

FAQ

Why is Association Emmanuel unique?

Unique in Quebec, *Association Emmanuel* supports every aspect of the adoption process when there is a special needs child involved, both adoption candidates and biological parents. The organization is committed to providing biological parents individual support adapted to their needs.

How does it work?

Being raised by our biological parents is the first choice when it's possible. However, adoption can be a positive conclusion to an unexpected event. The child can exist in a new lineage, with parents that will commit to him or her for a lifetime.

Legal procedures are done by the *Centres Jeunesse* throughout Quebec, from the adoption consent to the final adoption judgment.



Together,
let's reach a positive
conclusion to an unexpected
event.



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**MY CHILD IS
BORN DIFFERENT.
WHAT DO I DO?**



Founded in 1987, *Association Emmanuel, l'Amour qui sauve* actively works to promote the adoption of every child; we work in partnership with social services in cases where they have been unable to place a child because he or she has special needs.

To achieve that goal, we:

- Support biological parents facing the birth of a child with special needs;
- Find and help adoption candidates open to adopting a child with special needs, in accordance with the laws of Quebec;
- Provide follow-up assistance to families after an adoption;
- Support "Emmanuel families" in a variety of ways, including gatherings, meetings, conferences, and activities;
- Raise public awareness of every child's right to a family.

If you read this, you and I have something very particular in common.

Four years ago, when I was pregnant with twins, I found out through routine screening that one of my babies had Down Syndrome. What followed in the weeks after was the most difficult and heartbreaking time of my life. My partner and I were faced with what seemed an unanswerable question: **could we provide what this tiny human would need?**

Getting news that one of my babies wasn't "healthy" was shocking and traumatizing. Worse, I felt a great deal of shame. No matter how many people told me it wasn't my fault, there remained the question: **then why me?**

As time passed, I became better able to focus on practicalities. As my partner and I talked and talked, **it became clear that we would not be able to provide the kind of home we felt this baby needed.**

Then, something unexpected happened: **we discovered Association Emmanuel**, a nonprofit organization devoted to finding homes for special needs children and supporting the families throughout the lifespan of the children. **From that moment on, our adoption experience changed dramatically.**

Emmanuel's director told us it was clear we loved this baby and were acting as responsible, loving parents in the decision we'd made. We were astonished; this was far from the kind of judgmental reaction we were expecting.

My partner and I
emerged from that
experience whole,
knowing our son was
in the perfect place.

The adoption alternative is not always known and suggested by medical and social staff after you find out that your child has a disability. Parents get a lot medical information, which is not always optimistic or easy to understand.



Why can some parents provide for a disabled child and not me?

Some adoptive parents have the advantage of choosing, for several reasons, a special needs child. They are prepared, they have thought long and hard about it, and they choose it.

Some biological parents make the choice of "adopting" their own child, after going through difficult steps.

The utmost respect for everyone's path is an important value for *Association Emmanuel*; parents are supported where they are in their decision process.