Assessment of the TRAMPO project

May 2023

What do we do?

Who's involved?

How do we work?

Testimonials

"I'm really enjoying my TRAMPO journey! By listening to others, I've gradually broadened my definition of the word transition.

It's great to be able to talk freely outside the walls that exist between some of our institutions.

Collaboration takes time to establish and take root between change agents. There are several stages of implementation, and it's interesting to see the group move forward."

end of 2022

"Over the months, I've gradually changed the way I approach and talk to young people. I now ask myself how I can offer services that are more meaningful for the students.

I often worked in silos and didn't know the others. I stepped out of my comfort zone in TRAMPO and I'm so pleased with what I've learned and the human connections I've developed.

It made me realize how interconnected we all are. To find solutions to problems, we really have to work together!

It became clear to me that I had to do more and better to make parents feel welcome. We were overlooking them a lot in my organization, and this raised issues with my work team.

I discovered that I had a lot of choices and possibilities that I hadn't thought of for my life and my studies. It's important to innovate, not to be afraid of making mistakes and to leave room for young people (group of young people)."

April 2023

Excerpts from logbooks (Introduction): Stories of post-secondary transition

"I remember, during my college-university transition, a professor noticed my stress and approached me. She then referred me to Student Services for help. I now realize that I would never have taken the first steps to seek help. The moral of the story: it's important to reach out to people in transition!"

"My transition to CEGEP was a failure. I enrolled in a program that didn't suit my profile at all, due to a lack of information and support. As soon as I arrived, I felt completely lost and, above all, alone. I didn't know where to turn for help. I gave up a few months later."

"(...) a lack of self-esteem and self-confidence, a rigidity to see life's path in a straight line, performance anxiety, generalized anxiety, fear of adult life, of asking for help, of making the wrong career choice, of new experiences, etc. Although it wasn't simple or straightforward, I found my way with the support of my parents and some friends, therapy and a guidance process."

CoP#3: Stories of post-secondary transition support

"Clara is a Rwandan-Canadian. She never knew what she wanted to do all through CEGEP. She didn't feel that she was good at any one subject and felt disengaged. In her last semester at CEGEP, she takes a class featuring many Black writers and is given opportunities to share her own writing. She finally feels herself reflected in the course content, and she feels supported and encouraged by the teacher. She decides to apply to English departments, but she doesn't have high marks due to struggling for most of the time she's been in CEGEP. She ends up on a waiting list at a university and is again feeling discouraged from trying".

"An international student, newly arrived in Canada to study at UQO, attends the welcoming activities. I introduce the psychological support services. I then go meet other students and take the time to ask the student how she's doing. She feels confident and shares her concerns with me. I suggest a meeting the next day. I then accompany the student to the collective kitchen to receive food. I make a referral to the peer mentoring center. I speak with the residence manager and contact the person in charge of international students so that she can get the help she needs and especially so she can get answers to her questions. I met with her last week and she's doing really well. I think the support and, above all, the liaison with the key players have been beneficial for her and helped her integrate at UQO".

"Recently, a mother came to see me with her son. At the end of his guidance process, the young man asked to invite his mother because he was afraid of worrying her with certain challenges he was experiencing and with his choices. He thought I'd be able to explain things to her better (pathway to VT). Mother and son understood each other better. The mother became an ally for her son in his new school profile. For his part, the boy is relieved and satisfied to have been able to get his message across and reassure his mother.

CoP#4 & #5: Professional dilemmas

In regular high school: "Wanting to help students in their transition by talking to teachers about their progress and challenges, and my role as a professional preventing me from doing so/ as well as the desire to empower students at the same time". (Guidance counselling)

"I feel torn if I want to accompany the present moment (sadness, difficulty, conflict, discouragement) and the future moment (preparing the transition). Most of the time, I put out fires, but I'd like to help young people project themselves more into the future." (Social work)

At the Adult General Education level: "Let them have their plan A without shattering their dream (e.g., to be a doctor), but at the same time bring them back to reality, that of their academic record and their life circumstances". (Guidance counselling)

At CEGEP: "Pedagogical and administrative tasks compete with each other." (Teaching)

At university: "Difficulty juggling tasks and the needs of students. Feeling discouraged and powerless given the extent of the needs vs. the time I can devote to them." (Social work)

In consultation: "How can we reconcile a political demand and a demand from the field, which puts the young person at the center, for example if we want to establish collaboration with Ontario services?"

