

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Measuring Progress  
Made in Implementing  
the Recommendations  
of the Report of the  
**Special Commission on  
the Rights of the Child  
and Youth Protection**



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# INTRODUCTION

## Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection

The Quebec government established the Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection (CSDEPJ) to “examine the youth protection system in order to identify challenges and barriers and to make recommendations for improvement.”<sup>1</sup>

The Commission was created in response to the tragic death of a seven-year-old girl in April 2019<sup>2</sup> and the underlying lack of support for Director of Youth Protection (DYP) workers, who find themselves unable to satisfactorily meet a growing number of requests for assistance and intervention.<sup>3</sup> Régine Laurent was named Chair of the CSDEPJ in May 2019.

The CSDEPJ made its recommendations based on:

- 1,590 personal accounts received by telephone via a toll-free number, by email sent to the “Mon histoire” inbox, or by a secure online form
- 42 town hall meetings attended by 488 members of the public and 1,426 professionals from all 17 administrative regions of Quebec
- Statements given during public consultations by 355 witnesses (including members of the public, front-line workers, university researchers and government representatives)
- 233 written briefs.<sup>4</sup>

The CSDEPJ’s final report was officially submitted in April 2021.

## The CSDEPJ Watchdog Committee

Shortly after a bill to reform the *Youth Protection Act* was introduced, the Collectif petite enfance began holding discussions to determine how it could contribute to implementing the recommendations put forward in the CSDEPJ report. It became apparent that a neutral body was needed to systematically monitor the implementation of these recommendations. The Collectif petite enfance therefore commissioned experts and researchers from a variety of backgrounds<sup>5</sup> to select and enlist the future members of what would become the CSDEPJ Watchdog Committee (the Committee).

It was important that Committee members be seen as objective by the general public and that their only motivation be the improvement of living conditions for vulnerable children, youth and families. Additionally, Committee members were required to have experience directly related to the issues raised by the CSDEPJ, as well as the knowledge needed to critically but objectively examine progress made on the 57 recommendations and their subrecommendations.

1 Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection, *Instaurer une société bienveillante pour nos enfants et nos jeunes* (April 2021), 13, [Translation]. Accessed April 12, 2023, from [https://www.csdepj.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers\\_clients/Rapport\\_final\\_3\\_mai\\_2021/2021\\_CSDEPJ\\_Rapport\\_version\\_finale\\_numerique.pdf](https://www.csdepj.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_clients/Rapport_final_3_mai_2021/2021_CSDEPJ_Rapport_version_finale_numerique.pdf).

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Idem, p. 16.

5 **Camil Bouchard**, PhD in psychology, retired Université du Québec à Montréal research professor; **Annie Bérubé**, PhD, professor, Département de psychoéducation et de psychologie, Université du Québec en Outaouais; **Cari Lacharité**, PhD, professor, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières; **Julie Poissant**, PhD, professor, Département d’éducation et formation spécialisées, Université du Québec à Montréal; **Nibisha Sioui**, PhD, psychologist and course lecturer, Université du Québec à Montréal; and **George Tarabulsky**, PhD, Scientific Director, Centre de recherche universitaire sur les jeunes et les familles.

On April 28, 2022, almost one year after the CSDEPJ submitted its report, the names of the Committee members and Chair were announced:

- **Martine Desjardins**, Chair of the CSDEPJ Watchdog Committee
- **Andréanne Beaudry**, Commission des services juridiques (CSJ)
- **Elise Bonneville**, Collectif petite enfance
- **Nicolas Bourgois**, Collectif autonome des Carrefours jeunesse-emploi du Québec (CACJEQ)
- **Anne-Marie Cech**, Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)
- **Jessica Côté-Guimond**, Collectif Ex-placé DPJ
- **Fannie Dagenais**, Early Childhood Observatory
- **Jérôme Di Giovanni**, Alliance des communautés culturelles pour l'égalité dans la santé et les services sociaux (ACCÉSSS)
- **Caroline Dufour**, Coalition Jeunes +
- **Wyatt Dumont**, First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC)
- **Stéphanie Gareau**, Marie-Vincent Foundation
- **Martin Goyette**, Professor, École nationale d'administration publique (ENAP)
- **Sonia Hélie**, Youth Protection Act Researcher, Quebec Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect
- **Denis Lafortune**, Institut universitaire Jeunes en difficulté (IUJD)
- **Julie Lane**, Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale, Université de Sherbrooke
- **Louise Lemay**, Regroupement des équipes d'intervention jeunesse du Québec (RÉIJQ)
- **Geneviève Lessard**, Recherches Appliquées et Interdisciplinaires sur les Violences intimes, familiales et structurelles (RAIV)
- **Geneviève Pagé**, Équipe de recherche sur le placement et l'adoption en protection de la jeunesse

- **Marie-Andrée Périgny**, Association des conseils multidisciplinaires du Québec (ACMQ)
- **Karine Poitras**, Laboratoire de psychologie légale
- **Cécile Rousseau**, Research and Action on Social Polarisation (RAPS)
- **Tanya Sirois**, Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ)
- **George Tarabulsky**, Centre de recherche universitaire sur les jeunes et les familles (CRUJeF)

The Committee brings together researchers and representatives of civil society organizations. It is also supported by a coordination team that includes specialists in communications and evaluation.

The Committee is impartial and non-partisan. Its work, like that of the CSDEPJ, is focused on the well-being of vulnerable children, youth and families.

It is worth noting that all Committee members work full-time for their respective organizations and for a variety of causes. Their involvement on this Committee therefore represents an additional commitment in their already busy schedules.

## The Objectives and Stance of the CSDEPJ Watchdog Committee

The primary objective of the Committee is to document progress made in implementing the CSDEPJ's recommendations as published in its final report. It also intends to keep members of the public, stakeholders working in the field, decision-makers and elected officials across Quebec informed of this progress.

In accepting a seat on this Committee, each member has committed to fully supporting the CSDEPJ report and its recommendations, defending the greater good and respecting the Committee's established procedures with regard to governance and public statements.

The Committee's communications are informative in nature. It may express concerns regarding progress made (or lack thereof) in implementing recommendations and the consequences for vulnerable children, youth and families. However, under no circumstances will it make complaints or issue demands.

The Committee expresses a non-partisan point of view at all times and is committed to keeping all political parties informed.

## The Committee's Work

The Committee began by analyzing the CSDEPJ report in order to become familiar with its recommendations and subrecommendations. This process made it clear that there are many complex issues in a variety of areas, involving a diverse group of stakeholders and organizations with complementary roles.

The CSDEPJ report is written from an ecological systems perspective, taking into account how different systems interact to shape the experiences of vulnerable children, youth and families. This explains the multifaceted and complex nature of the information it contains. The report also underscores the importance of making multiple systemic changes and working on several fronts, such as those listed below, to advocate for children's rights and improve youth protection mechanisms, including:

- The *Youth Protection Act*
- Respect for children's rights and prevention
- Youth protection interventions
- The legal system
- Rehabilitation services
- Collaboration between professionals across multiple systems
- Valuing front-line workers.

From the outset, the Committee recognized the scope of the issues that need to be addressed in order to make lasting improvements to the youth protection system. For this reason, the Committee determined that it was essential to first develop the tools needed to impartially assess progress made in implementing each of the recommendations and subrecommendations.

In keeping with their commitment to the cause, some CSDEPJ commissioners assisted Committee members in developing these evaluation tools, with a view to ensuring that the Committee's work would align with the spirit of the report's recommendations.

## The First Priority: Developing Indicators

The Committee set out to define quantitative and qualitative indicators, so that progress made in implementing the CSDEPJ's recommendations could be measured on the basis of rigorous criteria. Developing the indicators accounted for the bulk of the Committee's first year of work.

Preliminary indicators were first proposed by an external evaluation specialist in order to facilitate the Committee members' work. Then, in order to tackle each chapter in depth, the members were grouped into subcommittees, where they improved, validated and finalized the preliminary indicators.



“An indicator is a concrete observation that makes it possible to assess the existence and intensity of a phenomenon using data or information as benchmarks.”<sup>6</sup> Indicators must be precise, that is, explicit and formulated clearly and unambiguously, in order to accurately measure the phenomenon of interest.

Many of the report’s recommendations have to do with improving the quality of interventions by developing or enhancing frameworks, approaches and standards, based on best practices. The Committee agreed to limit itself initially to indicators that would show that work was underway in these areas.

In essence, the CSDEPJ’s recommendations and subrecommendations call for the creation, modification or improvement of provincial bodies, policies, measures, programs, laws, standards of practice and reference frameworks. In the final validation stage, indicators were expressed in terms of results achieved, which makes it easier to verify whether the implementation, modification or improvement has been completed or is on track to being completed.

By the end of its first year, the Committee had developed an evaluation framework comprising reliable and relevant indicators (that can be refined as data collection progresses) for each of the CSDEPJ’s recommendations and subrecommendations. This evaluation framework document is a reference that can be used to assess progress in this regard.

In the following pages, one or more indicators are given for each recommendation and subrecommendation. In the majority of cases, the Committee limited itself to three indicators to assess the implementation of a subrecommendation; however, in certain cases, additional indicators were needed to capture all aspects of a recommendation. Like the CSDEPJ report, the indicators are presented in 15 chapters.

6 *Choisir des indicateurs*. Agirtot.org. [Translation]. Accessed April 12, 2023, from <https://agirtot.org/thematiques/evaluation-participative/choisir-des-indicateurs>

## NOTE

**Abc** ——— **Text in black** is a translation of extracts taken directly from:  
*Instaurer une société bienveillante pour nos enfants et nos jeunes*,  
Report of the Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth  
Protection, April 2021.

**Abc** ——— **Text in burgundy** has been written by the Watchdog Committee

In order to facilitate reading, all recommendations and subrecommendations are numbered and appear in the same order as in the CSDEPJ report .

## CHAPTER 1

# RESPECT AND PROMOTE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS



With regard to respecting and promoting children's rights, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

Children in Quebec need someone to promote and defend their rights.

There is no legislation in Quebec to protect the full set of children's rights.

The *Youth Protection Act* (YPA) does not always effectively protect the rights of children in vulnerable situations.

These observations led them to ask:

How can we better guarantee the rights of children, particularly those in vulnerable situations, in Quebec?

To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**APPOINT A COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND WELL-BEING**

**ADOPT A CHARTER OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

**CLEARLY REASSERT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN UNDER YOUTH PROTECTION**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 1.1

### APPOINT A COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND WELL-BEING

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Legislation creating the position of Commissioner of Children's Rights and Well-Being (CCRWB) is passed by the National Assembly.
- 2) A CCRWB is officially appointed.
- 3) Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 1.1.1 The Commissioner must:

##### 1.1.1.1 Incorporate the viewpoints of children into their work by:

- i. Establishing an advisory council made up of children and youth from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds in Quebec to advise the Commissioner on objectives, agendas and any other issue related to the Commissioner's mandate.
- ii. Establishing an advisory council made up of Indigenous children and youth for the same purpose.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Advisory councils that incorporate the viewpoints of Indigenous children and youth are established.
- 2) The nature and operating rules of these councils are codified in law.

##### 1.1.1.2 Monitor children's well-being and the impact of political and administrative decisions on children's rights.

#### INDICATOR

**The legislation establishing the CCRWB role includes a mechanism to monitor children's well-being.**

##### 1.1.1.3 Oversee the implementation of children's programs and services.

#### INDICATOR

**The legislation establishing the CCRWB role includes a mechanism to oversee the implementation of children's programs and services.**

- 1.1.1.4 Pay particular attention to children and youth less than 25 years of age who belong to groups that have more difficulty asserting their rights, e.g., youth who are Indigenous, disabled, from ethnocultural communities or the subjects of state intervention.

**INDICATOR**

**The legislation establishing the CCRWB role sets out specific measures to allow children and youth less than 25 years of age, particularly those who are Indigenous, disabled or from ethnocultural communities, to assert their rights.**

- 1.1.1.5 Provide ways to be accessible to children throughout Quebec and develop tailored approaches to reach out to and represent them.

**INDICATOR**

**The legislation establishing the CCRWB role provides for ways for all children in Quebec to participate fully in democracy and make their viewpoints and interests heard.**

- 1.1.1.6 Develop initiatives that encourage children and youth to make themselves heard and participate in democracy.

**INDICATOR**

**Recommendation 1.1.1.5 is implemented.**

- 1.1.1.7 Monitor how many children die every year in Quebec and note how many of them were in state care in the preceding two years. Require the Coroner, the CEOs of CISSSs and CIUSSSs, the Institut de la statistique du Québec and the Ministère de la Sécurité publique to periodically provide a list of deceased children to the Commissioner.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The legislation establishing the CCRWB role provides for a mechanism to monitor children's deaths in Quebec.**
- 2) This mechanism provides for data sharing between the government agencies concerned.**

- 1.1.1.8 Develop and oversee a mechanism to accredit lawyers appointed to represent children who are incapable of giving a mandate to a lawyer.

**INDICATOR**

**The legislation establishing the CCRWB role provides for a mechanism to accredit lawyers appointed to represent children who are incapable of giving a mandate to a lawyer.**

- 1.1.1.9 Transfer to the Commissioner the powers and responsibilities vested in the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse as set out in the YPA, along with associated resources.

**INDICATOR**

**The legislation establishing the CCRWB role provides that powers and responsibilities formerly vested in the CDPDJ (as set out in the YPA) are now vested in the CCWBR.**

**1.1.2 The Government must:**

- 1.1.2.1 Ensure the independence of the Commissioner for Children's Rights and Well-Being and grant them the same status as the Public Protector or the Auditor General, primarily with regard to:

- i. Appointment
- ii. Term of office
- iii. Budget
- iv. Accountability

**INDICATOR**

**The legislation establishing the CCRWB role contains sections similar to the following:**

- **Sections 1, 2, 3, 27.3, 24.4, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 35.1, 35.2, 35.3 and 36 of the *Public Protector Act***
- **Sections 63, 64, 65, 66 and 66.1 of the *Auditor General Act*.**

- 1.1.2.2 Give Indigenous children a voice by naming a deputy commissioner for Indigenous children and youth, who would be appointed in the same way as the Commissioner, based on suggestions from Indigenous authorities.

**INDICATOR**

**A deputy commissioner for Indigenous children is appointed.**

# Recommendation

## 1.2

### ADOPT A CHARTER OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

#### INDICATOR

**A Charter of Children's Rights is adopted by the National Assembly.**

#### 1.2.1 Affirm certain principles in the preamble.

##### INDICATOR

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

- 1.2.1.1 Affirm, in the preamble, that Quebec society cares for children, and that children's well-being is a shared responsibility.

##### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

- 1.2.1.2 Recognize that children have the right to grow up in a family and in a caring environment.

##### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

- 1.2.1.3 State in the preamble that Quebec has been bound to the Convention on the Rights of the Child since December 9, 1991, and this same Convention was ratified by Canada on December 13, 1991.

##### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

- 1.2.1.4 1.2.1.4. Affirm that children have rights and freedoms, including those listed in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Quebec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, the *Civil Code of Québec* and other laws.

##### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

## 1.2.2 Set out children's fundamental rights.

### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

1.2.2.1 Children are full-fledged members of society and the bearers of rights.

### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

1.2.2.2 Children's best interests must be the primary consideration in all decisions relating to them. (This principle applies in individual situations and extends to government policies, prevention and public awareness.)

### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

1.2.2.3 Corporal punishment is contrary to the values of a caring society and is an attack on children's physical and psychological integrity.

### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

1.2.2.4 The rights of Indigenous children must be reaffirmed and interpreted in accordance with their best interests, which include the preservation of their cultural identity.

### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

1.2.2.5 Children from vulnerable groups (e.g., children who are disabled, from ethnocultural communities or the subjects of state intervention) require greater attention.

### INDICATOR

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

- 1.2.2.6 Children have a right to participate in civic life and public decision-making at the local, regional and provincial levels, and this right is the responsibility of society as a whole. (Civic participation helps children become responsible citizens and learn about democratic processes.)

**INDICATOR**

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

- 1.2.2.7 Children have the ability and the right to make themselves heard.

**INDICATOR**

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

- 1.2.2.8 Children grow up in diverse environments, and a collective, interdisciplinary approach is needed for their protection and development. This requires seamless sharing of relevant information between the multiple institutions that make up the protection and development network.

**INDICATOR**

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**

### **1.2.3 Lead society in implementing children's rights.**

- 1.2.3.1 Clarify that no provision of any law may override the rights set out in the Charter of Children's Rights, unless the law expressly states that it applies notwithstanding the Charter.

**INDICATOR**

**The adopted Charter incorporates the elements of the subrecommendation.**



# Recommendation

## 1.3

### CLEARLY REASSERT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN UNDER YOUTH PROTECTION

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 1.3.1 Make the YPA clearer in order to improve its comprehensibility and application.

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the subrecommendations for 1.3.1 is verified.

##### 1.3.1.1 Rewrite the YPA, and the first two chapters in particular, in plain language, to make it easier for parents, children and front-line workers to understand.

##### INDICATOR

The government gives its legislative drafters a mandate with a deadline to rewrite the YPA using the principles of plain language.

##### 1.3.1.2 Remove provisions about adoption from the Act, except for those related to the duties of the Director in this regard. Provisions about adoption could be set out in a separate law or incorporated into the Civil Code.

##### INDICATOR

The YPA is amended as recommended.

Divide the second chapter of the YPA into three chapters: General Principles, Children's Rights and Parental Obligations.

##### INDICATOR

The YPA is amended as recommended.

### 1.3.2 Add a preamble to strengthen the enforcement of children's rights.

#### **INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the subrecommendations for 1.3.2 is verified.**

- 1.3.2.1 Introduce a preamble to the Act affirming that all actions and decisions taken under the Act must respect the Charter of Children's Rights.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.2.2 Affirm that the Act should be applied exceptionally and is not a replacement for the services requested by children and their parents.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.2.3 Recognize that emotional stability and safety are major determinants of children's healthy development.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.2.4 Reaffirm the need to make decisions about children as quickly as possible, given how a developing child perceives time.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

### 1.3.3 Reaffirm and add general principles.

#### INDICATOR

**Implementation of all the subrecommendations for 1.3.3 is verified.**

- 1.3.3.1 Affirm that the YPA as a whole must be interpreted and applied with respect for the right of Indigenous children to maintain their cultural identity.

#### INDICATOR

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.3.2 Affirm that those who intervene are required to involve children and their parents at all stages of the process.

#### INDICATOR

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.3.3 Affirm that all social and legal interventions under the Act must be collaborative in nature.

#### INDICATOR

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.3.4 Affirm that, where the Act applies, the intensity of any intervention taken with children and parents must be suitable in order to resolve the situation that is compromising children's safety or development.

#### INDICATOR

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.3.5 Affirm that rules for protecting and sharing children's personal information should serve children's needs and best interests.

#### INDICATOR

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.3.6 Affirm that all professionals who share relevant information have a duty to be discreet.

#### INDICATOR

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

### 1.3.4 Reaffirm certain children's rights and parental obligations.

#### **INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the subrecommendations for 1.3.4 is verified.**

- 1.3.4.1 In Chapter 5, we propose the following amendment to section 4 : Amend section 4 of the YPA to read: "If returning the child to his family environment is not possible, the decision must ensure continuity of care and the stability of his relationships and of living conditions appropriate to his needs and age on a permanent basis" in order to create a stronger obligation than currently exists in the YPA.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

### 1.3.4.2 Children's rights

- 1.3.4.2.1 Add to section 3 that all decisions, whether social or legal, involving a child must contain an analysis and a thorough, written explanation as to the child's best interests.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.4.2.2 Rephrase section 8, paragraph 2, to state that a child to whom this Act applies has the right to preschool, elementary and secondary educational services as provided for in the Act and in the basic school regulation established by the government, even when the child is in an alternative living environment.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.4.2.3 State that one parent alone can consent to care and services for a child who is under youth protection.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

- 1.3.4.2.4 Rephrase section 9 to emphasize the DYP's obligation to proactively establish contact with important individuals who are in the best interests of the child, so that the child's choices and best interests are prioritized when establishing such contact.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

### 1.3.4.3 Parental obligations

1.3.4.3.1 Affirm that parents have rights that allow them to fulfil their obligations to their children:

- i. Parents have the right and duty to care for, supervise and educate their children. They must feed and meet the needs of their children.
- ii. Parents exercise parental authority jointly.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

1.3.4.3.2 Recognize that parents have the right to act and to be heard.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

1.3.4.3.3 Reaffirm that parents have an obligation to be involved and actively collaborate in providing their children with a safe family environment that is conducive to healthy development.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The YPA is amended as recommended.**

# PREVENTION, FIRST AND FOREMOST

With regard to prevention and taking early action, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

**For many families in vulnerable situations, a report of abuse or neglect to the DYP is the point of entry to public services.**

**Many parents do not receive the support they need.**

**Vulnerable families do not receive prenatal and perinatal care early enough.**

**CLSC services are not easily accessible, and community organizations lack resources.**

**Early childhood education services face organizational challenges that curb their benefits.**

**It is becoming increasingly difficult to address students' needs in schools.**

**CLSCs serve communities with tailored services for families.**



These observations led them to ask:

How is it possible that, despite all our resources, our safety nets are unable to prevent child abuse and neglect?

Why have we been unsuccessful in ending the cycle of abuse and neglect in some families?

Where and how can we better support parents? <sup>1</sup>

To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**STRENGTHEN PREVENTION SERVICES**

**ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

**ESTABLISH A PROVINCE-WIDE MONITORING SYSTEM FOR CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

**PROMOTE CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

<sup>1</sup> (Commission report, page 90)

# Recommendation

## 2.1

### STRENGTHEN PREVENTION SERVICES

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 2.1.1 Strengthen, boost and expand local family services as a priority.

For this recommendation, the committee interprets the verbs used above as follows:

- 1) **STRENGTHEN**  
Increase the intensity of existing initiatives.
- 2) **BOOST**  
Increase funding for these initiatives.
- 3) **EXPAND**  
Add new services.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The number of people who make use of the following services increases every year (percentage increase relative to the 2020–2021 fiscal year):

Services for families:

- Integrated Perinatal and Early Childhood Services (SIPPE) program
- Youth in Difficulty (JED) program
- Programme d'intervention en négligence (PIN )
- Family community action support program
- Perinatal resource centres
- Financial support program for community drop-in childcare services
- Childcare services: all subsidies for childcare centres (CPEs), subsidized daycares and home childcare



**Services for the general public:**

- Addictions program
  - Mental health program
  - Community organization support program (PSOC)
  - Financial support program for gender equality and elimination of sexual violence and domestic violence (status of women)
- 2) Government spending on all programs listed above increases as a proportion (%) of total government spending in relation to the 2020–2021 fiscal year. Adjusted for inflation.
- 3) New programs or initiatives that could be considered local services [as defined by the MSSS<sup>2</sup>](#) are developed and funded.

## Recommendation

### 2.1.2

**SUPPORT PARENTS TO BETTER HELP CHILDREN****INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

**2.1.2.1 For all parents:**

- 2.1.2.1.1 Launch a parent support program (e.g., the Triple P program) for all parents, as part of basic prevention services.

**INDICATOR**

**A universal parent support program, in whatever form, is established in all regions.**

- 2.1.2.1.2 Facilitate referrals to mental health and addictions services, particularly for parents of young children.

**INDICATOR**

**The MSSS issues a directive to ensure that a clear mechanism is in place to refer parents of minor children to mental health and addictions programs.**

2 <https://www.quebec.ca/famille-et-soutien-aux-personnes/enfance/services-jeunes-difficulte-famille/services-proximite-jeunes-difficulte-famille>

- 2.1.2.1.3 Prioritize access to services for parents of children whose development and safety would be compromised in the absence of these services.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) The MSSS issues a directive to prioritize the care of children referred by the DYP to CLSC psychosocial services and to do so within 30 days.**
- 2) All individuals referred by the DYP to the CLSC receive services within 30 days.**

#### **2.1.2.2 For parents facing significant challenges:**

- 2.1.2.2.1 Launch the Programme d'intervention en négligence (PIN) fully across the province in order to:

- i. Ensure that the program is implemented in accordance with recommended standards
- ii. Standardize practices across all regions
- iii. Measure program implementation and effectiveness
- iv. Ensure that all regions of Quebec have trained, dedicated and reliable front-line workers who collaborate closely with all professionals in the field.

#### **INDICATORS**

**An independent third party or research team is given the mandate to:**

- 1) Verify that the program is implemented uniformly throughout the province and in accordance with the recommended standards.**
- 2) Measure the effectiveness of the program.**
- 3) Inform the government of personnel-related adjustments that need to be made in each region to ensure that the program runs smoothly.**

- 2.1.2.2.2 Ensure that front-line workers have the resources they need to meet the conditions for effectiveness of a program similar to the Personal, Family and Community Help Program (PAPFC).

#### **INDICATORS**

**An independent third party or research team is given the mandate to:**

- 1) Identify the conditions for effectiveness for a PAPFC-type program.**
- 2) Verify that front-line workers have the resources they need to meet these conditions.**

- 2.1.2.2.3 Offer the Programme d'intervention en négligence (PIN) to parents before or after their children have been taken into care by the Director of Youth Protection:
- i. When a report of neglect is received from a DYP
  - ii. During or after a DYP intervention.

**INDICATOR**

**All reports of neglect are referred by the DYP to the Programme d'intervention en négligence at the relevant institution.**

## Recommendation

### 2.1.3

#### **ACT EARLY TO GIVE CHILDREN THE BEST CHANCE FOR OPTIMAL DEVELOPMENT**

**INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

#### 2.1.3.1 **Prenatal and perinatal services**

- 2.1.3.1.1 Support the rollout of the pregnancy declaration system throughout Quebec. A declaration can be made by pregnant women, doctors, midwives, pharmacists or any professionals or organizations that provide pregnant women with services. Develop a plan to implement and monitor this rollout.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The pregnancy declaration system is made available throughout Quebec.**
- 2) The MSSS develops a plan to implement and monitor the rollout of the system.**

- 2.1.3.1.2 Make free prenatal courses available to all expecting parents in Quebec, with a particular focus on families in vulnerable situations.

**INDICATOR**

**Prenatal courses are offered, by a government agency or a partner, in all local service network (RLS) regions.**

- 2.1.3.1.3 Provide parents with the information they need for the entire prenatal and postnatal period, as well as for early childhood.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) The *From Tiny Tot to Toddler* guide is offered in multiple formats to all parents at their first check up.**
- 2) The content is accessible to everyone and is available in various languages.**
- 3) High-quality information resources created by third parties (e.g., *Naître et grandir*, *Fondation Olo*) are offered during the first prenatal check up.**

- 2.1.3.1.4 Restore the conditions for effectiveness for the Integrated Perinatal and Early Childhood Services Program (SIPPE):

- i. Invest the money needed to enable its rollout in all regions of Quebec
- ii. Ensure that the rollout is guided by a mandatory implementation and monitoring plan.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) Money is invested to roll out the SIPPE program in a way that respects the conditions for effectiveness set out in the brief submitted to the Commission by Quebec's regional directors of public health (document P-086, pp. 7–10).**
- 2) The MSSS has a plan to implement and monitor the conditions for effectiveness set out in the document mentioned above.**

### **2.1.3.2 Early childhood services**

- 2.1.3.2.1 Guarantee access to early childhood education to children in vulnerable personal, familial or social situations.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) There is an increase in the number of CPEs in the most materially disadvantaged coordinating office regions (i.e., level 4 or 5 on the Material and Social Deprivation Index [MSDI]).**
- 2) Early childhood education centre admission policies promote access to children who are in vulnerable situations and who are materially and socially disadvantaged.**

- 2.1.3.2.2 Implement strategies to reach out to vulnerable families so that they make use of the spaces made available to them.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The Ministère de la Famille (MFA) implements multiple strategies to better reach out to vulnerable families.**

- 2.1.3.2.3 Increase the number of reserved spaces in CPEs in disadvantaged neighbourhoods by accepting referrals from a wider range of sources and ensure the involvement of a front-line worker to help children integrate.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) All childcare facilities in neighbourhoods classified as level 4 or 5 on the MSDI have reserved spaces.**
- 2) Referrals for reserved spaces can be made by professionals outside of the health and social services network.**
- 3) Reserved space agreements that are being signed or renewed contain a clause outlining services that will be provided by the facility (i.e., the daycare) on site, including those provided by the front-line worker who facilitates children's integration.**

## **Recommendation 2.1.4**

### **ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICES AT CLSCS**

#### **INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

- 2.1.4.1. Provide access to effective services tailored to the needs of young people and their parents throughout Quebec as part of the Youth in Difficulty (JED) program at CLSCs:
- i. By ensuring timely access
  - ii. By ensuring the necessary intensity
  - iii. By providing services in other environments (e.g., early childhood centres, schools, communities)
  - iv. By offering programs that are known to be effective and validated.

