



# IMPACT REPORT

*Where  
Children Find  
Their Voice*



# Table of Contents

- 01 Message from the Executive  
Director & Board Chair
- 03 Vision, Mission
- 04 By the numbers
- 05 Gift of Speech Fund
- 06 Program Spotlight  
Taylor Adolescent Program  
(TAP)
- 08 Employee Spotlight  
Dr. Marlene Desjardins
- 09 Journeys Forward
- 10 Donor Spotlight  
Sara J. Price
- 12 Impact of Giving
- 13 Future Outlook
- 14 Contact Information

---

# Message from the Executive Director & Board Chair

01

## Dear Friends,

When we look back on 2024–2025, we see a year defined not by flashy milestones, but by important groundwork, the kind of steady, thoughtful work that makes everything else possible. This was a foundation year, and one that leaves us stronger and better prepared to meet the growing needs of children and families across Quebec.

## Together, we:

- Modernized our systems and introduced new technology that will make assessments and therapy more efficient and effective.
- Expanded our bursary program, distributing more than \$100,000 in assistance so that financial barriers never stand in the way of a child's progress.
- Strengthened programs like the Taylor Adolescent Program, which continues to change lives by combining academic support with mentorship and resilience-building.
- Took a close look at governance, welcoming new board members and actively recruiting others to join us in shaping the MFC's future.



This was also a year of transition on our Board. Last year, we said goodbye to Sara Price, one of our earliest directors. Sara's vision and generosity, shaped by her own family's journey, helped set the groundwork for everything we are today. Her leadership and courage in speaking openly about learning differences have reduced stigma, inspired hope, and created opportunities for countless children. We are proud to highlight her story later in this report (see page 10) as a way of saying thank you and honouring her enduring legacy.

We were equally pleased to welcome two new directors to the Board this year: Anthony Haddad, a retired education professional and Lauren Port, a lawyer at the beginning of her career, who represents the next generation of committed volunteers. They bring valuable expertise and a shared passion for ensuring children and families can access the support they need.

We are also continuing to recruit new members who can strengthen our capacity in areas such as accounting, fundraising, finance, communications, and education. Diverse voices and perspectives are key to building the future of the MFC, and we are excited to see our governance continue to evolve.

This year may have been a quieter one in outward appearances, but beneath the surface, we have been building resilience, capacity, and momentum. Thanks to you, our donors, partners, and community, we are ready for what comes next. Together, we will expand access, deepen impact, and ensure that no child is left behind.

With gratitude,

**Sandra Furfaro**

Executive Director



**James Officer**

Board Chair



## WHO IS THE MONTREAL FLUENCY CENTRE?



### The MFC...



- Supports children with speech & language disorders and learning differences through individual sessions and various programs
- Provides combined Psychoeducational and Speech-Language Pathology assessments
- Provides services for preschool, school-aged, and adolescent students.



## Vision

As learning and communication leaders, our vision is to reduce the long-term risks and difficulties that children and youth face and enable them to reach their full potential and be successful members of society.

## Mission

Our mission is to understand and support children and their families from preschool to young adulthood with difficulties in speech, language, learning, and literacy through assessment and treatment programs.

## Board of Directors

MFC is pleased to welcome two new members to our Board of Directors, Lauren Port and Anthony Haddad. In the coming year, we plan to further strengthen our leadership by welcoming up to three additional Board members. If you are interested in making a meaningful contribution by serving on our volunteer Board of Directors, we invite you to get in touch.

**James Officer**, Board Chair  
Past Director & Current Board Chair of McGill  
Explorations

**James Feith**, Board Vice Chair  
Elementary Education Specialist,  
CreatorEDU Inc.

**Peter Malouf**, Board Treasurer  
Mayor of Town of Mount Royal,  
Private Equity Investor, Entrepreneur

**Sophie Bossé**, Board Director  
Vice-president, Legal affairs,  
Investissement Québec

**Lauren Port**, Board Director  
Associate at Sheahan LLP

**Anthony Haddad**, Board Director  
Retired Education Advisor & Governing Board  
Member, John Abbott College

## WHO IS THE MONTREAL FLUENCY CENTRE?



### The MFC...



- Is a non-profit organization
- Is a team of Speech-Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, and Educational Therapists
- Provides Psychoeducational assessments which can identify ADHD and/or learning disorders
- Provides assessment and treatment of speech, language, and literacy difficulties



## Who we are

The Montreal Fluency Centre (MFC) is a non-profit multi-disciplinary clinic of Speech-Language Pathologists, Psychologists and Educational Therapists.

