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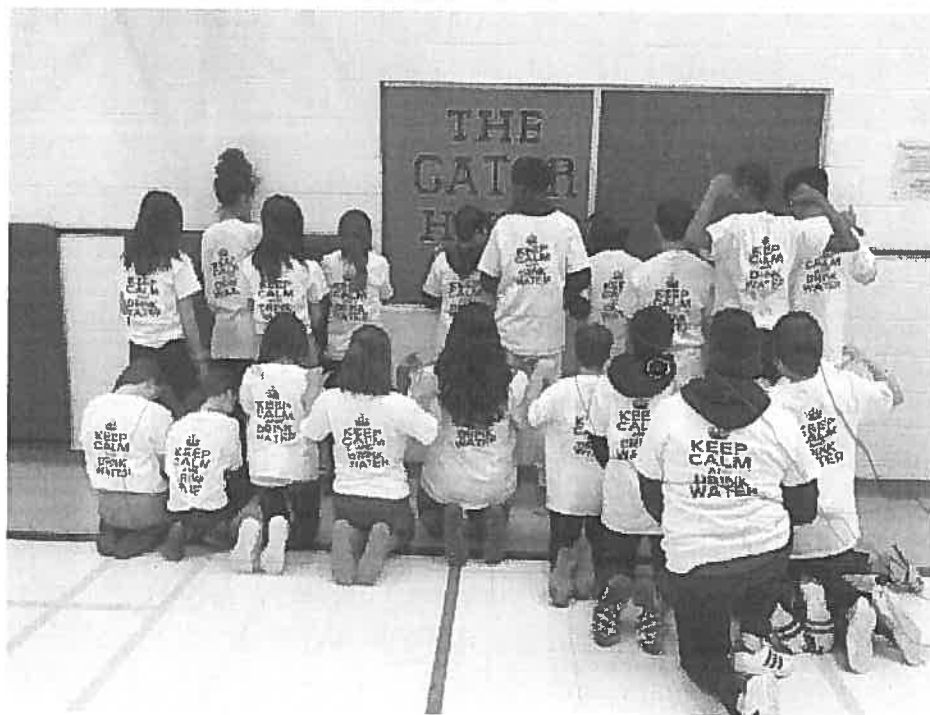
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February Feature Healthy School: St. Monica Elementary School

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We are excited to have 357 registered Healthy Schools, representing 55 school boards across the province for Ophea's Healthy Schools Certification 2018/19 school year! You can find out if schools from your board have registered by viewing the [Registered Schools List](https://www.ophea.net/sites/default/files/pdfs/HSC/hscertification_registeredschools_2018-19.pdf) (https://www.ophea.net/sites/default/files/pdfs/HSC/hscertification_registeredschools_2018-19.pdf).

Every month until June, we'll be sharing the experiences of select registered Healthy Schools who have been active on Twitter using [#HSCertES](https://twitter.com/search?src=typd&q=%23HSCertES) (<https://twitter.com/search?src=typd&q=%23HSCertES>); bringing you their success stories, challenges, and ideas to support you in making your school a healthier school. St. Monica Elementary School is our February Feature Healthy School. We caught up with Amanda Monardo and Tina Spremulli to learn about their experiences with Healthy Schools Certification. Check out our Q&A!

1. Who is on your school's Healthy Schools team (e.g.: students, public health professionals, teachers, admin, and/or community partners)? What do these different members bring to the team?

Our Healthy Schools Team is composed of 30 students, a Region of Peel Public Health nurse, 2 teachers, our Vice-Principal, parent volunteers, and sometimes community partners are involved (e.g. Region of Peel police officers, the local Pastor).

The students and teachers plan events for the school, taking on a leadership role. The Region of Peel Public Health nurse helps us plan our activities. Our Vice-Principal provides support, attends meetings when possible, and orders materials like apples for the Great Big Crunch Challenge. Community partners are often invited to special events like the Winter Walk Day and the Teachers vs. Cops volleyball events.

2. What is your Healthy Schools priority health topic? What lead you to choose this topic?

Our priority health topic is Mental Health. We chose this health topic following student-created surveys that were completed by students in grades K-8, and we also considered observations of students. In addition, we have made a Healthy Beverages Pledge with the Region of Peel.

3. How does your school team encourage students and staff to make healthy choices? Share an example.

We have weekly announcements that include health facts and events happening in our school. For example, for the month of December, each class took part in Water Drills. Students had to keep water available at all times. When water drills were called, students would drink water. Information about how many students were bringing water to school was gathered three days a week for four weeks. Final percentages of students participating were calculated after the 4 weeks and the top class received Healthy Schools T-shirts provided by our School Council. We will repeat this activity in February and April.

4. Tell us about a success, no matter how big or small, that your Healthy Schools team has had this year. Who was involved? What changed in your school?

Our Water Drills have been our biggest success so far. We noticed more students were drinking water and using our refill station. We now have two refill stations and we work with Eco Schools as well to meet their goals. The entire school has been involved and we are seeing less juice and pop at school. More water bottles (and even better: re-useable water bottles!) are coming to our school.

5. How have students been engaged as leaders within your school community as a result of Healthy Schools Certification?

The students lead announcements, take part in assemblies, present to the classes, and are beginning to lead meetings. We love doing challenges in our school on a monthly basis, and the students are doing a great job collaborating, coming up with ideas, and carrying out the ideas as well.

6. Does your Healthy Schools team have any upcoming events or activities that they're excited about?

In addition to our continued Water Drills, Nutrition Month is coming up and we plan on doing a Green Challenge that encourages students to fill half their plates with fruits/veggies and adhere to the new Canada Food Guide. We are also having a Wellness Day to support Mental Health and are currently brainstorming our April, May, and June challenges.

Amanda Monardo and Tina Spremulli

St. Monica Elementary School

Teachers / Healthy School Leads

[@GatorsHealthy](https://twitter.com/GatorsHealthy) (<https://twitter.com/GatorsHealthy>)

Looking to make your school a healthier place? Check out the [HS Certification Guidebook](https://www.ophea.net/sites/default/files/pdfs/HSC/hscertification_guidebook_2018-2019.pdf) (https://www.ophea.net/sites/default/files/pdfs/HSC/hscertification_guidebook_2018-2019.pdf). To see what healthy schools are up to follow [#HSCertES](https://twitter.com/search?src=typd&q=%23HSCertES) (<https://twitter.com/search?src=typd&q=%23HSCertES>) on Twitter!

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