



# GUIDE FOR SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ACTIVE LIFE (TSAL)

» sociovocational integration and employment / self-sufficiency  
education and training / leisure activities / social network  
housing / participation in the community / transportation





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## INTRODUCTION

The transition from school to active life<sup>1</sup> (TSAL) is a decisive step in the lives of secondary-school students who have a deficiency causing a significant and persistent disability or who have a severe social maladjustment or learning disability. There is, however, a TSAL process available for young people<sup>2</sup> enrolled in adult education or vocational training. For these young people, the contributions and joint efforts of various partners are essential to a successful transition and the carrying out of their life plan. This information guide, designed to promote and support the implementation and carrying out of a TSAL process, presents the guiding principles and steps involved.

This guide is the result of the combined efforts and commitment of all the government ministries and bodies represented on the TSAL interministerial committee: the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES), which directs the committee's work; the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS); the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (MTESS); the Ministère de la Famille (MFA); the Ministère des Transports, de la mobilité durable et de l'Électrification des transports (MTMDET); the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec (OPHQ), the Association montréalaise des directions d'établissement scolaire (AMDES) and the Fédération des comités de parents du Québec (FCPQ). It is based on previous interministerial work and the different activities (projects, joint efforts, memoranda of understanding, etc.) carried out in various regions of Québec.

## BACKGROUND

This guide is a result of the work done over recent years to better synchronize and deliver services and interventions to handicapped persons<sup>3</sup> in order to help them navigate the programs offered by different government ministries and ensure that they avoid having their services interrupted during transitions. This guide also takes into account documents prepared under the *Agreement for the Complementarity of Services between the Education Network and the Health and Social Services Network, i.e. the Individualized intersectoral service plan and the Framework for Developing and Strengthening a Continuum of Integrated Services for Young People at the Local and Regional Levels*.

The guide contributes to the implementation of the government policy entitled *Equals in every respect: Because rights are meant to be exercised and the National Strategy for Labour Market Integration and Maintenance of Handicapped Persons*. It also meshes with the work being done concerning the sociovocational and community activities of people with intellectual or physical disabilities or autism spectrum disorder.

In addition, the TSAL process is consistent with several of the orientations of the *Policy on Educational Success: A Love of Learning, A Chance to Succeed*, particularly Orientation 1.2 on the importance of acting continuously and in a concerted manner, which stresses the need to prepare and facilitate the transitions that students will have to face. It also responds to the challenges raised by the Policy with regard to adapting services to the diversity of individuals, needs and educational paths (Challenge 3). Moreover, the Policy emphasizes the importance of strengthening ties between educational settings and community stakeholders, which mirrors the principles of a TSAL process.

- 1 By "active life," we mean a set of activities that enable someone to perform actions and practise occupations that match his or her areas of interest and needs.
- 2 In this document, the phrases "young person" and "young people" and, in the documents of various networks, the word "youth," refer to both adolescents and young adults.
- 3 "'Handicapped person' means a person with a deficiency causing a significant and persistent disability, who is liable to encounter barriers in performing everyday activities." *Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration*, s. 1 (g).

## WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

It is intended for:

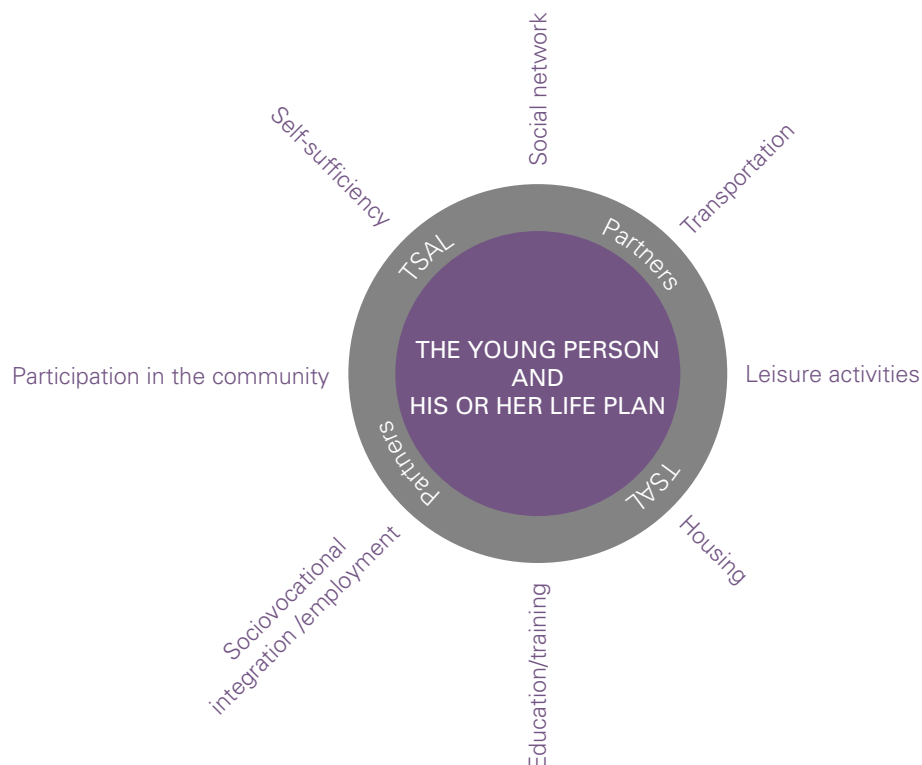
- › school system administrators responsible for initiating the TSAL process and for members of the school team (teachers and non-teaching professionals)
- › administrators and service providers in the health and social services network who actively collaborate in the process and work in the following programs: Physical and Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder (DP-DI-TSA), Youth at Risk, and Mental Health
- › all the partners (administrators and service providers) in the employment, transportation, recreation and sports sectors
- › community organizations that have the expertise and can help in any way to implement a transition process from school to active life

Young people, their parents and those close to them will also find useful information in this guide.

## WHAT IS A TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ACTIVE LIFE (TSAL) PROCESS?

The transition from school to active life is a planned, coordinated and concerted plan of activities intended to guide and support young people in planning and carrying out their life plan. It is also designed to smooth their way as they move from school to active life. In most cases, the process consists of the actions listed in the individualized education plan (IEP) and, if applicable, in the individualized intersectoral service plans (IISP).