## What we do

We provide assessment and treatment for language, communication and learning differences.

**525+**

Students benefiting from language and learning support

**30+**

Learners in the Summer Intensive Programs

**135+**

Students and support staff in the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk community

**40+**

Students supported through Success and Independent Learning (SAIL)

*“I can’t spell” is no longer in my son’s vocabulary.*

*Our life has changed – my son has been given tools for the rest of his life. It is like a miracle.*

---

# Gift of Speech Fund

05



**In 2024–2025**, MFC distributed more than \$100,000 in bursaries, allowing children from various financial backgrounds to access crucial assessments, therapy, and specialized support programs.

Our bursary program is tailored to each family’s situation, with awards covering 25% to 75% of service costs based on income, dependents, and extenuating circumstances.

On average:

- Treatment bursaries ranged from \$700 to \$1,000
- Assessment support averaged \$230 to \$1,275
- Full-year program assistance reached \$2,400 or more

This year, demand for bursaries exceeded our expectations. To ensure that every eligible family received some level of support, we made the difficult decision to reduce the percentage awarded per bursary.

Our goal is to never turn a child away due to financial need. With donor support, we can restore higher levels of assistance and ensure that all children, regardless of income, can continue to access life-changing services.

**100+**

Children and students received a bursary toward one or more services.

**\$135,000+**

Bursaries awarded - \$20,000 more than anticipated, and demand is growing.

# Program Spotlight

## Taylor Adolescent Program (TAP)



**TAP** is an after-school intervention program designed for students from Grade 5 to CEGEP with learning disorders (e.g., dyslexia, ADHD, or high-functioning autism). The program supports students in becoming effective, independent learners by working with tutor-mentors on academic tasks like homework, studying, and projects.

Using evidence-based practices such as scaffolded learning, visual organizers, and SMART goals, TAP helps students build executive functioning and metacognitive skills. Tutor-mentors guide students in planning, problem-solving, and using effective strategies to achieve academic and personal goals.

TAP also addresses students' social-emotional needs, fostering resilience, reducing anxiety and depression, and preventing learned helplessness. Students develop self-advocacy skills by learning to communicate effectively with teachers and administrators about their learning needs.

Beyond academics, TAP promotes a sense of belonging, self-confidence, and healthy adult relationships. It supports the broader community—parents, guardians, and school staff—by helping generalize strategies across settings.

# 30+

Students across our 3 TAP Programs:  
High School, Cegep, and Français

# 35+

University student field placements across  
our 3 TAP programs

---

# ...TAP continued

07

Most TAP staff began as volunteer tutor-mentors, and many have gone on to careers in education, psychology, and social work, often citing TAP as a pivotal influence. The program not only supports students in school but also prepares them to apply these skills to other areas of life, such as work and relationships.

Ultimately, TAP aims to empower both students and future professionals dedicated to working with youth in educational and clinical settings.

Support from The Louise and Alan Edwards Foundation helps make TAP accessible to all students by removing financial barriers, preparing future professionals, and expanding our community impact. To sustain and strengthen this transformative work, we need additional donor support—ensuring every student receives the academic and emotional support they need to reach their full potential.

*I want to take this opportunity to thank you for creating a space that fills a void many of us feel after completing a bachelor's degree in psychology. In my case, while I received strong theoretical training, there were few opportunities to apply those skills in a supportive, hands-on environment. TAP has truly provided that space – one where professional development and growth are clearly valued.*

*Since I began studying psychology and intervention, I've actively sought out clinical experiences, and none have taught me or affirmed my professional path as much as TAP has. From orientation to writing my end-of-year report, the guidance and support from team leaders have been consistent, thoughtful, and deeply appreciated.*

*This kind of opportunity is essential. Continuing to support programs like TAP means helping bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real-world application and ensuring that emerging professionals are well-prepared to intervene effectively as soon as they graduate.*

*-Katherine, High School TAP tutor-mentor*



# Employee Spotlight

08

Dr. Desjardins is the longest-serving psychologist at the MFC, where she has worked to provide accessible, strengths-based assessment and treatment services for students with learning disorders. Her approach to assessment is collaborative – with parents, educators, and other professionals – and aims to provide a wholistic understanding of the student’s learning profile. Her hope is that the assessment will serve as a guide for providing timely and effective support to students with various kinds of learning difficulties, so that they can successfully address their challenges. Dr. Desjardins has been fortunate enough to work with children, adolescents, and families both on and off the island of Montreal, always in non-profit organizations or Indigenous communities. More recently, she has been enjoying the opportunity to mentor early-career and student clinicians.