#### **INDICATOR**

**The standards of access, continuity, quality and efficiency described in the original ministerial program (CSDEPJ Report, p. 103) are respected when providing services as part of the JED program.**

## 2.1.5 Set up access points to ensure rapid access to youth and family services.

### INDICATORS

- 1) An access point is established in all CLSCs.
- 2) Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 2.1.5.1.1 Set up a local access point for youth and family services in all CLSCs throughout Quebec. This access point will:
- i. Receive, analyze and monitor pregnancy and birth declarations as well as requests for the JED program
  - ii. Support families who request services and ensure that their needs are met
  - iii. Provide the Crise-Ado-Famille-Enfance (CAFE) service to families who need an immediate response
  - iv. Receive alerts from partners (e.g., schools, childcare service providers, community organizations) who are worried about a family and arrange to reach out and offer services to the family
  - v. Identify a primary front-line worker to monitor the family's situation, involve the community and develop a support plan
  - vi. Play an advisory role and follow up in the event that there is a breakdown in services
  - vii. Liaise as required on an ongoing basis with the unit that receives and processes reports of abuse and neglect.

### INDICATOR

**Each of the seven tasks described above is performed by the access point.**

## Recommendation 2.2

### ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 2.2.1** Provide recurring, long-term financial aid that covers all annual operating costs (minimum \$200,000 per year) to family-oriented community organizations (OCFs) that are well established in their field and that work in partnership with local government agencies.

#### INDICATOR

Funding provided to OCFs increases so as to cover the entirety of their annual operating costs (minimum of \$200,000 per year per OCF) on a recurring basis.

- 2.2.2** Provide, in the same spirit, recurring, long-term funding that covers all annual operating costs to community organizations that assist families in vulnerable situations, including organizations that specialize in:

- i. Domestic violence
- ii. Women in difficult circumstances and their children
- iii. Youth leaving care
- iv. Immigrant families
- v. Food security
- vi. Men in difficult circumstances.

#### INDICATOR

Funding provided to community organizations dedicated to health and social services (PSOC envelope) and immigrant families increases so as to cover the entirety of their annual operating costs.

## Recommendation 2.3

### ESTABLISH A PROVINCE-WIDE MONITORING SYSTEM FOR CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

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#### 2.3.1 Adopt provincial targets for reducing child abuse and neglect.

##### INDICATOR

Provincial targets for reducing child abuse and neglect are made public.

#### 2.3.2 Ensure that child abuse and neglect reduction targets are closely monitored.

##### INDICATOR

The MSSS establishes a mechanism to monitor child abuse and neglect using objective, measurable data.

#### 2.3.3 Guarantee public access to provincial data on child abuse and neglect.

##### INDICATOR

Provincial targets and data collected on child abuse and neglect are publicly available.

## Recommendation 2.4

### PROMOTE CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

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**2.4.1 Reinstatement front-line health and social services workers in schools, thus promoting intersectoral collaboration and providing services to children where they are.**

**INDICATOR**

The number of interventions performed by CLSCs in schools increases.

**2.4.2 Ensure that school psychologists are able to focus on supporting and following up with children in the school environment.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The roles, duties and obligations of psychologists in schools are reviewed by the competent authorities in partnership with the Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ).
- 2) In all schools, the time that school psychologists spend on supporting and following up with students is greater than the time spent on assessments (scoring).

**2.4.3 Ensure that professional and technical resources are available to support school staff and to help children in a timely manner.**

**INDICATOR**

The ratio of professionals and technical resources to students increases in all schools.

**2.4.4 Keep children in their original school or childcare facility when they are taken into care under the *Youth Protection Act* (YPA) if doing so is in their best interests.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Clinical guidelines are developed to determine when and for how long it is in children's best interests to remain in their original schools or childcare environments.
- 2) All ministries involved issue ministerial directives indicating that keeping children in their original schools or childcare environments based on clinical guidelines is an option.

## CHAPTER 3

# COLLABORATE TO BETTER SUPPORT CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

With regard to collaboration to better support children and their families, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

Working in silos makes it impossible to work effectively with children.

The implementation of best practices for collaboration is not commonplace.

Recognize the expertise of each professional to work better together.

Families need help navigating services.

Confidentiality rules are complex and poorly applied, which negatively impacts collaboration.

Interministerial collaboration needs to be strengthened.

These observations led them to ask:

What is the impact of siloed work on families?

What are its causes?

What are the best practices for eliminating siloed work?

How can we effectively reach out to families and coordinate their services?



To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**MAINTAIN LOCAL AND REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS**

**IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND COORDINATION OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES**

**FACILITATE THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION TO BETTER SERVE CHILDREN'S INTERESTS**

**IMPROVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 3.1

### MAINTAIN LOCAL AND REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 3.1.1**      **Maintain community engagement and build on the achievements of Avenir d'enfants to meet the needs of children and their families throughout Quebec, paying particular attention to regions with vulnerable populations.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) An office or a department is created within a ministry to coordinate local and regional collaboration and engagement.
- 2) The various best practices implemented and promoted by the Avenir d'enfants initiative (Avenir d'enfants assessment report, pp. 79–80, and the Early Childhood Development Fund assessment report, pp. 363–382) are applied to the coordination process.
- 3) Funds equivalent to those budgeted for the Early Childhood Development Fund before it was discontinued are allocated to the newly created office or department and to local and regional collaborative initiatives.

- 3.1.2**      **Keep community workers deployed to reach out to families in vulnerable situations.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The number of community or local workers deployed to reach out to families in vulnerable situations is the same in all regions of Quebec as when the Avenir d'enfants initiative ended.
- 2) The MSSS codifies, in a standardized program, the funding needed to maintain conditions for success and to make these positions long-term.

## Recommendation 3.2

### IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND COORDINATION OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 3.2.1** Include time needed for collaboration on service planning (individualized service plans and individualized intersectoral service plans [ISPs and IISPs]) when preparing work schedules to ensure adequate service planning and better collaboration between all professionals.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) A mechanism to review work schedules is created based on standards established in literature to allow professionals to properly perform ISP- and IISP-related work.
- 2) Based on the review of work schedules, a certain number of hours is set aside for each category of professional involved in preparing ISPs.

### YOUTH INTERVENTION TEAMS

- 3.2.2** Strengthen youth intervention teams (EIJs) in CLSCs across Quebec and expand their role to ensure that they are able to respond to children with complex needs who require services from multiple networks.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The MSSS uses existing literature to develop guidelines on the optimal make-up, operation and roles of EIJs, including details of their coordinating role.
- 2) These guidelines explicitly define the expanded roles of EIJ coordinators with regard to multi-network interventions upstream of EIJs.
- 3) The make-up, operation and coordination role of EIJs align with these guidelines.
- 4) All CLSC regions are served by an EIJ mechanism as defined in the guidelines described for indicator 1.

### 3.2.3 **Ensure that intersectoral service planning is focused on supporting and fully involving children and their parents.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) Subrecommendation 3.2.4 is implemented.
- 2) A directive is in place to ensure that the front-line worker described in subrecommendation 3.2.4 fully involves parents and children in making decisions that concern them and makes sure that their point of view is captured and known by all professionals preparing the IISP.

### 3.2.4 **Designate a primary front-line navigator to support parents in situations where multiple services are required.**

#### **INDICATOR**

An MSSS directive makes it mandatory to designate a primary front-line navigator from the network to support parents or legal guardians (tutors) throughout the ISP/IISP process.

## Recommendation 3.3

### **FACILITATE THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION TO BETTER SERVE CHILDREN'S INTERESTS**

#### **INDICATOR**

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 3.3.1 **Develop guidelines regarding confidentiality to help DYP front-line workers know what information they can share in the child's best interests.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) A guide to interpreting the YPA's sections on confidentiality, containing the guidelines mentioned above, is developed by the MSSS for front-line workers.
- 2) This guide is distributed within the health and social services network (RSSS).

**3.3.2 Make the necessary amendments to the *Youth Protection Act* (YPA) to allow front-line workers who work with children to share information that is in the children's best interests.**

**INDICATOR**

Amendments are made to the YPA and the *Act respecting health services and social services* (ARHSSS) in order to permit and facilitate the exchange of information in children's best interests.

## Recommendation 3.4

### IMPROVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SERVICES

**INDICATOR**

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

**3.4.1 Formalize and implement mechanisms for collaboration between schools and social services to support the implementation of individualized intersectoral service plans (IISPs). Make it mandatory for planning to be performed jointly by the DYP or CLSC, the school and the family whenever a child is placed in care and receiving services from both institutional networks.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The MSSS creates a mechanism that guarantees that youth receiving services from both networks have an IISP.
- 2) All school service centres (SSCs), school boards and CISSSs/CIUSSSs enter into official agreements equivalent to the memorandum of understanding on the joint delivery of services to youth (appendices of the Agreement for the Complementarity of Services MELs-MSSS).
- 3) An individualized intersectoral service plan is created for all youth in care who receive services from both networks.

## CHAPTER 4

# IMPROVE YOUTH PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS

With regard to youth protection interventions, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

The procedure for receiving and processing reports of abuse and neglect is flawed.

The procedure for assessing the situation of children who are the subject of a report lacks rigour.

When children are taken into care, the front-line workers they interact with are not leveraged to their full capacity.

The Multi-sectoral Agreement is not applied optimally.

These observations led them to ask:

Are reports received by the DYP given the attention they deserve?

When no intervention is required, are sufficient efforts made to direct families to the resources they need?

Are the DYP's criteria for intervention applied rigorously?

Are parents and children sufficiently involved and supported?

Are professionals who are already a part of a child's life sufficiently involved in the measures taken to protect the child?

And, finally, do the DYP, police services and the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions collaborate enough to protect children and ensure their well-being in the types of situations described in the Multi-sectoral Agreement?





To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**IMPROVE HOW REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT ARE RECEIVED AND PROCESSED**

**ENSURE THAT REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT ARE ASSESSED RIGOROUSLY**

**SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN TAKEN INTO YOUTH PROTECTION**

**WORK TOGETHER TO BETTER PROTECT CHILDREN UNDER THE  
MULTI-SECTORAL AGREEMENT**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 4.1

### IMPROVE HOW REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT ARE RECEIVED AND PROCESSED

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 4.1.1**      **Involve the reporting professional if they are important to the child and family when analyzing the needs of the child and deciding whether the DYP should accept the report or not.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Clinical guidelines are developed to determine whether a reporting professional should be considered important.
- 2) Reporting professionals who are deemed to be important are kept informed in order to encourage their involvement in the report reception and processing stage before a decision is made whether or not to accept the report.

- 4.1.2**      **Increase the use of additional verifications in order to facilitate and accelerate decision-making as well as to support and direct families toward community resources that respond to their needs:**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The number of additional verifications of reports that are rejected increases.
- 2) The number of referrals made to other resources while reports are being processed increases.
- 3) The amount of time needed to reach a decision about a report decreases.

- 4.1.2.1 Be more vigilant when processing reports involving children who have been the subject of multiple reports by performing additional verifications.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The MSSS monitors how many children are the subject of multiple reports.
- 2) A ministerial directive makes additional verifications mandatory in cases where children have been the subject of multiple reports.

- 4.1.3 Amend section 45.1 of the YPA to require the DYP to inform the reporting professional of the decision to accept or reject a report, and provide the reporting professional with the information they need to continue or enhance their support for the child.

**INDICATOR**

The suggested amendment is made to the YPA (section 45.1).

- 4.1.4 Require front-line workers at the report reception and processing stage to have a university degree in social work, criminology or psychoeducation, be members of the relevant professional order and have field experience in youth protection. The implementation of this recommendation must be achieved through attrition.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) A ministerial directive specifying employment requirements for new hires in report reception and processing is issued.
- 2) Standards of practice for the professionalization of report reception and processing personnel are developed.
- 3) On all report reception and processing teams, the number of front-line workers with the required qualifications increases as individuals are hired to fill vacant or newly created positions.

- 4.1.5 Ensure that front-line workers complete a provincial onboarding program for new employees.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The provincial training plan developed based on recommendation 13.4 includes an onboarding program for new employees in report reception and processing.
- 2) New employees complete this onboarding program.

- 4.1.6 Offer clinical support through a structured program (e.g., mentorship, one-on-one or group supervision, community of practice, continuing education).**

**INDICATOR**

**13.3.3 is validated.**

## Recommendation 4.2

### **ENSURE THAT REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT ARE ASSESSED RIGOROUSLY**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Standards of practice for assessing reports of abuse and neglect set out in the youth protection reference manual are reviewed in depth.**
- 2) Updated standards are distributed throughout the DYP.**
- 3) Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

- 4.2.1 Require that all decisions be based on the factors outlined in section 38.2 of the YPA.**

**INDICATOR**

**The regulation developed based on subrecommendation 4.2.3 indicates that written assessment reports must contain, at a minimum, a mandatory section explaining how the four factors listed in section 38.2 of the YPA have been taken into account in reaching the decision.**

- 4.2.2 Ensure that clinical opinion and professional judgment prevail. The Système de soutien à la pratique (SSP) should only be used as a tool to help with decision-making, and the document that it generates must never be used in lieu of an assessment report.**

**INDICATOR**

**The regulation developed based on subrecommendation 4.2.3 stipulates that the assessment report must contain a section outlining the clinical opinion and professional judgment of the front-line worker assigned to the case.**

- 4.2.3 Create a regulation to standardize the sections that must be included in reports at all stages of the youth protection process (report reception and processing, assessment protective measures, review).**

**INDICATOR**

A regulation attached to the YPA is created to standardize the content of reports produced at each stage (report reception and processing, assessment protective measures, review).

- 4.2.4 Improve and standardize report writing standards across the province based on the principles of the YPA and the mission of the Director of Youth Protection, and provide front-line workers with training on these writing standards.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The draft regulation developed based on subrecommendation 4.2.3 includes provincial writing standards underpinned by the principles of the YPA and the mission of the DYP.
- 2) Training on the implications of this new regulation is developed.
- 3) The number of front-line workers having completed the training increases.

## Recommendation

### 4.3

#### SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN TAKEN INTO YOUTH PROTECTION

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 4.3.1**      **Make greater use of section 33 of the YPA, which enables the DYP to authorize a primary front-line worker to perform one or more of the DYP's duties.**

##### INDICATORS

- 1) Standards of practice promote and govern the care of children pursuant to section 33.
- 2) The MSSS develops an indicator to monitor changes in the use of section 33, particularly in cases where children are entrusted to a front-line worker from a team different from the one implementing protective measures.

- 4.3.2**      **Systematize the use of an individualized service plan (ISP) whenever multiple professionals are involved.**

##### INDICATOR

Recommendations 3.2 and 3.4 are applied.