**Figure I:** The transition process involves the young person's various spheres of life.



The transition process involves the various spheres of a young person's life but the importance assigned to each sphere depends on the young person's situation and goals. It involves the following (see Figure 1):

- › self-sufficiency
- › sociovocational integration and employment
- › education and training
- › participation in the community
- › leisure activities
- › social network
- › housing
- › transportation

Depending on the young person's needs and life plan, actions will be planned and carried out in one or more spheres of life, but not necessarily in all of the spheres at the same time.

The goal of the TSAL process is to ensure that the young people and their families benefit from a continuum of accessible and complementary high-quality services that meet their needs and goals in terms of their life plan. Young people's needs in the area of health and social services may influence their choices in the different spheres of life (e.g. work abilities, type of housing, need for assistive technology tools).

The TSAL process coordinates all the interventions into a continuum of services to foster the well-being of young people, their family and those close to them, to meet their needs and to contribute to their sociovocational integration and participation in society.

## WHO ARE THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO BENEFIT FROM THE PROCESS?

The TSAL process is specifically designed for young people with a deficiency causing a significant and persistent disability or with a severe social maladjustment or learning disability. Because of their needs and capacities, they are likely to encounter obstacles in their daily lives. These young people need support to develop their ability to function independently or maintain their skills and knowledge. They are the students who have individualized education plans. They need a concerted and planned process involving various partners, including members of the school team, so that they can experience a smooth transition from school to active life and can achieve their full potential in every sphere of their lives.

## WHO PARTICIPATES IN THE PROCESS?

The TSAL process must be anchored in the young person's aspirations and areas of interest. It is essential that the process begin with the young person's goals so that the activities proposed will enable him or her to become fully involved and either move forward with the existing life plan or readjust it. The young person will learn how to assume his or her responsibilities in each of the spheres of life affected. In the TSAL process, self-determination as well as the right, need and ability of each person to direct their life without undue external influence (Lachapelle and Wehmeyer, 2003) take on their full meaning.

## PARENTS OR A SIGNIFICANT PERSON

The active participation of parents or a significant person in the young person's life makes a big difference. (A "significant person" is someone with a responsibility for the young person.) They support the young person in his or her endeavours, encourage his or her development into an independently functioning adult and take part, along with the school team and the partners, in carrying out the steps needed to achieve the goals.



## THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE SCHOOL TEAM

School principals are responsible for implementing the TSAL process. Along with the members of their school team, they identify the young people who could benefit from a TSAL process and the partners involved (public, parapublic, community and private organizations in the area).

The school principal launches the TSAL process within the framework of the individualized education plan and assumes leadership of it. He or she prepares and carries out, with the young person and in collaboration with the partners involved, the planned activities; sees to it that the process is carried out and reviewed; sets up and maintains communication with the parents and organizations concerned; and, if needed, participates in the young person's IISP. Throughout the TSAL process, the school board provides the school principal with helpful support and information.

The involvement of the partners, especially those from the health and social services network, that are selected because of the needs associated with each of the young person's spheres of life, is essential.

## WHEN SHOULD THE PROCESS BE LAUNCHED?

The ideal time to launch a TSAL process depends on the young person's needs and life plan. There are certain times that are particularly appropriate for assessing the need for such a process.

It is recommended that the process be launched early enough to allow sufficient time to implement the actions that are deemed essential. Thus, the three years leading up to the expected end of secondary school are extremely important in the transition planning process because of the choices available to young people in the areas of schooling, sociovocational integration, housing, recreational activities and so forth.

The process can begin before the young person chooses a training path. This allows for a broader reflection on the process and allows it to be incorporated into the life plan. Three years before the young person's expected secondary-school leaving date is the often-recommended start date but, as the expected school leaving date could be moved forward, it is important to start planning the transition several years ahead. This is often the time when the question arises about the need to begin the TSAL process, in accordance with the young person's needs and capacities. In addition, the duration and intensity of transition activities may differ significantly from one person to another, depending on their life plan. Thus, the TSAL process may begin in different circumstances:

- » in preparation for times when training path choices must be made (e.g. training for a semiskilled trade)
- » in preparation for any major change likely to compromise the young person's social and sociovocational integration
- » when the young person starts a practicum/internship
- » to ensure continuity of services and maintenance of acquired skills and knowledge during the summer
- » when the young person's departure from the school is announced or expected

Avoiding interruptions in services appears to be a crucial element. The worker who will take over should be designated, before the young person leaves school. When the health and social services network becomes the primary responsible body, it is the navigator (key practitioner) who ensures the continuity and coordination of the required interventions. The navigator, designated by the CISSS (Integrated Health and Social Services Centre) acts as the primary advocate for the young person, their parents and the people close to them. The navigator guides and supports them through the numerous steps required to obtain services. He or she maintains close links with the workers involved in order to coordinate the interventions and support the achievement of the young person's life plan. The navigator remains in charge of continuity when the young person continues their studies in adult education or vocational training.



## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

*Acknowledgement of the place of the young person, parents or anyone else who is important to them in preparing and carrying out their life plan* (King et al., 2005)

The young person is at the centre of the process of transition from school to active life. The transition process is defined based on the young person's goals, interests, needs and skills. The success of this process depends on the involvement of the young person and his or her parents, as well as the guidance and support provided to them every step of the way.

*Importance of the collaboration between the partners involved and the clear division of responsibilities* (King et al., 2005)

The clear division of responsibilities among the partners concerned and the constant transmission of information are essential to the success of the TSAL process. Throughout the process, the partners, including the parents, make certain that their interventions are marked by coherence and continuity in order to encourage the young person's life plan to be carried out. In the context of complementarity, the expertise of each partner is important.

*Importance of planning, organization and constant assessment of the TSAL process at the provincial, regional and local levels* (Blum et al., 1993)

Joint planning of the goals to be achieved, the duration and intensity of the transition activities, and the division of tasks at each step is a winning condition. It is also important for the TSAL processes put in place to be assessed continuously so that any necessary adjustments can be made quickly.

