



St Monica Elementary (514) 369 0070

Office hours: 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Exceptional opportunities to grow and succeed.

Issue 5

January/February 2024

Happy New Year 2024

Wishing our St Monica community the very best for the new year, may it be filled with health, memorable moments, and prosperity.

As we return to school in 2024, the St Monica team is ready to embrace new beginnings with our students and support their continued dedication to succeed.

A few things to look forward to for the remainder of the school year ...

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| Kindness Campaign Part 2 | School Outings | Garden Sessions |
| Steelman Program | Cycle 3 Storytelling Event | Playground Activities |
| Free Hebrew Junior Lunch Sessions | Transition to High School Session | Parent Workshops |
| Girls and Boys Basketball Events | Spring Themed Celebrations | Spring Concert |
| Classroom Guest Speakers | Family Night | Student Success Celebrations |



SCHOOLMESSENGER®

School Messenger will be the application the EMSB and all schools will use for mass communications.

Messages will be coming from broadcasts@schoolmessenger.com



The 2023-2024 basketball season has started off with a bang!

Both the boys' and girls' teams started this year's season with wins against SSA. Since then, the Titans have dropped a few games but are ready to bounce back at upcoming games.

Our annual holiday basketball game between the teachers and students took place on Tuesday December 19th, in front of a jam-packed gym, the teachers kept their winning streak alive for another year.

And finally, following our holiday break, our cycle two and three students will have the chance to go skating at the Doug Harvey Arena as part of the Physical Education curriculum.

Go Titans!

Leighton Jacobs, Physical Education Teacher



... St Monica students for committing to sports and for always putting your best foot forward.

Upcoming Events

- Jan 8:** Back to School
- Jan 25:** Open House (4:00 pm – 8:00 pm)
- Jan 26:** Ped Day (daycare open)

- Feb 12:** Ped Day
- Feb 23:** PPO Dress Down Day
- Feb 28:** Term 2 Report Cards
- Feb 29:** Parent/Teacher Interviews (by appointment only)

Looking Ahead - March 2024

- Mar 1:** Ped Day (daycare open)
- Mar 4 to 8:** Spring Break—School Closed
- Mar 11:** Back to School
- Mar 22:** Ped Day (daycare open)
- Mar 28:** PPO Dress Down Day
- Mar 29:** Holiday (Good Friday)



Get an exclusive look at all the great things happening at St. Monica Elementary School.



“Every child deserves a champion—an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” Rita Pierson

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UPDATE: Building Emotional Literacy at St. Monica

We are pleased to provide an update on the social-emotional learning program implemented at St Monica this school year called: **Me, You, Us**.

Students from K4 through Grade 6 have learned to:

- Recognize and name one’s feelings
- Expand vocabulary to more accurately describe one’s emotions

Why? When students learn to recognize and name their emotions clearly, they can better down-regulate when strong emotions arise. They gain a sense of self-control by using the appropriate vocabulary to clearly name their internal states. As students learn to understand themselves they are better understood by others.

Key points:

- There are no right or wrong (good or bad) feelings; we should acknowledge all emotions since they are telling us something important
- Our feelings belong to us
- Other people are not responsible for our feelings. We ourselves are responsible for managing our feelings even when others trigger strong feelings in us.

Visit <https://atlasofemotions.org/> to explore and learn more about emotions to share with your students at home.

Samantha Page Smith, Spiritual and Community Animator

**St. Monica Elementary School
Open House**

Thursday, **October 26, 2023**
9:30 am – 12:00 pm
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Thursday, **January 25, 2024**
4:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Click on link below for Virtual Tour

<https://stmonica.emsb.qc.ca/emsb/schools/open-house/elementary-schools/StMonica>

Stress and anxiety: Accessing the benefits!

by Janet Silverstone Perlis and Despina Vassiliou, EMSB Psychologists—Student Services

