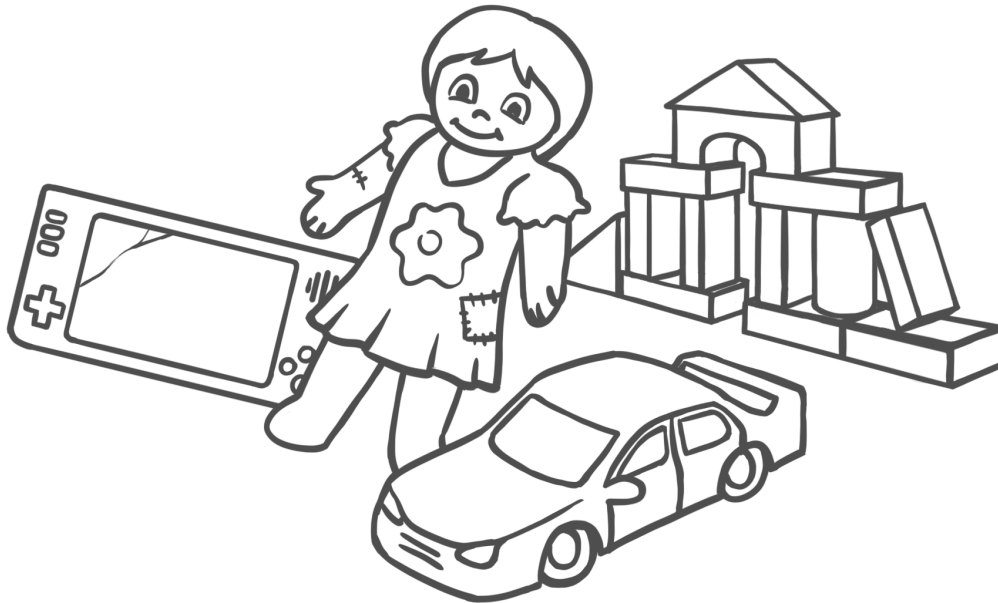


Rejoué

“With Rejoué, give toys a second life.”

Rejoué Website



The Spark

In France, 40 million toys are thrown away every year. That is 100,000 tonnes of waste, not including the discarded packaging for new toys. On average, toys stop being used after only 8 months and are either thrown away, or most often left unused in attics and cabinets.¹

When her son was born, Claire Tournefier realised how many toys were thrown away each year and decided to act. As a volunteer with the French Red Cross, she was also conscious that many people face difficulties in finding jobs. In France, 35 % of people in search of a job are held back by health issues, lack of digital or language skills, long unemployment or lack of commuting option.²

She decided to launch an association to tackle both problems at once. The goal of Rejoué is to provide high-quality second-hand toys and support vulnerable people to take up sustainable employment and thus avoid social exclusion.

Governance Model

The association collects toys directly from citizens or during company collection events. Toys are then sorted according to safety norms, tested, completed if needed, and cleaned with environmentally safe products. Finally, Rejoué sells the second-hand toys at a discounted price (40 % cheaper than a new toy) directly to families, but more often to childhood professionals. They work with kindergartens, toy libraries, leisure centres, municipalities and other solidarity networks. They also gift a share of their collection to children thanks to partnerships with companies.

To do all this work, Rejoué hires people who are excluded from the traditional labour market. For example, they focus on isolated mothers. Working contracts are adapted to the needs of the employees and are typically long-term contracts to give them stability. In addition, the association offers regular monitoring and support to ensure that employees develop their skills to keep their jobs. This support can include advice on how to solve work problems, trainings, and teaching of new skills. They can also support employees in obtaining disability recognition and accessing housing.

Rejoué's programme aims to create all conditions for workers to stay employed in the long term, even after they stop working for the association and find new jobs. Besides, the association had a permanent staff of 18 people in 2024. Volunteers are also welcome to help restore toys or sell them in the association's shop. As a supportive activity, the association organises company events during which teams can discover the work of Rejoué, and work alongside Rejoué's employees. It acts as a team building and awareness campaign.

Half of Rejoué's funding comes from public money. Local authorities fund part of the salaries of workers. Rejoué also receives grants from the European Social Fund, the state, regions, and some public agencies like ADEME. The sale of toys and services to companies (team building events) sums up to 18% of the association's revenues. The final share (about 30%) is covered by private donations from foundations and companies.

Rejoué has now been active for more than 10 years in the French region Ile-de-France and is growing steadily.

Social Benefits

Rejoué helps vulnerable people to re-enter employment by providing them with stable jobs and tailored follow-up support to help them build the skills and conditions they need to stay employed. The benefits extend beyond the employees themselves: many of them are parents, and their children benefit. Stable employment for parents means more stability for children, safer housing, more stable education and better access to health services. If parents have to learn French, they can also better support their children's education (e.g. help with homework).

Rejoué also provides affordable toys, and children in need can also receive some of the toys as gifts. The association has built a network of public actors, companies, civil society and volunteers to reach its goals of fighting social exclusion and unnecessary waste.

In 2023, the association reports the following successes:

More than
82,454 Toys
were restored.

82 People
were supported, of which 65% are woman.

6,245 Children
received gifts as part of solidarity initiatives.

Environmental Benefits

By collecting, restoring and recirculating old toys, Rejoué addresses the issue of waste generation in the toy sector. The association contributes to a circular economy, helping products last longer and reducing the purchase of new products. In addition, the association adopts sustainable practices in its processes by using ecological products for cleaning toys.

By promoting the reuse of toys through its outreach activities, Rejoué contributes to changing consumption patterns and raising awareness across society towards the need to keep products in use for longer.

Replicability Potential

The concept of Rejoué can be replicated in other places. The success of the organisation depends on successful partnerships to fund the activities (notably with companies that can sponsor used toy donations), and adequate support of employees to ensure their continued employment. Rejoué's financial model is built on the French system of local authorities sponsoring jobs for people that face employment challenges. It also benefits from the tax rebate offered to companies when they donate to associations.

Rejoué operates in the Paris region, but since 2017 they work on disseminating their model. In 2020, Rejoué launched the Rejouons Solidaire Network to support the creation and federate similar structures. Since 2024 the network is independent from Rejoué.

The dissemination strategy is to replicate the model in other regions and become active at this local level. This is more environmentally friendly than to collecting and selling toys over longer distances (including online). When Rejoué is contacted by companies outside its region, it shares contact with the local association.

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Sources:

- ¹ ADEME, <https://filieres-rep.ademe.fr/filieres-REP/filiere-JOUET>
- ² Tous mobilisés pour lever les freins à l'emploi – France Travail | francetravail.org



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