*The involvement of the organizations and partners in the TSAL process* (KING et al., 2005)

The role of government ministries and bodies at the provincial level is to raise awareness of and promote the ministerial orientations concerning the implementation of the TSAL. They ensure that the administrators and service providers in their respective networks become thoroughly familiar with the guide and participate in the TSAL processes for which their contributions are required.

In the 2013-2014 to 2015-2016 work plan for *Agreement for the Complementarity of Services between the Education Network and the Health and Social Services Network*, both government ministries agree to follow up on the development and strengthening of continuums of integrated services, including TSALs. In addition, within the framework of the 2015-2019 Plan for government commitments to promote the implementation of the policy *Equals in Every Respect*, MEES, the MTESS and the MSSS, in collaboration with the OPHQ, also agreed to support their networks in developing and implementing TSAL processes.

At the regional level, the partners involved, including representatives of the school boards and the CISSS, work to encourage the preparation, implementation and consolidation of TSAL processes and monitor them. The partners support the local coordination mechanisms in implementing TSAL processes. They continuously assess the processes put in place in order to propose solutions to problems that may arise.

The TSAL process is begun by the school and integrated into a service continuum. Regular follow-up enables interveners to adapt in accordance with the evolution of the situation and make the necessary adjustments. At the beginning of the process, mechanisms should be identified that will enable quick and effective action to be taken in a problematic situation. To facilitate the process, the partners may sign agreements about the division of responsibilities and the organization of services within the framework of the TSAL process. Each body, including the school board, makes its resources available and recognizes the time required for each step of the process.

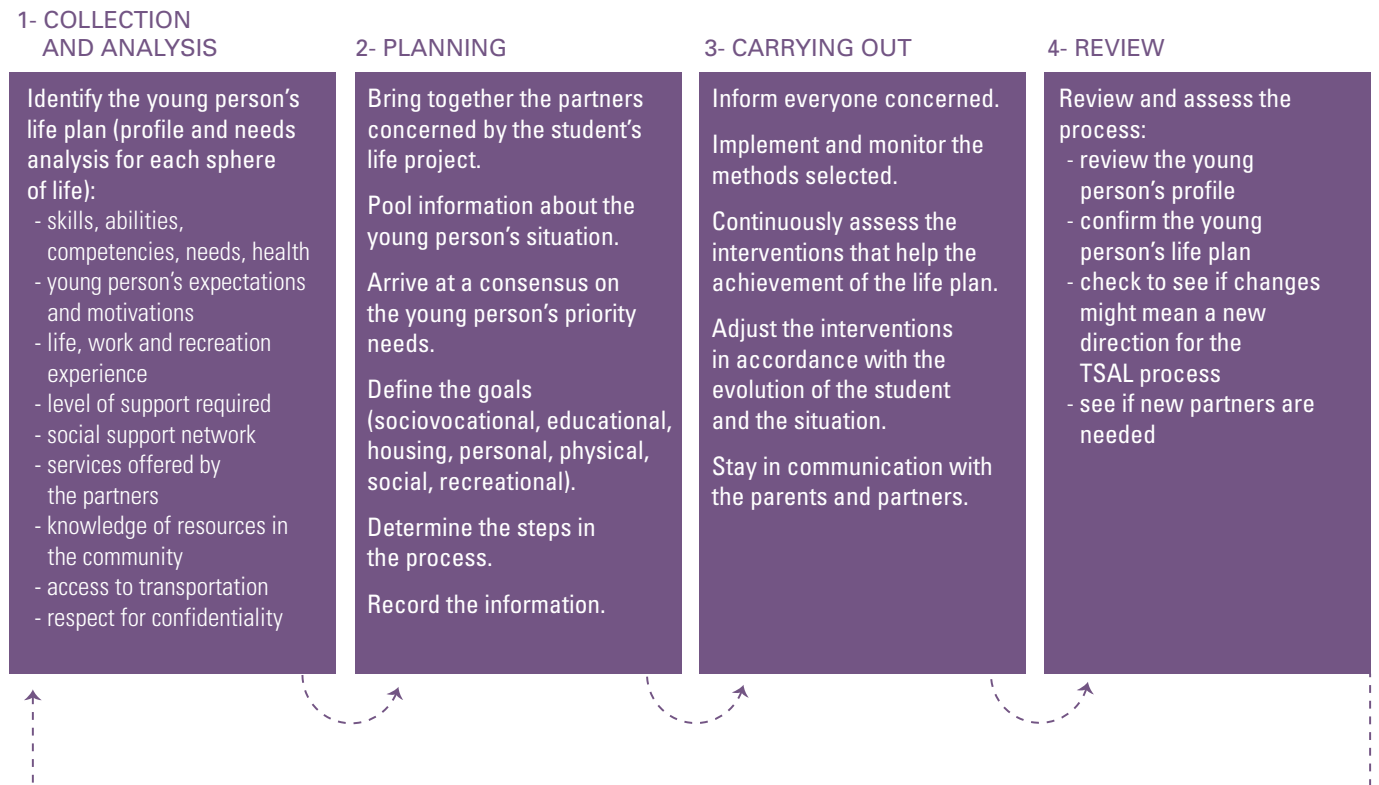
It is also important to designate the intervener who will take over once the young person has left secondary school and who will support and guide him or her until the foundations of their life plan are well laid. If a young person continues to receive services from the health and social services network after leaving school, a navigator should be designated.

*Recognition that the smooth transition to active life is a key factor for achieving the young person's life plan and social participation* (KING et al., 2005)

The TSAL is put in place to facilitate the transition from school to active life. Continuity and complementarity in the services and interventions of all the partners are priorities. The TSAL process may be complex sometimes, particularly when there are needs in several of the young person's spheres of life. It is important that support

measures for the young person and his or her family be provided throughout the process. It may also be necessary to help the young person and his or her parents access the services of organizations that will take over from the school the carrying out of the student's life plan.

**Figure II:** The steps in the TSAL process



## STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Experience shows that there is no single model for transition. However, planning of the TSAL must always be built around the young person's life plan, based on goals that will enable him or her to develop his or her capacities and competencies to ensure sociovocational integration and participation in society. The TSAL is based on an intersectoral collaborative planning of coordinated actions and is part of a dynamic process of assistance that is supported by a systemic view of the young person's situation. It is implemented in accordance with solution-oriented approach.

