



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Mental Illness Foundation Is Airing its New Awareness Campaign on Depression Among Young People

MONTREAL, January 12, 2009 – Starting today, the Mental Illness Foundation's new awareness campaign can be seen, heard and read by the general public. With a theme of depression among young people, the objective of this campaign is to make the population of Quebec aware that young people can also suffer from depression. It is the message conveyed by advertising on television and radio, while billboards and print advertising remind us that we need to break the silence and confront the taboos still surrounding depression among young people.

According to Nicole Allard, Executive Director of the Foundation, "this new awareness campaign is part of a five-year initiative, begun last year, whose ultimate goal is to promote urgent action with regard to mental illness. Last year, we highlighted the impact that mental illness can have, not only on the person affected, but also on those around him or her. This year, we are focusing on teens because we know that 5% to 10% of young people are affected. Here again, it is urgent to act given the number of suicides among young Quebecers".

When a teenager has symptoms of depression, they are often confused with what is sometimes called "teenage angst." As a result of this believe, a number of young people with this disease are not diagnosed and do not obtain help or the treatment they need. Parents do not always know what to do to help their child get through these difficult periods. It is important to know that depression diagnosed in time can be treated, both for teenagers and adults. People who want to know more about depression among young people can visit the Mental Illness Foundation website at:

<http://www.mentalillnessfoundation.org/en/p/help-a-person/our-assistance-programs/for-young-people>

Awareness and demystification of mental illness are beyond any doubt a public health issue in Quebec. With this in mind, the Mental Illness Foundation and the participating media work together to raise awareness amongst Quebecers and reduce taboos surrounding mental illness. The Mental Illness Foundation wishes to express all its gratitude to the media organizations, which generously provided space and air time to disseminate this campaign.

Founded in 1980, the mission of the Mental Illness Foundation is the prevention of mental illness in order to reduce the suffering of those affected and that of their loved ones by mobilizing individuals and society.

The Foundation is pursuing its prevention objective through its *Partners for life* and *Nothing's Working?* programs by reaching people in their milieu, at school and at work. We believe that better knowledge about mental illness and the contribution of possible solutions can contribute to early detection and thus decrease human suffering, as well as the related social and economic costs.

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