



ASSOCIATION  
QUÉBÉCOISE  
DES DOULAS

# Strategic planning

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United to make  
doulas shine

2025-2030



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# Introduction

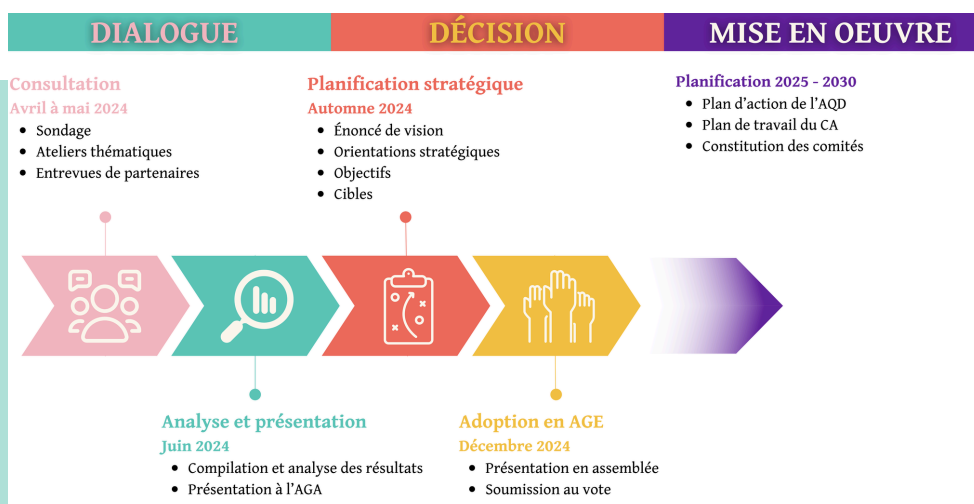
The Quebec Association of Doulas (QAD) is carrying out its mission with a clear vision for the next five years: to unite, strengthen and highlight the doula practice in Quebec. Through this strategic plan, we're laying solid foundations to ensure a long and lasting future for our organization, investing in a rich and engaging associative life, and expanding our voice to ensure that doulas are recognized for their true worth.

## A collective initiative for QAD's future

Our strategic plan for 2025-2030 is the fruit of a collective effort involving the doula in Quebec. This collective process has enabled us to revisit our positioning, define our priorities and together map out our path for the next five years.

## Inquiries and commitments

We surveyed our community through the survey "Echographie de l'AQD", we explored our shared values with the "Terreau Fertile" workshops, and we held strategic forums to refine our directions. These initiatives highlighted the importance of strengthening our network, increasing our visibility and restructuring our organization to better meet the needs of the doulas.



# Steps taken

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Solid roots, a common core and fruits to harvest



Our reflections took the shape of a tree

- The roots: What unites us as QAD - a community committed to the recognition and development of the doula practice.
- The core: Our organizational structure - an association that supports, promotes and elevates doulas.
- The leaves and fruits: Our aspirations for 2030 - a strong, influential and indispensable QAD in the Quebec perinatal field.

## Towards an even stronger QAD

Thanks to these steps, we have established an ambitious vision and taken concrete action to ensure our association's longevity, enrich our associative life and amplify our impact. Together, we're shaping the future of doula services in Quebec.

# Our three main priorities are

2

Strengthen our associative life: create an environment for sharing, learning and solidarity to foster a strong, committed community.

1

Consolidating our foundations: modernizing our structures, expanding our community and ensuring a ongoing and lasting management.

3

Make our profession shine: occupy space in the public eye, generate knowledge and establish our position with families and the healthcare system.

# Our mission

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**We represent,  
defend and  
develop the doula  
practice to  
positively  
transform the  
perinatal  
experience in  
Quebec.**



# Our mission

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## The mission that guides the association

Doulas working with pregnancy and childbirth have come together under the Quebec Association of doulas (QAD) banner to promote perinatal support. Together, they create a space for sharing, working together and mutual support.

## How do you implement this mission?

- Unite and strengthen our community: practice circles, support groups, knowledge sharing, co-development...
- Foster the individual and collective development of our doula practice: ongoing training, practical tools, collective reflexion...
- Promote doula services: awareness-raising among the general public and perinatal professional, communication, visibility...
- Represent our common interests: public speaking, media response, institutional and political representation...



# Our vision

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## United to make doulas shine

Raise Awareness and showcase the services a doula provides throughout the reproductive and perinatal journey, establishing them as a reference point for families and the healthcare system.



# Our Values

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Our values and principles, at the heart of our commitment

The Quebec Association of Doulas (QAD) is founded on fundamental values and principles guiding our practice and our actions. These principles are the foundation of our commitment, both within our doula community and in our involvement with individuals and families.

