



Alima
Perinatal Social Nutrition Centre

Activity Report 2023-2024





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Roxane Girard
Chair of the Board of Directors

A Word from the Chair and Executive Director



Julie Paquette, MBA, PDt.
Executive Director

Together, we have had the immense privilege of contributing to the growth and development of an organization that is now celebrating its 145th anniversary, a task we have undertaken with heartfelt conviction. Few organizations have the opportunity to draw upon such a rich history to better serve their clients.

A Growing Clientele

It is with mixed feelings that we noted a significant increase in demand for our perinatal social nutrition services. While we are pleased to have supported a large number of pregnant women, this increase underscores the troubling reality of growing demand for our services. This reality has compelled us not only to maintain our capacity to act but also to expand it while also ensuring full support for our extraordinary and highly qualified staff.

Alima, Perinatal Social Nutrition Centre

This past year was marked by the launch of our new branding. This change was only possible thanks to the efforts and engagement of our team and the support of our communications committee. We were all thrilled to participate in this transformation. However, while this change might seem simple, undertaking a rebranding exercise for an organization as storied and rooted in its community as ours remains a daunting task. Today, we are proud to stand under a new identity that showcases our organization's expertise.

Concretizing our Ambitious Strategic Plan

We have already reached the halfway point of our ambitious 2022-2026 strategic plan. As we reflect on our achievements thus far, we take pride in our progress while acknowledging the need to sustain our efforts, particularly in maintaining intervention capabilities and strengthening relationships with our primary stakeholders. We are enthusiastic at the prospect of another year spent putting Alima's values into practice and continuing to build toward our ultimate goal: that all babies start their lives on equal footing.

Roxane Girard
Chair of the Board of Directors

Julie Paquette, MBA, PDt.
Executive Director



Alima, Perinatal Social Nutrition Centre: A Natural Evolution for the Dispensary

Established in 1879, our organization has evolved into a veritable institution. From its origins as a meals-on-wheels program, Alima has now been dedicated to supporting pregnant women in situations of vulnerability. The perinatal social nutrition services developed and practiced at Alima are at the heart of our institutional interventions, like the Olo program, and have been widely deployed and used as the basis for additional programs developed in Canada and the United States. Our unique expertise, rooted in both experience and best practices, is highly sought after by both partners and collaborators.

It was time to centre this expertise and highlight our organization's innovative and dynamic character. As such, the Montreal Diet Dispensary has become Alima, Perinatal Social Nutrition Centre.

The name Alima is a combination of two French words that characterize the very essence of our organization's purpose: alimentation (nutrition) and maman (mother). Within the logo, the letter "A" represents the union of our three protagonists: Alima, the child and the mother.

This transformation would have been impossible without the full involvement of our team, our board of directors and our partner, Attitude Marketing. We wanted to offer a special thanks to Dan Nielsen, its president and founder, as well as Sébastien Tougas, Partner & Creative Director, Estelle Mottin, Project Manager & Mathilde Juteau, Project Coordinator.



New Name, Same Mission

Our commitment to reducing social health inequalities among vulnerable women during their pregnancies remains our priority, and we are deeply dedicated to this goal.

Mission



To support pregnant women in situations of vulnerability through perinatal social nutrition, giving their babies every opportunity to develop fully.

Vision

All babies start their lives on equal footing.



Values



Kindness

We advocate for kindness. We welcome others with openness, without expectations or judgement.

Equity

We believe in equity for all. Neither a person's identity nor their circumstances should limit their journey. Our greatest desire is to provide our clients and our team with opportunities and possibilities for advancement.

Curiosity

We are driven by an insatiable curiosity that pushes us to understand and learn more and more. This thirst for knowledge is expressed not only through our actions, but also in our desire to discover people for who they truly are.

Excellence

We are driven by excellence. We value the transmission and exchange of our knowledge to provide the best possible service.

Fun

We recognize that it is important to have fun in life. Fun is about savoring the present moment, offering a smile, a laugh, and sharing a beautiful camaraderie.



The Fundamental Importance of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The implementation of our strategic plan, coupled with the realization of our mission and values, has led us to a desire to take a clearer position on equity, diversity and inclusion. This commitment is reinforced by our diverse workforce and the support we provide to individuals from various backgrounds. Our commitment to this goal began by developing some guiding principles:

- 1 EDI is a constantly evolving approach, and Alima is committed to continually learning and improving within it.
- 2 Applying an EDI approach is a collective responsibility shared by all members of Alima's community.
- 3 Developing towards best practices and inspiring others to do the same requires that everyone who identifies with the organization develop their personal introspection and adopt a posture of humility.
- 4 EDI principles are integral to every action we undertake, regardless of scope or purpose.