We often assume that anything stressful or anxiety-provoking is always negative and should be avoided at all costs. Scientists, however, point out that stress and anxiety are not always harmful and actually provide benefits. This type of “good stress,” referred to as eustress, and the negative, more harmful version called distress both produce similar physiological symptoms. The difference lies in our perceptions of them. Eustress motivates us, operating at times like when working to meet a deadline. Distress is typically associated with fear, producing feelings of overwhelm and defeat. Eustress is believed to be a normal state that contributes to our overall health. Research has found a link between a short-term exposure to eustress and improved immune system functioning, among other health benefits. To help normalize anxiety and stress, changing our perception of that stress from something distressing to something more manageable can be empowering. Some ways we can reframe stress include:

- Interpret the physiological symptoms of stress as a warning sign. They prepare us for something that is happening, whether the source is negative or positive. Much like a smoke detector that goes off at the first sign of smoke our initial feelings of discomfort related to stress are a way for our body to energize us for the next step.
- Use stress as a motivator. The alertness generated by the stress response can mobilize us into action, enhance our performance whether it is completing a task or test, or competing. Eustress has been shown to enhance working memory, focus and energy.
- Experiencing stress as inoculation helps us handle similar situations in the future. Much like a vaccine can boost our immune system, exposure to stress and successfully managing it can build our resiliency. Smaller doses of stress give us a chance to develop coping tools and the confidence to navigate the tough situations. These previous experiences help build our resilience to stressful situations.

Stress is ultimately unavoidable; there is no such thing as a stress-free life. However, we can strengthen our coping skills by engaging in some of the following:

- Exercise is a natural way for your body to recover from the stress-related chemical changes, such as increased adrenalin and cortisol.
- Instead of criticizing ourselves, take a moment at the end of the day to think about our accomplishments. Focus on what worked and reinforce helpful strategies rather than dissecting what did not go well or didn't get done.
- Distinguish between situations you are able to control versus the ones you cannot. It is most rewarding to focus your energy on situations that are changeable and find ways to get through situations out of your control.
- Break down tasks into smaller, more achievable goals.
- Never compare your response to a stress to anyone else's. We may all be in the same storm but on different ships.
- Recognize when it is time to seek out extra support. Sometimes talking to a good friend is enough, however if the worries persist and you have difficulty functioning, don't hesitate to speak to a therapist with the goal of learning to handle stressful situations.

Remember: Distress can be reframed into eustress. It is a matter of perception and mindset—we must focus on it.



School Hours

8:55 - 9:05	Morning Supervision
9:05	Entrance (Bell Rings)
9:05 - 9:10	Homeroom
10:10 - 10:30	Morning Recess Pre-K
10:40 - 11:00	Morning Recess Gr. K - 6
11:30 - 1:00	Lunch Pre-K
12:12 - 1:30	Lunch Kindergarten
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch Gr 1 - 6
2:00 - 2:20	Afternoon Recess Pre-K
2:30 - 2:50	Afternoon Recess Gr. K - 6
3:50	Dismissal All Grades
3:50 - 4:00	Supervision (Yards & Bus)



Thank you for choosing us to be a part of your child's learning journey.



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Food Allergies

Some students have food allergies. We ask that all parents keep this in mind when choosing food items for lunch and snacks.

To avoid allergic reactions:

- Inform St. Monica's front office and your child's teacher of the allergy and ensure that auto-injectors (EpiPen) are readily available.
- Ask your child's teacher about the "designated eating area for students with allergies" in your school.

Providing a safe environment for St. Monica students is a major concern! We try our best to maintain an allergen safe environment. Parents should also take all necessary precautions.

Hot Lunch Program

While St. Monica does not have a cafeteria on site, we are happy to offer a hot lunch program through Mini Bistro for parents who wish to purchase lunch. Your child will enjoy high-quality meals that are lower in sugar, fat and food additives, providing essential nutrients according to Canada's Food Guide.