## Within our community

We encourage solidarity, team spirit and mutual recognition. We value mutual support between doulas, the diversity of approaches and the individual autonomy of each practice.

## Towards the people we provide a service for

Our values include listening, respecting and empowering. We believe in the ability of each family to make their own informed choices, and in their right to caring, inclusive, non-judgmental support.



- ✓ Trust
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Autonomy
- ✓ Collaborative spirit
- ✓ Inclusive and ethical practice
- ✓ Feminism



# Values & Principles

1. Trust
2. Respect
3. Autonomy
4. Collaborative spirit
5. Inclusive and ethical practice
6. Feminism



# Values & Principles

## 1. Trust

### Among our community

We cultivate trust between doulas

We recognize and value the expertise of each individual

### Towards the people we provide a service for

We have absolute confidence in the ability of the people we assist to give birth to their babies and to make the best decisions.

2. Respect

3. Autonomy

4. Collaborative spirit

5. Inclusive and ethical practice

6. Feminism



# Valeurs et Principes

1. Trust

## 2. Respect

### Among our community

We require respect for our work, our field and the conditions of our practice, including appropriate pay.

We recognize the value and diversity of different practice models (community/autonomous) approaches and promote respect between them.

### Towards the people we provide a service for

We respect the intimacy and sacredness of the birthing process

We honor and respect the diversity of individual choices and journeys in childbirth

3. Autonomy

4. Collaborative spirit

5. Inclusive and ethical practice

6. Feminism



# Valeurs et Principes

1. Trust
2. Respect

## 3. Autonomy

### Among our community

We advocate and defend independent practices and value the diversity of styles and types of services offered.

We support each doula in the growth of their unique practice.

### Towards the people we provide a service for

We support pregnant people's autonomous decision-making and families' experiential expertise.

We foster their empowerment through knowledge development.

4. Collaborative spirit
5. Inclusive and ethical practice
6. Feminism



# Valeurs et Principes

1. Confiance
2. Respect
3. Autonomy

## 4. Collaborative spirit

### Among our community

We promote mutual care and support among doulas.

We value sharing knowledge and resources.

We work together to improve our practice, both individually and collectively.

### Towards the people we provide a service for

We strive to cultivate constructive relationships with all parties involved.

We encourage complementary services and approaches.

5. Inclusive and ethical practice
6. Feminism



# Valeurs et Principes

1. Confiance
2. Respect
3. Autonomy
4. Collaborative spirit

## 5. Inclusive and ethical practice Among our community

We maintain an autonomous and independent practice.

We are committed to continuous improvement.

We are developing solutions to make our practice more accessible.

We reflect collectively on ethical issues.

## Towards the people we provide a service for

We welcome everyone with an open and non-judgmental attitude.

We recognize and celebrate diversity in all its facets.

We are innovative in the way we promote accessibility to doula services.

6. Feminism



# Valeurs et Principes

1. Confiance
2. Respect
3. Autonomy
4. Collaborative spirit
5. Inclusive and ethical practice

## 6. Feminism

### Among our community

We believe that our practice, which is predominantly carried out by women or gendered people, must be valued and defended.

We are committed to passing on and preserving our collective knowledge between generations of doulas.

### Towards the people we provide a service for

We are committed to supporting self-determination in the perinatal journey.

We are aware of power relationships and support our clients in knowing and asserting their rights.

# The directions

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The Directions are intended to define the major strategic thrusts that will guide the QAD over the next five years. They establish the guiding principles and overall objectives, without going into detailed actions. It is the compass: it sets the course for the QAD's future.

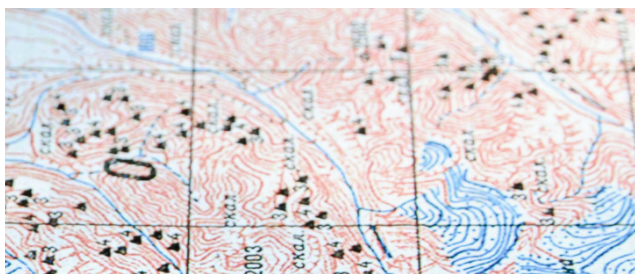


## 1 / Network and structure

Networking through a solid associative structure

## 2 / Inspire

Inspiring quality and ethical doula practice



## 3 / Respect and individuality

Giving a voice to doulas while respecting their individual practices

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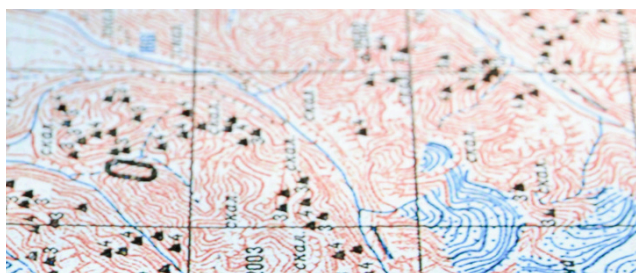
## 1/ Network and structure

