

Special commission on the right of children and youth protection

The APTS presents its brief: *Children at the heart of our priorities*

Longueuil, May 26, 2020 – The APTS (*Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux*) is presenting its proposals to improve youth protection services in hearings today with the special commission on the rights of children and youth protection.

"Our members are concerned for the children's well-being, but for a long time, work overload has prevented them from giving children the time and attention that they need. Reinforcements have to be brought in for youth centre workers on the front line. Urgent action must be taken to recognize their skills and judgment and grant them the professional autonomy they need to perform their duties. Their professional autonomy is often limited by the cumbersome statistical reporting they are required to do by a far too centralized system of health and social services," declared the president of the APTS, Andrée Poirier.

Representing the majority of youth protection workers, the APTS is using every available forum to demand massive reinvestments in front-line and second-line services to boost the ability of the health and social services system to fulfill its youth protection mandate in Québec.

"The premier recently called on unions to work with the government to improve working conditions in the health and social services sector. We're taking him at his word, and our current public-sector contract talks are a good opportunity for us to find solutions to the grave problem of attracting and retaining personnel, not only in youth protection but in health and social service professions as a whole," Andrée Poirier explained.

Concrete solutions for youth protection

In its [brief](#), the APTS proposes more than twenty ideas for improving the way services are organized and funded, employees' working conditions and conditions of practice, the way the courts are organized and run, and the legislative framework governing the exceptional mandate conferred on employees in youth services.

These solutions include setting up early screening to intervene as early as possible in the development of very young children; appointing a pivot youth worker for any first-line intervention with a child; promoting co-intervention to end the problem of working in silo; reviewing employees' workload based on the complexity of their cases; and ensuring better alignment between clinical considerations and the courts.

The lack of consistency and coherence that we decry in youth services can only be overcome if an autonomous structure is created within the CISSS and CIUSSS that would group together the entire set of youth services with the complementary psychosocial and rehabilitation services. A single management structure that has the necessary human resources and budgets to fulfill the youth protection mandate is vital," asserted Andrée Poirier.

The APTS also proposes that a permanent independent institution be created: an ombudsperson for children and young people. This person would be appointed by the Québec National Assembly and be responsible for developing and implementing a province-wide policy against child abuse and mistreatment.

The APTS

The APTS ([Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux](#)) represents 56,000 members, including more than 10,000 in youth protection services, whose role is indispensable in

ensuring that health and social services institutions run smoothly. Our members offer a myriad of services to the population in all regions of Québec, including diagnostic services, rehabilitation, nutrition, psychosocial intervention, clinical support and prevention services.

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