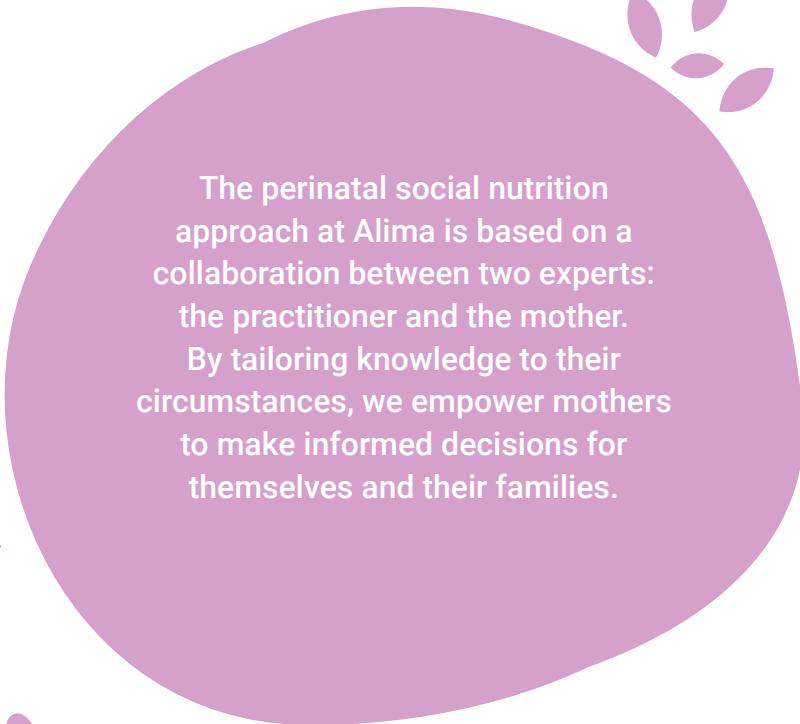


Perinatal Social Nutrition: A Powerful Intervention Tool

Perinatal social nutrition is a transdisciplinary approach focused on pregnant women in a situation of vulnerability. This approach gives mothers the tools they need to feed themselves and their babies throughout their pregnancy and into the baby's first months of life.

Based on a thorough evaluation of the mother's nutritional and psychosocial needs, alongside other important determinants of health, she can be given access to appropriate resources to facilitate better physical and mental health.

This is rooted in a fundamental principle.



The perinatal social nutrition approach at Alima is based on a collaboration between two experts: the practitioner and the mother. By tailoring knowledge to their circumstances, we empower mothers to make informed decisions for themselves and their families.



"I had the chance to be accompanied by Alima and to receive unparalleled reassurance from the organization through these difficult times. I don't know how to thank Alima enough! I am so grateful that my baby is healthy and that the practitioners encouraged me to take care of my own health as well. Now I have the strength to give my best, so I can make sure that my daughter is healthy and continues to grow up that way!"

Client at Alima

«For me it's about acknowledging the value of everyone's experiences and recognizing our client's autonomy in making her own choices, while supporting her to make sure those choices are well informed. It's about recognizing that expertise isn't just something we gain at school, it's something we gain little by little over every day of our lives.»

*Catherine Royer, M.Sc., PDt.
Nutritionist at Alima*

Our Perinatal Social Nutrition Services

Our services are at the core of our mission and feed into all of our other projects. The growth in our clientele is clearly visible in the data collected over recent years. Alima continues to value collaborations with partners from both the broader community ecosystem, and the health care system. These precious relationships facilitate access to services while taking into account the diversity of our clientele and their needs.

2021-2022

387 mothers

2022-2023

721 mothers

This increase sheds light on Alima's crucial role within the community, characterized by its flexibility and agility. It also encourages us to maintain strong relationships with our partners, for the benefit of our clientele.

