



# English Parents' Committee Association



## IN THIS ISSUE

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Webinars, protests, workshops -  
Supporting our kids.

### ARTICLE

How to Help Children with ADHD Manage  
Screentime - Cellphone Contract

### INFORMATION

Digital Citizenship Guide

### ARTICLES

Transitions: Elementary to Secondary  
Preparing Your Older Child for Summer  
Jobs or Other Activities

### INFORMATION

Upcoming Workshops by EPCA & OMETZ  
Canadian Parents for French and EPCA  
co-host Family Movie Night

### PARENT RESOURCES

March 2023

Volume 18



*Katherine Korakakis is the President of the English Parents Committee Association (EPCA). In addition to this vital role in the Quebec educational sector, Katherine has spent most of her life working alongside start-ups in various verticals. For 10 years, she was responsible for the development of entrepreneurial initiatives and projects under the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, a Youth Secretariat program of the government of Quebec. Katherine is Head of Entrepreneurship at ProMontreal Entrepreneurs (PME), an early stage VC fund that has been around for 22 yrs, and is currently the vice-president of PME MTL Centre-Ouest and on the investment committees of PME MTL Centre and PME MTL Centre-Ouest. Katherine has also authored and co-authored guidebooks on entrepreneurship education and has served on the Boards of numerous corporations.*

# President's message

## Webinars, protests, workshops - Supporting our kids.

Dear Parents,

Our kids had a well-deserved spring break and I hope you were able to enjoy it with them! Now we are nearing the end of the school year, which can make motivation more difficult. As parents and primary educators for our children, we play a critical role in their success. Let us be role models for them by talking to them positively about school and its importance and encouraging them to pursue their interests, overcome obstacles, and seek assistance when needed.

EPCA held a Bill 96 webinar which had hundreds of participants in attendance. We heard your concerns and are doing everything we can to advocate and make your voices heard.

On March 14th, EPCA - in partnership with Mettons fin à l'insécurité routière sur le trajet scolaire - held a province-wide protest against road hazards near schools. We have demanded that the government develop a road safety strategy and take action to make the areas around schools safer. We are now writing municipal counsellors and municipalities across the province of Quebec asking them to adopt motions that request the provincial government to quickly and significantly increase the budget allocated to the development of proven and effective safety measures around Quebec schools.

Finally, disruptions in educational services, exacerbated in part by labour shortages, are depriving students of services critical to their success and well-being. It is currently impossible to reconcile the current situation with our demand for a service for every need, for every student. We will continue to work with partners in the education community in an attempt to find a solution to the impasse.

I'd like to conclude on a high note by inviting you to browse and participate in our spring workshops! We have something for everyone, and I hope to see you there.

Thank you for contributing to the educational success of your child and thank you for being there for your community!





# How to Help Children with ADHD Manage Screen Time

Many children struggle with screentime management and understanding when to unplug. As well, ADHD can make it much more difficult for children to make appropriate technological decisions. Read more about frequent problems and how you may assist your children to overcome them.

## Time management is a source of contention

**The problem:** ADHD can make it difficult to maintain track of time. Children who struggle with time management may spend hours and hours in front of a screen without realizing it.

**Ways you can help:** Avoid phrases like "five minutes more." Instead, find out how long it takes your youngster to finish various sections of games and social media. Then, chat with your child about what he or she wants to accomplish and decide where to stop based on those goals. This enables you to issue warnings based on natural stopping places, such as "You must log out at the end of this round." Make sure to commend your child for logging out quickly and without fuss.

## Impulse control is an issue

**The problem:** Children with ADHD are more likely to engage in risky activity, such as inappropriate video viewing or sexting.

**How you can assist:** Television, computers, and other electronic gadgets should be kept in a common space, such as the living room. This makes it more difficult for your child to spend excessive time online or engage in harmful activity. Establish time and material limits in your child's cell phone or tablet's settings. Also, inform them that you will do surprise inspections to ensure their safety (and be sure that you follow through and do them).

## Sleeping difficulties are a source of concern

**The problem:** Bedtime can be difficult for children with ADHD. Staying online late at night can make it even more difficult for them to unwind.

