

There are many people—both young and not so young—who have had an account with Desjardins since elementary school. But times are changing and so is each generation.

What does Desjardins have to offer to youth today?

MAKE WAY FOR

Youth!

A FUTURE based on trust

The main problem that first-time young borrowers are usually faced with is a lack of credit history. But there's no need to worry! Quite a few caisses now use the "Confidence Capital" questionnaire as an add-on to loan applications. The questionnaire is not a prerequisite to obtaining a loan, but serves primarily to become better acquainted with young borrowers, giving them a vote of confidence based on past experience (part-time jobs, school involvement, volunteer work, etc.).

THE EXPERT: the youth advisor

Nathalie Bazinet is one of many youth advisors active in the Desjardins caisse network in Québec and Ontario. Her role consists of building bridges between young clients and the caisse. Working at Caisse La Porte des Anciens-Maires de Saint-Hyacinthe, Nathalie remembers how she wished she had been more informed about financial matters when she was younger. This is, in fact, what attracted her to this

position. "I attend seminars and participate in youth committees regularly that provide us with guidelines and strategies for meeting the expectations of young people. This helps us provide them with better support in their finances," she notes. As an expert in products tailored to a younger clientele, the youth advisor is an important point of reference for all kinds of projects.



OUR MISSION: to educate!

Of course, in light of its cooperative nature, Desjardins Group's aim is to use the caisse network to carry out its educational mission toward young people. "We know that these members are just starting out in life. They may need information on what a budget or a credit rating is, what a debt load is all about, or even how to save," Nathalie explains. "We guide them by playing an educational role. The use of credit can give a person an enormous sense of freedom, but it can become a burden when abused."

With this educational goal in mind, caisse employees conduct seminars on financial issues such as budgeting and credit in area high schools. A partner of several school cooperatives, Caisse La Porte des Anciens-Maires de Saint-Hyacinthe assigns an advisor to the local college at the start of every new school year. Other caisses across Québec also maintain a presence in regional colleges in order to help students find answers to their financial questions and concerns.

MEANS for taking action

Like many other caisses, Caisse La Porte des Anciens-Maires participates in the *Créavenir* program, which offers financing and assistance to members aged 18 to 35 who want to start their own business (see also articles on page 14 and 38).

Meanwhile, the caisse's Board of Directors are making even more room for youth through the Young Intern Officer program. Invited to sit in at board meetings as a non-voting member, the young officer takes parts in discussions and comments on issues that could influence the Board's decisions.



I'M STARTING my own business

Cash management, financing, financing packages, liquidities... I can't make heads or tails of it. I'd better ask at the caisse. An advisor will help me get my business off to a good start.

I'M DEPOSITING MY FIRST paycheque!

I can't wait to spend my first paycheque! If I deposit it, will the money be frozen in my account for several days? Like many other caisses, Caisse La Porte des Anciens-Maires now lets you access your money right away.

I'M BUYING a car

Wow, check out the red sports car! But can I really afford it? Before closing a deal, it pays to do some number crunching. What with the loan payments, insurance and gas, this snazzy sports car might just be too expensive to actually drive! It's also worth comparing the cost of buying a car from an individual versus from a dealer; this can affect the type of loan, interest rate and warranty coverage for the car.

I'M DOING AN INTERNSHIP abroad

I'll be able to leave with complete peace of mind because I worked out all the details ahead of time with my youth advisor. Line of credit, new ATM card, travel insurance, automated bill payments and power of attorney so transactions can be made on my behalf, such as cash transfers when I need them: all this and more will make my life easier while I'm abroad.

I'M A YOUNG professional

Physician, dentist, optometrist, pharmacist, actuary, chiropractor, accountant, engineer, pharmacologist, podiatrist or veterinarian – all my years of study now entitle me to great rates for a range of products and services.

I'M PURSUING my education

I made it: I've been accepted to the university of my choice! But studying and working at the same time is no piece of cake. In addition to government programs and financial help from my parents, what options do I have? There are products specifically designed to meet the needs of students who are waiting for a government loan or grant to kick in, or for those who don't qualify for them. For instance, a student line of credit will help cover my educational costs and while I'm in school I pay back only the interest.

I HAVE LOTS OF other goals too!

Check out the "Teens," "Students," "Young Workers" and "Achieving my Goal – 18-30 years old" section links on the www.desjardins.com Web site to find out more about our products and services and for some great tips and advice. We've got everything you need to give you a good start in life! **D**