Systemic

Systemic level

Service harmonization/collaborative work; service stability

- **Knowledge of services/communications.** Are we aware of the services offered in post-secondary transition in the Outaouais? How can we learn more?
- **Collaborative work.** How do we work together to meet the needs of young people in post-secondary transition? When we respond to needs, do we involve as many stakeholders as possible (education, health, community, specialized services, parents, etc.)? Do we make decisions together? How can we do things better?

- **Service efficiency.** How can post-secondary transition services be offered in the most direct and efficient way possible (limiting the number of intermediaries)?
- **Vision.** Do we have a clear vision for post-secondary transition, in the medium and long term, shared by all the partners involved? Does each institution have a clear vision? How can we build one and ensure its stability?
- **Financial sustainability.** How can we ensure the sustainability of financial commitments for post-secondary transition for the entire network of partners?

Relational

Relational level, the support system: parents and professionals

Balanced presence of parents

- **Communication.** Does the school communicate with parents about post-secondary transition issues? Could it do more, better?
- **Information and support.** Do we inform parents about the right posture to adopt to foster a healthy transition for their child? Do all parents have access to specialized resources, at all stages of their child's schooling, to support them in their parental role?
- **Accessibility.** Are there ways for parents to communicate with the school? How can parents learn about post-secondary transition to develop a clear vision of their child's options?

- **Mentors.** Are mentors available in cases where communication between parent and child regarding post-secondary transition issues is difficult? What about communication between parent and school? Who can play this role?

Professionals

- **Needs.** Do we take the time and means to understand the young person's needs and help him or her clarify them?
- **Strengths.** How do we enable each youth to experience success and become aware of his or her strengths?
- **Support for autonomy.** How do we perceive the importance of autonomy for the youth? How is the importance of autonomy communicated to the youth? How do we support them on the road to autonomy?

Personal

Personal level

For the person in transition: good self-awareness and balance

- **Accessibility of services.** Do all people in post-secondary transition have access to professional guidance, academic, social and health support services? Are these services easily accessible?
- **Training.** Do we offer workshops or training – mandatory or optional – on getting to know oneself, one's needs and how to manage one's own balance? As part of the curriculum or in conjunction with it?
- **Language and discourse.** How do we talk to young people about post-secondary transition? Do we encourage discovery and the right to make mistakes? What language/discourse do we use? Consistently across the network?

- **Relationship to success and standards.** How do we view success (academic and social), happiness (individual and collective), self-fulfillment, self-actualization, life experience, the ability to make personal choices, atypical training and life paths?
  Do we take into account the effect of social norms on young people's experiences and choices in post-secondary transition?
- **Role models.** Do we provide role models for the youth? Can each youth have a link with a significant adult? Are we developing student matching between levels of education, between grade levels?
- **Relationships with parents.** Do we educate parents on the importance of good self-awareness and balance for young people? Do all parents have access to this resource?

TRAMPO
Réfléchir et agir ensemble pour
la transition postsecondaire

Secondary

Group 1 / Secondary (public and private)

- How do we follow up with our students when they leave? with a diploma? without a diploma?

- Are we taking measures to support our most vulnerable students? before they leave school? when they are about to leave school? when they have already left? when they return to complete secondary school, when they choose vocational training (VT) or adult general education (AGE)? What measures?

- What activities are carried out in collaboration with the CEGEP/college system? with VT? with AGE? with the world of employment?

- What measures are we taking to support transition skills (*)? in our classrooms (transition preparation pedagogies; information, expectations, etc.) or outside the classroom (psycho-social activities, recreation, sports/culture, etc.)?

How do we define transition skills?

- Is the staff (teaching, support, management) informed about the transition and trained to support it? How are they trained?

- What measures are we taking to inform parents of their role in the transition? to accompany or support them?