**How you can assist:** Try to limit screen time to end at least an hour before your youngster goes to bed. To help achieve this, try removing cell phones and other electronic gadgets from the bedroom at night. Several devices allow you to configure "downtime" in the settings.



# How to Help Children with ADHD Manage Screen time

cont.



## Becoming distracted is problematic

**The problem:** All the bells and whistles on the internet make it difficult for youngsters with ADHD to focus on things like chores or homework. And when they're online, youngsters with ADHD can become "lost" in a game, forgetting they had duties to complete.

**Ways you can help:** Turn off the television in the background during homework time and make sure that other devices are not within reach. If the homework area is in a noisy room, headphones or earplugs may be useful. Remember that just because your child is on the computer doesn't mean his or her homework is getting done. They, too, may be distracted by other items on their computers or their phones. Look into programs that can assist students manage online diversions like games and social media until their homework is finished.

## Create a screen time contract (see next 2 pages of the newsletter)

Creating a screen time contract is an excellent approach for you and your child to establish mutual boundaries.

Collaborate to create a contract that:

- Makes time for homework and other home chores;
- Provides ideas for transitions and stopping spots; and
- Has strict limitations regarding the types of apps and websites that are not permitted.

When it comes to managing screen time, working jointly on a contract might help you feel more like partners and less like opponents. By doing this, your child may also be more likely to adhere to it moving forward.

As a starting point, use this cell phone contract and then you can modify it to your individual reality and circumstances. Then, once you've both agreed to it and signed it, keep it somewhere accessible so you can both review it on a regular basis.

# Cell phone

## CONTRACT FOR FAMILIES



This contract between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
begins on \_\_\_\_\_. We will look at it every \_\_\_\_ weeks to see how it is going and  
revise as necessary.

### Child Section

I know I need to:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Think before acting or posting | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay safe                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be responsible for what I do   | <input type="checkbox"/> Take care of my phone and devices |

I will remember that having a phone is a privilege and a responsibility. I agree to (check all that apply):

- ☐ Only use this phone to call people I'm allowed to call.
- ☐ Not send or forward mean or inappropriate texts or pictures.
- ☐ Get permission before downloading any apps.
- ☐ Respect that between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are phone-free hours.
- ☐ Leave my phone in \_\_\_\_\_ for charging, during homework time, and at bedtime.
- ☐ Give you my password(s) and know you'll be doing random checks.
- ☐ Understand that if I break or lose my phone, it may not be replaced.
- ☐ Answer when you call.
- ☐ Tell you about anything I see or receive on my phone that makes me uncomfortable.

# Cell phone

## CONTRACT FOR FAMILIES



### Parent or Guardian Section

I know that having a phone takes some getting used to. I need to:

- Understand you'll make mistakes.
- Listen to you when you tell me about something that makes you uncomfortable online.
- Learn new things so I understand the apps you want to use.
- Set a good example by not texting and driving or using the phone during meals or other family time.

### Deal-breakers

We agree that the following behaviors are deal-breakers and will cause the phone to be taken away until we work out a new contract.

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# Digital Citizenship

## DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP GUIDE

PRACTICING SAFE, RESPONSIBLE, AND LEGAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY



### DIGITAL COMMERCE

Be respectful and always have permission before you hit "buy."



### DIGITAL DOWNTIME

Remember to digitally disconnect and spend time with others.



### DIGITAL ETIQUETTE

Apply real world behavioral standards to the digital world.



### DIGITAL HEALTH

Know when to stay connected and when to turn off devices.



### DIGITAL INTEGRITY

Examine the source of online information to determine credibility.



### DIGITAL LITERACY

Avoid suspicious emails, websites, and online advertisements.



### DIGITAL PRIVACY

Review privacy settings. Know what to share and with whom.



### DIGITAL RESPONSIBILITY

Report problems, abusive behavior, and inappropriate images or content.



### DIGITAL SECURITY

Make passwords easy to remember, but hard to guess.