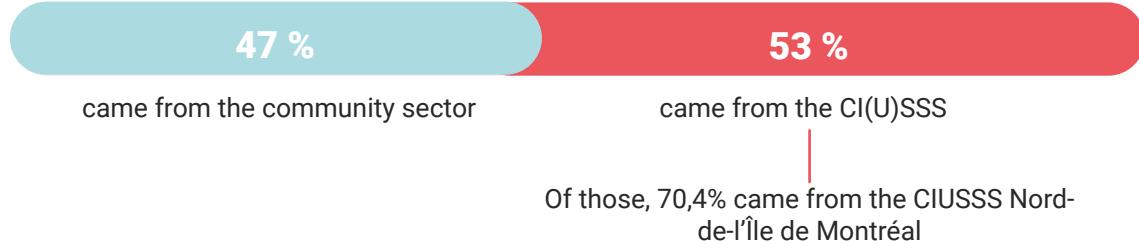
953 mothers
benefited from Alima's services in
2023-2024



A Portrait of our Collaborations and Referrals

Nearly 470 referrals

came directly from services located across the Greater Montréal Area.

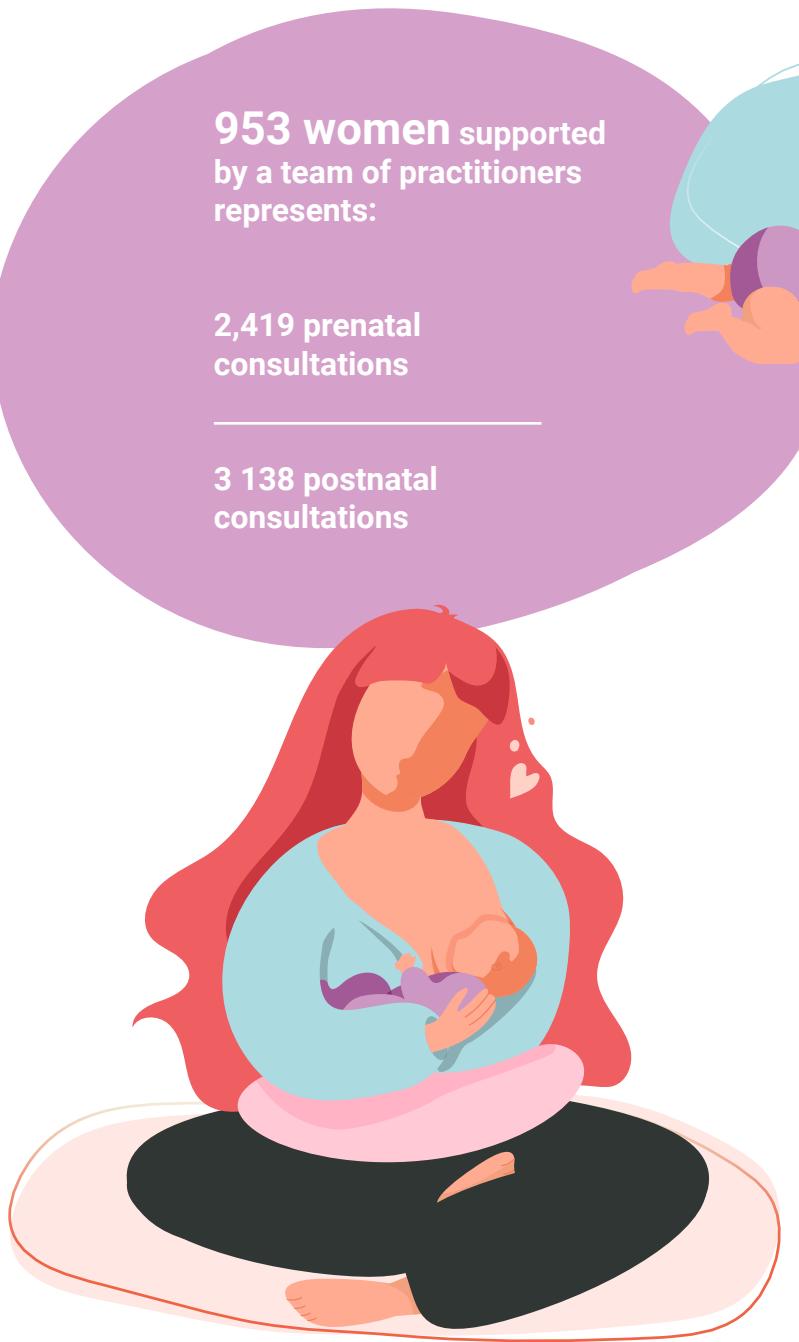


GOODS AND SERVICES PARTNERS

Carrefour alimentaire Centre-Sud	Fondation de la visite
Centre des femmes de Saint-Laurent	Fondation Olo
Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Saint-Laurent - Au cœur de l'enfance	Groupe Pro-Vert
Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de la Montérégie-Est	La Maison Bleue
CIUSSS du Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	Doctors of the World
CIUSSS du Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	Moisson Montréal
CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	Nutri-Centre LaSalle
CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	Regional Program for the Settlement and Integration of Asylum Seekers (PRAIDA)
CIUSSS de l'Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	Programme Rond-Point