CEGEP/College

Group 2 / CEGEP/college (public and private)

- How do we welcome students coming from secondary school (regular, vocational)?

- How do we welcome students arriving from rural areas, from other regions of Quebec or Canada, from abroad? adults returning to school, including parent-students? non-Francophones (or Anglophones?)? with special needs? with atypical backgrounds?

- How do we collaborate with secondary schools and universities?

- Are we taking measures to support our most vulnerable students? before they leave school? when they are about to leave school? when they have already left? when they return to complete a program or begin another program at the CEGEP/college level?

- What measures are we taking to support transition skills (*)? inside or outside the classroom? How do we follow up with students when they leave? with a diploma? without a diploma?

(*) How do we define transition skills?

- How do we support the transition from one program to another?

- Is the staff (teaching, support, management) informed about the transition and trained to support it?

- What measures are we taking to inform parents of their role in the transition? to accompany or support them?

University

Group 3 / University

- How do we welcome students coming from CEGEP/College or elsewhere? through measures and over time?

- How do we welcome students arriving from other regions of Quebec or Canada, or from abroad? adults returning to school? non-Francophones (or Anglophones?) with special needs? with atypical backgrounds? How is this welcome adapted to their diverse needs?

- How do we work with guidance professionals and individual teaching assistants? teachers and administrators at other levels of education, especially the CEGEP/college level?

- Are we taking action to support the most vulnerable? Before they leave university? when they are about to leave? when they have already left? when they return to complete a program? Are we taking action at the bachelor, masters and PhD levels?

- How do we follow up with students after they leave, and from one university level to the next?

- Is the staff (teaching, support, management) informed about the transition and trained to support it?

- What role can research play in supporting the transition?

Community and health sectors

Group 4 / Community and health sector, including consultation bodies

- In terms of support for post-secondary transition, what measures are we taking with young people, especially those at risk of dropping out of school? with parents and families? with adults planning to return to school? with immigrants?

- What measures are we taking to support young people in post-secondary transition, when the school system is unable to perform these measures or does not perform them (sufficiently) for a particular group?

- What measures are we taking for people in vulnerable situations (addictions, mental health, homelessness, delinquency, people with no life project or purpose, learning problems, newcomers with francization or literacy, etc.)?

- How do we collaborate with the various levels of education? How can we work (more) closely with educational institutions at all levels?

TRAMPO

Réfléchir et agir ensemble pour la transition postsecondaire

→ These recommendations stem from the work of all the TRAMPO groups. They are dynamic in nature and adaptable to a variety of contexts and institutional positions. As you read through them, we suggest you ask yourself the following questions:

- What experience do I have of the proposal contained in this recommendation in my daily professional life?
- How can I implement this recommendation in my institution, my profession, my team, my work, my daily life?
- What should we avoid doing if we want to move in these directions?

Ten recommendations for moving forward together (TRAMPO – May 2023)

Systemic level	1. Create a space for reflection on post-secondary transition with a heterogeneous group made up of all those concerned by post-secondary transition in the Outaouais. Recommend ongoing actions to the various partners. 2. Set up a unified administrative system (for the entire network) that follows people in post-secondary transition and produces and transmits files for them. 3. Create a post-secondary transition office for the Outaouais region, with a team of professionals and peers who accompany people in a broad and holistic manner in achieving their dreams, without institutional affiliation. At the centralized office, add an information section that presents all the transition options (school, work, entrepreneurship, other projects) and also highlights them. 4. Offer a service to find solutions to special situations, while taking preventive action upstream, if possible. Include a listening watch for populations with special needs or in vulnerable situations (immigration, indigenous, new needs). Reach out to these people, listen to them so that they feel heard, and then act on what has been heard, in partnership with people who know the issues involved.
Relationship level	5. Offer mandatory training for professionals and managers of services and institutions on transition issues (looking back on one's own history, social norms, language, discourse, skills to be developed, overall health, intervention methods) aimed at fostering autonomy for people in post-secondary transition, and information on existing pathways and services. Encourage peer-to-peer sharing. 6. Promote a greater presence of parents and families as partners in facilitating transition at all levels and in all sectors. Include parents in training programs for practitioners and/or offer them similar content. Support the creation of groups of parents working for post-secondary transition.
Personal level **People in transition**	7. Develop a variety of approaches to help people in post-secondary transition to get to know themselves better and identify their own needs. Promote autonomy and self-esteem. Support confidence and hope for the future. Foster peer-to-peer exchange and support. "*An approach centered on us, our needs, our dreams and our choices first, and not on the needs of the world of education, training or employment*" (TRAMPO youth). 8. Include the development and maintenance of health and life balance in post-secondary transition goals. Ensure that every youth and adult in transition has a broad support plan that includes social and overall health issues, as well as learning and academic program success goals.
Miscella-neous	9. Define expectations in terms of transition skills (post-secondary, to adult life) and promote their teaching/learning from an early age. Develop tools to promote educational institutions' expectations in terms of transition skills, by vulnerability group (as needed). Foster links between levels of education and between sectors to maintain and develop transition skills. 10. Collaborate with services offered in peri- and para-institutional buffer zones (sports, recreation, culture, etc.). Make more use of these spaces and downtime (summer, evenings) to support post-secondary transition. Establish stronger collaboration between the school and community sectors.

