

**Exodus becomes a motherhood issue: Group plans campaign to get action and keep Quebec kids from leaving province; [FINAL Edition]**

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**Full Text** (484 words)

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Susan Erdelyi wants to turn the departure of young people from Quebec into a motherhood issue.

She was joined by about 45 people last night for the inaugural meeting of Mothers Against Their Children Having to Leave Quebec, or MATCH-LQ, a group dedicated to keeping families together.

The group was started by Erdelyi, whose 26-year-old daughter left home to study medicine in Toronto a few years ago.

"I wasn't depressed, I was downright angry," Erdelyi, a Chomedey resident, said in an interview.

Inspired by groups such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, or MADD, Erdelyi said she wants to press the Quebec government to spend money on job creation rather than on such things as language inspectors.

"I want our children to have a choice," Erdelyi, 53, said. "If my daughter wanted to come back to Quebec, there's nothing here for her.

"I want to wake the politicians up and say to them, 'We should not be spending so much time talking about separation, we should be doing more to create jobs.' "

A 1996 poll by Createc for the English-rights group Alliance Quebec indicated that 40 per cent of English-speaking Quebecers age 18 to 34 expected to be living outside Quebec within five years.

At last night's meeting at a recreation centre in Laval's Chomedey district, the group said it's planning protests and letter-writing campaigns to Premier Lucien Bouchard and Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

Erdelyi, who is being backed by her 22-year-old son, Steven, stressed that her group isn't aimed exclusively at anglophones.

"It appeals to all mothers - English- and French-speaking children are all leaving. Everyone has a mother, whether alive or in heaven and a mother always wants to keep her family together."

Local Liberal MP Raymonde Folco offered her support last night and urged the group to contact rural francophone parents, who often see their children leave home, too. Folco

said she wanted to dispel the impression the Chretien government was "doing nothing, sitting on their hands" about the situation of Quebec anglophones.

"You shouldn't think you're alone in this," Folco said.

Many in the audience - which included about a dozen men - offered stories of children who moved, were about to move, or might move out of the province.

Susan MacLean of LaSalle showed up with her husband and two daughters, age 22 and 23, both of whom are planning to look for work in Calgary.

"That's the entire family going now," MacLean said. "I shouldn't be losing them. This is their home. I'd like to see whether there's anything I can do to make other people feel more at home. My kids don't feel like they're wanted."

The group plans to hold a meeting in Montreal next month and hold a protest at a yet-to-be-determined location in September. It also has set up a Web site and has an E-mail address: matchlq@hotmail.com.

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