



**Les
Petits
Frères** Pour un
grand âge
bien entouré

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

Little Brothers Urges Community Support to Ensure No One Spends Christmas Alone

Montréal, December 10, 2024—As the holiday season approaches, **Little Brothers**, a volunteer-driven organization, is launching an appeal for solidarity to counter the social isolation that still affects too many seniors in Québec. Every year, through its [holiday campaign](#), the organization and its foundation bring warmth and comfort to thousands of isolated seniors. They can reconnect with cherished traditions and enjoy the company of others with whom they can share and celebrate.

On December 24th and 25th, **416 of the 2,750 Great Friends** will experience their very first Christmas in the warm company of volunteers and the Little Brothers team. From Bas-Saint-Laurent to the Outaouais region, volunteers will be actively engaged in delivering gifts, organizing festive meals, and visiting seniors in their homes. These efforts help strengthen social connections during winter celebrations.

“Behind every closed door may be an elderly lady experiencing bereavement or a neighbour with mobility challenges going through the festive season alone. A simple gesture of generosity can restore dignity and break down the barriers of isolation. Everyone deserves to feel cared for and valued, not just during the festive season, but throughout the year.”—**Catherine Harel Bourdon, President and CEO, Little Brothers.**

Critical needs: the burden of social isolation in Québec

As Québec’s population is ageing, the challenges posed by the social isolation of the elderly are taking on unprecedented proportions. Today, more than **55,000 seniors live alone in Québec**, a figure that is constantly rising according to the *Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ)*, underlining the urgent need for action.

Isolation can have profound impacts on health. The **World Health Organization (WHO)** reports that it elevates the risk of depression, chronic illnesses, and even premature death. Similarly, the National Institute on Aging highlights that the health effects of isolation are comparable to smoking **15 cigarettes a day**. Furthermore, individuals who are isolated tend to rely more heavily on emergency medical services due to a lack of support for their everyday needs.

Large-scale mobilization: a call to action

To address these growing needs, Little Brothers has mobilized 3,000 volunteers across 12 regions, creating a network of mutual support. Among these dedicated individuals is Marie-Andrée, a volunteer in the Montréal area, who exemplifies the profound human

Siège social

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impact of their commitment. For the past four years, she has shared meaningful moments with Louise, a Great Friend. For Louise, these visits transcend mere companionship. “Marie-Andrée is much more than a volunteer. She’s become a friend, a family. Thanks to her, I no longer feel alone.” These connections highlight the significant daily impact of Little Brothers’ work.

To pursue and expand these initiatives, the **organization relies on public donations for almost 80% of its funding**. Although government grants are invaluable, they only cover a limited proportion of the needs. Every donation and every hour of volunteer work contributes directly to helping more isolated elderly people every year.

A campaign that changes lives

“I like to think that the holidays should be a time not just for entertaining, but above all for sharing and thinking of others. It’s the perfect opportunity to reconnect with our values of mutual aid and solidarity, so that no one is left behind.” — **Marie-Thérèse Fortin, actress and spokesperson, Little Brothers.**

In this time of plenty for many families and homes, a gesture of solidarity can make all the difference. With this holiday campaign, **Little Brothers aims to raise the funds needed to support its mission in 2025**. These resources will enable the organization to maintain and expand its programs, meet growing needs and continue its essential work for isolated seniors, while strengthening its impact in local communities.

To contribute to this important support network, **make a donation or offer your time** today by visiting littlebrothers.ca.



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About Little Brothers

Since 1962, Little Brothers' mission has been to break the isolation of lonely people aged 75 and over by creating a committed, loyal family around them. Active in 12 regions of Québec, and everywhere else through telephone twinning, the organization is the only one to support seniors right up to the end of their lives, whatever their condition. With an average age of 85, these "Great Friends", as they are affectionately known by the volunteers and the entire Little Brothers team, benefit from a network of support and mutual assistance that lasts an average of four years and can even extend to more than ten years. Most of these people live on low incomes, and almost a third suffer from complex health problems. Actress Marie-Thérèse Fortin is the spokesperson for Little Brothers, and actress Béatrice Picard has been its godmother for over fifteen years.

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Official spokespersons, interviews on request

- Catherine Harel Bourdon, President and CEO, Little Brothers, to discuss the growing issues of social isolation among seniors and the solutions that have been implemented.
- Marie-Thérèse Fortin, spokesperson, Little Brothers, to share her personal perspective on the importance of the holidays and the values of sharing to support the cause of isolated seniors.

Pictures available [here](#)

Photo credits and caption

- Philippe Latour (photographer)
- From left to right: Marie-Thérèse Fortin, actress and spokesperson for Little Brothers, Louise, Great Friend, and Marie-Andrée, volunteer.