

Youth suicide: More early detection and better coordination are needed

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Although progress has been made in recent years, the matter of youth suicide in Quebec still needs to be more effectively addressed. In fact, a new study in the *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* shows that more lives could be saved through early detection and increased public awareness and information sharing among professionals.

For this research, a team of scientists from the Douglas Mental Health University Institute and McGill University studied 67 suicide completers ages 25 and under and matched them with 56 living control subjects. They evaluated their psychopathological profile and determined which services would have been appropriate by conducting a needs assessment. The team then compared these needs with what services were actually received.

The results of this study show that a majority of [suicide victims](#) had suffered from [mental health](#) problems. They were more likely than [control subjects](#) to be in need of services to address underlying substance use disorder, depression, and other suicide-related problems. The study also identified significant deficits with respect to training of professionals, coordination of services, and continuity of care.

"It is imperative to better train the public, via awareness campaigns, for instance. We must also better identify, treat, and coordinate services for youth at risk," says Johanne Renaud, MD, M.Sc., FRCPC.

A few figures

In 2009, suicide was the second leading cause of death of Canadians aged 15 to 34. It is known that 90% of people who die by suicide suffer from a mental illness.

Provided by Douglas Mental Health University Institute

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