



# Michaelle Jean P.S. Council Newsletter

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## Updates from the Council

Dear Families of Michaelle Jean Public School, Welcome to 2021!

First and most importantly, I hope that everyone is staying safe and healthy during these uncertain times. Thank you for your continued support and patience while we navigate around obstacles and through challenges for both on-line and in-person learning. With perseverance, we will get through this together - as a school community.

At our February 2nd School Council meeting, the 2020-2021 budget was approved. Items approved to support MJPS students and teachers are:

- School Agendas
- Modern Learning/Technology such as whiteboard desks, computers, tablets, etc.
- Parent Engagement Presentation
- Student Presentations
- Grade 3 yearbooks
- Tumblebooks (on-line library of books accessible from homes)
- Sponsoring a child from Plan Canada for French letter exchanges
- Angel Fund to support additional school fees for some students

We extend our gratitude and thanks for everyone's generosity to past fundraising initiatives such as the pizza lunches. Your contributions make a lasting impact on students and staff at MJPS!

Sincerely,

Kimberley Sato  
Chair

## MJPS Reminders

- School Model Change Request Forms Due – February 8, 2021
- Family Day – February 15, 2021 (Schools Closed)
- In-Class School resumes – February 16, 2021
- Mid-Winter Break – March 15-19 inclusive

## 2020-2021 Council Members

**Chair:** Kim Sato

**Co-Treasurers:**

Patton Su and Bryan Wright

**Secretary:**

Sushma Kavikondala

**Communications Officer:**

Corinne Francis

**Volunteer Coordinator:**

Ashley Bebbington

**Sub-committee chairs:**

**School Climate:**

Elnaz Golestani

**Parental and Community  
Involvement:**

Moiz Mohamedali

**Student Success:**

Deep Swaroop

**Administration:**

Nora Mazlounian

## Mark your Calendars

If you have any questions about the role of School Council and activities or just simply want to write us a note, please feel free to e-mail at [michaele.jean.ps@sc.yrdsb.ca](mailto:michaele.jean.ps@sc.yrdsb.ca). Questions will be answered or directed to those who can answer them!

Please join us at the next SC virtual meeting on **Thursday April 8, 2021 at 7pm!** Volunteering in your child's school is critical in bridging the gap between home and school and cannot be done without you!

Tentative School Council Meetings (Virtual) - 7:00 PM - 8:30PM

- Thursday, April 8, 2021
- Tuesday, May 4, 2021

## School Views



Thank you to all the parents and families for their generous support for the Holiday Food Drive in aid of 360 Kids.

Their staff were overwhelmed by the support shown by the MJPS community, at such a crucial time of year.





# SARA WESTBROOK

A child's emotional state affects their performance at school, their relationships and their physical and mental well-being. Emotions can be hard to identify, to move through and hardest of all...to talk about.



It is no doubt that this pandemic has affected parents and children alike. The constant adjustment to the regulatory changes can affect the well-being of all those involved.

## NURTURING YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

DATE: Monday, March 29th TIME: 7 pm - 8 pm

In this virtual presentation, parents and guardians will learn **3 Strategies** to help develop:

### Resilience and Emotional Well-Being in Children

Using the **3 Strategies** with your child will help them:

- Self-regulate
- Decrease anxiety and stress
- Have a closer relationship with others
- Communicate with empathy, respect & kindness
- Create healthier mental and physical well-being

*"In a society that is increasingly difficult to be a child, Sara Westbrook makes a difference to parents who feel a growing need to gain helpful strategies to support their children emotionally."*

VINCE MONACO – PRINCIPAL – HCDSB

As seen and heard on



### Celebrating with families in the YRDSB

- February 2020
- [YRDSB Black History Month – Celebrating Black Excellence](#)
- February 12 – Lunar New Year also known as Chinese New Year (Buddhism)
  - Year of the Metal Ox
- February 14 – Valentine's Day
- March 28 – Pesach/Passover (Judaism)



### Student Resources

- ✚ [Je lis, je lis littérature! - RK Publishing \(Username & password required\)](#)
- ✚ [Virtual Books by l'Envolée](#)
- ✚ [Khan Academy \(Math\)](#)
- ✚ [French as a Second Language Homework Toolbox](#)
- ✚ [French Audio Dictionary](#)

## 6 week Live Online Mindfulness Program for Kids



Sessions will include fun and engaging games and activities that include:

- ✓ Mindful Movement and yoga
- ✓ Breath Awareness
- ✓ Sensory Activities
- ✓ Brain Games
- ✓ Guided Relaxations
- ✓ Heartfulness and gratitude art

Everyone is welcome!  
Highly beneficial for kids who may struggle with

- ADHD
- Sleep Problems
- Anger issues
- Anxiety
- FASD



Mindfulness helps us be more aware, focus and calm difficult emotions

The first 50 children who register will receive

Two free "Mindful Marvin Books!"



