



**Little
Brothers** Embracing
the Elderly

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

International Day of Older People: Little Brothers want to make ageing well a social project

Montreal, September 26, 2023 — International Day of Older Persons, celebrated each year on October 1, is more than just a date on the calendar for Little Brothers. For the organization, which has been fighting the isolation of Quebec's elderly for 60 years, the time has come to act. Every day counts to ensure that the Quebec population ages with dignity and respect, now and in the future.

This feeling is shared by many stakeholders in the seniors' community, who will be taking part with one voice in a [major citizens' march](#) this Sunday. The march, which hopes to rally over 1,000 people, will take place simultaneously in Montreal and Quebec City. Catherine Harel Bourdon, who was appointed President and CEO of the Little Brothers organization on August 21, will be among the marchers, convinced of the need for change.

"The aging of Quebec society is significant and irreversible. We need to move quickly from the emergency stage to solutions to ensure a better future for the generations that preceded us. I am concerned by the scale of the demographic challenge facing us. One day, will we be able to say that we live in a society of "ageing well"? With you, I want to believe in it," she declared.

A reminder to all of the challenges of aging

In Quebec, one person in five is at least 65 years old, according to the latest [Bilan démographique du Québec](#). For the first time, this proportion exceeds that of young people under the age of 20 and has been increasing rapidly since the baby-boomers began to reach this age bracket. Another alarming fact is that, according to a survey by the [Direction régionale de santé publique](#) on the social participation of Montreal seniors, many octogenarians say they never feel useful to the community.

For a growing number of seniors living alone and without support, joining a stable and secure network like Little Brothers brings emotional, physical and mental benefits, as well as enabling them to maintain a social role. This is something that **Béatrice Picard**, the organization's patron for the past 16 years, has witnessed first-hand in the course of her involvement. Now 94 and still active, she is keen to raise public awareness of concrete actions that can be taken to counter the loneliness and exclusion of seniors. Promoting their social participation and dignity is one of her dearest wishes:

"Every day, every person, whether they're 25 or 95, should say to themselves, 'I'm here, I'm alive and I'm part of this diverse community, and I'm going to try to understand it.

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littlebrothers.ca



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After all, we're all the ones who build it together. Remember that International Seniors Day is 365 days a year.

Needs that exceed resources

With an average age of 86, some **2,600 seniors** are supported each year by **15 local Little Brothers teams** and their extensive network of **2,900 volunteers** in **12 regions of Quebec** (Gatineau, Granby, Montreal, Laval, Lévis, Longueuil, Quebec City, Rimouski, Saint-Jérôme, Sherbrooke, Thetford, Trois-Rivières, southern Lanaudière, Basses-Laurentides and Saguenay).

By connecting people who get involved voluntarily and 100% free of charge with nearby seniors, authentic and sincere relationships are forged. A meaningful presence, filled with warmth, that lasts until the end of life.

These actions are remarkable, but insufficient, given the ever-increasing number of seniors across the province who suffer from isolation and loneliness. In 2023, more than 500 seniors were newly welcomed by Little Brothers. To contribute to these efforts, 730 volunteers are needed across the province, including 300 in the Montreal area alone.

To support Little Brothers' mission and growth, people can [make a donation](#) or [volunteer in their community](#).

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About Little Brothers

For 60 years, the mission of Little Brothers has been to counter the isolation of lonely seniors by creating a committed and loyal family around them. Active in 12 regions of Quebec, the organization is the only one to accompany seniors free of charge forever, whatever their condition, right up to the end of their lives and even beyond. With an average age of 85, these people, affectionately nicknamed "Great Friends", benefit from a network of support and mutual aid for around four years, but this can extend to more than ten years. The majority live on low incomes, and almost a third suffer from complex health problems. Actress Marie-Thérèse Fortin is the spokesperson for Little Brothers, and for the past fifteen years, actress Béatrice Picard has been its Patron. More details at littlebrothers.ca.

Source: Little Brothers

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