- 4.3.3**      **Experiment with a pilot project in a few regions of Quebec where responsibilities are shared between the primary front-line worker and the reviewer, and expand this model across the province if results are convincing.**

##### INDICATORS

- 1) Pilot projects that follow the guidelines set out on p. 165 of the CSDEPJ report are launched in multiple regions of Quebec.
- 2) A report is produced to determine whether the results are convincing.

## Recommendation

### 4.4

#### WORK TOGETHER TO BETTER PROTECT CHILDREN UNDER THE MULTI-SECTORAL AGREEMENT

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 4.4.1** Complete the review of the Multi-sectoral Agreement within six months, i.e., by October 31, 2021.

##### INDICATOR

The review of the Multi-sectoral Agreement is completed by October 31, 2021.

- 4.4.2** Ensure that the revised Multi-sectoral Agreement is rapidly distributed through partner training following the completion of the review.

##### INDICATOR

Training on the new version of the Multi-sectoral Agreement is provided to all agreement partners.

- 4.4.3** Provide training to professionals who are called to act within the framework of the Multi-sectoral Agreement.

##### INDICATOR

The provincial coordination body described in subrecommendation 4.4.8 implements a training process for partners that work within the framework of the Multi-sectoral Agreement.

- 4.4.4** Ensure that the partner who is selected to conduct an interview with a child is the most suitable option given the child's needs and circumstances.

##### INDICATOR

The review of the Multi-sectoral Agreement complies with the recommendations of the CSDEPJ report.

**4.4.5 Amend section 72.7 of the YPA to ease the rules on sharing personal information in order to allow partners to share relevant information when necessary to carry out their duties.**

**INDICATOR**

The suggested amendment is made to the YPA.

**4.4.6 Develop standardized data collection mechanisms to facilitate assessment of the impact of the Multi-sectoral Agreement.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Ministerial indicators are created and maintained, for at least the following data, to assess the impact of the Multi-sectoral Agreement:
  - a) The number of regions where the agreement is applied according to best practices
  - b) The number of agreements signed and how many result in charges
  - c) How many charges result in convictions for issues covered by the agreement
  - d) The length of the process
  - e) The type of professional who took the child's statement.
- 2) A research team or MSSS department is given the mandate to develop indicators to measure the well-being of children who go through this process (e.g., do they feel believed and respected, are they comfortable, how many times do they have to tell their story, how much trauma is experienced as a result of the process).

**4.4.7 Incorporate best practices from other initiatives, such as the SIAM in Quebec City and the CREM in the Outaouais, in order to ensure that the Multi-sectoral Agreement is applied optimally.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Funding to launch initiatives such as SIAM or CREM is given to all CISSSs and CIUSSSs.
- 2) Projects with characteristics, purpose and objectives similar to these two initiatives are launched by CISSSs and CIUSSSs in all regions.



#### **4.4.8 Establish an active and dynamic provincial coordination body.**

##### **INDICATORS**

- 1) A body is created to manage the province-wide coordination of the Multi-sectoral Agreement.**
- 2) The body created has the means to implement all subrecommendations under recommendation 4.4 as well as any others that emerge from the Agreement revision process.**

#### **4.4.9 Appoint someone to liaise with each of the regional partners who can resolve difficulties that may arise in the application of the Multi-sectoral Agreement.**

##### **INDICATORS**

- 1) The regional initiatives cited in subrecommendation 4.4.7 and launched in all regions are also mandated to manage the regional coordination of multi-sectoral agreements.**
- 2) This mandate comes with the resources needed to create and maintain “liaison officer” positions.**

# GUARANTEE CHILDREN A FAMILY FOR LIFE

With regard to guaranteeing children a family for life, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

Keeping children with their families should be the primary goal but is not always possible.

The YPA does not make it possible to ensure children have a family for life.

Actions and decisions are too slow in coming and do not adequately take into account what children want.

Making life plans for children takes place too late in the process.

The established maximum placement periods do not reflect children's lived realities.

Placing children in care until they become adults does not guarantee stability.

Adoption and guardianship (tutorship) are more likely to provide stability but are difficult to achieve.

Foster families face many obstacles.

Providing all children with a family for life.



These observations led them to ask:

Why is society unable to provide enough support to parents who face major difficulties so that children can be raised within their families?

Why is our youth protection system unable to guarantee a family for children who need one?

Why do children who eventually find a family first have to go through multiple placements and delays when their needs are immediate?

Why is it so difficult to meet children's fundamental need to grow up as part of a family?

Why aren't healthy, stable attachments prioritized in the best interests of the child?

To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**LISTEN TO AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT CHILDREN'S POINTS OF VIEW**

**IMPROVE CASE PLANNING AND CASE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

**FACILITATE ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP (TUTORSHIP) TO SERVE THE INTERESTS OF MORE CHILDREN**

**PROMOTE FOSTER FAMILY ENGAGEMENT—**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

## Recommendation 5.1

### LISTEN TO AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT CHILDREN'S POINTS OF VIEW

#### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

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- 5.1.1**      **Make it mandatory to consider children's wishes when case planning. This may involve taking into account the words, gestures, attitudes and behaviours of the child. This obligation should apply to all professionals, both social and legal, who are called upon to make decisions regarding a child's life.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Recommendation 6.4 is implemented.
- 2) The regulation described in subrecommendation 4.2.3 specifies that reports prepared by front-line workers for courts must contain a mandatory section on the child's preferences for their own lives, including words, gestures, attitudes and behaviours, regardless of their age.
- 3) A ministerial directive makes it mandatory to use the case planning framework provided on p. 189 of the CSDEPJ report.

## Recommendation 5.2

### IMPROVE CASE PLANNING AND CASE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

#### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

---

## 5.2.1 Better meet the needs of children

- 5.2.1.1 Amend section 4 of the YPA so that the first paragraph reads: “Every decision must ensure continuity of care and the stability of [the child’s] relationships and of living conditions appropriate to his needs and age on a permanent basis” in order to create a stronger obligation than currently exists in the YPA.

### INDICATOR

**The suggested amendment is made to the YPA.**

- 5.2.1.2 Introduce in the YPA the obligation to begin concurrent planning as soon as children are removed from their family environment. Concurrent planning means making an alternative plan (e.g., adoption, guardianship/tutorship, placement until adulthood) to be implemented if the preferred plan (i.e., keeping children with or returning children to their family) is not possible.

### INDICATOR

**The suggested amendment is made to the YPA.**

- 5.2.1.3 Clarify in the Act the importance of continuity of care and stability of relationships by amending the wording to guarantee stability for the child. For example, the third paragraph of section 91.1 of the YPA could be amended to read: “If the security or development of the child is still in danger at the expiry of the periods specified in the first paragraph, the tribunal must make an order that ensures continuity of care, stable relationships and stable living conditions corresponding to the child’s needs and age on a permanent basis.”

### INDICATOR

**The suggested amendment is made to the YPA.**

- 5.2.1.4 Amend section 91.1 of the YPA so that, when an order of permanent placement is made, the tribunal is obliged to rule on contact with the parents and the transfer of parental authority to the permanent family, based on the child’s best interests.

### INDICATOR

**The suggested amendment is made to the YPA.**

- 5.2.1.5 Update the “Permanency planning: A permanent plan for lifelong roots” framework and reinstate training on the framework throughout Quebec.

### INDICATORS

- 1) **The “Permanency planning: A permanent plan for lifelong roots” framework is revised.**
- 2) **The provincial training plan developed based on recommendation 13.4 includes training on the new framework, and this training is developed.**

- 5.2.1.6 Coordinate the application of the “Permanency planning: A permanent plan for lifelong roots” framework throughout the province in order to ensure uniform application by all social and legal front-line workers.

**INDICATOR**

**An office or department at MSSS is responsible for coordinating the application of the framework.**

## 5.2.2 Better adhere to maximum placement periods

- 5.2.2.1 Calculate the maximum length of placement based on the date that children are first removed from their family environment.

**INDICATOR**

**The suggested amendment is made to the YPA.**

- 5.2.2.2 Make the best interests of the child the only acceptable reason for surpassing the maximum placement periods. This could be accomplished by amending section 91.1 of the *Youth Protection Act* (YPA).

**INDICATOR**

**The suggested amendment is made to the YPA.**

- 5.2.2.3 Ensure that actions are taken before maximum periods expire by entrusting each regional DYP with the responsibility for monitoring maximum placement periods.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) **A ministerial directive is issued to require all regional DYPs to monitor maximum placement periods.**
- 2) **A planning process is undertaken for all youth whose maximum placement periods are at risk of expiring.**

## Recommendation 5.3

### FACILITATE ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP (TUTORSHIP) TO SERVE THE INTERESTS OF MORE CHILDREN

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 5.3.1** Create a new type of adoption in Quebec: simple adoption, i.e., an adoption that does not sever the relationship between children and their biological parents, in order to facilitate the adoption of older children or those who wish to maintain ties with their biological parents and own their previous experience.

#### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the *Civil Code of Québec*.

- 5.3.2** Add the expiry of maximum placement periods as a new criterion for eligibility for adoption or guardianship when a child is not expected to return to their family and adoption or guardianship is in the child's best interest.

#### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the *Civil Code of Québec*.

- 5.3.3** Implement measures to provide practical, financial and administrative support for families that adopt or become guardians (tutors).

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Regulations on financial aid for adoption and guardianship are modified to make the aid more generous and more easily accessible.
- 2) A ministerial directive is issued to provide adoptive and guardian families with practical and administrative support as needed once adoption and guardianship procedures are finalized.

## Recommendation 5.4

### PROMOTE FOSTER FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 5.4.1** Mandate an independent body to evaluate the impacts of new family-type and intermediate resources created following the adoption of the *Act respecting the representation of family-type resources and certain intermediate resources and the negotiation process for their group agreements* on the quality of relationships and follow-ups between CISSSs/CIUSSSs and resources, as well as the quality of services received by children placed with these resources.

#### INDICATOR

A research team external to the health and social services network (RSSS) is mandated to evaluate the impacts of new family-type and intermediate resources.

- 5.4.2** Develop an evaluation process for each type of foster family, be it regular foster families, kinship foster families or “mixed bank” foster families.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The family-type and intermediate resources framework is modified following a revision of the criteria used to evaluate foster family candidates.
- 2) The criteria stemming from this process are evidence-based.
- 3) The criteria are different for each type of foster family.

- 5.4.3** Create, in all regions of Quebec, a list of families willing to foster children and youth immediately and on a long-term basis, regardless of their case plans.

#### INDICATOR

A list of families willing to foster children and youth immediately and on a long-term basis, regardless of their case plans, is created in all regions of Quebec.



**5.4.4 Develop mandatory official training for each type of foster family, be it regular foster families, kinship foster families or “mixed bank” foster families.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Training specific to each type of foster family is developed by the MSSS.
- 2) The training is made mandatory for the accreditation of family-type resources.

**5.4.5 Provide appropriate support and continuing education for each type of foster family.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The MSSS develops new training tailored to each type of foster family.
- 2) Qualified personnel are dedicated specifically to training and supporting foster families.

**5.4.6 Continue to implement the Looking After Children (LAC) approach and ensure province-wide coordination.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) An office or department at the MSSS is responsible for coordinating the province-wide implementation of the LAC approach.
- 2) This body's mandate is to continue implementing the approach throughout Quebec.
- 3) This body is given enough financial and human resources to carry out its mandate.

## CHAPTER 6

# DEVELOP COLLABORATIVE, PARTICIPATIVE AND CUSTOMIZED LEGAL INTERVENTIONS

With regard to legal intervention, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

The number of cases that end up in court has increased steadily over the last 30 years.

A significant number of children are the subjects of legal interventions.

Overuse of the legal system prevents children from getting help in a timely fashion.

The legal system is not well suited to children's needs.

The system is adversarial, which is an obstacle to intervention.

Children's representation varies and is not effectively structured.

These observations led them to ask:

How can we ensure that children and parents are able to participate in making decisions that affect them?

How can we adapt the legal process to better serve children and families?

How can we reduce timeframes in the legal system so that services can be delivered more quickly?



To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**PROMOTE AND FACILITATE THE USE OF VOLUNTARY MEASURES**

**PROMOTE A NEW OPTION: AN INDEPENDENT, FREE AND FAST YOUTH MEDIATION SERVICE**

**ADOPT A COLLABORATIVE, PARTICIPATIVE AND CUSTOMIZED APPROACH IN COURT**

**ENSURE THAT CHILDREN'S LAWYERS ARE ADVISORS, FIRST AND FOREMOST**

**CREATE A RELIABLE AND EFFECTIVE SYSTEM TO ACCESS INFORMATION IN REAL TIME ABOUT CHILDREN UNDER COURT-ORDERED YOUTH PROTECTION**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 6.1

### PROMOTE AND FACILITATE THE USE OF VOLUNTARY MEASURES

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 6.1.1** Make the participation of children and their parents a requirement at all stages of the youth intervention process throughout Quebec.

#### INDICATOR

The regulation described in subrecommendation 4.2.3 specifies that all reports written during a child's time under youth protection must include a section outlining the opinions of the child, regardless of how the child communicates, as well as a section outlining the opinions of the parents.

- 6.1.2** Offer mediation at child and youth protection centres throughout Quebec to increase and facilitate the use of this voluntary option.

#### INDICATOR

The number of agreements on voluntary measures signed increases in all regions of Quebec.

- 6.1.3** Allow renewal of agreements on voluntary measures at the end of their two-year terms. This renewal should feasibly end the intervention and be authorized personally by the DYP.

#### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the YPA.

- 6.1.4** Train front-line workers on the legal aspects of intervention so they can better support parents and children.

#### INDICATOR

The provincial training plan based on recommendation 13.4 includes a specific component on the legal aspects of intervention.

## Recommendation 6.2

### PROMOTE A NEW OPTION: AN INDEPENDENT, FREE AND FAST YOUTH MEDIATION SERVICE

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 6.2.1 Launch an 18-month pilot project in three regions to establish the operating conditions for a youth mediation service.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) Pilot projects for mediation services are established in three regions.
- 2) An implementation framework is created, specifying the conditions for success for an independent youth mediation service.

#### 6.2.2 Establish an independent, free and fast youth mediation service as a first-step alternative to going to court in order to promote the participation of parents and children.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) The new option of mediation is incorporated into the YPA.
- 2) A new mediation service that is subsidized by but separate from the government is established throughout Quebec.
- 3) The time needed to access the service does not exceed the period set out in section 47.1 regarding provisional agreements.

#### 6.2.3 Equip this service with a roster of trained and accredited mediators.

##### INDICATOR

The incorporation of mediation into the YPA as described in subrecommendation 6.2.2 is accompanied by descriptions of the supplementary requirements that must be met by accredited mediators who want to work in this new service.