Centre Communautaire Gerry-Robertson	Clinique communautaire de Pointe-Saint-Charles

CIUSSS: (Integrated health and social services centres (CISSS) and integrated university health and social services centres (CIUSSS))

Our Mothers in 2023



953 women supported by a team of practitioners represents:

2,419 prenatal consultations

3 138 postnatal consultations



Births

5.1% low birth weight rate

5.0% prematurity rate

Breastfeeding

95% began breastfeeding

46.7% exclusively breastfed up to 6 months (vs. 25.4% for the province of Québec¹)

953 pregnant women and their families were accompanied this year:

38.4 % were living on less than a sustainable income

23 % depended on social assistance and family allowances

20.5 % had no income at the time their file was opened (a 30% increase over last year).

Our Mothers in 2023

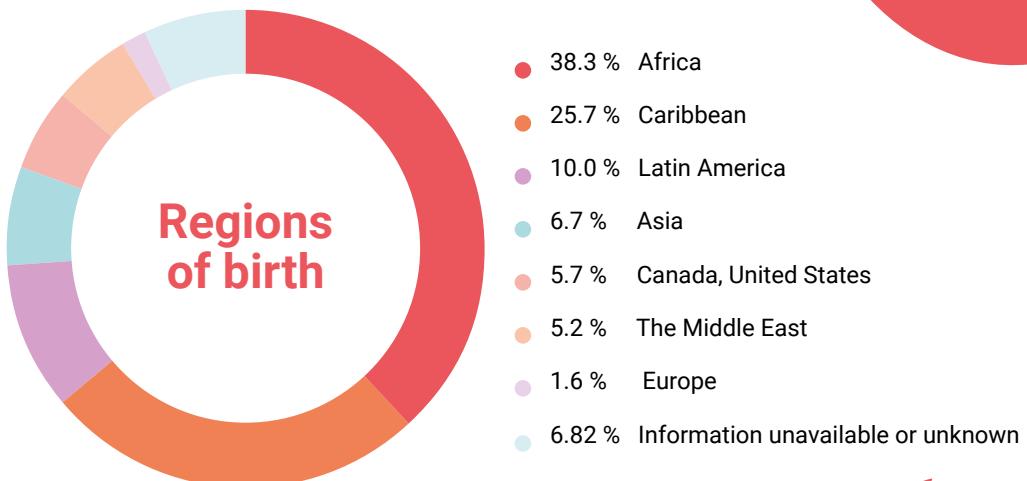
Legal and Immigration Status

This clientele continues to primarily be supported through the late pathway program, which was initially created to respond to the needs created by a massive influx of asylum seekers in Montreal.

