

# The **BIG** little newsletter for the familial study ON CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND TYPE 2 DIABETES AMONG CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Vol. 2 No. 1 (Spring 2007)



## Recruitment update

As you may already know, the familial study on the prevention of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes in children and adolescents is looking to recruit close to 800 families by December 2008. To do this, several recruitment strategies are being used, but the most successful one is undoubtedly our collaboration with school boards and schools. Indeed, close to 99% of the 215 families already evaluated learned of this study through their child's school.

What motivates school boards and schools to take on an active role in this study? At the Montreal School Board, which receives close to 70 requests for collaboration, projects seeking a better understanding of social environment or an improvement in quality of life are among 4 types of projects given priority. The QUALITY project fits into this category, because it seeks to better understand the factors that can prevent health problems among youth.

Following the school board's approval, each school is contacted by the research team. If the school agrees to participate in the study, recruitment leaflets, letters, and copies of the newsletter are sent to the school to be distributed to students in grade 2, 3, 4, and 5. This is likely how you heard about the study.

On page 4 of this newsletter, you will find a complete listing of the school boards participating in the study. We want to thank them for their cooperation, which is essential to the success of this study.

Finally, we would like to remind you that there are about 600 spots remaining for families wishing to participate in the study before December 2008. We would also like to thank in advance all the families who will take part in their second evaluation visit this summer, which allows us to follow the evolution of the youth and their family forward in time in this great cohort study.

See you soon,  
*The Big little newsletter team*

## Is my family eligible?

If you have not yet participated in the study, parents can answer these 4 questions:

- o Are you overweight?
- o Does anyone in your family have diabetes or cardiovascular disease?
- o Do you have high cholesterol or blood glucose (blood sugar)?
- o Do you have high blood pressure?

If at least one parent answered "yes" to at least one question, your family is probably eligible to participate in this study. If at least one parent answered "don't know", we can help you learn more.

### Here is our contact information:

**Telephone:** (514) 345-7751  
*Or call toll free*  
1-877-326-8596

**Email:** [famille@recherche-stejustine.qc.ca](mailto:famille@recherche-stejustine.qc.ca)

**Website:** [www.chu-sainte-justine.org/healthy-family](http://www.chu-sainte-justine.org/healthy-family)



## *Research is progressing !*

Since the first family was evaluated in July 2005, the familial study is progressing well and constantly evolving. Indeed, two researchers recently obtained funding for complementary projects. Belinda Nicolau, dentist and epidemiologist, will study the relationship between overweight and oral health. Jennifer McGrath, psychologist and public health specialist, will evaluate the effect of stress on the incidence of metabolic syndrome among children.

## *A bit of humour!*



### *Riddle from Jasmin, 8 years old (Montreal site)*

The more you add, the lighter it gets. What am I? ..... holes



### *Joke from Audrey, 10 years old (Montreal site)*

A mother mosquito tells her kids: “Never get close to humans, they’ll try to kill you.”  
One of her baby mosquitoes replies:  
“You’re wrong, mom! Yesterday, one of them spent all evening clapping for me!” 

## *As a parent, I participated in this study because...*

Following their visit, several parents shared the reason for their participation:

“I have hypercholesterolemia myself, and unfortunately I only learned about it late... So I think this is an opportunity for Ludovic to get screened at an early age.”

Nathalie (Montreal site)

“Having type 2 diabetes, I am well aware of the consequences of this disease on my everyday life and on my quality of life. If research can find new ways to improve the life of my child, who is at risk, or that of another child, then I think it’s important to get involved.” Chantal (site de Montreal)

*“I like to contribute to research. I think this study deserves attention, because of the large number of families that are affected by these health problems.”*

Nancy (Montreal site)



*And as Guylaine said (Montreal site):*  
“My son was in the spotlight that day!”



## ***I would like to know...***

Several youth and parents have sent questions about health and about the project to the *Big little* newsletter team. Here's an answer to Jérémie's (9 years old, Montreal site) question: **“What is cholesterol?”**

Cholesterol is a type of fat with many useful functions, including building the envelope around the cells of your body, and producing hormones like testosterone. It is therefore important to have cholesterol in your body. But, if there's too much of it, cholesterol increases the risk of problems with blood vessels in your heart and heart attacks. Cholesterol is found in foods from animal sources like eggs, dairy products, and meats. But the cholesterol in your blood is mostly produced by your own body – the more fat you eat, the more cholesterol your body produces.

During your hospital visit, we measure the total amount of cholesterol in your blood and in your parents' blood. We also measure the amount of good and bad cholesterol. Cholesterol travels in your blood using 2 types of carriers: the bad carrier distributes cholesterol to the cells like a pizza delivery boy delivers pizza, whereas the good carrier picks up excess cholesterol like a garbage truck picks up trash. As you can imagine, it's better to have a lot of “good cholesterol” and less “bad cholesterol” to keep your heart healthy ♥.

And that's cholestérol



***The star of the Big little Spring newsletter is... Raphaëlle, 10 years old (Montreal site)!***

*It's her and her parents on the drawing →*

Let's get to know her better with a few Quiz questions...

Why did you participate in the study? ***There are health problems in my family.***

What's your favourite food? ***Mexican food***

Her favourite athlete is the speed skater ***Anouck Leblanc-Boucher***. She thinks Anouck is ***AWESOME!***

What's her claim to fame? ***She won 3 silver medals in a row in speed skating.***

What do you want to be when you grow up? ***A professor or a psychologist***

What do you say to other youth who might want to participate in the study? ***That it's a great life experience.***

*Pssst... Would you like to be our star? All you have to do is fill out the form given to you during your visit at our Montreal or Quebec site, and wait for the next newsletter!*



## *School boards and their schools at the ♥ of research.*

Since the beginning of the study, over 889 schools have agreed to distribute  
close to 250,000 leaflets to their students annually.

We want to thank the participating school board and schools:

School board	Participating schools (2006-2007)	Leaflets given to students since 2005
de la Capitale	39	15 190
de la Côte-du-Sud	34	3 090
de la région de Sherbrooke	6	984
de la Rivière du Nord	33	11 320
de la Seigneurie des Mille-Îles	43	17 504
de la Vallée-des-Tisserands	21	4 712
de Laval	39	16 061
de Montréal	74	22 336
de Portneuf	13	1 757
des Affluents	36	13 533
des Découvreurs	18	7 722
des Grandes-Seigneuries	24	10 510
des Hautes-Rivières	29	10 231
des Hauts Cantons	22	2 611
des Laurentides	12	1 767
des Navigateurs	34	12 881
des Patriotes	39	12 375
des Premières-Seigneuries	32	6 909
des Sommets	22	2 373
des Trois-Lacs	18	4 381
Eastern Townships	16	1 961
English Montreal School Board	30	5 299
Lester-B.-Pearson	16	3 943
Marguerite Bourgeois	51	10 154
Marie-Victorin	39	15 028
New Frontier	7	943
Pointe de l'Île	37	14 274
Riverside	15	3 347
St-Hyacinthe	24	2 867
Val des Cerfs	27	4 494
Écoles privées non affiliées	39	7 382

**Objective  
800  
families  
by 2008**

**215  
families  
evaluated**

*Whereas the majority of families will be making their first evaluation visit, some will already take part in their second evaluation visit in July 2007. We look forward to seeing you again!*

### *Many thanks to our funding agencies and sponsors*



Université de Québec  
Institut national de la recherche scientifique

### *To contact the journal and research team:*

Telephone: (514) 345-7751 or toll free 1-877-326-8596

Email: [famille@recherche-ste-justine.qc.ca](mailto:famille@recherche-ste-justine.qc.ca)

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