#### 6.2.4 Establish this service in a neutral place.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) The implementation framework developed based on recommendation 6.2.1 is respected with regard to finding neutral locations for this new option.
- 2) The number of independent and free service points that offer youth mediation increase in all Quebec regions.

## Recommendation 6.3

### **ADOPT A COLLABORATIVE, PARTICIPATIVE AND CUSTOMIZED APPROACH IN COURT**

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

---

#### 6.3.1 Put into practice the principles of the *Code of Civil Procedure* and the YPA relating to alternative dispute resolution in youth protection.

##### INDICATOR

The percentage of cases resolved using the principles of alternative dispute resolution outlined in the YPA or the *Code of Civil Procedure* increases.

#### 6.3.2 Promote mediation in the judicial process by opting for settlement conferences.

##### INDICATOR

The percentage of cases that lead to settlement conferences increases year over year.

### 6.3.3 **Prioritize agreements, reviews without a hearing and settlement conferences.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) More than 50% of reviews without a hearing lead to an agreement.
- 2) More than 50% of settlement conferences lead to an agreement.

### 6.3.4 **Continue to provide judges with training on being effective facilitators.**

#### **INDICATOR**

The proportion of judges having completed facilitator training increases.

### 6.3.5 **Humanize and modify courthouses to make courtrooms more child- and parent-friendly.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) A framework or a guide of best practices for creating child- and parent-friendly facilities is developed.
- 2) The proportion of courthouses that have implemented measures and initiatives in line with the framework increases.

### 6.3.6 **Study the possibility of a unified family court in Quebec.**

#### **INDICATORS**

An interministerial committee is established, and its mandate, at a minimum, is to:

- a) Study the possibility of creating a unified family court
- b) Determine what would be needed to make such a court successful.

## Recommendation 6.4

### ENSURE THAT CHILDREN'S LAWYERS ARE ADVISORS, FIRST AND FOREMOST

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 6.4.1**      **Communicate information regarding a child's situation to the child's lawyer for free and as quickly as possible.**

#### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the YPA.

- 6.4.2**      **Promote the lawyer's role as a provider of advice and support to the child at all decision-making stages, and not only in court.**

#### INDICATOR

*The Act respecting legal aid and the provision of certain other legal services is amended to incorporate the duty to advise and support for lawyers who represent children.*

- 6.4.3**      **Develop mandatory, appropriate training for lawyers who represent children.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Training for lawyers who represent children is developed.
- 2) This training is mandatory.

- 6.4.4**      **Establish specific rules of conduct for these lawyers.**

#### INDICATOR

The code of professional conduct includes specific rules for lawyers who represent children.



#### 6.4.5 Guarantee universal legal aid for all children who are the subject of a youth protection intervention.

##### INDICATOR

*The Act respecting legal aid and the provision of certain other legal services is amended to guarantee universal eligibility for legal aid for children who are the subject of a youth protection intervention.*

## Recommendation 6.5

### CREATE A RELIABLE AND EFFECTIVE SYSTEM TO ACCESS INFORMATION IN REAL TIME ABOUT CHILDREN UNDER COURT-ORDERED YOUTH PROTECTION

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 6.5.1 Mandate the Ministère de la Justice (MJQ) to develop an information system for legal files for youth under protection.

##### INDICATOR

A mandate is given to the Ministère de la Justice to develop the recommended information system.

#### 6.5.2 Develop a simple and clear information system that is adapted to users' needs in order to ensure efficient management and reporting.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) A project to create an information system is launched after the mandate recommended in 6.5.1 is issued.
- 2) Development of the information system involves validation and evaluation by users.

### 6.5.3 **Make non-identifying data in the information system public and accessible in real time.**

#### **INDICATOR**

The data provided by the system developed based on subrecommendation 6.5.1 is anonymized and made publicly available in real time.

### 6.5.4 **Mandate researchers to analyze the impacts of decisions made through the youth mediation service and of decisions made by the court.**

#### **INDICATOR**

A research mandate is issued to compare mediation and the traditional adversarial approach as described in chapter 6 of the CSDEPJ report in terms of the impacts on youth during their time under protection.



# HUMANIZE REHABILITATION SERVICES

With regard to rehabilitation services, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

There are major gaps in both physical and mental health services.

Youth placed in rehabilitation centres fall far behind in their studies, are less likely to complete their schooling and have fewer qualifications than their peers.

The use of restraint measures, which sometimes cause harm to children and youth, is on the rise.

Youth placed in rehabilitation centres have difficulty asserting their rights.

The MSSS needs to review the services offered by rehabilitation centres, taking into account the numerous issues they face on the front lines.



These observations led them to ask:

How can rehabilitation centres better promote the well-being of youth in care and ensure that their rights are respected?

How can the services offered by rehabilitation centres be improved to better meet the needs of youth in care?

To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO ENSURE THAT YOUTH'S RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED**

**CREATE A TASK FORCE TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUTH IN REHABILITATION**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 7.1

### TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO ENSURE THAT YOUTH'S RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 7.1.1 Guarantee physical and mental health services for youth.

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

7.1.1.1 Provide all youth placed in rehabilitation centres with access to proper physical and psychological care.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) Mechanisms are implemented to allow all youth placed in rehabilitation centres to receive a comprehensive evaluation of their biopsychosocial health.
- 2) Mechanisms are implemented to prioritize access to all forms of care for youth placed in rehabilitation centres.

7.1.1.2 Provide youth placed in rehabilitation centres with specialized mental health assessments in a timely fashion.

##### INDICATOR

The time needed for youth in care to receive specialized mental health assessments decreases.

7.1.1.3 Ensure that all rehabilitation centres are able to provide appropriate responding psychiatrist services.

##### INDICATOR

The proportion of rehabilitation centres with a responding psychiatrist increases.

## 7.1.2 **Respect the academic programs of youth in rehabilitation centres and plan interventions to ensure that these youth succeed academically.**

### **INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

7.1.2.1 Implement measures to increase educational achievement among youth in rehabilitation centres.

### **INDICATOR**

**The number of mechanisms to promote educational achievement increases.**

7.1.2.2 Ensure that school service centres, school boards, rehabilitation centres, schools and CLSCs create individualized intersectoral service plans (IISPs) jointly.

### **INDICATORS**

- 1) All school-aged children placed in rehabilitation centres have an IISP.**
- 2) Subrecommendation 3.5.1 is implemented.**

7.1.2.3 Make educational achievement an integral part of the rehabilitation process for children in care.

### **INDICATORS**

- 1) Standards of practice for educational achievement are adapted for youth in rehabilitation centres and added to the rehabilitation framework.**
- 2) The academic framework applied in rehabilitation centres is adapted for youth who live there (flexibility).**

7.1.2.4 Guarantee children in care access to educational services, including the full Quebec educational curriculum.

### **INDICATOR**

**Graduation rates (diploma of secondary school or vocational studies) increase.**

### **7.1.3 Monitor the use of restraint measures so that they are applied in exceptional circumstances only.**

#### **INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

7.1.3.1 Monitor the use and appropriateness of restraint measures.

#### **INDICATOR**

**Ministerial indicators are created and maintained to monitor and evaluate the use and appropriateness of restraint measures in rehabilitation centres.**

7.1.3.2 Ensure that restraint measures are not used for disciplinary purposes.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) Subrecommendation 7.1.3.1 is implemented.**
- 2) Subrecommendation 7.1.3.3 is implemented.**

7.1.3.3 Train rehabilitation centre personnel on the appropriate use of restraint measures as well as on the trauma that can result from their use.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) The provincial training plan developed based on recommendation 13.4 includes mandatory training for rehabilitation centre personnel on criteria for the appropriate use of restraint measures as well as on the trauma that can result from their use.**
- 2) The percentage of rehabilitation centre personnel having completed the training increases.**



## Recommendation 7.2

### CREATE A TASK FORCE TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUTH IN REHABILITATION

This task force must guarantee the full participation of youth and their parents and ensure that their rights are fully respected. The following should be taken into consideration:

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The MSSS establishes a task force.
- 2) Each of the items listed as a subrecommendation on page 261 of the CSDEPJ report is listed in the official mandate establishing the task force.
- 3) Each item listed on page 261 of the CSDEPJ report is discussed with:
  - a) Youth currently receiving rehabilitation services, as well as their parents
  - b) Youth formerly under protection.

#### 7.2.1 Young people's living environments

##### 7.2.1.1 Inadequate and outdated physical spaces

#### INDICATOR

This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.

##### 7.2.1.2 Lack of spaces in rehabilitation centres

#### INDICATOR

This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.

##### 7.2.1.3 Lack of diversity in housing resources

#### INDICATOR

This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.

## 7.2.2 Services offered by rehabilitation centres must take into consideration:

### 7.2.2.1 The importance of case planning for all children

#### **INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

### 7.2.2.2 Customized services

#### **INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

### 7.2.2.3 Cultural, spiritual, sexual and gender diversity

#### **INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

### 7.2.2.4 Integrating approaches focused on developmental attachment and trauma

#### **INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

### 7.2.2.5 Approaches that facilitate the transition to adulthood

#### **INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

### 7.2.2.6 The importance of family interventions and parental involvement

#### **INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

- 7.2.2.7 The impact of rehabilitation centres on the community and the development of positive relationships

**INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

- 7.2.2.8 Working conditions for front-line workers.

**INDICATOR**

**This issue is addressed through specific work undertaken by the task force described in recommendation 7.2.**

# SUPPORT YOUTH AS THEY LEAVE CARE

With regard to youth leaving care, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

Youth who leave DYP care at the age of 18 are left to fend for themselves.

Youth leaving care do not have the skills they need for successful social and professional integration.

Many young people find themselves without a stable place to live once they turn 18.

The destruction of case files robs young adults of their past.

These observations led them to ask:

How can we help young people as they leave care?

How can we better support them with education and developing skills for work?

How can we ensure that they have appropriate housing?

Do the rules around access to and retention of case files reflect the reality of youth who were in care?



To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**SUPPORT YOUTH LEAVING CARE**

**SUPPORT YOUTH WITH EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

**IMPROVE HOUSING STABILITY FOR YOUTH**

**RETAIN YOUTH PROTECTION FILES FOR YOUTH WHO HAVE REACHED  
THE AGE OF MAJORITY**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 8.1

### SUPPORT YOUTH LEAVING CARE

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 8.1.1 Create a program for youth leaving care that supports them until age 25 through a variety of measures:

- i. Housing support
- ii. Support with education and vocational training
- iii. Income support
- iv. Social and community support
- v. Access to health and social services.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) A post-care support program is created for and offered to youth leaving care.
- 2) The measures and services proposed as part of this program are offered to youth until age 25.
- 3) The program comprises measures that address, at a minimum, the areas listed in the recommendation.

#### 8.1.2 Consult youth on what services should be implemented and empower them to be proactive in relation to services that affect them.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) A feedback mechanism is put in place specifically to allow youth to give feedback on the services they receive.
- 2) This mechanism is adapted to young people's reality and is available on an ongoing basis.
- 3) This mechanism provides for a way to disseminate the results.

### 8.1.3 Facilitate access to flexible health and social services that are adapted to the needs of youth who are turning 18 and leaving care.

#### INDICATOR

Measures or programs are put in place to facilitate access to health and social services for youth who are turning 18 and leaving care.

### 8.1.4 Promote social support for youth.

#### INDICATOR

Subrecommendations 8.1.4.1 and 8.1.4.2 are implemented.

#### 8.1.4.1 Fund and support a peer-support program to facilitate the transition out of care.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) A program that uses peer support to facilitate the transition out of care is implemented.
- 2) Funding for this program is guaranteed.

#### 8.1.4.2 Ensure that youth are aware of the services available to them.

#### INDICATOR

A mechanism to inform youth of the services that are available to them once they turn 18 and leave care is implemented.

## Recommendation 8.2

### SUPPORT YOUTH WITH EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

### **8.2.1 Develop provincial measures, partnerships and policies to support further education, professional integration and skills development.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) A provincial program is set up to help young people pursue studies, find jobs and develop skills.
- 2) The resources needed to launch this program are available.
- 3) The development of partnerships is at the heart of the provincial program.

### **8.2.2 Facilitate access to guidance counsellors through a closer relationship with Carrefour jeunesse-emploi.**

#### **INDICATOR**

The subrecommendation is a component of the provincial program described in subrecommendation 8.2.1.

### **8.2.3 Increase awareness of special college loans and bursaries available to youth in care.**

#### **INDICATOR**

The subrecommendation is a component of the provincial program described in subrecommendation 8.2.1.

### **8.2.4 Study the possibility of implementing a student loan forgiveness program.**

#### **INDICATOR**

The subrecommendation is a component of the provincial program described in subrecommendation 8.2.1.

### **8.2.5 Make the Programme qualification des jeunes (PQJ) accessible to the entire target clientele.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) The number of youth admitted to the program increases.
- 2) Subrecommendations 8.2.5.1, 8.2.5.2 and 8.2.5.3 are implemented.



- 8.2.5.1 Make admission criteria for the program more flexible.

**INDICATOR**

**Eligibility criteria for the PQJ are made more flexible so that more youth leaving DYP care are able to access it.**

- 8.2.5.2 Ensure that the program is coordinated across the province.

**INDICATOR**

**An office or department of MSSS is responsible for the province-wide coordination of the program.**

- 8.2.5.3 Ensure that new budgets are accompanied by an implementation plan, an implementation monitoring plan and annual results on use by and impacts on youth.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) **The program's budgets are increased as a result of the increased flexibility of criteria.**
- 2) **An implementation plan for the new program is developed.**
- 3) **A research or evaluation process is put into place in order to annually monitor the implementation of the revised program and its impacts on youth.**

## Recommendation 8.3

### IMPROVE HOUSING STABILITY FOR YOUTH

**INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

- 8.3.1 **Allow youth to stay with foster families until they turn 21 if they choose.**

**INDICATOR**

**Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the YPA.**

### 8.3.2 Increase the stock of public and community housing.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Funding for youth-friendly public (social) housing increases.
- 2) Funding for youth-friendly community housing increases.
- 3) Funding for guiding and supporting youth who are leaving care increases.

### 8.3.3 Provide financial support to community organizations whose mission is to house youth and create such organizations in regions that have none.

#### INDICATOR

Funding for community organizations that provide housing to youth increases.

### 8.3.4 Study the possibility of providing assistance for housing, e.g., rent subsidies.

#### INDICATOR

An office or a department at MSSS is responsible for studying the possibility of providing assistance for housing to youth leaving care.

## Recommendation

### 8.4

#### RETAIN YOUTH PROTECTION FILES FOR YOUTH WHO HAVE REACHED THE AGE OF MAJORITY

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 8.4.1** Retain files for children who were under youth protection following the standard file retention rules for health and social services.

##### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the YPA.

- 8.4.2** Limit access to a youth's file to only the youth once they become an adult.

##### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the YPA.

- 8.4.3** Put all relevant information, including unredacted documents, reports and judgments, in the file so that the young person has a complete picture of their situation.

##### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the YPA.

# TAKE ACTION FOR INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

With regard to Indigenous children, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

The issues and solutions have already been highlighted by multiple inquiry commissions.

Indigenous children are overrepresented in youth protection.

The well-being of Indigenous children is inseparable from their culture.

The YPA is discriminatory toward Indigenous children when it is applied without considering Indigenous realities.

Indigenous children do not have a voice.

Applying the principle of self-determination to youth protection makes it possible to respond adequately to children's needs.

These observations led the commissioners to propose that:

The recommendations that have already been made be implemented.

The *Youth Protection Act* (YPA) be applied in a way that respects the values of Indigenous communities and aligns with their cultures.



The commissioners therefore put forward the following recommendations:

**IMPLEMENT THE CALLS TO ACTION OF THE VIENS COMMISSION AND THE NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MMIWGS**

**SUPPORT THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT IN YOUTH PROTECTION MATTERS**

**ENSURE THE WELL-BEING OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN WHEN ENFORCING THE YPA**

**GIVE A VOICE TO INDIGENOUS CHILDREN**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

## Recommendation 9.1

### IMPLEMENT THE CALLS TO ACTION OF THE VIENS COMMISSION AND THE NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MMIWG

#### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

---

#### 9.1.1

The Quebec government must implement and fund the recommendations on children's rights and well-being, social services and youth protection issued by the Viens Commission and the National Inquiry into MMIWG.

#### INDICATOR

The recommendations on children's rights and well-being, social services and youth protection issued by the Viens Commission and the National Inquiry into MMIWG are implemented.

## Recommendation 9.2

### SUPPORT THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT IN YOUTH PROTECTION MATTERS

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

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### 9.2.1 **Allow Indigenous leaders to create their own laws related to family and youth protection.**

*“Given the emphasis on Indigenous self-determination in Chapter 9, a clarification of subrecommendation 9.2.1 is in order. From an Indigenous standpoint, this subrecommendation is contradictory. Indigenous peoples’ claim to self-determination implies that they interact with the federal and provincial governments as equals. Therefore, subrecommendation 9.2.1 should not be understood as recommending that the Quebec government ‘allow’ Indigenous people to create their own laws, but rather that it not prevent them from creating their own laws and that it enable these laws to be fully implemented.*

*Additionally, depending on the outcome of the challenge to Bill C-92, the Quebec government may be required to duly recognize the jurisdiction of Indigenous leaders in the application and enforcement of these laws, as stated in 9.2.2.”*

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) The Supreme Court ruling on the Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families (formerly Bill C-92) endorses the full implementation of the Act.**
- 2) The Quebec government does not challenge Indigenous laws, whether currently in force or in the process of being adopted, in the areas of social services for children, youth and families.**
- 3) The Quebec government cooperates actively and in good faith in the transition that is necessitated by these laws as well as in their enforcement.**

## 9.2.2 Recognize the jurisdiction of Indigenous leaders over the application and enforcement of these laws.

### INDICATORS

- 1) Subrecommendation 9.2.1 is validated.
- 2) The Quebec government officially recognizes the jurisdiction of Indigenous leaders over the application and enforcement of laws adopted by the competent Indigenous authorities.

## 9.2.3 Fund the development of a legislation drafting process.

### INDICATOR

A funding program is established to support the development of a legislation drafting process in relation to subrecommendations 9.2.1 and 9.2.2.

## 9.2.4 Fund the implementation and operation of systems to help families and children developed by Indigenous leaders exercising their legislative jurisdiction.

### INDICATOR

The funding program mentioned in subrecommendation 9.2.3 includes a component that enables the implementation and operation of systems to help families and children.



## Recommendation

### 9.3

#### ENSURE THE WELL-BEING OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN WHEN ENFORCING THE YPA

##### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 9.3.1 Starting immediately, fund the creation and implementation of Indigenous initiatives to better protect Indigenous children, with a view to creating a youth protection system based on their values and cultures.**

##### INDICATORS

- 1) The number of projects funded to create youth protection systems based on Indigenous values and cultures increases.
- 2) The scope of funding increases.
- 3) The duration of funding increases.

- 9.3.2 Ensure the cultural safety of Indigenous children when undertaking a youth protection intervention by prioritizing the following:**

- i. A holistic approach
- ii. The importance of language
- iii. Family models and multiple attachments
- iv. The concept of time
- v. The role and importance of extended family
- vi. The sense of belonging to their community and nation.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) Amendments are made to the YPA to address cultural safety.
- 2) These amendments are determined through a process led by Indigenous people.
- 3) Standards of practice are drafted in accordance with the legislative amendments.

- 9.3.3 Fund and provide mandatory training on Indigenous cultures and the different aspects of Indigenous identity to front-line workers so they can adapt their interventions under the YPA to Indigenous realities.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Training on Indigenous culture and the different aspects of Indigenous identity is developed through a process led by Indigenous people.
- 2) All DYP front-line workers receive this training.

## Recommendation 9.4

### GIVE A VOICE TO INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

**INDICATOR**

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

- 9.4.1 Create the position of Deputy Commissioner as well as a team dedicated exclusively to Indigenous children's issues to work with the Commissioner of Children's Rights and Well-Being.**

**INDICATOR**

Subrecommendation 1.1.2.2 is implemented.



# ADAPT SERVICES FOR ETHNOCULTURAL COMMUNITIES

With regard to ethnocultural communities, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

**Black children are overrepresented in youth protection.**

**Immigrant families face barriers that prevent them from fully benefiting from public services.**

**Greater training and collaboration are needed to adapt services to immigrant families and established ethnocultural communities.**

**The way that family identities are documented in youth protection limits the ability to adapt practices.**

These observations led them to ask:

**Why do ethnocultural communities continue to face barriers in accessing services?**

**Why are certain communities overrepresented in youth protection?**

**Most importantly, how can we change this?**



To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE ET DES DROITS DE LA JEUNESSE (CDPDJ) REGARDING RACIAL PROFILING AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION**

**REMOVE BARRIERS AND IMPROVE OUTREACH TO IMMIGRANT FAMILIES**

**SUPPORT AND ASSIST PARENTS WHEN A REPORT OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS MADE**

**DEVELOP AND DELIVER MANDATORY INTERCULTURAL TRAINING FOR ALL PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND CHILDREN**

**CREATE A DETAILED AND UP-TO-DATE PORTRAIT OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 10.1

### IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE ET DES DROITS DE LA JEUNESSE (CDPDJ) REGARDING RACIAL PROFILING AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

#### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

#### 10.1.1 Apply and follow the recommendations of the CDPDJ in:

- i. Schools
- ii. Youth protection
- iii. Public safety.

#### INDICATORS

The recommendations made by the CDPDJ in *Report of the Consultation on Racial Profiling and its Consequences* are implemented in at least the following three areas:

- 1) Schools
- 2) Youth protection
- 3) Public safety.

## Recommendation 10.2

### REMOVE BARRIERS AND IMPROVE OUTREACH TO IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 10.2.1 Facilitate access to information and services for immigrant families at CISSSs and CIUSSSs.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) Section 349 of the ARHSSS is fully respected in all CISSSs and CIUSSSs.
- 2) Measures or initiatives to facilitate access to RSSS services for immigrant families, including appropriate interpretation services, are implemented.

#### 10.2.2 Provide health and social services to children born to women with precarious immigration statuses.

##### INDICATOR

Amendments needed to implement the recommendation are made to the YPA.

#### 10.2.3 Adapter les services pour répondre aux besoins des familles immigrantes.

##### INDICATOR

The number of initiatives to adapt services to the needs of immigrant families increases.

## Recommendation 10.3

### SUPPORT AND ASSIST PARENTS WHEN A REPORT OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS MADE

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

---

- 10.3.1**      **Initiate and establish cooperation between youth protection services and community organizations that support refugees and immigrants, as soon as possible.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) A protocol for collaboration between youth protection services and community organizations that support refugees and immigrants is developed.
- 2) This protocol contains a clause that sets out the obligation of youth protection services to collaborate with the community organization whenever a report of abuse or neglect is made concerning a child from an ethnocultural community.

- 10.3.2**      **Ensure that community organizations are adequately funded so that they can provide the support and mediation services needed.**

#### INDICATOR

Programs to fund community organizations that work with refugees and immigrants are improved to allow them to provide support services to the families of all youth from ethnocultural communities who are the subject of a report of abuse or neglect.



## Recommendation 10.4

### DEVELOP AND DELIVER MANDATORY INTERCULTURAL TRAINING FOR ALL PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 10.4.1 Create training programs that allow front-line workers, teachers, managers and support personnel to develop intercultural skills.

##### INDICATORS

A training program on developing intercultural skills is created for:

- a) All CLSC and YP front-line workers
- b) All CLSC and YP middle managers
- c) CLSC and YP support personnel who are or could be in contact with service users
- d) All primary, secondary and post-secondary educators.

#### 10.4.2 Adapt these training programs based on the type of professional, the environment and specific needs in the region.

##### INDICATOR

A process is implemented to adapt and evaluate the training program recommended in subrecommendation 10.4.4 for the type of professional, the environment and the region.

## Recommendation 10.5

### CREATE A DETAILED AND UP-TO-DATE PORTRAIT OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Analysis of data resulting from 10.5.1 makes it possible to create a detailed, up-to-date portrait of cultural diversity.
- 2) Tools are developed for this purpose.

- 
- 10.5.1**      **Ensure that data about the cultural identity of individuals is captured in the main databases using common nomenclature.**

#### INDICATOR

The PIJ data bank is adapted so its database systems can accurately document the cultural identity of service users.

- 10.5.2**      **Use the portrait to adapt services to the needs of ethnocultural communities.**

#### INDICATOR

A process is implemented to review YP services, in consultation with the target communities, in relation to the findings of the portrait.

- 10.5.3**      **Monitor the over-representation of certain population groups in youth protection services.**

#### INDICATOR

A research team or an MSSS department is given the mandate or responsibility to monitor the over-representation of certain population groups in youth protection.



## CHAPTER 11

# MEET THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN



With regard to English-speaking children, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

**In order to establish trust, children and their families need to be supported in a language they understand.**

**Areas outside Montreal urgently need but are facing a shortage of English-speaking resources and personnel.**

**In Montreal, the quality of services for English-speaking families is declining.**

These observations led them to ask:

**How can we ensure that English-speaking children and families in Quebec have equitable access to prevention and youth protection services?**

To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**GUARANTEE ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR ENGLISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGHOUT QUEBEC**

**GIVE A MULTIREGIONAL MANDATE TO ONE OR MORE INSTITUTIONS TO PROVIDE REHABILITATION SERVICES TO ENGLISH-SPEAKING YOUTH**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 11.1

### GUARANTEE ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR ENGLISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGHOUT QUEBEC

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

---

#### 11.1.1 Closely monitor institutional programs that provide the English-speaking population with access to services.

##### INDICATOR

Pursuant to section 18.1 of the *Regulation respecting the Provincial Committee on the dispensing of health and social services in the English language*, the Minister accepts the Committee's proposed budget for its new functions described in subrecommendation 11.1.3.

#### 11.1.2 Ensure that outreach and youth protection services meet the needs of English-speaking populations throughout Quebec.

##### INDICATOR

A mechanism is in place to ensure that services offered meet the needs of English-speaking populations.

**11.1.3**      **Require the Provincial Committee on the dispensing of health and social services to report to the Commissioner for Children's Rights and Well-Being on the status of services.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Section 509 of the ARHSSS sets out the Committee's responsibility to submit an annual report on the status of services to the CCRWB.
- 2) Pursuant to section 18.2 of the *Regulation respecting the Provincial Committee on the dispensing of health and social services in the English language*, the Minister allows the communications policy to be adapted as needed to enable communication between the Committee and the CCWBR.
- 3) A report whose goal is to closely monitor access to services for English-speaking children and their families is drafted by the Committee and submitted annually to the CCWBR.

## Recommendation 11.2

**GIVE A MULTIREGIONAL MANDATE TO ONE OR MORE ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE REHABILITATION SERVICES TO ENGLISH-SPEAKING YOUTH**

**INDICATOR**

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

**11.2.1**      **Designate and fund one or more organizations with a multiregional mandate to ensure that the rehabilitation needs of English-speaking children in Quebec are met.**

**INDICATOR**

A multiregional mandate is given to one or more organizations.

- 11.2.2 Offer rehabilitation services to English-speaking youth. Provide services as close as possible to where people live, accounting for geographic constraints.**

**INDICATOR**

**Subrecommendation 11.2.1 is respected.**

- 11.2.3 Building on the multiregional mandate, support other organizations in providing youth protection services to English-speaking populations across the province.**

**INDICATOR**

**The organizations that are given the mandate set out in subrecommendation 11.2.1 also support other organizations in the province with providing youth protection services to English-speaking populations.**

# RECOGNIZE THE IMPACTS OF FAMILY CONFLICTS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

With regard to family conflicts and domestic violence, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

Children are often overlooked in cases of domestic violence and separation disputes.

DYP front-line workers should use an approach that prioritizes parental collaboration.

Front-line workers are not sufficiently trained or prepared to handle situations of domestic violence and separation disputes.

Collaboration between the DYP and shelters is lacking.

The justice system is not well suited to address situations of domestic violence and serious disputes between parents.

These observations led them to ask:

Are children's experiences and needs given enough attention in such situations?

Are DYP front-line workers well equipped to identify the different problems that arise during family conflicts?

How can collaboration between the DYP and organizations that help families be improved?





To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**DEVELOP COLLABORATIVE, INTERSECTORAL INTERVENTIONS THAT GUARANTEE THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

**GIVE PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO CHILDREN WHO HAVE WITNESSED OR BEEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR SEPARATION DISPUTES, AND ENSURE THAT INTERVENTIONS ARE FOCUSED ON THEIR NEEDS**

**BETTER SUPPORT AND ASSIST MOTHERS WHO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TO BETTER PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN**

**INVOLVE FATHERS IN CUSTOMIZED INTERVENTIONS TO BETTER PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN**

**ENSURE THAT FRONT-LINE WORKERS ACQUIRE AND MAINTAIN EXPERTISE**

**ADAPT THE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 12.1

### DEVELOP COLLABORATIVE, INTERSECTORAL INTERVENTIONS THAT GUARANTEE THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 12.1.1 Establish genuine collaboration between the DYP, CLSCs, shelters, resources for fathers, the police and the justice system.

##### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

##### 12.1.1.1 Develop and apply a protocol that better defines the guidelines for a genuine partnership between all these stakeholders with a view to ensuring that services are adapted to the realities of mothers and children.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) An office or department at the MSSS develops an intersectoral protocol for collaboration between the DYP, CLSCs, shelters, resources for fathers, the police and the justice system in all cases of domestic violence or when there is a risk of domestic violence.
- 2) The number of cases managed following the protocol's guidelines increase.

#### 12.1.2 Assign responsibility for domestic violence cases to one professional at every child and youth protection centre.

##### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

- 12.1.2.1 In order to ensure the necessary collaboration between the DYP and community organizations, the commissioners recommend that the MSSS and all CISSSSs and CIUSSSs:

Assign responsibility for domestic violence cases to one professional in every child and youth protection centre in order to ensure efficient communication between all partners; this professional can work with community organizations to develop the expertise needed to support front-line workers.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Responsibility for domestic violence cases is assigned to one professional at every child and youth protection centre in Quebec.
- 2) This professional's mandate is to ensure that the protocol described in subrecommendation 12.1.1.1 is followed.

## Recommendation 12.2

**GIVE PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO CHILDREN WHO HAVE WITNESSED OR BEEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR SEPARATION DISPUTES, AND ENSURE THAT INTERVENTIONS ARE FOCUSED ON THEIR NEEDS**

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 12.2.1 Offer tailored psychosocial services in a timely manner and with the appropriate level of intensity to children who have witnessed or been victims of domestic violence or separation disputes.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Tailored services are available in all regions for children who have been victims of domestic violence or serious separation disputes.
- 2) Wait times meet the established standards.

- 12.2.2 Develop and provide support programs to children who are witnesses to or victims of domestic violence or serious separation disputes.

#### INDICATOR

The services described in subrecommendation 12.2.1 are based on standardized programs built to suit these specific needs.

## Recommendation 12.3

**BETTER SUPPORT AND ASSIST MOTHERS WHO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TO BETTER PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN**

### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

- 12.3.1 Equip DYP front-line workers with the tools they need to better understand serious separation disputes and domestic violence experienced by mothers and children living in shelters, so that they can offer customized support.**

### INDICATOR

The provincial training plan based on recommendation 13.4 includes training on serious disputes and domestic violence.

## Recommendation 12.4

**INVOLVE FATHERS IN CUSTOMIZED INTERVENTIONS TO BETTER PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN**

### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 12.4.1 Ensure that fathers receive customized help, support and follow-up when a family conflict is worsening or at risk of worsening, in order to better protect their children.**

### INDICATORS

- 1) Customized services to help, support and follow up with fathers in family conflict situations are provided by the RSSS or dedicated community organizations.
- 2) Specific mechanisms are created to systematically refer and orient fathers to these services when family conflicts are worsening or at risk of worsening.

**12.4.2 Offer more services that are tailored to fathers with violent tendencies.****INDICATOR**

Budgets for tailored services provided by the RSSS or dedicated community organizations to help, support and follow up with fathers with violent tendencies increase.

## Recommendation 12.5

### ENSURE THAT FRONT-LINE WORKERS ACQUIRE AND MAINTAIN EXPERTISE

**INDICATOR**

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

**12.5.1 Implement continuing education.****INDICATOR**

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 12.5.1.1** All psychosocial professionals in youth protection as well as CLSC professionals who provide psychosocial services to youth and their families should have access to continuing education:
- In domestic violence, including post-separation violence, serious separation disputes and parental alienation:
- i. That provides theoretical and practical knowledge on how best to work with the children, women and men involved.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The provincial training plan based on recommendation 13.4 includes training on domestic violence, post-separation violence and serious disputes.**
- 2) This program is also offered to hands-on psychosocial professionals who work in youth protection or with youth and their families at CLSCs.**

- 12.5.1.2 All psychosocial professionals in youth protection as well as CLSC professionals who provide psychosocial services to youth and their families should have access to continuing education:

In interventions specific to fathers, in order to:

- i. Help fathers who are in distress or precarious situations
- ii. Encourage fathers to engage with their children
- iii. Make fathers aware of the importance of their role in their children's lives.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) **The provincial training plan based on recommendation 13.4 includes a continuing education component about:**
  - a) **Fathers in distress or precarious situations**
  - b) **Ways to encourage fathers to engage with their children**
  - c) **Making fathers aware of the importance of their role in their children's lives.**
- 2) **This program is also offered to hands-on psychosocial professionals who work in youth protection or with youth and their families at CLSCs.**

## **12.5.2 Ensure that front-line workers receive clinical supervision.**

#### **INDICATOR**

**Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.**

- 12.5.2.1 Provide clinical supervision in cases of domestic violence, post-separation violence, serious separation disputes and parental alienation.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) **The model described in subrecommendation 13.3.3 includes training for clinical supervisors on issues specific to domestic violence, post-separation violence, serious separation disputes and parental alienation.**
- 2) **Standards of practice for youth protection and front-line work include a standard ratio of clinical supervisors specializing in domestic violence to front-line workers.**
- 3) **These standards are respected.**

## Recommendation 12.6

### ADAPT THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Evaluate existing projects and, if their results are convincing, expand their scope.

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 12.6.1** The commissioners recommend that the Ministère de la Justice and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux:  
Evaluate existing sociolegal initiatives that aim to help parents resolve their conflicts by prioritizing the best interests of their children.

#### INDICATOR

Both implement processes to evaluate existing socio-legal projects that aim to help parents resolve their conflicts.

- 12.6.2** The commissioners recommend that the Ministère de la Justice and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux:  
Expand the scope of these projects to all of Quebec if the results are convincing.

#### INDICATOR

A provincial plan to scale up evidence-based interventions is developed.

# VALUE, SUPPORT AND RECOGNIZE FRONT-LINE WORKERS

With regard to front-line workers, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

The workloads of front-line workers impact the quality and stability of services.

Front-line workers are at risk of experiencing physical and psychological violence.

Clinical supervision and management do not meet the needs of front-line workers.

The level of knowledge and skills needed in front-line work, and youth protection in particular, is underestimated.

These observations led them to ask:

Are the workloads of CLSC and youth protection front-line workers too heavy?

Are there standards for assessing workloads, and are they up to date?

Are front-line workers protected sufficiently in their work?

Do front-line workers receive the clinical supervision and management they need?

Is the specialized nature of youth protection work sufficiently appreciated?

Do front-line workers receive enough training?





To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**REVIEW THE WORKLOADS OF FRONT-LINE WORKERS TO ENSURE QUALITY OF SERVICES**

**ENSURE THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FRONT-LINE WORKERS**

**PROVIDE GREATER SUPPORT FOR AND BETTER MANAGEMENT OF FRONT-LINE WORKERS**

**IMPROVE INITIAL TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**RECOGNIZE THE SPECIALIZED NATURE OF THE YOUTH PROTECTION MANDATE**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 13.1

### REVIEW THE WORKLOADS OF FRONT-LINE WORKERS TO ENSURE QUALITY OF SERVICES

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 13.1.1**      **Establish standards of practice for CLSC front-line workers, taking into account quality standards and the real needs of children and their families, and expand the role as it relates to children in care.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Standards of practice are established to give CLSC front-line workers the real capacity to take into account the specific needs of the user, whether they are:
  - a) A child
  - b) A parent.
- 2) Standards of practice specific to CLSC front-line workers who are called on to support children in care as part of their expanded role are established as suggested in subrecommendation 4.3.1.

- 13.1.2**      **Adjust the number of front-line workers based on the demand for services and clientele needs.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Subrecommendation 13.1.1 is applied.
- 2) Standards of practice developed in accordance with subrecommendation 13.1.1 are applied.

### 13.1.3 **Accelerate and finalize, in the short term, the revision of standards of practice in youth protection based on clinical quality criteria and impacts on children, and begin applying the revised standards as soon as they are adopted.**

- i. Until the revised standards of practice are finalized, comply with standards established by the Association des centres jeunesse du Québec (ACJQ) in 2004, i.e., an average of 42.5 assessments per front-line worker per year at the Assessment and Determination of Protective Measures stages.
- ii. An average of 16 files for children taken into care at the Application of Protective Measures stage.

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) **Revised standards of practice are published at the conclusion of the revision process that was still ongoing when the CSDEPJ report was released.**
- 2) **Until indicator 1 is validated:**
  - a) **Front-line workers at the Assessment and Determination of Protective Measures stages conduct an average of 42.5 assessments each.**
  - b) **Front-line workers at the Application of Protective Measures stage are responsible for an average of 16 children each.**

### 13.1.4 **Continue the work started by the MSSS to provide better administrative support to and reduce administrative work for front-line workers.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) **Standards of practice for youth protection and the front line (CLSC) are revised to incorporate best practices with regard to the ratio of administrative hours to clinical hours worked.**
- 2) **Accounting or administrative mechanisms are developed to verify these ratios in every youth protection and front-line department.**
- 3) **The standards described for indicator 1 are respected by all departments.**

## Recommendation 13.2

### ENSURE THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FRONT-LINE WORKERS

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 13.2.1 Ensure the safety of front-line workers by assessing risks and developing pre-intervention strategies to limit these risks.

##### INDICATOR

Risk assessment protocols and pre-intervention strategies are developed and applied in all regions.

#### 13.2.2 Offer psychological support services, particularly following interventions in high-risk or emotionally challenging situations.

##### INDICATORS

- 1) A post-intervention protocol suited to the reality of psychosocial front-line workers in youth protection and CLSC front-line workers who provide psychosocial services to youth and their families is developed.
- 2) The protocol described for indicator 1 requires expanding the types of psychological support provided by the employee assistance program (EAP).
- 3) The protocol described for indicator 1 requires prioritizing access to the expanded psychological services provided by the EAP.

## Recommendation 13.3

### PROVIDE GREATER SUPPORT FOR AND BETTER MANAGEMENT OF FRONT-LINE WORKERS

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 13.3.1**      **Ensure proximity management, with a reasonable and standardized ratio, by managers who are experts in the area for which they are responsible, in order to meet the needs of front-line workers who provide youth services.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Standards of practice for youth protection and the front line (CLSC) are revised to incorporate best practices with regard to:
  - a) Maximum number of people reporting to a single middle manager
  - b) Maximum number of teams or departments overseen by the same middle manager
  - c) Skills that middle managers must possess for their specific area of work.
- 2) Accounting or administrative mechanisms are developed to verify these ratios in every youth protection and front-line department.
- 3) The standards described for indicator 1 are respected in all departments.

- 13.3.2**      **Provide managers in-depth training on management, prevention programs, parenting and the development of children in vulnerable situations in order to help them prioritize intervention and prevention strategies.**

#### INDICATOR

The number of continuing education hours related to youth, youth protection and human resources received by youth protection and front-line (CLSC) managers increases.

### 13.3.3 **Develop a standardized clinical support and management model to respond to the needs of CLSC and youth protection workers.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) A clinical support and management model tailored to CLSC and DYP front-line workers is developed.
- 2) This model is applied uniformly in all CLSCs and in youth protection.

## **Recommendation 13.4**

### **IMPROVE INITIAL TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **INDICATOR**

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

#### 13.4.1 **Establish a task force that represents practitioners, educators, professional orders, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur to develop an integrated training program comprising initial, specialized and continuing training in the relevant areas (i.e., social work, criminology and psychoeducation) within 18 months. (In the interim, maintain RUIJ's continuing education programs, reinstate a training plan for new employees, spread out over a set period of time, and reinstate the requirement for prerequisite training for duties requiring particular expertise).**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) An intersectoral task force that will develop a provincial training plan is established by November 3, 2022.
- 2) This training plan comprises a continuum of initial, specialized and continuing education units (in social work, criminology and psychoeducation).
- 3) The provincial plan requires certain duties to be performed only by personnel who have received prerequisite training for those duties.
- 4) Until this provincial program is deployed:
  - a) RUIJ's continuing education programs are maintained
  - b) A training plan for new employees is provided by the RUIJ.

- 13.4.2**      **Develop a standardized provincial welcome/orientation program as part of the provincial plan and make it mandatory for all new employees of the Youth in Difficulty (JED) program before beginning their duties.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The training plan described in subrecommendation 13.4.1 includes a welcome/orientation component for new employees.
- 2) All new employees of the JED program complete the welcome/orientation training before beginning their duties.

- 13.4.3**      **Implement a provincial training program based on best practices and make training mandatory for certain clinical duties and activities.**

**INDICATOR**

The work of the task force described in subrecommendation 13.4.1 is based on best practices (e.g., scientific and grey literature, clinical knowledge, assessments).

- 13.4.4**      **Implement and track the results of a skills development plan tailored to the individual needs of front-line workers, and ensure that adequate training is provided.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) A skills development plan is created for each front-line worker.
- 2) A mechanism is implemented to ensure that the skills identified in each plan align with those identified in the provincial training plan.

- 13.4.5**      **Ensure that continuing professional development is the shared responsibility of the front-line worker and their workplace.**

**INDICATOR**

Institutional human resource policies state that professional development is a shared responsibility.

**13.4.6 Create time and provide financial support for professional development, and include professional development hours in workload assessments.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) Institutional human resource policies require institutions to allocate enough time for professional development.
- 2) The budget for professional development increases at all institutions.

**13.4.7 In Chapter 6, we made a recommendACTION regarding legal training for front-line workers, which we restate here: Train front-line workers on the legal aspects of intervention so they can better support parents and children.**

**INDICATOR**

**Subrecommendation 6.1.4 is validated.**



## Recommendation 13.5

### RECOGNIZE THE SPECIALIZED NATURE OF THE YOUTH PROTECTION MANDATE

#### INDICATOR

**Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.**

#### 13.5.1 **Create a new title, “youth protection worker,” which recognizes the specialized nature of the youth protection mandate.**

- i. Require front-line workers to have completed or be enrolled in specialized university training.
- ii. Require front-line workers to be members of their professional order to be able to call themselves youth protection workers.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The new title of “youth protection worker” is created.**
- 2) To obtain this title, an employee must be a member of a professional order related to youth protection work.**

#### 13.5.2 **Recognize the high level of responsibility and the complexity of the work by standardizing bonuses and benefits at all stages of youth protection intervention.**

#### INDICATOR

**The same bonuses and benefits are offered to employees in all areas of youth protection.**

# ESTABLISH STRONG LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL SERVICES

With regard to social services, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

Youth protection services need leadership at the provincial level.

Front-line services have deteriorated.

The structure of CISSSs and CIUSSSs is not well suited to the reality of social services.

There is a lack of collaboration between practitioners and academia.

