



Vol 7 | No 1 | Nov. 2015
fiqsante.qc.ca

le des RÉSEAU eunes

BULLETIN DU RÉSEAU DES JEUNES
DE LA FÉDÉRATION INTERPROFESSIONNELLE DE LA SANTÉ DU QUÉBEC



WORK-FAMILY-PERSONAL LIFE: IT CONCERNS US!

At every edition of the Youth Network, I am proud and impressed to see the enthusiasm and commitment of the young participants. You are the future of the Federation and this is definitely promising!

This time, the Network was an opportunity, for the Youth Committee to collect the key information for conducting a reflection on the involvement of the 30-year-old and younger healthcare professionals at all levels of the organization. Considering the major transformations in the healthcare network, it is crucial to better define the role of the young members, whether it is at the local, regional or provincial level. This reflection will then be shared with the Executive Committee of the FIQ and its delegates.

The 2015 edition of the Youth Network also enabled the participants to deepen their knowledge and to enrich their understanding of the concept of work-family-personal life balance. A major question was thus raised:

how to attain a certain balance between these three areas of life?

Obviously, to achieve this, it is necessary to know the various issues linked to this balance and to discuss it. That is how the participants were invited, in the initial stage, to develop their own definition of work-family-personal life balance. Then, they were able to listen to different speakers address the facilitating measures stipulated in the FIQ collective agreement and their history. Lastly they had a look at what happens elsewhere on this matter.

This 11th edition of the Youth Network was another great success!

*Marie-Claude Ouellet,
Political Officer for
the Youth Committee*

The next generation...



Jonathan Nagode, Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM)

BALANCE, A PERSONAL DEFINITION

Shortly after the Network opened, the participants took a few minutes to write their own definition of work-family-personal life balance. At the end of the two days of discussion, the majority of them stated they would now have a better understanding of the different aspects of work-family-personal life balance and the relevancy of the collective demands related to it.

BINGO!

In order to encourage interaction between the participants and so that they could exchange and get to know each other better in a friendly atmosphere, an ice-breaking activity, called Bingo Balance, was proposed by the organizers.

BRAINSTORMING, A REAL GUERRE DES TUQUES (SNOWBALL FIGHT)

To gather the information necessary to inspire its reflection on the role of young members at all levels of the FIQ, the Youth Committee proposed an activity entitled Brainstorming to the participants of the Network.

After having answered three questions on different coloured papers and then scrunching them up, they were then asked to throw them to the other side of the room where other participants were sitting. Then, everyone had to pick up three scrunches up papers of different colours, read the ideas written on them and identify the ideas they felt were most important in their eyes with a heart. We were really in the middle of a *Guerre des tuques!* (snowball fight)





Marie-Eve Surprenant, Coordinator of the *Table de concertation de Laval en condition féminine* (Laval Consensus-Building Table on the Status of Women).

THE CONCEPT OF WORK-FAMILY-PERSONAL LIFE BALANCE

Here to share the results of a study that she conducted with young couples 30 years old and younger on gender equality, the speaker Marie-Eve Surprenant addressed the ways to facilitate a more fair way of sharing the tasks within a couple and in a family with the participants of the Network.

According to this study, young people see a couple as a free space of inequality and they believe that couples and families share the tasks fairly. In today's reality, this sharing of tasks is still influenced by the gender division of work and by the persistence of many stereotypes. Despite the perception of equality between spouses, the results of the study show a gap which compromises achieving a true equality in the sharing of the tasks. Thus, despite recent progress, it is more difficult for women to attain a balance between the two areas which are work and family because they are still considered to be responsible for the family.

The solutions which encourage a better balance of the different aspects of life must, first and foremost, be collective. The State and the employers must help in compounding the opportunities which lead to a better work-family

balance by passing legislative measures or appropriate policies, by prescribing a model of organization of work which takes into account the role of parent and by reducing the persistent inequalities between men and women. So, despite some progress, in 2011 women were paid 75% of the average weekly remuneration of men, according to the Council on the Status of Women.