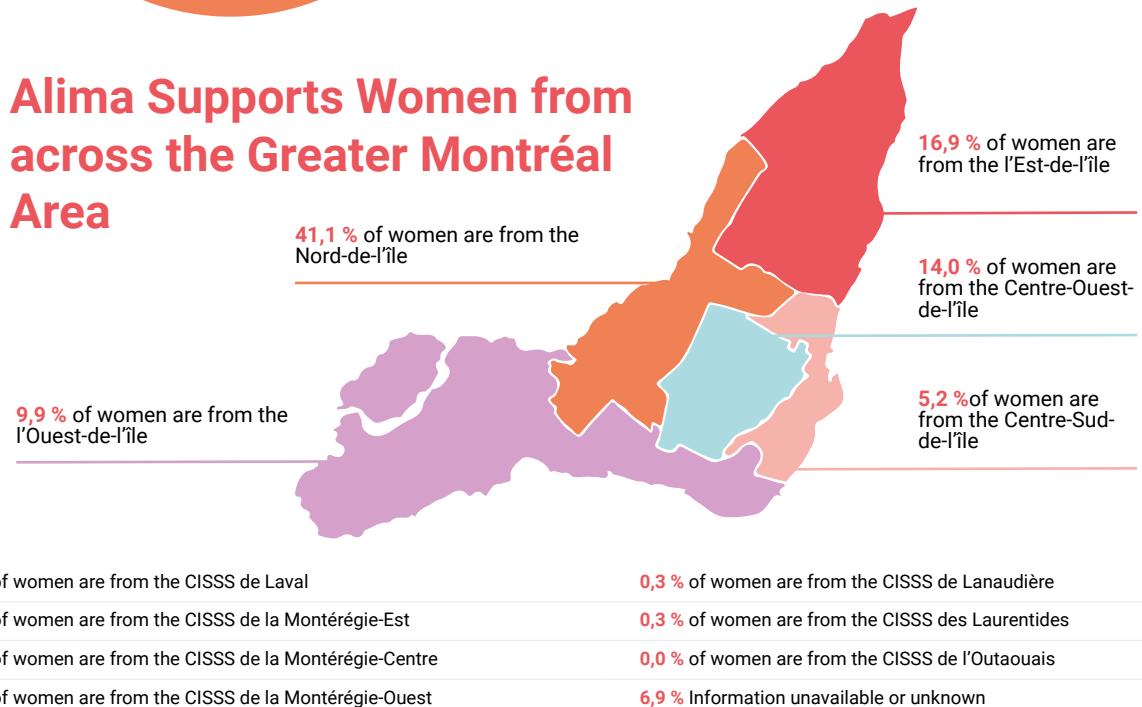
- **76,1 %** precarious immigration status
- **1,8 %** refugee status
- **22,2 %** citizenship and permanent resident status



64 %
were living with precarious
immigration status,
including 43% who were
asylum seekers



Alima Supports Women from across the Greater Montréal Area



Active in Groups across the West Island and Centre-Ouest Regions

Alima has been participating in several local groups focused on early childhood in the West Island and western Montreal, including in Lasalle and Lachine. Two local points of service were also put in place thanks to collaborations with Nutri-Centre in Lasalle and with the Gerry Robertson Community Center, the latter of which was developed as part of the Projet communautaire Pierrefonds (PCP). Efforts have also commenced with federal hotel programs in Dorval to facilitate access to its services for pregnant women who are asylum seekers or refugees.

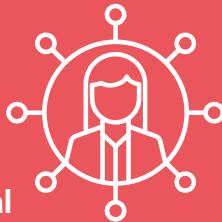
We are also present in Centre-Ouest/Downtown Montreal, working alongside partners like the PRAIDA and CLSC Métro at the YMCA Residence that houses refugees and asylum seekers. Alima is equally present in local groups within the Peter McGill area working on early childhood, food security and immigration. A new initiative, the «kitchen corners» project led by the Community Table and involving several partners including Alima, is currently under development.

Northern Montreal: New Projects in Saint-Laurent and Bordeaux-Cartierville

Thanks to a wonderful collaboration with the CIUSSS in this area, alongside other local partners working on early childhood, Alima has been able to provide local services in Saint-Laurent and Bordeaux-Cartierville since last fall. Two organizations have generously been hosting us in their offices: the Centre des femmes de Saint-Laurent and Au cœur de l'enfance. Alima is also a member of the Comité des organismes sociaux de Saint-Laurent (COSSL) and participates on the local committee regarding asylum seekers.

Expanding our Services across Greater Montréal

Under an agreement with the East-Montérégie CISSS, approximately 10 pregnant women from that area have been able to receive support from Alima. Based on the success of this initial pilot project over the past year, our partnership will continue through 2024-2025. We're also actively working to develop similar partnerships in other parts of Montérégie and in Laval.



Our Partnerships with Academic, Professional and Research Organizations

As an organization, Alima always prioritizes sharing our knowledge and expertise. It is our hope that doing so can contribute towards advancing general knowledge and skills around perinatal nutrition and food security.

Université Laval

Participated in the academic article entitled [A Perinatal Social Nutrition Approach to Improve Breastfeeding in a Culturally Diverse Group of Low-Income Women.](#)

Collaborated on the development of a nutritional assessment tool for populations in situations of vulnerability.

McGill University

Contributed to the Bachelor's program in nutrition.

Hosted six interns.

Université de Montréal

Contributed to the Bachelor's program in nutrition.

