



**RAPSIM**  
Réseau d'aide aux personnes seules  
et itinérantes de Montréal



**RÉSEAU**  
de la communauté  
autochtone à Montréal  
  
Montreal  
Indigenous  
Community  
**NETWORK**

**TOMS**  
TABLE DES ORGANISMES COMMUNAUTAIRES  
MONTRÉALAIS DE LUTTE CONTRE LE SIDA

## **Press release**

*For immediate release*

### **Dismantling Encampments: AQPSUD, RAPSIM, RÉSEAU and TOMS oppose these repressive measures.**

**Montreal, August 28th** - The Association Québécoise pour la promotion de la santé des personnes utilisatrices de drogues (AQPSUD), the Réseau d'aide aux personnes seules et itinérantes de Montréal (RAPSIM), the Montreal Indigenous Community Network (NETWORK), and the Table des organismes communautaires montréalais de lutte contre le sida (TOMS) are joining together to denounce the dismantling of encampments currently underway in Montreal, as well as the upcoming August 31st dismantling at Beauport Notre-Dame camp announced by the Plante administration.

While we are in the middle of a housing crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and a worsening overdose epidemic, there are still no long-term solutions adapted to the needs of marginalized people. It is necessary that authorities tolerate these encampments, often the only places people can come together to ensure the safety of all, particularly that of women in highly precarious situations. These encampments allow people who are unable to access standard refuge, or who prefer to avoid such places, to find a certain stability that does not restrict their movement as public health directives require.

Indeed, the standard refuge and emergency lodging provided are not necessarily adapted to specific needs of those in need and can, in fact, become sites of discrimination, particularly with regards to Indigenous people, trans people, people who consume drugs, and sex workers.

The NETWORK calls on the general public as well as public authorities to consider the importance of temporary camps for our Indigenous community members, for both ceremonial and shelter reasons, notably with an objective to not disturb the grounds or surroundings. Moreover, for those community members living far away from home, this type of temporary shelter may allow them to feel more at home and comforted during this time.

More importantly, the current pandemic situation brings to light particularly stressful moments for our First Nations, Inuit, and Metis community members who have previously experienced trauma concerning how governments have dealt with past health crises. The intensification of police interventions associated with the temporary camps contributes to the reliving of these traumatic experiences. The right to shelter is a fundamental right, especially in the context of a pandemic in which the primary recommendation is to self-isolate.

By evicting residents from these encampments, it separates them from their communities and reinforces social isolation. It is imperative to respect the choices of these residents.

We firmly oppose dismantling any and all encampments including the Beauport Notre-Dame camp, and we support the [demands](#)<sup>1</sup> of its residents.

We oppose all forms of eviction that constitute an infringement of human rights, accentuate stigmatisation of the most marginalized people in our society, and imperil their health and safety.

We are asking for long-term solutions that respond to the needs of those concerned.

**We stand in solidarity!**

### **About the organizations**

The AQPSUD is a provincial organisation that promotes harm reduction and empowerment and gathers people who use drugs, to promote health, prevent blood-borne and sexually transmitted infections and improve their living conditions.

The RAPSIM is a grouping of regional community organizations serving the homeless population. It has 110 members.

The NETWORK supports the ecosystem of individuals and groups committed to improving the quality of life of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis communities living in the greater Montreal area.

TOMS is a grouping of 30 regional community organizations committed to combating HIV/AIDS.

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### **For further information**

Annie Savage, Interim Director, RAPSIM, Cell. 438 885-7904, [annie.savage@rapsim.org](mailto:annie.savage@rapsim.org);  
Marjolaine Pruvost, Coordinator, TOMS, Cell. 438 521-8609, [coordo@toms-mtl.org](mailto:coordo@toms-mtl.org); Alexandre Huard, Community Organization Support, NETWORK, Cell. 438 881-8311, [alexandre@reseaumtlnetwork.com](mailto:alexandre@reseaumtlnetwork.com)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://journalmetro.com/opinions/tribune-libre/2504566/camping-notre-dame/>