Some key experiences in her own education and training shaped Dr. Desjardins’s

approach to assessment and treatment of learning disorders. These include being a careful listener, questioning assumptions and beliefs (particularly her own!), and approaching assessment and treatment work with humility. Reading relevant research helps her stay current and offer families the most meaningful, cost-effective assessment she can.

The same philosophy guides Dr. Desjardins’s leadership of the Taylor Adolescent Program (TAP), an after-school initiative supporting neurodivergent youth through strategic, skills-based tutoring (see TAP feature on p. 5). By training and mentoring the program’s volunteer tutor-mentors, Dr. Desjardins and the TAP team strengthen both students’ autonomy as learners and the next generation of psychologists, educators, and speech-language pathologists.

Her personal and professional experiences, including reflections on her own family’s journey with learning difficulties, inform her conviction that assessments should help students understand themselves, recognize their strengths, and feel valued. Dr. Desjardins exemplifies the MFC’s mission through her unwavering dedication to children, youth, their families, and colleagues, and her impact continues to elevate the quality of care across the communities we serve.

**Dr. Marlene Desjardins**  
School Psychologist, TAP Director



Marlene celebrated 20 years at MFC in 2024

*An assessment should do more than inform—it should help a young person understand themselves, recognize their strengths, and truly feel valued.*



*What I think about TAP is that it's totally awesome! All of the tutors are nice and helpful to us students and I wish that I could repay the tutors that have helped me.*

*The tutors in TAP helped me with homework and other things that are school related, so I think TAP is really helpful and that people that are struggling in school could go there to be successful and have better grades.*

*TAP in my honest opinion is so much fun! During social time, we play games and other types of things like that and when someone is sad or depressed like me sometimes for example, the tutors cheer us up and make us feel better, that's what I like about TAP.*

*Hopefully, I can see you guys again at some point in life, and thank you, for everything that you have helped me with, and I wish that I could do the same to TAP.*

*-Jeremy, TAP student*



*My daughter struggled to read in the second grade. Her anxiety was so severe that she made herself sick to avoid school. After the three-week BLITZ program at the MFC, where she worked one-on-one with a therapist every morning, everything changed. She returned to school with strategies, confidence and three huge binders. Now, she's reading in both English and French—and can't wait to go back this summer.*

*We wouldn't have been able to afford the program without the 50% bursary we received. This year, our bursary was reduced to 33%, but we enrolled her again because we know the program works. I don't know what next year will bring, but we're hopeful.*

*- Parent*

---

# Donor Spotlight

10

## From Parent to Champion

Sara first came to the MFC looking for support for 2 of her younger sons. *"I was tentative at first, I didn't trust the system completely, to get help without a long wait, and I didn't want my son(s) to be labeled into a category and not get the right help. What I found at the Centre was my second family - a group of incredibly passionate speech pathologists and psychologists who were - and are - devoted to understanding each child, work with them and their parent(s) and partner with the school(s) for their best outcomes".*



**Sara J. Price**

Trustee  
The McConnell Foundation

That experience, along with forging an enduring friendship with the founder, Rosalee Shenker, grew into a lifelong commitment. Sara went on to become one of the longest serving members of the Board of Directors, to help shape governance, facilitate a strategic plan and most importantly, she championed fundraising of all donors, no matter the amount, to ensure stability and the future success for the Centre.

## Breaking Stigma, Building Community

*"I was, and continue to be, so surprised by families who think seeking extra help outside of school is a failure. They are reluctant to admit or seek help for fear of being judged or have their child be an outcast. To the contrary, the MFC allows children to find their voice and give them the tools they need to go the distance at school. I do think it's much better now, the more we hear that there is no such thing as "normal" but I also see kids go through school without the help which can ultimately put them at risk of being an outcast in their community. No one deserves that."*

Sara has always believed that too many families hesitate to seek help due to the stigma of learning challenges. She has worked tirelessly to change that, speaking openly about her experience and talking about the MFC community where families can get the proper diagnosis for their child, and feel supported, and understood by the staff.

