



NEWS RELEASE
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**Much needs to be done to improve youth protection services
in Montréal, according to the APTS**

Montréal, October 15, 2018 – APTS members who work at the *Centre jeunesse de Montréal* and at Batshaw Youth and Family Centres are perplexed by the 2017-2018 report launched on October 10 on the theme, *La cause des enfants tatouée sur le cœur* (the cause of children, tattooed on our heart). The statistics obtained by the APTS show a far rougher reality on the ground. Employees are stretched to breaking point and have to contend with high turnover rates, a lack of resources and case files that are piling up.

For the 2017-2018 year, the turnover rate at the *Centre jeunesse de Montréal* was 10.9% and the number of departures totalled 206 employees. The figures are comparable at the Batshaw centres, whose services are designed for English-speaking youth. The turnover rate for educators has risen to 12.2% in the last few years, and 69 of these youth workers left their jobs for good in the past year.

"In youth centres, personnel is under enormous pressure and conditions are increasingly difficult," decried Véronic Lapalme from the APTS. "A number of educators are holding on until they find a job elsewhere or change career paths altogether. Youth centres are having trouble retaining personnel, especially their younger employees." This exodus has a very real impact on young people and their families, who have to contend with longer and longer wait times before reported incidents are assessed.

"The figures are telling: in 2017-2018, there were 175 children awaiting services on the French side," Véronic Lapalme added. "It's imperative that solutions be found to improve our members' working conditions."

"During that period, 302 children were waiting for an assessment for English services, so you can imagine the pressure for personnel who are acutely aware of what's at stake for these children," declared Josée Asselin, provincial APTS representative and spokesperson for employees at Batshaw centres. "Since then, dozens of case files have been conferred on employees who are too overworked to provide follow-up – in the sole aim of artificially reducing the wait lists when the legally prescribed time limits have expired."

At the *Centre de jeunesse Montréal*, personnel are overworked while vacant positions are left unfilled. In 2017-2018, 76 positions were left vacant. "That's far too many," affirmed Véronic Lapalme. "The union has filed collective grievances contesting this work overload and the unhealthy work climate that is setting in." On the English side, 84 positions remained vacant in 2017-2018.

The francophone teams, like their anglophone counterparts, are exhausted by this situation. Last year, 165 employees were forced to go on sick leave. For the APTS, lasting solutions to this problem are long overdue.

"Youth workers are well-acquainted with what children and their families need. It's essential that they be listened to and that their message be heard. Our union is closely following its members' realities in youth centres, and we are calling on the institutions and the MSSS to work in concert with our union so that we can clearly identify the problems and above all, bring in solutions," concluded the two union representatives.

The [APTS](#)

With 55,000 members, the APTS is an indispensable public-sector union in health and social services. It represents professionals and technicians in over a hundred job titles, in diagnostic services, rehabilitation, nutrition, psychosocial intervention, clinical support and prevention services.

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For information:

Josée Asselin
Telephone: 514-608-4099

Véronic Lapalme
Telephone: 514-378-4828