Suggested activities

Finally, here are a few suggested activities, inspired by our TRAMPO process, to go a step further in your own environment:

Food for thought:

1. Activity: OUR TRANSITION STORIES: Treasures of experiences

Ask each member of your group to think of an important transition in his or her life – professional and/or personal. Ask them to name the transition, and then identify the person, group, program or event that helped or hindered them the most. Participants share their stories with the group.

In mixed groups with people who are going through a transition and others who are at a different stage of their journey, with younger or older people, we've seen the benefits of introducing this exercise to everyone, including the people guiding the process. Excerpts from transition stories can also serve as triggers for group discussion.

→ offers a starting experiential framework that helps us to remember that we all go through transitions, and far more often than we think.

2. Activity: OUR PROFESSIONAL AND/OR PERSONAL DILEMMAS: Ways of identifying obstacles

This work is carried out with a group of professional practitioners who accompany young people – or those not so young – on their transition journey, in a variety of ways. Each person is encouraged to identify professional dilemmas by asking themselves the following questions: Have I ever wanted to take certain actions with respect to a young person, but had to take others? What came into play in this situation to prevent me from taking the actions I wanted to take?

→ is inspired by professional practice support models.
Participants are encouraged to reflect on their own values and the prevailing values and norms in the institutional and social environment in which they work, and to identify any discrepancies.

Reflecting while being propelled towards action:

3. Activity: OBSTACLES TREE – SOLUTIONS TREE
A turning point to transform our stories

To start this activity – in the TRAMPO group – we first identified the obstacles in our own transition stories, in stories told by young people and adults in transition, and in our professional dilemmas. We came up with a long list, which we divided into a dozen or so categories. The group then voted to identify the most important categories to study. Four categories were identified to start with, then two more were added along the way, until the group felt that the resulting picture represented lived reality. First, we drew up the obstacle tree, then the solution tree, in sub-groups. The trees were enriched by the whole group during two subsequent sessions.

→ adapted from the participatory action research guide, its sections on problem trees (from p. 65) and ends and means trees (ideal scenario) (from p. 99): www.participatoryactionresearch.net. The more this activity includes partners from different backgrounds, the more mobilizing it will be for change.

Acting together:

4. Activity: QUESTION-SOLUTION SHEET / DECK OF CARDS – To support and nurture work with groups wishing to take action.

All the question-solution sheets on the preceding pages of this document can be used to engage in focused discussion with partner groups on post-secondary transition issues. We encourage you to use them as they are, and in any order, reorganizing them to best serve your concerns. When the answers to the questions are recorded, an action plan can then be drawn up. If the answers are hard to find, the group can be invited to ask themselves intermediate questions and act on them. The list of intermediate questions can be long. It is drawn up until it is possible to start taking action. The first action asked for should be easy to take. We also suggest using this material as a deck of cards. If the answer is found, the group moves into the room; if not, they stay put. The more advanced group can then help the slower one by suggesting solutions. This approach is particularly interesting in a multi-level or multi-trade environment.