*"That blue door is home to so many and it is so important to understand when a child needs help, it affects the entire family and there is a direct connection to the mental health of everyone. The pandemic put a very real focus on that and I am so excited and proud to have seen the staff reimagine, so quickly, their service model to the telehealth hybrid online".*

---

# ...Donor Spotlight continued

## A Legacy That Lives On

Sara's leadership, along with the extraordinary support of her family's foundation, has allowed thousands of children to access the services they need. Her hope for the future is a Centre where families not only find help, but also belonging, where parents, alumni, and friends become advocates, volunteers, board members and donors.

*"We are living real time in a mental health crisis. Children's learning challenges, if not addressed early, with compassion and the right support, will become part of this crisis. Building vital communities depends on our youth and I know the Centre and its incredible staff are dedicated to every child's learning success and ultimately, life success."*

You have always championed every donor, big or small. On behalf of the Centre, we thank you for your dedication.

*The Montreal Fluency Centre has been such an important part of our lives! My child has been receiving speech therapy there for several years, and the centre has given us tremendous support not only for my child's needs but to our family as a whole. (...)*

*We are fortunate enough to continue to grow and learn with the help and support of the MFC team equipped with an array of specialized after school programs including academic coaching, psychological support, and speech language pathologists tailored to my child's learning style, addressing both his strengths and challenges.*

*Knowing that my child has such an amazing team standing beside him, who genuinely care for his well-being and success is everything a parent can ask for. My son truly enjoys the sessions and has gained the confidence he needs to continue to succeed. We are happy to see such continuous positive improvements. Thank you, Montreal Fluency Centre, for all that you're doing for our children and our community.*

*- Claudia, parent*

---

# Impact of Giving

## Community Generosity: Eatz Encore Makes the Season Bright



For years, the Taylor Adolescent Program (TAP) has relied on Eatz Encore for their delicious turkey dinners, bringing warmth, laughter, and connection to our hardworking students. For the past two years, owner and cherished community partner Kristina has generously donated a turkey dinner to our TAP holiday celebration. Her contributions have created joyful moments for students who work tirelessly, some experiencing a traditional Canadian holiday for the first time. Eatz Encore's generosity is a powerful reminder of how local businesses can nourish both body and spirit.

## Canadian Red Cross - COVID-19 Recovery Program

The Montreal Fluency Centre is deeply grateful for the support of the Canadian Red Cross COVID-19 Recovery Program. This funding played a critical role in helping us adapt to the challenges brought on by the pandemic. With the grant, we modernized our systems, upgraded technology, and provided staff training to fully implement a hybrid model of in-person and virtual services. These improvements have enhanced our ability to meet the growing demand for support among children with learning difficulties—many of whom have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic's impact on education and social development. Thanks to this support, we are now better equipped to deliver essential services more efficiently and effectively across our community.



### Results:

- **New laptops, iPads and accessories for staff to conduct assessments, write reports and prepare and conduct therapy sessions using up-to-date tools**
- **Training sessions to better understand and use digital tools for on-site and distance assessments and treatments**
- **Teambuilding as staff are working together to learn and use the new tools and build a more cohesive transition to a hybrid service model**



**In the year ahead,** we will continue to focus on raising much-needed funds to help offset the cost of essential speech-language, literacy, learning, and educational services. Ensuring access to high-quality, specialized support remains our core objective.

We also look forward to deepening our partnerships with donors and the broader community as we work together to expand our impact.

## Program Analysis

We will seek support and partnerships in analyzing the Taylor Adolescent Program (TAP) with the objective to expand and scale the program to reach more students.

## Expanding our Reach

In addition to our active social media presence, we are seeking more opportunities to reach parents through information and support sessions.

## In 2027, MFC Turns 40!

Founded in 1987 and operating as a registered charity since 1998, MFC will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2027. This milestone also marks 20 years in our current building—a space that has supported our work and our community for two decades. We look forward to celebrating this special year together and invite our community to join us. Please watch for upcoming announcements, and if you have ideas or would like to support these celebrations, we would be delighted to hear from you.

# Thank you

14

The Montreal Fluency Centre gratefully acknowledges contributions, quotes and photos from donors, staff, volunteers, clients, and professionals.

Report produced by Sandra Furfaro, Linda Sullivan, with contributions from Karen Mitchell.

Le Centre de la fluidité verbale de Montréal | Montreal Fluency Centre



514-489-4320

Phone



info@montrealfluency.com

Email



www.montrealfluency.com

www.fluiditemontreal.com

Website



LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram

Social Media



4626, rue Sainte-Catherine  
Ouest, Westmount, Qc H3Z 1S3

Address