Networking through a solid associative structure

- Ensure QAD's financial sustainability
- Develop an organizational structure conducive to sustainability
- Structure a regional network of representatives

## 2/ Inspire

Inspiring quality and ethical doula practice



## 3/ Respect and individuality

Giving a voice to doulas while respecting their individual practices

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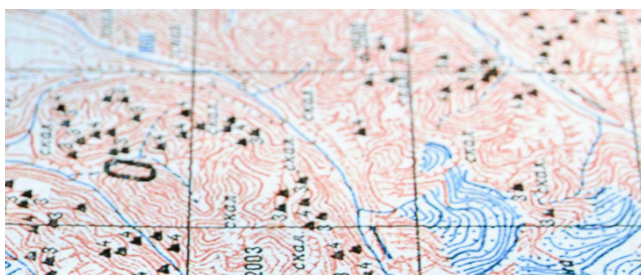
## 1 / Network and structure

Networking through a solid associative structure

## 2 / Inspire

Inspiring quality and ethical doula practice

- Offer a rich, stimulating and reassuring associative life
- Enrich members' skills in providing support
- Co-create inspiring and unifying reference points for practice



## 3 / Respect and individuality

Giving a voice to doulas while respecting their individual practices

# The directions

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## 1 / Network and structure

Networking through a solid associative structure

## 2 / Inspire

Inspiring quality and ethical doula practice



## 3 / Respect and individuality

Giving a voice to doulas while respecting their individual practices

- Promote doula support to the general public
- Build the QAD's reputation
- Represent doulas to government and healthcare institutions
- Strengthen our alliances in perinatal care

# Priorities 25-26

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“The present is not a past in the making, it is the moment of choice and action.”

Simone De Beauvoir

1

Consolidating  
our foundations

2

Focus on  
associative life

3

Establish and  
strengthen our  
reputation

## 1 Consolidating our foundations

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- ✓ Revise the general policies and membership criteria to encourage a larger membership, with doulas from all sectors (including community organizations offering childbirth support).
- ✓ Find new sources of funding to set up a part-time permanent staff position.
- ✓ Revisit the QAD ethical charter with the aim of converting it into a shared philosophy of practice.
- ✓ Updating the website/member management program to facilitate the membership process and automate time-consuming tasks for volunteers and permanent staff.

# Priorities 25-26

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Key priorities for the years ahead

1

Consolidating  
our foundations

2

Focus on  
associative life

3

Establish and  
strengthen our  
reputation

2

## Focus on associative life

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- ✓ Create opportunities to have fun together, to lift each other up, to learn, to help each other, for a tightly woven community that fosters the blossoming of doulas and the development of their practice.
- ✓ Work to create a major seminar event for 2026

# Priorities 25-26

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Key priorities for the years ahead

1

Consolidating  
our foundations

2

Focus on  
associative life

3

Establish and  
strengthen our  
reputation

3

Establish and strengthen our reputation

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- ✓ Speaking out in the media, knowledge gathering with statistics on birth accompaniment

3.

# Conclusion

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What a wonderful adventure we are building together!

With this strategic plan, we've mapped out a clear path for the AQD, one that relies on the strength of the collective, the commitment of each and every one, and a shared vision of the future of doulas in Quebec.

This plan is more than just a document: it is the reflection of a community in action, of a growing association that is taking root and asserting itself a little more each day. We have laid solid foundations, we have defined concrete actions, and above all, we have confirmed one essential thing: the QAD is forging ahead, together.