### COLLECTING AND ANALYZING INFORMATION

The school principal, or representative, in collaboration with his or her team, identifies the young people who will need support to carry out their life plan. This is how the process usually starts. However, young people or their parents who are already worried about the transition may approach the principal themselves.

The principal then meets the young person and his or her parents (or the person who guides and supports him or her) to propose a TSAL process, identify factors that will encourage their participation and obtain an informed consent on the sharing of personal information. Thus, the young person or his or her representative can agree to the pooling of certain information about the young person's needs and capacities in the different spheres of life and specify what type of information must be kept confidential.

Together, they draw up a profile of the young person's needs, challenges, strengths and dreams in each sphere of life and support him or her in creating a life plan. The school principal or representative identifies the partners concerned by the TSAL process. At this step, the available relevant information about the young person's situation is pooled.

### PLANNING INTERVENTIONS

The school principal arranges a meeting with the young person, his or her parents and the group of partners who are essential to the carrying out of the young person's life plan. Reaching a consensus on the young person's profile, his or her needs and the foundations of his or her life plan is crucial for the proper planning of actions. The partners agree on the priority goals to be achieved in a given period of time, the main competencies to be developed and the ways and means (e.g. learning activity, exploration of new environments, practicum, summer job) to support the development of the target competencies. All partners indicate their contribution in accordance with their expertise and mandate. The planned activities are recorded in the student's IEP and, if applicable, in his or her IISP.

### CARRYING OUT INTERVENTIONS

Once the responsibilities have been well defined and divided between the young person, their parents, the members of the school team and the partners, each can implement the strategies and means needed to fulfil the commitment they have made. Communication amongst them throughout the TSAL process is very important to the carrying out of the young person's life plan. Regular and frequent communications will allow for faster adaptation to the evolution of the young person's situation.

### REVIEWING THE PROCESS

To ensure monitoring of the process and achievement of the agreed-upon goals, the school principal, along with the young person, his or her parents and all the partners, schedules regular reviews. These make it possible to assess the feasibility of the young person's life plan and make necessary adjustments as the young person's situation evolves. Some adjustments are to be expected during a TSAL process, hence the importance of beginning it early enough in the young person's schooling.



## THE PARTNERS' COMMITMENTS

### GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES

The government ministries and bodies that are members of the interministerial committee have made a commitment to raise awareness of and promote the orientations concerning the implementation of the TSAL process. They ensure that their representatives and partners on the local and regional levels actively contribute to the implementation of the process.

#### MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION ET DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR

In its Policy on Special Education, *Adapting Our Schools to the Needs of All Students*, the Ministère defines the basic orientation as the success of all students who have handicaps or social maladjustments or learning disabilities: "To help students with handicaps or social maladjustments or learning disabilities succeed in terms of knowledge, social development and qualifications, by accepting that educational success has different meanings depending on the abilities and needs of different students, and by adopting methods that favour their success and provide recognition for it" (*Adapting Our Schools to the Needs of All Students*, 15). The organization of services, which is the responsibility of the school boards, concretizes this key orientation and justifies the involvement of school principals in the TSAL process. "In keeping with the principle of equality of opportunity, the mission of a school is to impart knowledge to students, foster their social development and give them qualifications, while enabling them to undertake and achieve success in a course of study" (*Education Act*, s. 36). The process also provides for continuity of services between general education in the youth sector, general education in the adult education and vocational training.

It involves placing students at the centre of their own success, focusing on the student's strengths and the school's resources and adopting a systemic view of the student's situation while building on an approach focussed on finding solutions. Complementary educational services are called upon to facilitate the student's progress in his or her various types of learning. The IEP becomes the preferred method of facilitating the implementation of joint actions and is part of a dynamic support process.

It is also within this joint process that the decision to implement adaptations or make changes with respect to the Québec Education Program will be taken and recorded in the IEP. To ensure the student's success, an adapted program, such as the Program for Students With Moderate to Severe Intellectual Impairments, may be suggested to him or her following the assessment of his or her capacities and needs.

The goals of the TSAL process are recorded in the IEP or in the IISP.

### RECREATION AND SPORTS

"Leisure plays an essential role in community development: it affects the quality of life and the well-being of individuals, contributes to the development of social ties and social capital, and represents a place for expression and engagement in democratic life."<sup>4</sup>

The Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur collaborates with a large number of provincial, regional and local partners in the area of recreation and sports. Depending on their area of intervention, they come from the association or municipal sector, in the fields of education or health, or from the private sector.

At the provincial level, sports and recreation bodies are also active in creating environments conducive to furthering inclusivity. They are called upon to develop the practice of recreational and sports activities within a healthy and safe environment, and to work to implant structures that will facilitate meaningful and inclusive practices.

<sup>4</sup> The Québec Declaration, Art. 410th World Leisure Congress, World Leisure Organization, Québec City, October 2008.

At the regional level, organizations such as the regional recreation associations for people with handicaps, regional sports associations, and regional recreation, outdoor and physical activity authorities may also support young people and their families in carrying out their life project in many ways. On the local level, this same support may come from vacation day camps, community recreation centres, clubs, sports associations and community recreation organizations, and municipalities.

Some organizations work directly with the person and those close to him or her, while others encourage the development, promotion and accessibility of recreational and sports activities. Depending on the specifics and priorities, the various actors work in accordance with an organizational model that can differ from one region to another.

## **MINISTÈRE DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX**

The health and social services network is responsible for maintaining and improving individuals' physical, psychological and social capacities to play a role in their community and to carry out the roles they intend to assume in a way that is acceptable to themselves and to the groups to which they belong. The services provided focus mainly on encouraging the adaptation or rehabilitation of individuals and supporting their participation in society. Most young people involved in TSAL processes have received services from the health and social services network at some point in time.

Individuals who want to access the range of services offered must contact the Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) in their region.