Hosted four interns.

Université Sherbrooke

Contributed to the academic program in Medicine

Université du Québec à Montréal

Contributed to the academic program in psychology.

Université Lumière Lyon 2

Hosted a student in Education and Health Training, Promotion and Education.

Alima participated in the annual conference organized by the Order of dietitians and nutritionists of Quebec (ODNQ) on equity, diversity and inclusion. As part of the panel entitled ***“Feeding the Inclusion of Ethnocultural Diversity: The Role of Nutritionists”***, Alima was able to raise awareness and share tools with dietitians and nutritionists regarding best practise in nutrition interventions with ethnoculturally diverse communities. [Click here for the content](#)

The special edition of the ODNQ nutrition journal was published in winter 2024, giving Alima the opportunity to contribute towards advancing knowledge by sharing its expertise and best practices in perinatal social nutrition. [Click here for the content](#)

Nutrium

Alima participated in the annual Nutrium day for continuing education organized by the department of nutrition at Université de Montréal, which focused on nutrition and perinatality this year. Through a workshop entitled “From Pregnancy to the 4th Trimester: Understanding Perinatal Social Nutrition through Practical Examples,” participating nutritionists had the chance to learn more about the perinatal social nutrition approach, covering topics such as breastfeeding and food choices for babies.

Families with an Immigrant Background

Alima contributed to the creation of a training workshop on supporting immigrating and culturally diverse families with the Olo Foundation, which is now offered to the entire Olo community of practice. The workshop was created in collaboration with a diverse group of experts to give practitioners the tools they need to better support the families they accompany.

First Steps towards Adapting our Services to Indigenous Realities

With funding from the Conseil du système alimentaire montréalais (CSAM) and the Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal, Alima has initiated a process to culturally adapt our practices to better serve Indigenous populations a process to culturally adapt our practices to better serve Indigenous populations. This funding has also allowed the implementation of a co-development process with other organizations and the search for new collaborations with various partners. The entire team of practitioners is involved and mobilized for this project to ensure they can develop their collective knowledge and skills.

The Jean-Marie Moutquin Scholarship

This year marked the second edition of the Jean-Marie Moutquin Scholarship, highlighting Dr. Jean-Marie Moutquin’s involvement in Alima. As an ambassador for the organization, Dr. Moutquin’s respect and admiration for our staff and their work is honored through this scholarship. A \$500 scholarship is awarded to one of Alima’s students or interns each year, according to predetermined criteria.

This year, the Jean-Marie Moutquin Scholarship was awarded to Marianne Juteau.





The Essentials: Food and Material Support

Throughout the year, Alima provided essential support to our clients with the help of several partners.

We were able to maintain our food and nutritional support in large part thanks to the Fondation Olo. Over the course of the year, we distributed:

12,087 vouchers for milk	6,127 vouchers for frozen vegetables
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4,199 vouchers for eggs	115 boxes of multivitamins
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Moisson Montréal generously donated the equivalent of \$52,809.20 in food items. Our clients were also able to benefit from our collaboration with the **Carrefour alimentaire Centre-Sud**. We also explored offering seasonal access to fresh vegetables through **Groupe Pro-Vert**. The company **Belove** also provided Alima with 2,304 bags of baby cereal and the organization **Tablee des chefs** provided 120 bags of dry ingredients for cookies.

Several corporate donors also provided Alima's clients with additional food support, including WSP, Novartis and Manulife.

Alima also offered different material goods to our clients. 82 birth kits (layettes) from the **Fondation de la visite** were distributed. The **Saint Edmund of Canterbury Parish** also organized fundraising events. Toys were also generously donated by **CHM communications**.

Nurturing Life: Sharing our Expertise on Perinatal Social Nutrition

Nurturing Life is a program funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) that offers a variety of tools to community workers in the field of perinatology.

Nurturing Life offers free webinars, practical tools and other content that is informative, reliable, inclusive and clear.

Nurturing Life is a concrete example of how Alima shares its expertise, balancing direct experience with contemporary scientific works to promote a healthy diet for all parents and their babies.

Winners of the 2024 DUX Grands Prix

Every year, the DUX awards shine a spotlight on companies, organizations and institutions working in the food sector that have demonstrated their leadership in developing products and initiatives that promote public health and environmental sustainability.

