



Centraide
of Greater Montreal

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

The Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation gives \$2.5M to the Centraides to support isolated and marginalized youth amid COVID-19

Montreal, April 29, 2020 – The Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation is providing \$2.5M in funding to the Centraides of Quebec for a project to support youth amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding will help youth agencies reach isolated and marginalized young people and give them educational and psychosocial support so that they can continue their studies and go back to school in 2020-2021 with the best chances of success.

The ultimate goal of this project is to ensure that all young people can still develop their full potential. This funding will be allocated to agencies supported by the Centraides of Quebec and may go beyond this network depending on the specific realities and needs of each region.

The school break over recent months has increased the risks of isolation, marginalization and school dropouts for young people. The vulnerability of this group, and particularly of those already experiencing personal or academic difficulties, has been exacerbated by the school closures. A gap has also been widening between vulnerable youths and other young people who have access to technology (an Internet connection and computer equipment) and who have the skills and motivation (fostered by help from an adult or an ability to see themselves in the future) to continue their studies and their development.

“Today’s announcement is a response to the needs expressed by people who are working tirelessly to help highly vulnerable youth. The stay-at-home order has made their work even harder. We are pleased that we can rely on the Centraides of Quebec to quickly support agencies that help these young people and to ensure they get the support they need,” said **Jean-Marc Chouinard**, President of the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation.

“School dropouts are higher in underprivileged neighbourhoods, both in urban and rural settings. Youth success is the key to building a stronger and more prosperous society and an important tool in the fight against poverty. Right now, agencies are having a hard time reaching young people who are confined at home. This situation, combined with the fact that many agencies and vulnerable families lack access to technology, requires urgent and coordinated action. Quebec’s Centraide network is in contact with the youth agency ecosystem. It can identify local needs based on each region’s reality and can quickly support agencies that help young people in their specific territory,” said **Lili-Anna Pereša**, President and Executive Director of Centraide of Greater Montreal.

This project will allow youth agencies to:

- Contact and stay connected with isolated and marginalized youth.
- Deliver educational and psychosocial support to young people.
- Provide access to computer tools and equipment as needed.
- Give community agencies and staff the capacity to develop and maintain solutions to support youth.

Centraide has a presence in 18 regions in Quebec and is supported by private, public and parapublic corporations and institutions as well as large trade unions. The money it raises is invested locally to break the cycle of poverty and social exclusion.

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