Who: Children ages 5-12  
When: 6 Wednesday evenings  
Dates: Wed. Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> to Wed. Mar. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Time: 5:00-6:00 pm

**Cost: Free! (Funding provided by Health Nexus)**

**Includes:** Live online mindfulness instruction, information packages to promote family mindfulness emailed after each session

To Register and receive the zoom link:  
email: [healthymindfulme@gmail.com](mailto:healthymindfulme@gmail.com)



Facilitated by: Sherry-Lynne Kirschner B.A. B.Ed R.Y.T, author and mindfulness educator. Check out [www.mindfulme.ca](http://www.mindfulme.ca) and [www.mindfulmarmot.com](http://www.mindfulmarmot.com) to learn more about Sherry-Lynne Kirschner

## 6 Week Live Online Mindfulness Program for Youth

# Create Calm Build Resiliency

Everyone is welcome!

Highly beneficial for teens who may struggle with:

- ADHD
- Sleep Problems
- Anger issues
- Anxiety
- FASD

Course Includes:

- Mindful:
- Movement
  - Music
  - Art
  - Journaling

- Guided Relaxations
- Breathing exercises
- Brain games

Free Mindful Journals to the first 25 registered!

Save the Date!

Who: Youth ages 13-20

When: 6 Wednesday evenings

Dates: Wed. Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> to Wed. Mar. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Time: 7:00-8:00 pm

**Cost: Free! (Funding provided by Health Nexus)**

**Includes:** Live On-line mindfulness instruction, information packages to promote family mindfulness emailed after each session

**To Register and receive the Zoom link email:**

[healthymindfulme@gmail.com](mailto:healthymindfulme@gmail.com)



Facilitated by: Sherry-Lynne Kirschner B.A. B.Ed R.Y.T, author and mindfulness educator. Check out [www.mindfulme.ca](http://www.mindfulme.ca) and [www.mindfulmarmot.com](http://www.mindfulmarmot.com) to learn more about Sherry-Lynne Kirschner

## COVID Safe Activities

- [Richmond Hill Annual Winter Carnival](#)
- [Richmond Hill](#)
- [Borrow a S.T.E.A.M. Kit from the library](#)
- [Science at Home | Ontario Science Centre](#)
- [ROM Kids Show](#)
- [Fun and Educational Activities](#)
- [Coronavirus: Learning resources for kids home from school](#)
- [Fun Activities: Supporting Families](#)
- [Over 30 Virtual Field Trips with Google](#)

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# FACT SHEET

## *A Model for Strengthening Families and Communities to Improve Outcomes and Resilience of Children*

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### **Families and Schools Together Canada**

The Elementary Families and Schools Together (FS&T) model is an asset-building, innovative and collaborative prevention and parent involvement process. It is a multi-family group process that brings families together to participate in specific, fun, research-based activities aimed at strengthening families, respecting and supporting parents and building communities. Extensive research has proved that stressed families, particularly those who are socially isolated and on marginal incomes, are at risk for neglect and abuse toward their children. F&ST applies community organising principles, group work practices, child and family therapy strategies to build protective factors for children and increase child and family resilience. F&ST works to prevent:

- Family violence and breakdown
- Child abuse and neglect
- School failure
- Juvenile violence and delinquency

#### **The F&ST Process**

To help children succeed as adolescents and subsequently as adults, F&ST works to (McDonald et al., 1991):

- **Enhance family functioning** by strengthening the parent-child relationship and empowering parents to become primary prevention agents for their children.
- **Prevent neglect and abuse** by developing both natural cross and within generational social support networks for new mothers (and fathers) in high school, at home and in the community.
- **Prevent alcohol and other drug abuse in the family** by increasing the family's awareness and knowledge of substance abuse and its impact on child development and linking the family with appropriate assessment and treatment as needed.
- **Reduce the daily stress that families experience in daily life** by developing an ongoing support group for young parents of infants, linking the family with appropriate community resources, and building the self-esteem of each family member.

F&ST values and structure are based on selected research in family therapy, child psychiatry, community development, group work and on stress & social support. The F&ST programme helps young children succeed by creating structured opportunities for voluntary involvement in repeated, positive, personal, communicative and bonding experiences. These relationship-building interactions take place with the children and their primary caretaking parents, families, peers and school & community professionals. Interventions also take place with the parents and their own peers.