Marie-Eve Surprenant concluded her speech by presenting a tool entitled *Guide d'accompagnement des milieux de travail en conciliation travail-famille* (A Practical Guide to Work-Family Balance in the Workplace). This Guide, designed and written by the stakeholders on the *Table de concertation de Laval en condition féminine* (Laval Consensus-Building Table on the Status of Women) is available online at tclcf.qc.ca.



1. Marilyn Tremblay, *CSSS de Saint-Jérôme*
2. Marika Côté, *CSSS de la région de Thetford*





YOUTH RALLY

At the Youth Network, the rally is a formula which has proven itself in letting the participants absorb the concepts discussed during the different presentations.

Hereafter are a few of the questions which they had to answer and their answer:

True or false? A healthcare professional can be absent from work up to a maximum of 10 days without pay per year to fulfill obligations linked to the care or the health of her child.

Answer: True

True or false? To obtain a leave of absence without pay or a part-time leave of absence without pay for studies, an employee must have completed two years of service with the employer, among other things.

Answer: False

A healthcare professional who wants to get involved on her local union team must:

- a) Benefit from days of union leave stipulated in the collective agreement?
- b) Request a volunteer premium and renounce her family life?
- c) Negotiate schedule changes with her immediate superior to free up time to carry out her activism?
- d) Be sure to always carry out the union activities on a shift that is different from the one of her position?
- e) All of the above?

Answer: a)





Sylvie Dallaire, Union Consultant, Union Organizing Service, FIQ

THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT AND BALANCE

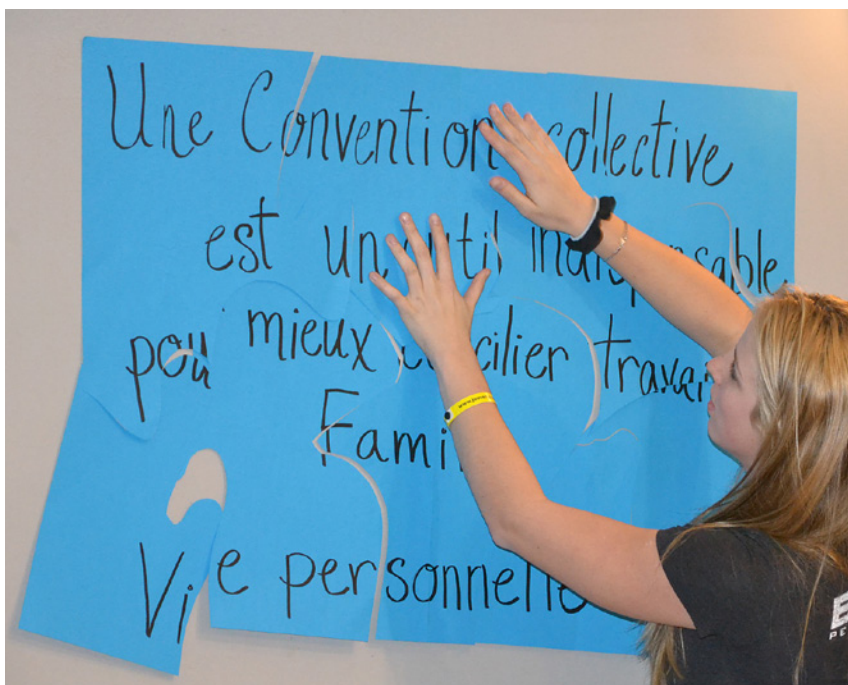
To be mobilized, one must be well informed. That is the message passed on to the young participants at the Network by Sylvie Dallaire, Union Consultant at the FIQ.

The collective agreements include several measures for work-family-personal life balance, but one must know about them to be able to benefit from them. Obviously, these measures did not appear as if by magic in the collective agreements, but rather are the result of long battles waged over the years by the unions and their members.