### **INTEGRATED HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRES**

The CISSS provide general services to the entire population, including young people involved in a TSAL process. The mandate of the CISSS is to:

- › receive, evaluate and direct individuals and those close to them to the appropriate services
- › accompany and support vulnerable people
- › offer a range of health and social services and some specialized services, notably in schools

The general services offered vary depending on the difficulties the young people are having and can involve:

- › health and social services (including psychosocial support)
- › support for acquiring social skills that will help them integrate into the job market
- › homecare services
- › follow-up services in the community to promote their social integration and help them live where they choose

The specialized services take the form of adaptation, rehabilitation and social integration services designed for people with handicaps. These services help improve their quality of life by:

- › supporting development of their independence with regard to their environment (job, housing, community, etc.)
- › training interveners and raising their awareness, and providing support and advice to the people who are important to them in their different settings
- › evaluating their abilities and areas of interest
- › recommending adaptations for workstations
- › encouraging the acquisition of new habits to support the carrying out of their life plan and smooth their pathway to a self-sufficient life
- › promoting the continuity and coordination of required interventions (navigator)



## MINISTÈRE DU TRAVAIL, DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA SOLIDARITÉ SOCIALE

The Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale is responsible for helping handicapped persons find and keep a job. It provides services in the areas of employment and social solidarity to the people of Québec through the Emploi-Québec network.

Handicapped persons access government employment services mainly through their local employment centre (CLE) and the specialized manpower services for handicapped persons (SSMO-PH).

### LOCAL EMPLOYMENT CENTRES

The local employment centres offer all Quebecers, especially young people, reception, evaluation, reference, follow-up and guidance and support services to help them find and keep a job. Through the CLEs, Emploi-Québec helps create jobs and develop the work force, and to fight unemployment, exclusion and poverty, from the point of view of economic and social development. Emploi-Québec mainly serves people who are looking for a job but it also offers several subsidy and financial assistance programs designed to promote the integration of handicapped persons into the job market.

### SPECIALIZED MANPOWER SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The specialized manpower services for handicapped persons (SSMO-PH) are specifically designated by Emploi-Québec to offer specialized employment services to handicapped persons.

#### **The mission of the SSMO-PHs is:**

To provide services adapted to the needs of persons with physical, intellectual, sensory or psychological disabilities with respect to choosing a career, acquiring competencies, looking for a job, integrating into the workforce and keeping a job. While most of the organizations provide services to all categories of persons with disabilities, some, mainly in the large centres, specialize in services to one or two categories.

#### **Their mandate:**

To provide the following services to handicapped persons who want to enter the job market:

- › employability assessment
- › assessment of their functional work capacity
- › job search and analysis of tasks
- › raising of awareness in the workplace
- › adaptation of workstations
- › personalized support, guidance and follow-up on the job
- › training and support of these persons in their workstation and workplace

Within the framework of the TSAL, the SSMO-PH are sought out when young people finish school, to support their finding and keeping a job, mainly through preparing the workplace to welcome a handicapped person and implementing support and accommodation measures when necessary. It is also important for young people and their families to visit the SSMO-PH in person a year in advance to familiarize themselves with the services, get information and discuss the feasibility of the life plan with the interveners there.

## MINISTÈRE DES TRANSPORTS, DE LA MOBILITÉ DURABLE ET DE L'ÉLECTRIFICATION DES TRANSPORTS

The mission of the Ministère des Transports, de la Mobilité durable et de l'Électrification des transports is to provide efficient and safe transportation systems so that people can move around the province. This includes the implementation of adapted transportation services to promote the social, occupational and economic integration of handicapped persons.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

In Québec, several authorities share the responsibility for organizing public transportation to support the mobility of the population within their territory. To discover all the public transportation, regional public transportation or adapted transportation services available, people simply need to contact the municipalities.

Access to public transportation for handicapped persons varies from one region and one authority to another, so the authority or region itself should be contacted to obtain details about the services they provide. This will also enable the young people to choose the means of transportation that will best meet their needs and provide them with the greatest self-sufficiency possible.

## **L'OFFICE DES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES DU QUÉBEC (OPHQ)**

The mission of the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec is to ensure compliance with the *Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration*. The Office is responsible for promotion, coordination, facilitation and assessment.

It also informs, advises and assists handicapped persons and their families and makes representations on their behalf on an individual and a collective basis. The Office helps in various ways to support the implementation of TSAL processes with provincial, regional and local partners.

The functions of the Office's department in charge of support services to individuals include:

- › informing and advising handicapped persons, their families and the interveners who work with them
- › supporting and accompanying handicapped persons and their families in their dealings with service organizations
- › promoting individualized service planning, including TSAL processes, particularly within the framework of ISPs and IISPs (e.g. if the interveners or managers in the education network want to know what resources exist in the different spheres of a young person's life, the OPHQ can help)

At the regional level, the Office is responsible or jointly responsible for several regional cooperative bodies that facilitate the implementation of TSAL processes by mobilizing the various partners concerned.

Lastly, the Office publishes different guides on the services, programs and measures designed for handicapped persons and their families.

## **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

There are different ways in which community organizations can help people carry out their life plan. These include assisting, informing, raising awareness in their communities, advocating for and defending their rights and providing services.

Here are a few examples:

- › associations of handicapped persons
- › recreation associations for handicapped persons
- › associations of parents whose children have a specific disability



## CONCLUSION

The transition from school to active life is a key period during which social participation by young people should be encouraged. All partners are committed to the success, full development and participation in community or occupational activities of these young people. The partners work together to support the evolution of the life plans of young people for whom a TSAL process is essential, ensuring that interveners bring as much of their expertise as possible to the table. The contributions of each partner are very important, as are the planning and organization of interventions. If actions are concerted, the support provided will be even more effective.

This guide was designed to explain the broad orientations of TSAL processes. It confirms the commitment of each of the partners in this process. Several regional authorities have also designed tools that facilitate the implementation of such processes and take their own particular situations into account.

This guide underscores the importance of the collaboration and concerted efforts of the different partners on the local, regional and provincial levels with regard to the TSAL process and the social participation of young people.



## APPENDIX

### EXAMPLES OF TSAL PROCESSES

The transition from school to active life (TSAL) process may vary in length and intensity, depending on the young person's profile, i.e. his or her capacities and needs. The reflection that school principals undertake along with their school teams is necessary and determinant for implementing the TSAL process. Questions about the different options available to the young person (finding and keeping a job, employability, contributing activities and daily activities) are to be asked conscientiously. In each of the situations described below, interventions focussed on several spheres of the young person's life. These scenarios describe a TSAL process and show the importance of supporting and guiding young people in developing their life plan and the importance of teamwork.