SOURCE: <https://safesitter.org/digital-citizenship/>



# Transitions:

## Elementary to Secondary School

**By: Zachary Mandelzys.** *For the last decade, Zachary has been working in the education setting where he has spent most of his time as a High school resource teacher. For the last year and a half, he has been in the role as a Provincial Transition Coordinator where he has been working on a mandate that focuses on student transitions - secondary through to post secondary. A primary focus of this mandate has been on exploring and implementing strategies to help ensure a successful transition.*

Over the last several years elementary school has been a familiar place, and with any familiar place it comes with comfort. Your child has seen the same friendly faces, played in the same recess yard, heard the same bell, developed wonderful friendships with their classmates and built strong relationships with teachers- who over time learned their likes, dislikes, learning style and needs.

You and your child are leaving this sense of comfort and moving towards something that is unknown- and it's ok to be nervous.

As parents, we have our own ideas of what high school is based on our own experiences, imagination, and from what we hear and see- which may contribute towards feelings of apprehensiveness.

You may find yourself thinking- is my child ready? Can they do it?

In comparison to high school, elementary school is typically a smaller building, has fewer students, teachers and classrooms, and the students are continuously being guided. High school can seem like a different world.

High school teachers are responsible for many classes and students. Students are expected to be accountable for their learning and organization, responsible for managing their study and leisure time, as well as getting to class on time- with the right material.

Your child may be worried about making new friends or losing old ones, getting lost or forgetting their locker combination, their homework, bullies, the general expectations of high school, and much more.

So what can we do as parents to best support our kids? It is like learning to ride a bike. Eventually you need to take off their training wheels, and when you do, they will fall- and that is totally fine.

We are there to support our kids on this new path and they will figure out what works and doesn't work.





# Transitions:

## Elementary to Secondary School cont.

We can support our kids by encouraging conversation and learning about how their day went, their accomplishments, and listening to their worries or concerns.

Should they be nervous about managing all their classes, you can practice using an agenda. If they are nervous about making new friends, you can see the type of programs, teams, or social clubs that the high school offers.

By creating an environment that promotes fluid and transparent conversation your child will have the support they need to be successful throughout this transition.

Some strategies to help shore up the transition to high school can be seen with being academically and socially involved in school, creating positive relationships with friends and school staff, as well as having positive home support. These factors can contribute towards increasing your child's motivation and confidence, their academic engagement and perception of school, social skills and sense of belonging- which are all contributing elements of student success.

For parents, it is beneficial to be aware of the support and resources that are available (academic, social/emotional, and career) as well as the various learning pathways that students can embark on.

The more we are aware of these resources, the better understanding we will have on how to best support our kids throughout their academic journey.

For more resources, see the following links:

- To explore more information on secondary and postsecondary pathways [click here](#) to view a short 9 minute video!
- <https://sites.google.com/lbpearson.ca/transition-network-secondary/home?authuser=0>
- [Transition Webinar 2023 - Google Slides](#)



# Preparing your Older Child for a Summer Job or Other Activities

With summer quickly approaching, and teenagers in the home, you may be thinking it is time to start preparing your child for entering the work world. Whether it be to help them build more self-confidence, gain practical experience, improve their time management skills, or maybe just to earn a little side money to put towards a goal they have in mind, a summer job can be a worthwhile endeavour for teens and young adults. Likewise, valuable skills can be developed through other activities in the summer such as volunteering or taking on an internship instead of a full employment opportunity.

Here are the five most practical steps that you can take to help prepare your child for a summer job, internship, or volunteering position. Please keep in mind every child is different and this is not a one size fits all approach. You know your child best, so you can tailor the below to what works best for your family.

1. First off, you will want to give things an early start by encouraging your child to start looking for opportunities that interest them as soon as possible in the new year or spring. This will give them plenty of time to research and apply for those positions that interest them. They should start preparing their resume and cover letter, if necessary. There are many helpful resume builder templates available online to help your child get started. Don't be afraid to help as well, but also make sure to give them the space to give it a go themselves.