After all, vigilance is required, as the governments and the employers have the bad habit of questioning these gains. There is also a lot of road to cover for new measures in work-family-personal life balance to be adopted and put in place in the workplaces, in particular in the healthcare network.

“For the healthcare professionals, access to the measures covering this balance is a challenge in itself. Despite the difficulties, they should however feel legitimized in using them” stated Sylvie Dallaire during her presentation.

Among the measures in work-family-personal life balance addressed, there was the leave for family responsibilities the leave for marriage or civil union, the leave of absence or part-time leave of absence without pay, the leave with deferred pay, the conversion of certain premiums to time worked and the arrangement of work schedules.



1. Valérie Houde, CHU de Québec



Mélanie Bourque, head of the graduate programme in social work at the *Université du Québec* in Outaouais, Saint-Jérôme campus

WORKING PARENTS AND WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT: CAN QUÉBEC BE INSPIRED BY ELSEWHERE?

The presentation of Mélanie Bourque gave an overview of the existing practises in work-family-personal life balance outside of Québec.

First of all, the speaker stated that the difficult balance between work and family can generate conflicts which impact on both work and family. However, there are two major orientations for minimizing the impacts of the conflict between these two different areas of life. The first is the setting up of the working conditions which compel the employers to promote work-family balance. The second is the development of family policies that facilitate the balance.

England, the Netherlands and Australia preferred to pass legislation on the working conditions, to the detriment of family policies. In these countries, every worker is entitled to request balancing measures from her-his employer and he is obliged to accept this request. However, for administrative reasons, the employer can refuse to grant the worker's request. The most popular model in these countries rests on an individual right and, consequently, the worker's bargaining power is reduced, because he-she is alone to face the employer.

Contrary to them, France and Québec have instead invested in moderately or highly developed family policies (QPIP, day cares, etc.), while the working conditions linked to the balance are a little less present. For example, in Sweden, the family policy related to parental leaves stipulates that the length of these leaves is 480 days. The father is also entitled to two months of leave that he can split up to use up to the child is eight years old. Moreover, there is a gender equality policy in Sweden.

It is important to specify that putting family policies in place contributes to the development of collective rights.

In closing, Mélanie Bourque stated that a combination of well-developed family policies, combined with working conditions conducive to better work-family-personal life balance, would be a step in the right direction. We must continue to make demands to obtain winning conditions!



Vicky Landry, Union Consultant, Research Team, FIQ

PARENTAL LEAVES

We cannot talk about work-family-personal life balance without addressing the issue of parental leaves, without a doubt the most used measures in the ranks of the Federation.

Whether they cover the mother, the father or adoptive parents, the measures related to parental leaves are the result of battles waged by men and women from all walks of life. These measures have tangibly improved the quality of life for parents and children. Since the Québec Parental Insurance Plan was created, the birth rate in Québec has moreover significantly increased.

The FIQ is proud to have contributed to the improvement in parental leaves for its members. Due to the measures included in its collective agreement, mothers

and fathers can fully exercise their rights.

“The conditions stipulated in the collective agreement of the Federation have been improved over the years, in particular in parental rights. However, the healthcare professionals who have difficulties can talk to their local union team which can take the necessary steps with the appropriate people. That is the best way to be heard and to effect positive change”, stated Vicky Landry, Union Consultant at the FIQ.



INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SOLUTIONS WITHIN REACH

Prior to the end of this Network, the young members were invited to participate in an interactive workshop where they could creatively express their opinions, on the ways they can use to achieve work-family-personal life balance.

Among the answers were:

Professional domain

- The knowledge and application of certain provisions in the collective agreement
- The right to know her schedule in advance
- The improvement of certain leaves

Family domain

- The sharing of household tasks
- The support of family members, the social network and resources

The participants believe that the ways of working towards balance between these domains are inevitably through the capacity to live in the moment, to let go, to listen to oneself and to assert oneself. They find that it is individually, collectively and as a union that work-family-personal life balance can become a reality!