

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Improving Collective Mental Health: Tel-Aide Montréal Calls Upon Montrealers to Get Involved

**Montréal, March 13, 2023** - On March 13<sup>th</sup>, National Day for the Promotion of Positive Mental Health, there is no better time to start volunteering. As the long winter and inflation take their toll on the moral of Montrealers, Tel-Aide Montréal calls upon individuals to get involved to have a positive influence on the mental well-being of others.

On Tel-Aide Montréal's helpline, a little under 125 volunteers trained in active listening answer over 23,000 calls each year. But even more calls could be answered if a greater number of individuals volunteered to lend an ear. In fact, according to Mental Health Research Canada's latest national poll conducted January through February, mental health indicators have remained flat or gotten slightly worse since their last poll (November 2022), after a long period of post-pandemic improvement.

Loneliness is the most frequent reason to call Tel-Aide Montréal, followed by various mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Strained relationships also push individuals to call the helpline. "People either have no one to share their feelings with or are uncomfortable sharing their emotional struggles with someone they know," said one Tel-Aide Montréal listener. "We try to create a space for callers to have an open and frank discussion about their emotional challenges. There are no taboos, and we don't judge."

Tel-Aide listeners are trained in the principles of active listening, or respectful, empathetic, and authentic listening—pioneered by the psychologist Carl Rogers. Active listening creates a safe space for callers to express themselves so they can develop self-awareness and gain a sense of agency to find their own solutions.

One Tel-Aide Montréal listener compares active listening to sitting on a bench with a friend who needs to share their feelings and feel heard. But unlike that friend on a bench, Tel-Aide Montréal listeners are just a phone call away at 514-935-1101, from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.

"Volunteering is a win-win for both the volunteer and the end user of all mental health support organization," said Francine Courtois, Tel-Aide Montréal Executive Director. "In fact, years of research now demonstrate that not only do others benefit from volunteer work, but it also benefits volunteers themselves: it gives a sense of purpose and a sense of accomplishment from helping others." In addition, when future volunteers receive their training in active listening, this can improve the quality of their own relationships. People

interested in becoming active listening volunteers can visit Tel-Aide Montréal's website at [www.telaideмонтreal.org](http://www.telaideмонтreal.org).

**Tel-Aide Montréal: Here to Listen, for Over 52 Years**

Founded in Montréal in October 1971, Tel-Aide was the first listening line in Montréal and the first in Canada to offer free 24/7 service in English and French. Today, our services are still free for anyone feeling lonely, stressed, struggling with addiction or abuse or who simply needs someone to listen without judgment. Tel-Aide Montréal is part of the Québec Association of listening centres (ACETDQ <https://www.lignedecoute.ca/> ).

For details, please visit [our website](#) or [Facebook page](#)

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**For further information, please contact:**

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