

PRESS RELEASE

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The great media family joins the Mental Illness Foundation for its campaign “ There is an urgency to act “

MONTREAL, January 8th, 2008 – The Mental Illness Foundation presented today its new awareness campaign for the grand public on the theme “There is an urgency to act”. Created by the communication agency Tank, this campaign consists of a message of public interest for television and radio, billboards, advertisements for print as well as for the Web. The majority of media generously agreed to give airtime and space to promote this awareness campaign.

At the conference, the founder of the Mental Illness Foundation, Dr. Yves Lamontagne, President-General Director of the *Collège des médecins du Québec*, testified to the urgent need for action in regards to mental illness: “At any time, one Quebecer on six suffers from a form or another of mental illness. Worse, studies show that less than half of the people affected by mental illness consult for their illness.”

The campaign seeks to show the impact that mental illness can have not only on the person affected, but also on those around him. “We want to make people understand that mental illness can strike any one without warning at any time, as a natural disaster or a terrorist act. No one is sheltered from mental illness, regardless of their age, gender, level of education or social status” said Mrs. Nicole Allard, Executive Director of the Foundation.

For his part, Mr. Michel Proulx, vice-chairman of Tank, said: “While we were working on this project, we realised that this cause affected us not only professionally but personally. Like many people, we have in our entourage a relative, a friend, an acquaintance that was or is affected by one or another of these illnesses. Therefore, we are all concerned by mental illness.

Apart from the media who are involved in this campaign, the Foundation would like to thank all the craftsmen and artists who contributed freely to the realization of this campaign.

Awareness and demystification of mental illness are beyond any doubt a public health issue in Quebec. With this in mind, the Mental Illness Foundation and the participating media work together to raise awareness amongst Quebecers and reduce taboos surrounding mental illness.

Founded in 1980, the Mental Illness Foundation’s mission is to prevent mental illness and reduce the suffering of people affected, as well as that of their loved ones, by mobilizing individuals and society. The Foundation pursues its goal of prevention through its programs *Partners for Life* and *Nothing Working?* by reaching people in their environment, at school and at work. We believe that a better understanding of mental illness and providing solutions can help detect these illnesses at an early stage and thereby reduce human suffering as well as the social and economic costs.

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