

# AFPAD

## Finding strength in each other

Michel Germain  
Director General



Association des  
Familles de  
Personnes  
Assassinées ou  
Disparues

**Many voices, many paths**

Federal Symposium  
Monday, April 11, 2011

# Who are we?

The AFPAD is a non-profit organization that works throughout the entire province of Quebec and unites:

- the families of someone who has been murdered
- the families of someone who has gone missing in seemingly criminal circumstances

Each member of the AFPAD is not represented by an individual but by all of the members of a family affected by a homicide or a disappearance: parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents . . .

# 2003: distressing findings for relatives of victims

- No legal recognition;
- No psychological support for the family;
- \$600 in financial aid for funeral expenses;
- No legal representation for relatives;
- Significant collateral damage for relatives of victims;
- Little expertise developed to help relatives;
- No financial or job security for relatives of victims who have been murdered or are missing;

## Establishment of the AFPAD

- In 2004, around fifty families affected by the cause got together to stand up and assert the rights of their victims.
- In fall 2005, the organization obtained its letter patents and was officially created.

Christian  
Caretta

Marcel  
Bolduc

Michel  
Surprenant

Pierre-Hugues  
Boisvenu



Cathy



Isabelle



Julie



Julie

# Between 2005 and today . . . our victories . . .

## Provincial

- **3 bills passed since 2006**
  - Bill 25 passed in 2006
  - Bill 58 passed in 2007
  - Reform of the prison system in 2007
- **Reform of the *Commission québécoise des libérations conditionnelles* in 2007**
- **Reform of police investigations in missing person cases in 2008**
- **Advisory panel**
- **Increased visibility for victims of crime**

# Between 2005 and today . . . our victories . . .

## Federal

- **12 laws that have been amended, or are in the process of being amended, since 2005**
  - DNA legislation
  - Creation of the sexual predators registry
  - Stiffer sentences for violent crimes
  - Reverse onus for repeat offenders
  - Minimum sentences for sexual predators
  - Consecutive sentencing in homicide cases
  - An end to double credit for time served in pre-trial custody
  - Stiffer sentences for trafficking drugs to minors
  - An end to statutory releases without merit
  - Minimum sentences for trafficking minors
  - Employment insurance eligibility
  - Monitoring repeat and dangerous offenders
  - Reform of the parole and prison system



**Between 2005 and today . . .  
our victories . . . (cont'd)**

**Federal**

- **Creation of the Ombudsman position at the federal level**
- **Establishment of the office for victims of crime**

# AFPAD serving families

- **Meet with families the day after a traumatic event**
  - Contact them and assist them after the incident
  - Explain the judicial process to families
  - Explain new legislation
- **Guide and comfort families**
  - Monthly lunch and learns (learning to share their experiences)
  - Thematic meetings with families
  - Professional references and listening
- **Guide them in the judicial process**
  - In Court at the beginning of each new step in the judicial process
  - Legal support in dealing with institutions (review process)

# **AFPAD serving families (Cont'd)**

- **Guide them in legal cases**
  - Unsolved murders
  - Criminal disappearances
- **Guide them in dealing with the media**
- **Research in victimology**

# **AFPAD today**

- **546 member FAMILIES**
- **Permanent offices in Montreal and Quebec City**
- **Competent and involved staff**
- **Board of Directors made up mainly of members who have lived through a traumatic event**
- **Emergency assistance fund for families**

## **AFPAD today** (Cont'd)

- **Fund dedicated to university research in victimology: Isabelle Boisvenu Funds**
- **Volunteer legal advisors**
- **Volunteers in the regions to support families**
- **A network of partners dedicated to victim assistance**
- **An effective communication strategy (Web site, bilingual tools, quarterly newsletters, on-line discussion forum, media relations, conferences)**

# **AFPAD tomorrow . . .**

- **A network of trained and available volunteers**
- **Activities in the regions, close to families**
- **On-line references and consulting services**
- **A media monitoring system for locating families experiencing a traumatic event more quickly**
- **A better understanding of families' satisfaction with respect to services**
- **Better recognition of victims' rights among the public and in public institutions**
- **Increased funding**

# Contact us

**Montreal: (514) 396-7389**  
**Quebec City: (418) 686-5443**

**Toll-free: 1-877-484-0404**

**administration@afpad.ca**  
**www.afpad.ca**

**AFPAD offices:**

**6540 Beaubien Street East**  
**Suite 300 D**  
**Montreal, Quebec H1M 1A9**

**Tour de la Cité**  
**2600 Laurier Boulevard**  
**Suite 950**  
**Quebec City, Quebec G1V 4W2**



La force de l'**entraide** !

*"Car la vie est si fragile . . . "*

**[TRANSLATION] "Because life is so fragile . . ."**

*Luc De La Rochelière*

