

The Stop the Stigma/Safe Schools Team gathers weekly to discuss and implement initiatives in the school to raise awareness of issues related to mental health, bullying and school safety.

- Students work to create reflective activities that teach students to become more self-aware. This includes lessons, posters, guest speakers, events etc. The students' main goal is to tie awareness of mental health, bullying and school safety to our Catholic virtues of the month and Catholic Graduate Expectations and to create a "**culture of kindness**" within the school.
- In part, students decided on this initiative based on the results of the My School, My Voice survey which indicated that most of bullying that was reported was verbal: name calling , teasing or joking), and that most bullying was related to race, language or accent, or physical appearance.
- Students on the safe schools/ stop the stigma team were pleased with the results of the "Transition to High School Survey" that every fall is administered to grade 9 students which indicated that **90% of students felt safe at Madonna**
- The team felt that initiatives in place the previous year and the beginning of this year were working to create a culture of kindness and raise awareness of issues related to mental health, bullying and school safety.

October

- **Cornucopia of Gratitude** - Students created a bulletin board with a "Cornucopia of Gratitude"; each student in the school was asked to contribute something they were grateful for by writing it on a paper fruit/vegetable, cut- out. The stop the stigma/safe schools team posted student responses on the Cornucopia bulletin board and shared student responses on the announcements
- **Scatter Kindness** - Guidance (C. Romano) launch of the "Scatter Kindness" initiative; students are nominated based on acts of kindness within the school and their name is posted on the "kindness" bulletin board each month. Students receive a certificate and gift that is presented to them at one of our school Masses.

November -- Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month

- **Guest Speaker**- Anthony Mclean encouraged students to break stereotypes, respect differences and celebrate diversity in our student populations
- **Bullying awareness and prevention poster competition.** Winning class announced (Ms. S. Lee's class). The winning class enjoyed a pizza party.
- **Life size papier Mache bully** was placed outside the cafeteria to encourage students to give the bully advice about how to be a peacemaker. Students placed pieces of advice inside the bully's head and responses were posted on a bulletin board that was created to highlight the virtue of the month - peacemaking
- **Student Announcements** - to raise awareness about the difference between teasing and bullying, and how to get help
- **Building Integrity** - Staff were asked to review, with students, the bullying awareness supplement at the back of the agenda entitled Building Integrity: Take a stand against bullying
- **Toronto Police Presentation** - Internet Safety
- **Safe Schools Student Ambassador Bullying Awareness and Prevention Symposium**
 - Launch of hashtag #TCDSBStandsUP;
 - Celebration and sharing of Safe Schools Ambassador Team local initiatives;
 - Toronto Police Service Presentation;
 - Gallery Walk to challenge Ambassadors to think critically and respond empathically;
 - Interactive Maestro Fresh Wes performance.

December

- **T.E.A.R** - (Teens ending abusive relationships) from Victim Services Toronto – came to speak to grade 11 and 12 students about how to identify and end abusive relationships.
- **Christmas tree reflection** – students shared their tips with their peers about how to deal with stress over the holidays. These positive messages were placed on a Christmas tree for all to read.
- **Stress free Christmas tips** were announced to the school to help students manage feelings, and emotions over the holidays.
- **Mental Health Symposium** - December 1st - students learned about mental health, cyber bullying, conflict resolution, effective communication, positive relationships, addiction, etc.

February

- **“Love is greater than fear”** Bulletin Board - stop the stigma/safe schools team created a bulletin board outlining students fears about mental illness as well as how to overcome those fears
- **Candy grams**- stop the stigma/ safe schools team distributed candy grams with information about where students can report problems and get help within the school
- **Relaxation Week** - The stop the stigma/safe schools team hosted a week which included:
 - Yoga and meditation
 - Mental health bingo
 - DIY stress balls
 - Info night
 - Kahoot game in cafeteria at lunch with prizes for the winners
- **Video**- De-stress for relaxation week (created by Madonna students)
<https://www.youtube.com/shared?ci=3G8JNZNuW3w>

March

- **Bathroom Campaign** - Stop the stigma/safe schools team created posters with information on where students can get help with problems ; i.e. community services – example, “what’s up walk-in”, kids help phone
- **Launch of safe schools anonymous reporting app** – to report bullying or safety concerns - presentation for all staff and students on purpose and how to use it. Posters were distributed around the school

April

- **Scales of Justice**- Stop the stigma / safe schools team raising awareness of equality and respect for differences and to celebrate diversity
- **Girls group** begins April 4, 2017 – to address issues of healthy relationships with family, peers and friends

Safe Schools Student Ambassador Symposium: Be Outstanding-April 25th

- Presentation and activities by “Insight POR AMOR and Testament from P.E.A.C.E.,”
- Speaker Carol Soares: Healthy Relationships;
- Opportunity for Ambassadors to network with peers;
- Sharing of Best Practices—student ambassadors will have the opportunity to share their SSAT grant initiatives;
- Various activities to challenge Ambassadors to think critically and respond empathically to the day’s theme which is **Be Outstanding**.

SAFE SCHOOLS/STOP THE STIGMA TEAM INITIATIVES 2016/2017

May- Children's Mental Health Week--May 1st - 5th

- **Zumba** classes and healthy initiatives begin
- **Toronto Public Health Nurse**- presenting mental health wheel, during both lunches on May 1st
- **Building Healthy Relationships**- Carole Soares presenting to grade 9 students
- **Guest Speaker** – Assante Haughton presenting to Grade 10's and 11's- youth and mental illness
- **Mindfulness workshop**- for grade 12 students
- **Mental Health Toolkit**- TCDSB toolkit of strategies will be shared with students over announcements throughout the week
- **Big Basket Bonanza**- students will complete a mental health quiz based on all of the activities that have been done throughout the year. Completed quizzes will be used as ballots for three movie theatre prize baskets, provided by Toronto Public Health.

June

- **Stress relieving tips** for exams-dealing with stress and emotions