#### SITUATION 1

Philip is 18. He has a motor impairment and also has severe language difficulties. He lives with his parents and older brother in an urban neighbourhood. The family home is adapted to Philip's needs. He uses a wheelchair and needs help with the activities of daily life, especially dressing and personal hygiene. He uses adapted school transport to get to school and his parents drive him to other activities. He attends a specialized school that offers regional educational services and, every day, he also uses the surveillance services program for disabled secondary school students because his parents work and Philip is not self-sufficient enough to stay home alone. His parents want their son to maintain his progress through the summer. Philip is a young man who likes to be with his friends and participates in activities to the extent of his abilities. He is interested in computers and, this year, he started to use a tablet to browse the Internet.

The school principal responded positively to Philip's parents questions about their son's future and explained what the TSAL process involves. The first step is taken with Philip, his parents (with the collaboration of the school team) and a worker from the CISSS program for people with physical impairments. They draw up a profile of Philip's capacities and areas of interest and discuss his aspirations and life plan. In this process, they discover that Philip and his parents want the same thing, for him to stay active, continue to develop his abilities and socialize with friends once he finishes his schooling.

Given Philip's interest in computers, it is agreed to pursue efforts to improve his written English. The possibility of putting his tablet to work to alleviate his difficulties in communicating orally will be explored by the school team with the collaboration of the worker from the CISSS. As his parents would like to see Philip participate in a recreational activity on weekends, they contact two community organizations to find out what activities are offered.


At the end of the school year, the interveners, Philip and his parents meet to review the actions carried out during the year and plan activities for the summer. It is decided that, during the summer, Philip will enjoy vacation time with his family and will also go to a specialized summer camp run by a community organization for two weeks, which will give his parents some respite time.

To prepare Philip's second year of the TSAL process, the interveners begin with the review at the end of the previous school year. Philip's life plan remains unchanged from last year. His interest in using his tablet helped motivate him to improve his written English and his advances are recorded. On Saturdays, he will participate in an activity organized for young adults with disabilities by a community organization. Philip's parents would like to see him use the municipal adapted transportation service, something he has yet to do.

The goals set for the second year are designed to help Philip continue to become more self-sufficient, focussing on using the tablet and taking adapted transport to get to activities outside of school.

It is agreed that steps will be taken to get Philip registered for adapted transport and for the recreational activity on Saturday. The school interveners will continue to work on the goals of improving Philip's written language and will also look for software that will help him form sentences and use a speech synthesizer to communicate.

At the end of the school year, the action plan is reviewed. Philip used adapted transportation to get to the recreational activity on Saturdays and is now more at ease with getting around. He has also succeeded in using his tablet to communicate simple, everyday requests. It is agreed that, during the summer, he will spend time vacationing with his family. He does not want to go back to the specialized camp this year, so arrangements are made for him to participate in the community organization's day activities during the other weeks of the summer.



For the third year, the issue of Philip's leaving school will be examined in more depth because he is feeling very anxious and is wondering what he will do next year. His parents are also concerned because they both work and want to find a solution that meets Philip's needs while allowing them to continue their work-related activities.

The school team (principal, teacher, educator), the worker for the CISSS intellectual impairments and autism spectrum disorder (DP-DI-TSA) program who will take on the role of navigator, the representative from the community organization, Philip and his parents share about the evolution of the situation over the past year and identify possible courses of action for his transition from his school to another environment next September. Philip would like to continue his studies. His parents express their concerns about how he is going to eat.

The goals for this last school year are focussed on English and written communication. Philip will continue to participate in the Saturday recreational activities. His teacher will do a more systematic evaluation of his capacities to perform simple secretarial tasks on the computer and activities will be planned to help him develop his abilities in this area.

In preparation for his leaving the school, the interveners will arrange to enrol Philip in one or two courses at the adult education centre. In addition, the community organization can welcome Philip two days a week in its day activities program. An adapted sports organization that needs volunteers to do simple secretarial tasks will be approached. If the outcome is positive, a few days to try it out will be planned during the year so that Philip can confirm his interest and develop a relationship of trust with the organization's staff.

The designated navigator will ensure the continuity of services to support Philip and his family over the year and especially when he has to leave school in June to continue on his path in new surroundings.

## SITUATION 2

Eighteen-year-old Julie has Down syndrome (trisomy 21) and a mild intellectual disability. She lives with her family in a rural community. She loves children and her neighbour runs a home daycare. When Julie is not at school, she gives the neighbour a hand. She plays with the children and helps out by doing a few tasks. She spends a lot of time with her family and has little in the way of social and recreational activities.

Julie takes the school bus to school. She is timid, has little self-confidence, tends to undervalue herself and gets discouraged quickly. She is enrolled in a Work-Oriented Training Path (WOTP).

Julie and her parents hope that, once she finishes school, she can work in a daycare like her neighbour's. Julie and her family have received services from some partners (health and social services network, community organizations). Their social network is quite limited.

Julie's teacher thinks that the TSAL process could help Julie and speaks to the school team (principal, special educator, psychologist). They decide to offer this possibility to Julie and her parents.


Everyone makes sure that Julie fully understands what is involved in the process and that she is ready to participate in it. Her parents want to participate in this process that is so important for their daughter's future. A profile of Julie in the different spheres of her life is prepared with the collaboration of the CISSS worker handling its intellectual impairments and autism spectrum disorder program, who has worked with her over the last several years. This profile helps to pinpoint her strengths, limitation and needs in terms of school, work, recreation, relationships with those around her and transportation.

Julie, her parents and the school team (principal, teacher, special educator and psychologist) then meet to prepare Julie's individualized education plan in which the actions specific to the TSAL process are identified. They help Julie formulate her life plan even though it is likely to change over the next few years. Julie says that, eventually, she would like to work in her neighbour's daycare and even open her own daycare in the basement of the family home. In the shorter term, she really wants to buy a scooter to get around, go to school and see her friends. Most of all, she dreams about living in her own apartment and having a boyfriend. After she finishes her studies, she would marry this boyfriend and they would have at least three children.