Alima, Perinatal Social Nutrition Centre, received the 2024 DUX Grands Prix in Communication Initiatives for our Nurturing Life program, recognized for its leadership in promoting public health and environmental sustainability in the food sector.

Impacts of the Nurturing Life Program

93 % of members reported that the contents of the Nurturing Life program allowed them to better understand perinatal social nutrition

74 % of members applied the knowledge they gained from the contents of the Nurturing Life program

66 % used its practical tools when working with clients

Members:
426 workers from 153 organizations across Québec.



A new visual identity for Nurturing Life in 2024!

Member Testimonials

“Thanks to this platform, we can quickly obtain the most up-to-date information!”

“This site is a great resource when I have specific questions that aren’t necessarily addressed in other recognized reference sites.”

“It helps us stay current with families’ lived realities.”

Nutritious and Affordable Food Basket (NAFB)



In addition to its extensive expertise in perinatal social nutrition, Alima is a key player in addressing food insecurity. This role has evolved over decades, with a strong emphasis on listening to the lived experiences of clients facing situations of vulnerability. The NAFB helps popularize crucial information in the interest of making sure adequate, health food is accessible to everyone.

The NAFB is a tool used to estimate the minimum cost of a balanced grocery basket that meets the nutritional needs of the Quebec population and to track how that cost changes over time.

Data from Montreal:

A report that analyzes data collected from Montreal was published last fall. Its findings clearly demonstrate the significant increase in the cost of food, underscoring the growing food insecurity among lower-income households. [For more information, read the report here](#)

Rollout across Quebec:

Thanks to funding from the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS), three regions have been included in a pilot project to document the cost of healthy diet. Data has already been collected in the Côte-Nord, Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine and Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec regions, and it is currently being analyzed.

Adapting to the Needs of Two Indigenous Communities:

Partnerships have been established with two communities: Lac-Simon and Kawawachikamach needs assessments based on discussion groups and meetings with expert committees have helped to define a strategy to adapt the NAFB to the specific realities within these communities.

We're in the News!

The NAFB has been getting plenty of attention, as demonstrated by the various articles published about it.

Le Devoir

December 4, 2023

De combien le prix de votre panier d'épicerie a-t-il augmenté ?

[Read the article](#)

24heures.ca

November 14, 2023

Il faut payer 284\$ de plus par année pour manger sainement

[Read the article](#)

Radio Canada

January 17, 2024

Voici comment on a réduit notre facture d'épicerie de 50 %

[Read the article](#)

La Presse+

November 14, 2023

14 137 \$ Pour son épicerie de base

[Read the article](#)

Le Journal de Montréal

November 14, 2023

Le prix de l'épicerie nutritive de base bondit de 25 % en deux ans

[Read the article](#)



Thanking our Exceptional Donors and Partners

We extend sincere gratitude to our exceptional partners for their financial support and contributions, enabling Alima to uphold our mission of supporting pregnant women in situations of vulnerability and advance our flagship projects. We wish to offer special thanks to:

OUR FINANCIAL PARTNERS

Public Health Agency Canada	Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal
Centraide of Greater Montreal	Dairy Farmers of Canada
Le Conseil du système alimentaire montréalais	Ministry of Health and Social Services

Year-End Campaign

The goal was to raise \$50,000 to support the organization's activities. Thanks to the generous donations received, Alima raised a total of 60 397 \$.

In Memoriam Donations/Bequests

In their memory, donations have been made to Alima:

Baghajian, Annette	Lamarre Legault, Jeannine	Bigras, Michel
Reeves, Carmen	Côté, Joseph	Bélanger Choquette, Pauline
Meziner, Carol	Bessette, Jules	Fitzpatrick, Rhonda
Duquette, Florent	Choquette, Marc	Boulay, Robert
Roy, Ghyslain	Pike, Marjorie	Duquette, Yves

The Alima Family

This year, our volunteers played a crucial role supporting all aspects of our operations (sorting donated food and material, translation, covering the reception, developing tools, etc.).

We also want to thank the companies and educational institutions that encourage their employees and students to give their time and get involved in the community: Industrial Alliance, Nikon Optical Canada, OnePoint, McGill University (CHAP program).

To effectively carry out its mission, Alima also depends on the insightful contributions of its board of directors, numerous committees, dedicated professional volunteers, and staff members who give of their time and expertise so generously.