Decision makers do not have the data they need to make informed decisions.

These observations led them to ask:

Is provincial leadership in youth protection strong enough?

Is the structure of CISSSs and CIUSSSs well suited to the realities of social services?

Is there enough collaboration between practitioners and academia?

Do decision makers have all the data they need to make informed decisions?



To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**ESTABLISH STRONG LEADERSHIP IN SERVICES FOR YOUTH IN NEED**

**ADAPT THE CISSS/CIUSSS MODEL TO THE REALITIES OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**CAREFULLY MONITOR CHILDREN'S SERVICE TRAJECTORIES AND MEASURE THE IMPACTS OF INTERVENTIONS**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 14.1

### ESTABLISH STRONG LEADERSHIP IN SERVICES FOR YOUTH IN NEED

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 14.1.1**      **Establish a provincial authority, a provincial director of youth protection (provincial DYP) under the umbrella of the MSSS, responsible for implementing best practices and ensuring the consistent application of relevant laws across Quebec.**

#### INDICATORS

- 1) The role of provincial director of youth protection is created under the umbrella of the MSSS.**
- 2) This director ensures the implementation of best practices and the consistent application of laws.**

- 14.1.2**      **Review and clarify the mandate of the Direction générale adjointe des services à la famille, à l'enfance et à la jeunesse of the MSSS with a view to ensuring strong leadership in developing and standardizing front-line services.**

#### INDICATOR

**The DGASFEJ's mandate is revised to ensure stronger leadership in developing and standardizing front-line services.**

- 14.1.3** Create an independent provincial body, the Réseau national universitaire intégré Jeunes en difficulté, whose primary objective is to support the advancement of practices and knowledge and improve the care and services provided to children and families.

**INDICATORS**

- 1) A Réseau national universitaire intégré Jeunes en difficulté, independent from the government and supporting the provincial DYP and the DGASFEJ, is created.
- 2) The mandate of this body is, at a minimum, to:
  - a) Support the advancement of practices and knowledge
  - b) Improve the care and services provided to children and families.

## Recommendation 14.2

### ADAPT THE CISSS/CIUSSS MODEL TO THE REALITIES OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**INDICATOR**

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 14.2.1** Divide the Multidisciplinary Services Department within CISSSs and CIUSSSs in two by creating a Professional Psychosocial Services Department.

**INDICATOR**

A Professional Psychosocial Services Department is created at every CISSS and CIUSSS.

- 14.2.2** Divide the Multidisciplinary Council within CISSSs and CIUSSSs in two by creating a Professional Psychosocial Workers Council.

**INDICATOR**

A Professional Psychosocial Workers Council is created at every CISSS and CIUSSS.

## Recommendation 14.3

### CAREFULLY MONITOR CHILDREN'S SERVICE TRAJECTORIES AND MEASURE THE IMPACTS OF INTERVENTIONS

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

- 14.3.1** Create a provincial steering mechanism to support and evaluate the clinical performance of the Jeunes en difficulté (JED) services program.

#### INDICATOR

A provincial steering mechanism is created to support and evaluate the clinical performance of the Jeunes en difficulté (JED) services program.

- 14.3.2** Ensure that internal audits are performed annually to monitor the quality of services and verify their compliance with regulations, statutes, reference frameworks, standards of practice and guidelines.

#### INDICATORS

- 1) Annual audits of all CLSC and youth protection departments are carried out in every institution.
- 2) The audits verify compliance with regulations, statutes, reference frameworks, standards of practice and guidelines.

- 14.3.3** Consider integration by the MSSS of information systems dedicated to the trajectory of young people in need and their families (PIJ and I-CLSC).

#### INDICATOR

Work to integrate the PIJ and I-CLSC systems is started.

- 14.3.4 Increase awareness within the MSSS and other involved ministries (e.g., Santé et Services Sociaux, Éducation, Famille, Justice) of children's experiences with public services and the impact on their health and well-being.**

**INDICATOR**

Research mandates are issued to better understand children's experiences with public services (through RSSS and others) and the effects of these experiences on their health and well-being.

**In the short term:**

- 14.3.5 Make the RAMQ's unique provincial identifier accessible to researchers, not only in databases for protection services, but also in databases for front-line services and other health and social services.**

**INDICATOR**

Researchers are able to use the RAMQ's unique provincial identifier in all RSSS databases.

- 14.3.6 Create the agreements needed to cross-reference data between different ministries (e.g., Éducation et Enseignement supérieur, Santé et Services sociaux, Famille, Justice) in order to better plan services for youth and their families.**

**INDICATORS**

- 1) The agreements needed to cross-reference data between different ministries are signed.**
- 2) Cross-referenced data is consulted when planning services for youth and their families.**

**14.3.7 Develop procedures to facilitate the secure use of data from different systems while ensuring that confidentiality and privacy rules are respected.**

**INDICATORS**

Procedures exist or work to develop procedures is begun for the purpose of:

- a) Facilitating access to data from different systems
- b) Ensuring the secure use of data in accordance with confidentiality and privacy rules.

**14.3.8 Make key data from resulting analyses available to the public in the interest of transparency and improvement.**

**INDICATOR**

All data and analyses resulting from the changes suggested in subrecommendations 14.3.4, 14.3.5 and 14.3.7 must be made available to the public.





# INVEST IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT SERVICE AT THE RIGHT TIME

With regard to investing in and funding programs and services, the consultations undertaken by the CSDEPJ led the commissioners to make the following observations:

**Investment in prevention is woefully inadequate.**

**Budgets for protection services need to be increased and protected.**

**Planning of program funding is not based on evidence.**

These observations led them to ask:

**What should be done, in terms of funding, to reduce the pressure on youth protection services?**

**Where should investment be prioritized in order to reduce wait times?**



To address these issues, the commissioners put forward the following recommendations:

**MAKE LARGE-SCALE INVESTMENTS IN PREVENTION SERVICES**

**ALLOCATE THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND ENSURE THEIR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT**

**ENSURE CONTINUITY OF FUNDING ACROSS BUDGET CYCLES TO MAINTAIN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS**

**FUND RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND PROGRAM EVALUATION TO ENSURE IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICES**

For each of these recommendations and their subrecommendations, the Watchdog Committee has identified at least one indicator of progress.

# Recommendation

## 15.1

### MAKE LARGE-SCALE INVESTMENTS IN PREVENTION SERVICES

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 15.1.1 Strengthen front-line services to tackle child abuse and neglect.

##### INDICATORS

For this recommendation, the committee interprets the verb used as follows:

##### STRENGTHEN

Increase the intensity of existing initiatives.

- 1) Based on public accounts, government spending on "front-line services in CLSCs" and "funding for community organizations" related to the Youth in Difficulty (JED) program increases (percentage increase from the 2020-2021 fiscal year; adjusted for inflation).
- 2) The ratio of hours worked to the number of people receiving "front-line CLSC services" related to the JED program is higher than the ratio for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

### **15.1.2 Increase resources allocated to prevention in order to provide children and families a timely response with the necessary intensity.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) A government indicator (Ministère des Finances) that applies to all ministerial portfolios is created and used to measure:**
  - a) Government expenditure on prevention**
  - b) Number of people reached through prevention initiatives.**
- 2) Spending (as measured by the government indicator) increases (percentage increase from the 2020–2021 fiscal year; adjusted for inflation)**
- 3) The ratio of the expenditure to the number of people reached through all prevention interventions, as described for indicator 1), increases.**

### **15.1.3 Guarantee funding for parental support programs and services for families in vulnerable situations, and allocate the human resources needed to implement them properly.**

#### **INDICATORS**

- 1) Based on public accounts, government spending on the following programs or services increases:**
  - a) The Programme d'intervention en négligence (PIN)**
  - b) Integrated perinatal and early childhood services (SIPPE, service 1.2 of the Programme national de santé publique (PNSP) 2015–2025)**
  - c) Prenatal and postnatal nutrition services for families living in vulnerable situations (Olo program, service 1.3 of the PNSP 2015–2025).**
- 2) Funding granted to third parties whose work is essential to the success and smooth operation of the PNSP 2015–2025 services listed for indicators 1.2 and 1.3 increases.**

## Recommendation 15.2

### ALLOCATE THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND ENSURE THEIR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

#### 15.2.1 Boost funding for resources related to youth protection as well as all specialized services required by children and their parents.

#### INDICATOR

For this recommendation, the committee understand the terms used as follows:

#### BOOST

Increase funding allotted for these initiatives

#### INDICATOR

Based on public accounts, government spending on specialized services related to the Youth in Difficulty (JED) program and youth protection in general increases (percentage increase from the 2020-2021 fiscal year; adjusted for inflation).

#### 15.2.2 Ensure that resources allocated to youth protection in all CISSSs and CIUSSSs meet the real needs of children and their families in all regions of Quebec.

#### INDICATOR

The Ministère ensures that youth protection institutions receive funding that takes into account the number of reports received and reports accepted as well as real operations at the Assessment, Determination of Protective Measures and Application of Protective Measures stages.

## Recommendation 15.3

### ENSURE CONTINUITY OF FUNDING ACROSS BUDGET CYCLES TO MAINTAIN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS

#### INDICATOR

Completion of the following subrecommendation is verified.

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#### 15.3.1 15.3.1. Protect budgets allocated to prevention services for young people in need and their families and to youth protection services.

#### INDICATOR

The increase in budgets for youth protection and the JED services program (excluding specialized services) is equal to or greater than inflation in each fiscal year, beginning with the 2020-2021 fiscal year, at every CISSS and CIUSSS.

## Recommendation 15.4

### FUND RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND PROGRAM EVALUATION TO ENSURE IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICES

#### INDICATOR

Implementation of all the following subrecommendations is verified.

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#### 15.4.1 Create partnerships with research organizations to improve the effectiveness of interventions and, ultimately, reduce the cost of the most intensive interventions.-

##### INDICATORS

- 1) Partnerships with research organizations are established.
- 2) Under these partnerships, mandates are issued for:
  - a) Evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions
  - b) Continuous improvement of practices (through evaluation of training and processes).

#### 15.4.2 Provide financial support for innovative clinical research.

##### INDICATOR

A program to fund research and evaluation to support the development of innovative practices and initiatives is established.





## CONCLUSION

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The Committee members came together to create a realistic and objective evaluation tool to measure progress made in implementing the recommendations of the CSDEPJ report. The evaluation framework presented here was developed following numerous discussions between researchers, subject matter experts and CSDEPJ expert commissioners. The framework specifies the actions required to demonstrate progress on the implementation of any given recommendation or subrecommendation.

An exhaustive review of the CSDEPJ report led the Committee to make the following observations:

- Some recommendations are quite general in scope, covering a broad range of actions, measures and/or programs. This presents a challenge in terms of both planning and monitoring implementation. As a result, the Committee occasionally proposed more indicators than the established maximum so that the recommendations could be implemented and verified thoroughly.
- The report employs a vast lexicon in the recommendations, without providing an associated glossary. Trying to grasp the precise meaning of some of the vocabulary (e.g., measures, reference framework, standards, standards of practice, services, programs) is a challenge. The only way to fully understand some of these terms is to read the document in its entirety.
- Some recommendations mention “best practices” without always defining them clearly or even indicating whether they already exist. The Committee therefore assumed that the CSDEPJ was referring to best practices based on research and evaluation or on formal and rigorous continuous improvement processes.
- In multiple chapters, recommendations mention the creation of provincial bodies or committees; however, this could cause coordination challenges and give rise to siloed work. Those responsible for implementing the recommendations would do well to consider the document as a whole and group certain recommendations under the umbrella of the same body or committee.
- For example, one chapter proposes that a given provincial body be responsible for coordinating all training for the network, while several recommendations that address training for various types of stakeholders and professionals appear in other chapters without necessarily mentioning the provincial body. As a result, mechanisms will be needed to ensure that all these recommendations are aligned.
- Similarly, some indicators require several ministerial directives to be issued, sometimes by more than one ministry. These directives will need to be communicated to the networks in a structured and organized manner, sometimes by grouping them by issue, other times by preparing them within interministerial bodies.

Going forward, the Committee will continue to identify available and accessible data sources that make it possible to monitor implementation of the CSDEPJ’s recommendations. As the indicators were being developed, many potential sources of data were identified: media, parliamentary and legislative monitoring; data from various ministries via access to information requests; and relevant literature reviews. Collaboration between multiple bodies, research groups and organizations may lead to the development of useful supplementary data sources. Above all, the Committee will be counting on the goodwill of political and administrative authorities.

The Committee will take an inventory of data sources over the coming year, taking the following into account:

- For some indicators, data cannot currently be accessed, because the data is either not compiled or not yet publicly available. The ability to access this information therefore rests entirely on the political will to take the steps needed to provide access.
- In order to properly measure progress made and quality of implementation of certain recommendations, adjustments (sometimes major) will need to be made to existing health and social services databases. Research and evaluation projects as well as monitoring mechanisms will also need to be established.
- At the same time, some recommendations directly concern access to data or linkages between existing databases in the health and social services network as well as between databases of different ministries. In addition, these recommendations aim to establish the conditions needed to monitor several indicators. Therefore, for some indicators, the implementation of certain recommendations is a prerequisite to being able to monitor other recommendations.

Many of the selected indicators could have been initially verified during the Committee's first year of work since progress had already been made. However, it would not have been possible to ensure the quality of implementation at that stage, and a partial evaluation of progress would not have aligned with the principle of neutrality underlying the Committee's work. Therefore, the Committee will wait for its next report to confirm whether initial steps taken and decisions made by the government are heading in the right direction to ensure the full implementation of the CSDEPJ report's recommendations.

In subsequent versions of the framework, the Committee may refine and improve indicators, particularly those relating to criteria for best practices, and add indicators to evaluate improvements in intervention quality using proven methods. This refinement will enrich the framework presented here.

## A Strong Foundation on Which to Build

The indicator development process gave rise to fruitful, inspiring and engaging discussions and laid the foundation for the Committee's future work. The Committee is grateful for the invaluable support of the advisory committee, which ensures that the former's work aligned with the spirit of the CSDEPJ's recommendations. Additionally, the Committee is pleased that it can rely on the Minister for Social Services, who has pledged to make every effort to guarantee the well-being of vulnerable children, youth and families.

### NOTE

**Abc** ————— **Text in black** is a translation of extracts taken directly from:  
*Instaurer une société bienveillante pour nos enfants et nos jeunes*,  
Report of the Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth  
Protection, April 2021.

**Abc** ————— **Text in burgundy** has been written by the Watchdog Committee

In order to facilitate reading, all recommendations and subrecommendations are numbered and appear in the same order as in the CSDEPJ report .

