



CHAIRE DE RECHERCHE DU  
CANADA SUR L'ÉVALUATION  
DES ACTIONS PUBLIQUES À  
L'ÉGARD DES JEUNES ET DES  
POPULATIONS VULNÉRABLES



For immediate release

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Supporting the Education of Youth in Care: A Profitable Investment for Québec

**Montreal, February 21, 2020** - The cost of the undereducation of youth in care is estimated at \$370 million per cohort of youths who leave care, a new study by the EDJeP partnership, directed by the Canada Research Chair in Evaluating Public Actions Related to Young People and Vulnerable Populations (CREVAJ) at ENAP, concludes.

#### The CLÉ Project: A Key to a Solution

Launched in 2015 by the Fondation du Centre Jeunesse de la Montérégie, in concert with the CISSS de la Montérégie Est, the CLÉ project aims to provide financial and emotional support for postsecondary education of youth who were placed in care, by providing scholarships with a monthly value of \$416, throughout their advanced studies. Scholarship recipients are also matched with a mentor – a volunteer from the community – who supports them outside the school and the youth protection institution.

CLÉ participants are highly satisfied with the project: the scholarship eases their financial burden and lets them focus on their studies. The young participants emphasize that financial aid alone is not sufficient. As one of the students explained, to support academic success you need to *“feel that there is a structure around you, not just receive a cheque.”* A support structure after age 18, which the CLÉ project provides, is thus greatly appreciated by the recipients. To quote one student: *“The CLÉ project highlights individuals’ strengths, their self-determination.”*

#### The Cost of Inertia

Martin Goyette, ENAP professor and lead researcher in the CLÉ project, says that the project echoes the troubling research findings on the undereducation of youth in care. *“The analysis of the second wave of EDJeP data shows that at age 19, 24.8% of youth in our cohort had gotten a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, compared with 77.4% for all youth in Québec of the same age. We now know that the cost of undereducation represents a potential economic loss of nearly \$370 million for this cohort over their whole working life. What’s more, the cost of social services associated with undereducation, such as legal expenses, social assistance and mental health, is not included in this figure.”*

Pier-André Bouchard St-Amant, economist, professor of public finance at ENAP and researcher with the Chaire réseau jeunesse (Youth network chair, CRJ) explains: *“In connection with Hooked on School Week, our study points to vast economic potential that remains untapped due to the undereducation of youth in care. Further, evidence indicates that measures to encourage high school graduation appear to be profitable.”*

Executive Director of ENAP, Guy Laforest, says that the work of professors Martin Goyette and Pier-André Bouchard St-Amant demonstrates that research on the education of youth in care must continue. “This is an important societal issue and these young people must not be forgotten in discussions of student retention,” he points out.

[Read the full research report on the undereducation of youth in care](#)

[Read the report on the evaluation of the CLÉ project](#) (Version en français seulement)

#### **About Youth Leaving Care in Québec and France: A longitudinal study (EDJeP)**

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) perspective. The research team has also innovated by including a committee of youth formerly in care, who collaborate 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. / [www.edjep.ca](http://www.edjep.ca)

#### **About CREVAJ:**

The Canada Research Chair in evaluating public actions related to young people and vulnerable populations (CRÉVAJ) seeks to acquire new knowledge in order to better guide the interventions and support mechanisms provided to people in need, particularly in the youth sector. / [www.crevaj.ca](http://www.crevaj.ca)

#### **About the Fondation du Centre jeunesse de la Montérégie:**

The Fondation du Centre jeunesse de la Montérégie helps over 2,800 children in precarious or difficult situations. This foundation provides youth with support that would generally come from a parent: enrolment in sports or cultural activities, access to health care, funding to pursue post-secondary studies, finding an apartment and all other forms of support that are essential for their growth. / [www.fcjmonteregie.org](http://www.fcjmonteregie.org)

#### **About the CISSS Montérégie-Est:**

The Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de la Montérégie-Est is a public institution that arose on April 1, 2015 from the merger of the Pierre-Boucher, Pierre-De Saurel and Richelieu-Yamaska health and social services centres, along with the Centre jeunesse de la Montérégie. / [santemonteregie.qc.ca/est](http://santemonteregie.qc.ca/est)

#### **About the École nationale d’administration publique**

ENAP is the only French-speaking university in North America specializing in public administration. It is also a vocational school that offers individuals and organizations a complete range of training and services and supports them in meeting the challenges of the public and parapublic sectors. ENAP is evolving WITH AND FOR public actors. / [enap.ca](http://enap.ca)

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