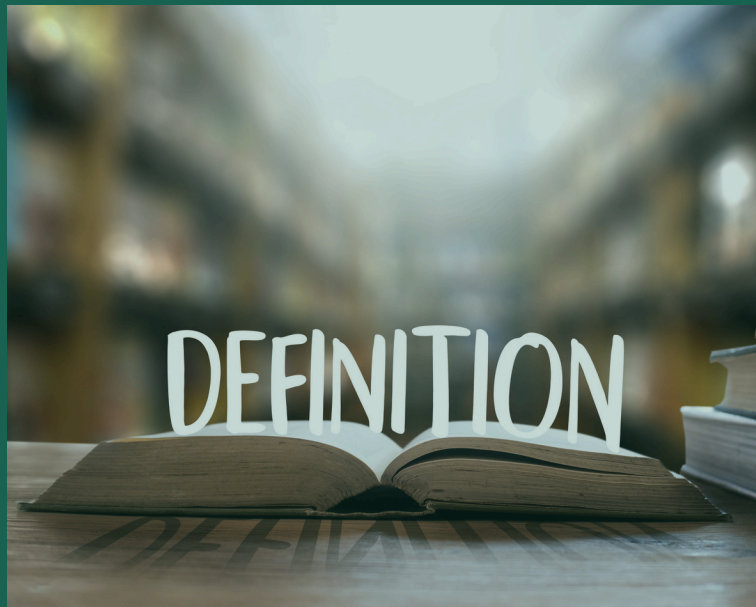


**Let's stay the course, hold our values high and continue to showcase doulas!**

The future looks bright, thanks to our collective commitment to making doulas shine, supporting our profession and innovating together. Thank you to all those involved, because every action and every voice counts in building a strong, united and indispensable QAD.



# Appendix



# Definition

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## Birth doula

(ou birthing doula support)

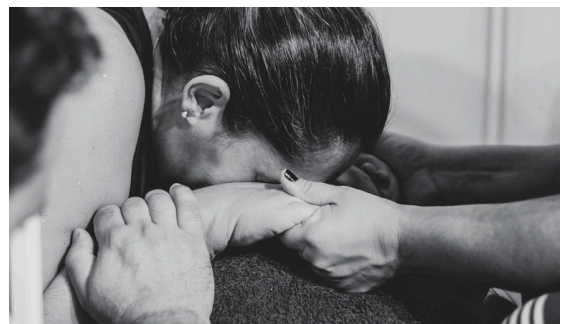


A birth doula is a community-based birth support trained in perinatal care. They offer emotional, physical and organizational support to expectant parents, accompanying them throughout the pregnancy, birth and first postnatal weeks.

By conveying information, listening with empathy and respecting the parents-to-be's values and beliefs, they support the parents' reflective process so that they can make free, informed decisions on their own terms.

The doula's approach is based on understanding and honoring the physiological birth process. By preparing for the birth and providing ongoing support, the doula promotes a satisfying experience that respects the parents' wishes. The close, ongoing relationship that develops long before the birth enables them to build a deep bond of trust and to become intimately acquainted with the family's needs, concerns and wishes. This privileged relationship, combined with the training acquired, also allows them to identify situations requiring special attention, and to direct families to the appropriate community resources.

**The doula's approach is based on understanding and honoring the physiological birth process.**



# Key features

## 1 Ongoing interpersonal support

- Prenatal phase: establish a reassuring bond of trust through regular meetings and communication, helping the birth to proceed physiologically.
- During the birth: continuous, active presence as soon as the parents request it (home, triage, induction, labor), until the family has rested ( $\pm 2$ h post-birth). Constant attention to the physical, emotional and informational needs of the parents and the baby.
- Postnatal phase: extended support, including visits to discuss the birth experience, normalize the family's needs, nurture the development of parenting skills and offer tangible help, according to the services offered. Follow-up through various means of communication for several weeks.

It is this overall, personalized and continuous approach that generates the benefits of birth support.



# Key features

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## **2 Empowerment :**

Empower parents by strengthening their own inner resources, supporting their decision-making autonomy and developing their confidence in their own parenting skills.

## **3 Personalized, customized approach:**

A service freely chosen by parents and adapted to their specific needs, while respecting their culture, values and beliefs.

## **4 Autonomy and indépendance :**

Practice through community organizations or in private practice, completely independent of medical and institutional systems

## **5 Non-medical framework:**

Offers support that complements the medical care provided, without interfering with it or practicing reserved acts.



# Advantages

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A few facts: Research has shown the benefits of hiring a birth doula\*:



Duration

Shorter labor with fewer complications;



Interventions

Fewer interventions, including synthetic oxytocin, forceps or suction cups;



Feelings

Fewer negative feelings;



Epidural

Less use of epidural;



C-Section

Reduced need for Caesarean sections;



Depression

Reduction in post-partum depression;



Nursing

Improved breastfeeding success rate;



Empowerment

Increased empowerment during delivery and postnatally;



Confidence

Improved parental self-confidence.

\* Ellen D Hodnett 1, Simon Gates, G Justus Hofmeyr, Carol Sakala, Continuous support for women during childbirth. 2017. Référence



**“What we do  
together is stronger  
than what we do  
alone.”**

Margaret Mead

**JOIN US**

