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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Criminal exploitation of minors and youth victimization in Montréal: ICPC publishes two key new reports

Montréal, May 28, 2026 — The International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC) announces the publication of two major reports on the criminal exploitation of minors and youth victimization in Montréal. By examining both criminal exploitation and youth victimization in public spaces, these analyses highlight mechanisms of control, urban vulnerabilities, and digital transformations that are reshaping risks. They also outline concrete, evidence-based and actionable prevention strategies.

Understanding to better prevent: what is changing for youth

Both reports point to a common finding: the risks of crime and victimization among youth are evolving rapidly under the influence of social, urban, and technological transformations. They emphasize the importance of control dynamics and power asymmetries, as well as the role of living environments (public spaces, social networks, urban routines) in exposure to violence. The first report proposes a shift in the analytical framework toward criminal exploitation of minors, while the second documents recent trends in youth victimization in Montréal and highlights the most promising prevention practices.

1. Trajectories under control: understanding the criminal exploitation of minors in a fragmented criminal ecosystem since 2018

This report advances a shift in the analytical framework of youth criminal dynamics by placing the concept of criminal exploitation at its core. It shows how the fragmentation of criminal structures and the reconfiguration of power relations intensify asymmetries: central actors control resources and decision-making, while minors occupy more exposed, interchangeable, and vulnerable positions. Drawing on a mixed-methods approach, this analysis invites us to move beyond reductive interpretations centered on the notion of “gangs” to better understand contemporary mechanisms of control, dependency, and instrumentalization. [Read the report.](#)

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2. Youth victimization and urban violence dynamics: integrated analysis of risk factors, contexts, and prevention practices in Montréal

Based on police data from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR 2.2) of Québec's *Ministère de la Sécurité publique* and a socio-ecological approach, this report presents an overview of victimization among youth aged 24 and under in the Montréal metropolitan area (2018–2024). It places particular emphasis on crimes against persons occurring in public spaces. The report highlights a marked increase in victimization in these environments and identifies risk patterns associated with locations, urban routines, and social vulnerabilities, while also presenting protective factors and international prevention models. [Read the report.](#)

Ann Champoux, Director General of ICPC, notes that “when it comes to violence or exploitation involving young people, short-term policies and interventions play an important role in responding to urgent situations. With these two reports, ICPC offers a renewed perspective to better understand these realities in depth: what may weaken young people, expose them to risks, but also what protects them. In Montréal, as elsewhere in Québec, it is essential to support actions rooted in communities and oriented toward prospects in order to sustainably strengthen prevention and youth support efforts.”

About the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC)

Based in Montréal since 1994, ICPC is an international organization whose mission is to support the development and implementation of effective policies, programs, and practical initiatives aimed at reducing crime and delinquency. It acts as an international centre of expertise and reference for governments, municipalities, organizations, businesses, and civil society in addressing these complex challenges. By focusing on research, capacity building, and knowledge transfer, ICPC contributes to creating safer, more inclusive, and more resilient communities in Canada and internationally.

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