



PRESS RELEASE— MONDAY, MARCH 23,
2020

COVID-19 PANDEMIC SPORT'AIDE: A TEAMMATE LENDS AND EAR TO YOUNG ATHLETES

(Quebec City, Monday, March 23, 2020) – Faced with the current pandemic and the health concerns it is provoking, in the last few days, Sport'Aide has decided to expand its offer of support to the Quebec sporting community. Confronted like the rest of the population with the complete cessation of their activities, in the next few weeks our young athletes, their parents, their trainers, their coaches, official and volunteers are and will be faced with a major void that could cause harm from a psychological point of view.

“We are very concerned by this situation and that is why we have offered our support to the government of Quebec in this difficult period. Right now, the sporting community must cope with this feeling of emptiness, this time to fill, inactivity and the lack of socialization which is added to the disappointment and uncertainty caused by the current situation. In short, all the ingredients are there and are sufficient to cause anxiety, a certain psychological distress or even symptoms of depression,” explains **Sylvain Croteau**, General Manager of Sport'Aide, who confirms that *“the team of counsellors is also available to listen, support and orient our young athletes who need and will need to be heard, to ventilate and to be equipped.”*

Furthermore, over the coming days/weeks Sport'Aide will adapt its “general public” communications, develop information and awareness tools for the benefit of the entire sporting community. *“For these young athletes, even though their performances and their results probably would have had a decisive influence, first on the pleasure and satisfaction that they would have felt, but possibly for the next step in their sporting path as well, it is important that they can realize that the emotions that they are experiencing right now are normal... but also that life will return to normal one day or another. Thus, the importance of supporting them while we wait for better days,”* terminates Mr. Croteau.



Finally, Sport'Aide, recipient of the most recent *Ensemble contre l'intimidation* award (*Together Against Bullying Award*), "organization" category, offers a support, orientation and guidance service (24/7, confidential and free) to the victims and witnesses of violence in a sports environment, equips and supports sporting organizations while taking actions to educate and raise the general public's awareness to this social problem recognized by the scientific community, sporting organizations, and government and child protection authorities.

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For more information:

Sylvain Croteau – General Director of Sport'Aide

s.croteau@sportaide.ca

(581) 994-4816