The goals for the year revolve around the support to be provided so Julie can pursue her studies with her parents' help. The interveners will take steps to help Julie increase her self-esteem and handle her academic and personal difficulties better. Julie and her parents will find out about purchasing and driving a scooter. The interveners suggest several ways to develop Julie's self-sufficiency so she can live on her own, concentrating on her laundry and housekeeping skills.

At the end of the school year, the school interveners, Julie and her parents meet to review the actions carried out during the year and to plan activities for the summer. They have decided that, during the summer, Julie will take advantage of her vacation time to participate in the activities organized in her municipality for adolescents with intellectual disabilities. Julie will register with the adapted transport service to be able to participate in these activities and see her friends during the summer. Efforts will continue to encourage Julie's self-sufficiency at home by having her do some of the cooking. As part of Julie's IEP meetings in the fall, it is agreed to invite the school social worker and the association for handicapped people responsible for the summer activities in which Julie participated. For the second year of Julie's TSAL process, the school team will continue where they left off at the end of the previous school year. The social worker and guidance counsellor will also participate in the process. Julie's life plan will remain the same as last year. It is also agreed that the school's guidance counsellor will explore other areas of interest with Julie. Purchasing a scooter is delayed for safety and financial reasons. Julie has found a boyfriend but her parents feel that he could have a negative influence over their daughter. Her parents also express concerns about Julie's love and sex life and want to get help so that she will be well informed.

The goals for the second year are focused on enabling Julie to further explore her working capacities through two school practicums, one in which she will carry out tasks in the daycare and the other in which she will perform the tasks of a cook's helper. Work is ongoing to help Julie identify her areas of interest and her working capacities. It is agreed that, the following spring, the specialized manpower services will be asked to check into the possibility of a summer job for Julie and, at the same time, the steps will be taken so that Julie will be able to participate in the summer activities of the association for people with intellectual disabilities, if she does not get a job. The DP-DI-TSA (Physical and Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder) program worker and



the teacher will provide Julie with information about emotional and sexual life to better equip her to handle her romantic relationship.

At the end of the school year, a review of the action plan takes place. As Julie experienced difficulties during her school practicums (slow performance, lack of motivation, lack of attention in carrying out her tasks), it is agreed that she will not take a summer job. She will, however, do volunteer work at her municipality's song festival and will take part again this summer in the activities of the association for persons with intellectual disabilities.

For the third year, finding a job for Julie must be explored in more depth because she will turn 21 and will no longer attend school next year. The school team (principal, teacher, educator, guidance counsellor and social worker), the counsellor in specialized manpower services for persons with disabilities (SSMO), the worker in the CISSS intellectual impairments and autism spectrum disorder (DP-DI-TSA) program, the representative of the association of persons with an intellectual impairment, Julie and her parents will share about the evolution of her situation over the past year and identify courses of action for transitioning into an environment other than school in September.

The school practicums of last year reveal certain obstacles to Julie's integration into the job market when she finishes her schooling. She still wants to work with children but agrees that it would be far too complicated to have her own daycare in the basement of the family home. She also shows interest in kitchen tasks but her main challenges are remaining focussed on the task and speeding up the rate at which she does the work.

In addition, the intervener will remain in touch with Julie and her parents for future support in the area of emotional and sexual life. Julie's relationship with her boyfriend is going well. Julie seems to have more confidence and was receptive to the information given to her about appropriate behaviours. Julie says that she is not ready to have children and would rather continue her efforts to get a job and live in an apartment one day.

The goal for this last school year is for Julie to continue her studies in the Work-Oriented Training Path program. She will take part in school practicums that will be more oriented towards the kitchen. Specific attention will be paid to the challenges Julie must overcome to improve her productivity. A more systematic evaluation of her work capacities will be performed with the collaboration of the school, workers from the DP-DI-TSA program and the specialized manpower services (SSMO) program using evaluation grids and based on the results of the practicums.

In preparation for Julie's leaving her school, arrangements will be made for her to be registered for SSMO services and in the DP-DI-TSA and be supported on her road to a job. Getting a job is a long-term goal because there is a gap between her work capacities and the expectations of the job market. Steps will be taken to enrol Julie in adult education services that will foster the ongoing development of her life plan.

Julie will also continue to participate in activities offered by the association for people with intellectual impairments because her main fear about leaving school is that she will lose all her friends.

Lastly, to help their daughter become more self-sufficient, Julie's parents have agreed that she can move into the basement of the family home and have her own apartment (bedroom, bathroom, kitchenette and living room) where she can host her friends and boyfriend and prepare her own meals.

A designated navigator will ensure the continuity of services to support Julie and her family throughout the year and especially in June when she will have to leave the school and continue her journey in a new place.

At the end of this third year, the same interveners will meet to review the past school year and facilitate Julie's transition from school to adult life. The navigator will follow-up on the agreed-upon actions that Julie can continue to develop her employability. The years that will follow Julie's leaving school will be determining ones for achieving the different goals of her life plan, especially getting a job and living independently in an apartment with her boyfriend.

### SITUATION 3

Felix is 17 and, ever since he was a young child, he has dreamed about becoming a florist. He has an autism spectrum disorder. He does not like change and has difficulty communicating with others. He is more or less a loner and lives with his family in an urban neighbourhood. He uses public transportation to get around. His main recreational activities are electronic games and gardening. Felix needs to get to know places and people well before he feels comfortable in a new environment. He needs support and guidance to successfully handle changes. He uses his smart phone and computer programs adapted to his needs to remind himself about tasks he has to do. He has started a Florist's Helper training program and has completed a practicum at a florist's. He hopes to get a summer job there at the end of the school year.

The first year, after discussing Felix's strengths, weaknesses and needs, the interveners at the school think it is time to suggest to him a process aimed at ensuring a smooth transition from school to active life. The teacher meets Felix and his parents and introduces them to the TSAL process.

Once Felix and his parents have agreed, a profile is drawn up for the different spheres of his life and a navigator is named to accompany him in his TSAL process. Information is gathered about his strengths, limitations and aspirations with respect to school, a future career, leisure activities, interpersonal relationships and his needs with regard to transportation and housing.

