



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

École nationale
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CHAIRE-RÉSEAU DE RECHERCHE
SUR LA JEUNESSE DU QUÉBEC

PRESS RELEASE

Covid-19 pandemic and needs of youth who leave care

Montréal, May 11, 2020 - The EDJeP partnership, directed by the Canada Research Chair in Evaluating Public Actions Related to Young People and Vulnerable Populations (CREVAJ) of the École Nationale d'Administration Publique (ENAP), has announced the latest results of their large-scale longitudinal study on the future of youth in care in Québec.

The most recent results of the EDJeP study show that the measures implemented to combat the COVID-19 pandemic are directly affecting decisive spheres in the transition to adulthood of youth in care. They are also hindering young people's ability to achieve a successful transition to independent adulthood. Notably, the pandemic is diminishing access to housing, strongly accentuating risks linked to mental health problems in already vulnerable populations, limiting the ability to continue studies, and hampering access to employment. The pandemic may also increase the likelihood of youth being needlessly apprehended by the justice system.

Each year, about 2,000 young people leave prolonged out-of-home care as they near or reach age 18. The EDJeP findings indicate that about 1,180 youth must leave care this year between the months of March and August. **Even without the pandemic**, about 20% of these youth would experience at least one episode of homelessness, and more than 30% would find themselves in housing instability, the study concludes. The current crisis surely aggravates this situation in a context where access to housing becomes more difficult. Further, our data show that the jobs first affected by the crisis are precisely those held by young people. Access to social and mental health services for youth is another challenge during the Covid-19 crisis. At age 19, 36% of the young participants in the EDJeP study who are living in a stable housing situation report having had mental health difficulties, compared with 50% of youth who have experienced at least one homelessness episode. Lastly, the study data show that this cumulative vulnerability increases the probability of youth entering the justice system: youth in a stable housing situation have a 24% probability of having been arrested in the last 12 months. This probability reaches 45% for youth who report at least one episode of homelessness.

The current crisis calls for the quick adoption of measures designed to prevent youth in care from having to leave their care setting hurriedly, without adequate support. Many Canadian provinces have adopted moratoriums to avoid abruptly cutting off services for youth in care. This could avert their having to leave their care setting during the pandemic. In fact, certain legal provisions currently allow social workers to continue to offer services to youth after they reach adulthood. The EDJeP data show that maintaining support for youth, rather than cutting off of services immediately when youth reach age 18, is a powerful protection factor along youths' path to adulthood, and an effective way to ease this transition rather than impose it.

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See complete report by [clicking here](#)

Previous reports:

[Longitudinal study on the future of youth in care in Québec and France: education, a major challenge for youth](#)

[Longitudinal study on the future of youth in care in Québec and France: placement instability, a major issue for youth in transition](#) (Report from wave 1)

[Youth leaving care, residential stability and instability and homelessness](#)

[Evaluation of the CLÉ: A Montérégie Youth Centre Foundation initiative in collaboration with the East-Montérégie CISSS](#)

[Costs of undereducation of youth in care](#)

[Youth leaving care in France and Quebec: Difficulties faced while transitioning to adulthood via a support network](#)

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. 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. For more information, visit 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

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