Visit the website at <https://leminibistro.emsb.qc.ca/>

Please take note that St. Monica **does not** have microwaves, other cooking equipment or cutlery on site available to students, so parents should not send pack food that requires reheating. Also ensure that you provide your child with plastic forks and spoons as needed.

School & Workbook Fees *Please send your payment for your child's fees.*

Lunch Fees Lunch supervision is available for all children who wish to stay at school to eat their lunch. There is a charge of \$250 per child from Kindergarten (K5) to Grade 6, and the charge for Pre-Kindergarten (K4) is \$280 per child. This money is used to pay for the lunch monitors needed to supervise your child. Thank you for making payments as soon as possible.

See our website for fee breakdown <https://stmonica.emsb.qc.ca/stmonica/our-school/about/school-fees>

Daycare Fees Parents using our B.A.S.E. Daycare Service will be provided with monthly invoices for amounts owed. Please ensure that payments are made regularly. Take note that daycare services cannot continue if outstanding payments are not settled in a timely fashion.



B.A.S.E. Daycare Program

St Monica provides daycare services from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on all school days and most Pedagogical Days. Our daycare is closed on holidays, weekends and during the Holiday and March breaks.

See our website for details <https://stmonica.emsb.qc.ca/stmonica/daycare>

You can contact **Ms. Michelle Graham, Daycare Technician (Interim) at (514) 369-0087** for all inquiries related to daycare services and payments.



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Important Information

Gentle Reminder for Morning Drop-off your child must be dropped off in the school yard by 8:55 a.m. Teacher supervision begins at 8:55 a.m. If the school yard gates are closed, please escort your child to the front office. To ensure everyone's safety and a systematic entry, the teachers are not able to open the gate for late arrivals. Thank you for your understanding.

In case of rain, parents are asked to bring their child to the main entrance of the school at 8:55 a.m. (at first bell). They will then proceed to the school gym where teachers will greet them.

Children Pick-Up upon dismissal of classes at 3:50 p.m. all students who walk home will exit by the junior yard door. Children attending daycare will be brought to their after school classroom. The only children leaving from the front door are the children that take the bus home.

If there is a change to your child's after school dismissal we ask that you contact the main office by **3:00 p.m.** to notify changes to your child's routine.

Please note that all visitors must report to the Front Office.

Student Absences/Changes to Routine parents are encouraged to use Mozaik to report late arrivals and absences, or a call can be placed to the school at 514 369 0070 before 9:00 a.m. and state the child's name, room number and reason for their child's absence. If no one answers the phone, please leave a message on the answering machine (the answering machine is on overnight). Please ensure that the school is notified before **3:00 p.m.** if there is a change in routine for dismissal at the end of the day.

Dress Code a gentle reminder that all students must be in clean uniform daily. Navy blue tunic, skirt, pants (no jeans, no leggings), or walking shorts (knee-length or longer), white tops, shirt with collar, turtleneck, sweatshirt (no t-shirts, no lettering or logos) and sweaters are navy blue.

All articles of clothing must be labelled by the parent so that the item can be identified and returned to the rightful owner.

Lost and Found please check the "lost and found" areas at the Daycare entrance on a regular basis. Any unclaimed clothing will be placed on tables as a reminder to pick up when we have school events. All items not picked up at these events will be donated to charity in December and in the Spring.

Physical Education Uniform navy blue shorts and a grey t-shirt can be purchased from school office. The uniform is not mandatory for Pre-K and Kindergarten children, but they must wear navy blue shorts and a white t-shirt. For hygienic reasons, children are not permitted to wear their uniform under their school clothes. Please make sure your child has running shoes for Phys. Ed. class.

Personal Accident Insurance parents are encouraged to subscribe to personal accident insurance in case their child gets hurt while participating in physical education and sports or in any other circumstances. Fees incurred for ambulance services, medical/dental/ocular services and any other services related to an injury will not be assumed by the school. Parents are encouraged to contact their personal insurance company or any other insurer to get advice and information about accident insurance coverage for their child.



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