

## Longitudinal study on the future of youth in care in Québec and France: placement instability, a major issue for youth in transition

### For immediate release

Montréal, June 5, 2019 - The EDJeP partnership and the Canada Research Chair in Evaluating Public Actions Related to Young People and Vulnerable Populations of ENAP have announced the latest results of their large-scale longitudinal study on the future of youth in care in Québec and in France (EDJeP).

Our analysis demonstrates that placement instability is a major issue for youth in transition. This instability is closely related to the school experience of youth, and directly affects their future outlook. The average number of placements for the 1,136 youth in our cohort is 5.75. 17% of the young people experienced 10 moves whereas 11% experienced 12 or more. Some youth reported over 30 placements.

Our results clearly show that youth with more instability are half as likely to be working toward obtaining a Secondary V diploma or the equivalent before age 18. Youth facing instability were twice as likely to be neither studying nor working, compared with those with a more stable track.

This reality is particularly striking for youth in rehabilitation centres; their academic results are much poorer than those of youth placed in a foster family. Thus, the more time youth spend in a rehabilitation centre, the lower the probability that they will obtain a Secondary V diploma or the equivalent before age 18. Our study finds that youth who experienced the most instability have a higher tendency of being placed in a rehabilitation centre.

Martin Goyette, the lead researcher of the study, explains that “For some youth, this instability during care is compounded by the termination of services at age 18, in most cases. In the rest of Canada and the United States, other jurisdictions have put in place extended care systems aimed at youth who age out of the youth protection system, but not available all youth in care in Québec can access this type of support. In fact, the effectiveness of these programs has been demonstrated in the international literature.”

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Our first results released in November 2018 highlighted the much poorer educational achievement of young people in care. While 72% of all young Quebecers of the same age were enrolled in secondary 5, this was the case for only 17% of young people who were participating in our study.

For Jessica Côté-Guimond, spokesperson for EDJeP's Youth Committee, these results are very worrying: "We already know that young people in care have fewer resources to succeed in school. Now we learn that the link between academic success and stability in placement is strong and clear. In the midst of major discussions on the role of the Director of Youth Protection, it is absolutely necessary to look into the issue of stability and continuity in the services for youth in care. The future of the most vulnerable young people in our society is at stake!"

The second wave of data collection is underway in all regions of Quebec, as we are currently interviewing the participants of the first wave. We plan to meet them again for a third time in 2020. The study will help shed light on the transition to adulthood of your people aging out of Quebec's foster-care system. The results aim to improve social practices and public policies concerning support and the future of youth in care.

**For an interview and information:**

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**Link to the complete report:**

[http://edjep.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/EDJeP\\_Stabilite.pdf](http://edjep.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/EDJeP_Stabilite.pdf)

**About Youth Leaving Care in Québec and France: A longitudinal study**

EDJeP examines the living conditions and transition from care of young people ages 17 to 21 who were placed in out-of-home care by youth protection services. This large-scale research is the first representative study of its kind in Canada. It adopts an international (France-Québec comparison) and interdisciplinary perspective and rests on solid cooperation between youth protection and community and government actors. The research team has also innovated by including a committee of youth formerly in care, who collaborate horizontally in a multifaceted manner, at all stages of the research process. The study is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada as part of a partnership program. For more information, visit [www.edjep.ca](http://www.edjep.ca)

**About the CREVAJ**

The Canada Research Chair in Evaluating Public Actions Related to Young People and Vulnerable Populations (CREVAJ) aims to acquire new knowledge of evaluation methods of public actions, and to improve knowledge related to putting public action into practice along with the effects of public action. The work done by the Chair is intended to better guide interventions and support mechanisms for vulnerable people, particularly in the youth sector, a sector that sheds exemplary light on the recent transformations of the State both in terms of renewal of public action and of its limitations and risks. For more information, [www.crevaj.ca](http://www.crevaj.ca)

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