The programme begins with outreach in which parent-professional partnerships visit homes of isolated and stressed families who are identified by the school personnel and invite them to the F&ST meetings. The programme brings 10-15 families together for 8 weekly sessions of carefully crafted social activities. Activities include: building a family flag, sharing a family meal, singing together, playing communication and/or feelings identification games, engaging in peer self-esteem building activities, one-to-one time and parent networking. In the one-to-one time component, parents are coached in one-on-one, non-judgemental, non-directive play therapy with their children. Parents continue this activity daily at home. Research by the University of Washington's Department of Psychiatry has shown this technique to be a successful method of reducing psychiatric symptomatology of the child (Kogan, 1980).

When families graduate from the eight weekly F&ST sessions, they join an ongoing, collective of interdependent families who meet monthly for two years, called F&STWORKS. These F&STWORKS groups are managed by families who have graduated from the programme, with the support from a collaborative of culturally compatible parents and professionals. One F&ST parent graduate is a paid partner of the team who plans and leads activities that strengthen the children's bonds to their family, school and community (McDonald, 1991).

Quantitative evaluation results indicate that parents increase bonding with their child, within the family unit and with other parents, the school and community-based agencies. Through this multi-faceted approach, family, individual, school, peer and cumulative risk factors are addressed to support the resilience of the child.



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# FACT SHEET

## *A Model for Strengthening Families and Communities to Improve Outcomes and Resilience of Children*

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### Programme Cost

Programme cost per child is approximately \$7 per hour for 86 hours of service over 30 sessions spanning 2 years. The average cost per child over 2 years is \$300. Programme implementation is funded through a variety of sources and is the responsibility of the partners implementing the approach. Major funding sources for implementing the Elementary F&ST model include local government, the education sector, private foundations, community-based donors and groups, faith organisations, police services and federal and provincial government programs.

### F&ST Model Success

The success of the F&ST model derives from its theory- and research-based approach. It is a strengths and assets-based model. As a prevention and early intervention strategy for children ages 5-8, the programme provides teacher identification of at-risk children through school-based screening. Through collaboration, educators, parents and community professionals work as non-hierarchical team to plan, carry out and evaluate the local Elementary F&ST programme. Total family involvement is achieved when parents and siblings join the children at the Elementary F&ST sessions. Parents are respected and supported as the primary prevention agents for their children through structured social activities and by forming a strong network with other families. The F&ST model has proven to be adaptable in varied settings. Rural, suburban and inner-city schools serving diverse ethnic groups of children report experiencing ownership of their local F&ST programmes, and the American Institute on Research (1988) has identified F&ST as one of six culturally competent education programs.

Twelve years after the first Elementary F&ST groups were initiated at Family Service Madison, Wisconsin, the model is being implemented in more than 450 schools across the U.S. and over 100 schools across Canada, as well as in 5 countries. Through Family Service Canada, the Elementary F&ST model has been replicated systematically in Canada by certified F&ST team trainers since 1998.

Increased family friendships, community involvement and parent self-sufficiency documented in the U.S. in follow-up studies 2 to 4 years after programme completion, suggest that the changes in the families' systems endured (McDonald et al.,

1997). In California, statewide outcome data on 442 families in 12 cities showed reduced conduct disorder – a predictor of F&ST children getting in trouble in later life.

In Canada, data on over 200 families nationwide shows very significant reductions in conduct disorder in children aged 5-8 years old after completion of the Elementary F&ST programme. Participation in the 2-year follow-up F&STWORKS component improves these results.

Assessments of Winnipeg, Manitoba parents and children, conducted 6 months and 1 year upon completion of the Elementary F&ST programme showed statistically significant improvement in children's school and home behaviours, family closeness, parental involvement in school and a reduction in social isolation (Dubik, 2000).

### Recognition and Awards

The F&ST model has received numerous national honours and awards in the U.S. These include the New American Community Award: National Council on Crime and Delinquency (1 of 5), 2000; Strengthening America's Families: Model Family Programs for Substance Abuse and Delinquency Prevention (1 of 35), 1999; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Education Research and Improvement (1 of 27), 1998.

In Canada, the F&ST approach is named a Best Practice in Preventing Substance Use Problems Among Young People, Health Canada, 2001. In addition, the F&ST approach is endorsed by the Canadian School Boards Association, the Canadian Association of Principals and the Canadian Teachers Federation.

### For Further Information

For further information about the F&ST model for any age group in Canada, contact Andréa Veilleux, F&ST Projects Coordinator for Family Service Canada at 1-800-668-7808 or [a.veilleux@familyservicecanada.org](mailto:a.veilleux@familyservicecanada.org). For more information on F&ST team training and replication, contact the F&ST Canada National Training Centre in Calgary, Alberta at 1-877-205-5203. Information is also available on the web at [www.familyservicecanada.org/fst](http://www.familyservicecanada.org/fst).

