



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate distribution

2008 provincial election

Québec teens will also be voting!

Montréal, November 26, 2008 – Contrary to popular belief, our future voters are not indifferent when it comes to the 2008 election. Indeed, more than 200 institutions are currently taking part in *Voters in training*, a project that allows teens to experience an election campaign and to participate in a mock election.

"Thanks to the activities that we propose, young people are discovering how our democratic institutions work, learning about the platforms of political parties and debating the issues of the election campaign," explained Laurence St-Denis, President of the Forum jeunesse de l'île de Montréal and national spokesperson for *Voters in training*. "Our experience has shown that when you take the time to talk about politics with young people, when you discuss their concerns and when you give young people the opportunity to express themselves, they show an interest," declared Ms. St-Denis.

Voters in training seeks to recreate the context of a real election with all the decorum and seriousness that this event entails. Mock elections in schools and youth centres take on a more realistic aspect thanks to the election materials kindly provided by the Chief Electoral Officer of Québec. "We are happy to be able to once again contribute to the success of *Voters in training*. This initiative allows young people to take the mystery out of going to the polls. Indeed, we consider that this program contributes to developing early on in the life of young people the desire to take part in elections," declared Marcel Blanchet, Chief Electoral Officer of Québec.

"In a context where voter turnout rates are on the decline, particularly among young voters, a project like *Voters in training* takes on its full meaning. If we want citizens to be active and committed, it is essential to introduce them to politics in their teen years," concluded Ms. St-Denis.

A week of activities and voting

During the last week of the campaign, numerous activities will be held in the participating institutions across Québec: discussion forums, debates between candidates, mock elections. To attend one of these activities, representatives of the media are asked to get in touch with the organizers of *Voters in training*.

The results of the mock election will be made public at 8 p.m. on December 8th on the following web site: www.votersintraining.com.

Who are we?

Voters in training is a non-partisan and non-profit program which has allowed more than 130,000 future voters to discover our democracy and to exercise their "right to vote" since 2001.

Voters in training is made possible thanks to the financial participation of the Secrétariat à la jeunesse du Québec within the context of the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy and the Chief

Electoral Officer of Québec. It is coordinated by the Forum jeunesse de l'île de Montréal and carried out by the Centre de développement pour l'exercice de la citoyenneté with the collaboration of all of the regional youth forums of Québec. In addition, *Voters in training* can count on the invaluable cooperation of the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec, the Québec English School Boards Association, the Regroupement des maisons de jeunes du Québec, the Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal and the Table de concertation des forums jeunesse régionaux du Québec.

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