è dare ascolto. Per un giovane o un genitore richiede molto coraggio rivolgersi a qualcuno e ammettere di avere un problema. Per cui

someone and say we have a problem. So I feel I have a responsibility to take the first step and make the journey with them. We don't let go of our young people."

Julia Greco-Giaccio is one of the many hundreds of young people who have passed through the DBYLC. She is now a math tutor at the centre. "Theo puts 110% into everything he does and he is always smiling and so positive. We are so lucky to have him," says the 22-year-old McGill student.

Greco-Giaccio says spending time at the DBYLC helped her get through her mother's recent battle with breast cancer. "I was really struggling with my life in general; I wasn't very confident. But the centre helped me grow as a leader, it helped me connect with a bunch of other people that were going through similar situations and it gave me the confidence I needed to step up in my life."

Vecera has been instrumental in helping the community in other ways as well. In 2014, when the borough was planning to shut down a local neighbourhood police station, Vecera led the brigade to keep Poste 45 open. More recently, residents have been complaining about the strong odour emanating from the nearby Sanimax animal rendering plant. Vecera has been talking to residents and city councillors to find a solution to the problem.

Local municipal politicians have been noticing Vecera's talents as a community leader in RDP, and Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre has even suggested he runs for political office. "I'm considering it," admits Vecera. "But I've still got a lot of work to do here. I'm not done yet."

sento di avere la responsabilità di compiere il primo passo e intraprendere questo viaggio assieme a loro. Non molliamo i nostri ragazzi."

Julia Greco-Giaccio è una delle molte centinaia di giovani passati attraverso il DBYLC. Greco-Giaccio dà adesso ripetizioni di matematica al centro. "Theo mette il 110% in tutto quello che fa ed è sempre sorridente ed ottimista. Siamo molto fortunati ad averlo," dice la 22enne studentessa dell'Università McGill.

Greco-Giaccio dice che l'aver trascorso del tempo al DBYLC l'ha aiutata ad affrontare la recente battaglia della madre contro il cancro. "Ero davvero in difficoltà nella vita in generale; non ero molto sicura di me. Ma il centro mi ha aiutata a crescere come guida, mi ha aiutata a mettermi in contatto con un gruppo di persone che stavano attraversando esperienze simili, e mi ha trasmesso la fiducia di cui avevo bisogno per fare un passo avanti nella mia vita."

Vecera è determinante nell'offrire sostegno alla comunità anche in altri modi. Nel 2014, quando il comune pianificava la chiusura della stazione di polizia del quartiere, Vecera ha indotto la brigata a tenere aperta Poste 45. Più di recente, i residenti si sono lamentati dei forti odori emanati dalla vicina Sanimax, un impianto

per il trattamento dei rifiuti animali. Vecera ha parlato con i residenti e i consiglieri cittadini alla ricerca di una soluzione al problema.

I politici municipali locali hanno notato il talento di Vecera quale guida della comunità di RDP e il sindaco di Montreal, Denis Coderre, gli ha anche suggerito di candidarsi per un incarico politico. "Lo sto valutando," ammette Vecera. "Ma ho ancora molto da fare qui. Non ho ancora finito."



Theo Vecera received a gold Quebec National Assembly President's medal this past November in recognition of his 25 years of community service at the helm of The Don Bosco Youth Leadership Centre in east end Montreal.



"Teen Spirit" Friday night program

I will keep telling you that you are important, deserving, loving, intelligent, worthy, compassionate, beautiful, creative, inspiring, brave, true, strong, and able until you finally realize it for yourself.

The Don Bosco Youth Leadership Centre is a gathering of over **1000** young people every year which is coordinated by only 2 full time staff and over 50 young adult volunteer leaders (who many were once kids/teens)

...in various **safe, supervised and nurturing** programs and services that **promotes positive values, develops leadership skills** and **INSPIRES YOUNG PEOPLE** to be an active presence in community life and beyond.

dbylc.com

Since 1997

Non-profit



Don Bosco YLC

(T) 514.648.6421

(F) 514.648.6404

Monday to Friday: 3pm to 9pm

Weekends: Special events/outings



ylctheo@hotmail.com

ylcanna@hotmail.com

