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# news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Government of Canada invests over \$2 million to prevent and alleviate homelessness in Quebec

**STE-JUSTINE DE NEWTON, QUEBEC** – The Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness, and Nick Discepola, Member of Parliament for Vaudreuil-Soulanges, today announced that the Government of Canada is providing financial support of \$108,287 under the youth component of the Homelessness Initiative for the Péveril project in Ste-Justine de Newton.

The contribution brings total federal funding provided in Quebec under the Youth and Aboriginal components of the Government of Canada's Homelessness Initiative to \$2,425,384. The cornerstone of the Government of Canada's \$753 million homelessness strategy is the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), which has a budget of \$305 million.

“The Initiative rests on the principle that communities are best positioned to develop strategies that reflect the needs of local homeless people and that can produce concrete results in the long term,” stated Minister Bradshaw. “To do so, we support partnerships among all levels of government, the private sector and community organizations. The Péveril project is a fine example of what can be accomplished by working together; with our partners, we can find effective ways to help homeless youths.”

“The Péveril project is an excellent example of community action to promote the well-being of all,” commented Mr. Discepola. “Not only does it build on young people's desire to acquire the tools to get out of the cycle of exclusion and precarious existence, it also creates co-operative linkages with other organizations: Moisson-Sud-Ouest, the Canadian Tire Foundation and youth centres in the Montérégie region.”

The “Péveril - Ressource d'insertion sociale et d'hébergement pour jeunes” project will give ten homeless youths an experience that will help them discover their own potential and promote their social integration and job market entry. It will support learning based on participants' individual needs. Participants will work in a group tending a 7-acre garden. The produce will be distributed by Moisson Sud-Ouest, the Suroît-region food bank.

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“Marginalized youths who have no family moorings need to feel they belong to a group that will support them, sustain them and help them realize their individual potential,” said Jean Deschesne, clinical director of the Péveril project. “For this category of youths, self-realization is a prerequisite for any process of social integration. The contact with nature and the practical work the kids do at Péveril help them learn about themselves and set life goals.”

Since the Homelessness Initiative was launched in December 1999, the Government of Canada has supported 23 projects for youths and Aboriginal people in Quebec. Some offer homeless youths the opportunity to acquire work experience and upgrade their basic skills. Others improve services and supports for homeless Aboriginal people living in an urban environment.

The contributions announced today were made under the Youth and Aboriginal components of the Initiative, each of which has been allocated a budget envelope of \$59 million to help meet the needs of communities dealing with problems of homelessness.

In addition, \$56.7 million will be made available under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) for projects to assist homeless people in the Montreal and Quebec City census metropolitan areas and the towns of Chicoutimi, Trois-Rivières, Drummondville, Hull and Sherbrooke. The governments of Canada and Quebec signed a co-operation agreement in February 2001. Communities have an active role to play in implementing the SCPI. A management committee is responsible for managing and co-ordinating the Initiative in Quebec, with the support of an advisory committee composed of representatives of the two levels of government and local organizations.

Funding for this project was provided for in the February 2000 federal budget and is therefore built into the existing fiscal framework.

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**For more information on the Government of Canada’s Homelessness Initiative, visit our Web site at [www.hrdc.gc.ca/nsh-snsa](http://www.hrdc.gc.ca/nsh-snsa)**

**See the attached backgrounder for project descriptions.**

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