Board of Directors

Roxane Girard, chair
Manager in the cultural sector

Jocelyne Pinsonneault, Vice-President
Manager consultant

Julie Turcotte, Treasurer
CPA Internship, APSV

Johanne Côté, Secretary
Retired Executive Director

Astrid Bicamumpaka Shema, Secretary
Doctor at Pierre-le-Gardeur Hospital

Gabrielle Marquis-Beaudoin, Secretary
Lawyer at the Sud-Ouest Legal Aid Office

Isabelle Tremblay, Secretary
Organizational psychologist at EVOQ
Architecture

Marie-Josée Côté, administratrice
Director, Governmental Affairs and Public
Policies, Propulsion Québec

Mario Lalancette, Secretary
Executive Director AQDFL

Committees:

Governance Committee
Johanne Côté, Chair
Astrid Bicamumpaka Shema
Julie Paquette

Finance Committee
Julie Turcotte, Chair
Roxane Girard
Maxime Joly
Julie Paquette

**Human resources and
Nominations Committee**
Isabelle Tremblay, Chair
Johanne Côté
Roxane Girard
Julie Paquette

Communications Committee
Jocelyne Pinsonneault, Chair
Annie Langlois
Marie-Josée Côté
Mario Lalancette
Fahd Rami
Julie Paquette

Funding Committee
Isabelle Tremblay
Jocelyne Pinsonneault
Mario Lalancette
Maria Hiriart
Julie Paquette

Ad Hoc Committees

Higgins House Committee
Jocelyne Pinsonneault
Roxane Girard
Julie Paquette

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Committee**
Gabrielle Marquis-Beaudoin
Julie Turcotte
Catherine Vézina
Maude Guévin
Olivia Borgatta/Zoé Mekhoulh
Ouardia Zeggane
Julie Paquette

**Strategic Planning Steering
Committee**
Johanne Côté
Astrid Bicamumpaka Shema
Jocelyne Pinsonneault
Roxane Girard
Julie Paquette



Staff

Julie Paquette, MBA, PDt
Executive Director

Stéphanie Tremblay, M.Sc., PDt
Director of Programs and Social Impact

Alessia Gadoua, PDt
Project Manager for the Nutritious and Affordable Food Basket (until January 2024)

Catherine Vézina, PDt,
Project Manager and Writer for Nurturing Life

Claude Bachand, M.Sc.
Project Manager for the Nutritious and Affordable Food Basket (Indigenous populations)

Fahd Rami,
Communications Advisor

Julie Delorme, M.Sc., Dt.P.
Project Manager for the Nutritious and Affordable Food Basket

Maria Hiriart, M.S. Ed.,
Administrative Coordinator

Merly Judith Montero Espitaleta
Head of reception

Olivia Borgatta (en parental leave)
Communications Advisor

Tammy Tran, PDt,
Coordinator for Family Services

Andréa McCarthy, M.Sc., PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

Catherine Labelle, PDt, IBCLC
Nutritionist-dietitian, Lactation Consultant

Catherine Royer, M.Sc., PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

Cloé Gosselin, PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

Dina Salonina, PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

France Proulx, PDt, psychologist (M.A.)
Nutritionist-dietitian

Isabelle Dubé, PDt,
Member of the OTSTCFQ on the Registry of Acquired Rights
Nutritionist-dietitian

Karen Madeiros, PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

Lorraine Fréchette-Doyon
Social and Community Worker

Maryam Boulad, PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

Maude Guévin, PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

Guardia Zeggane, PDt,
Nutritionist-dietitian

Selma Buckett, IBCLC,
Lactation Consultant

Suzanne Lepage, PDt,
Coordinator of Social Nutrition Practices

Zoé Mekhoush
Social and Community Worker

Interns 2023-2024

Bachelor's in Psychoeducation - Université de Montréal
Mélanie Phan

Master's in Nutrition - McGill University

Nathaly Aguilera Vasquez
Ariane Nadeau
Oriana Bellisimo

Bachelor's in Nutrition - McGill University
Alyssa Arturo
Caroline Hunziker
Cloé Gosselin

Bachelor in Public Health - Université Lumière Lyon 2
Léa Muller

Bachelor's in Nutrition - Université de Montréal
Mia El-Eid
Chiara Masotto-Prévost
Marianne Juteau
Ines Safinez Oultache



Graphic Design
Agence La Slide

Photos
Nathalie Choquette







Alima

Centre de nutrition sociale périnatale

Alimente l'espoir depuis 1879