Next, during the preparation of Felix's IEP, the school team identifies TSAL actions that could further the pursuit of his life plan. Partners from the health and social services network and employment network are invited to this meeting because their collaboration is essential to the achievement of certain goals. It is agreed that the SSMO will evaluate Felix's work capacities and that the centre de réadaptation en déficience intellectuelle – troubles envahissants du développement (CRDITED) (rehabilitation centre for individuals with intellectual impairments or pervasive development disorders) will support the teacher's activities to improve communication between Felix and the other students. The CRDITED will also support his parents in reducing the sources of conflict between their son and the other members of the family.

At the end of the school year, the school team, Felix, his parents and the partners involved meet to review the actions carried out during the year and plan activities for the summer. To address Felix's aspirations, steps are taken by the CRDITED or SSMO so he can do a practicum or get a summer job in a florist's shop or in a related field.

The second year, actions are planned to continue the TSAL process and get feedback on the activities that took place over the summer. The school interveners, Felix, his parents and the partners involved (CRDITED, SSMO, CISSS, etc.) are at the first meeting. The goals set for this second year are still associated with Felix's life plan, which may be the same as that of the previous year or which could be modified in accordance with Felix's needs and aspirations. A follow-up meeting with all the interveners, Felix and his parents is scheduled for the end of the school year to plan the summer period.

Just like the first two years, the TSAL process is reviewed during the meeting for Felix's IEP at the beginning of the third year. Felix will definitely leave school at the end of June. Actions will be taken to prepare for his taking a job at a florist's shop or with a horticulturist. His practicums and summer jobs enabled him to confirm his areas of interest and realize his capacities to do this work. As Felix's parents are looking to sell their house, Felix would like to take a small apartment near his workplace. He would also like to take driving lessons so he can eventually buy a car. The SSMO manpower counsellor will support and guide Felix in finding a job before the end of the school year. Felix and his parents will gather information about driving lessons. The CISSS worker will explore with Felix the best ways to adapt to independent apartment living.

A follow-up meeting will take place between the interveners, Felix and his parents a few weeks before the end of his schooling. Felix's needs will be reassessed and arrangements will be made for a navigator to stay in touch with him, at least for his first year of active life.



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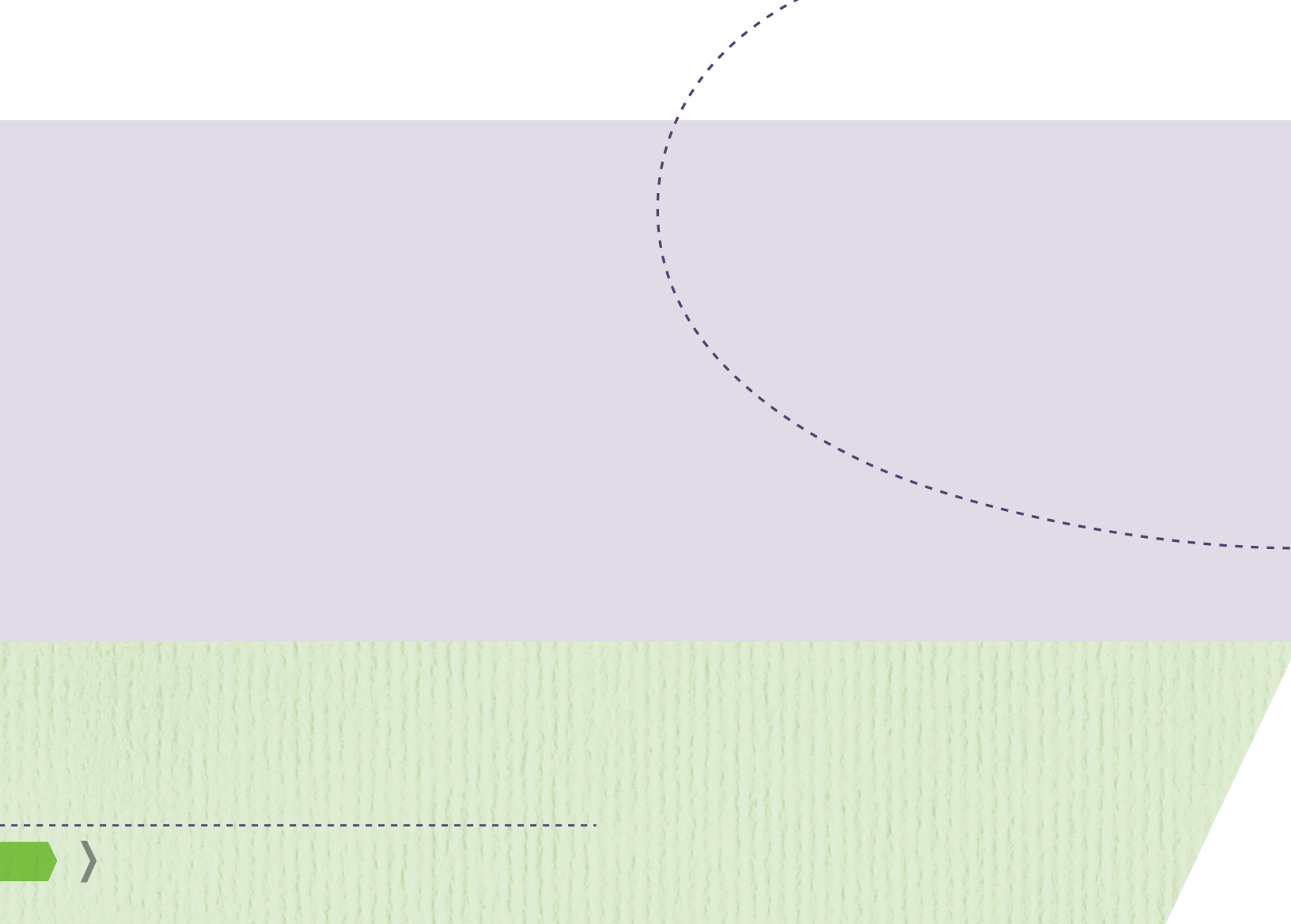
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