2. You can help your child by giving them opportunities to develop key skills that will help them in potential positions by performing everyday routine tasks. These include:

- communication skills: let them handle the exchange at the pharmacy to familiarize themselves with what kind of brief conversations they can expect when dealing with the public
- time management skills: let them plan the amount of time it will take to prepare dinner, set the table, and clean up afterwards, which would fit within the restaurant industry standards expectations
- problem-solving skills: you can give them real-life situations where you must be at a certain place at a certain time but do not have a ride and ask them what's the best way to get there? These self development skills are sure to help jumpstart their confidence so that that they can handle their entry into a summer job.



# Preparing your Older Child for a Summer Job or Other Activity cont.



3. Next, have them research the position they are interested in. By having your child perform the research for the position or opportunity they are interested in, including the organization and the specific responsibilities, they will understand what is expected of them and what they can expect to gain from the experience.

4. Since you want your child to feel confident in what they are applying for, you can offer to do a few mock interview sessions. If you help them practice their

interview skills, including reviewing common interview questions and helping them prepare their responses, you can be sure that they will feel that much more confident in the real event, giving them a better chance of landing the job, internship, or volunteer opportunity.

5. Last, but certainly not least, is to be sure to emphasize responsibility and accountability. Help your child understand that their actions and behavior will impact their reputation and the success of the organization as well as their own success as they move forward. Encourage them to take ownership of their work and to always strive to do their best, even though they are likely to face challenges as they set off into this “grown up world”.

Above all things, remind your child that although getting a job or an internship means they must be a bit more responsible, it doesn't mean they cannot have a lot of fun along the way. After all, if you're doing what you love, you will never work a day in your life!





# REGISTER: EPCA Workshop



**Monday, April 3, 2023 – 7:00 to 9:00 PM**

EPCA Presents an *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Workshop*

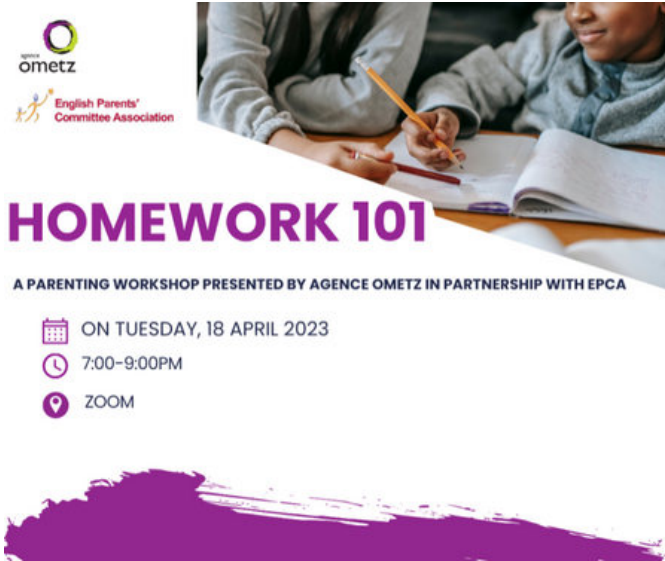
## **Evolving from “Colour Blindness”**

A discussion about how we recognize the reality of systemic racism as it pertains to daily life

In this workshop developed by parent activists Tina Oppong and Gloria Lombardi, parents are invited to partake in an open, honest, and respectful discussion about racial “colour blindness”. The presentation offers topics for reflection including unconscious bias, microaggressions, allyship, and a look at being anti-racist. The objective is to hold a space in which to listen, share, and get comfortable with being uncomfortable during these essential conversations with ourselves, with others, and with our children as they transition along with us, from “colour blindness” to celebrating individual differences.

[Register here.](#)

# REGISTER: EPCA & OMETZ Workshops

A graphic for the 'Homework 101' workshop. It features the Ometz and English Parents' Committee Association logos at the top left. The main title 'HOMEWORK 101' is in large, bold, purple letters. Below it, in smaller text, is 'A PARENTING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY AGENCY OMETZ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EPCA'. The date and time are listed: 'ON TUESDAY, 18 APRIL 2023', '7:00-9:00PM', and 'ZOOM'. The background image shows a child's hands writing in a notebook with a pencil.

**HOMEWORK 101**

A PARENTING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY AGENCY OMETZ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EPCA

ON TUESDAY, 18 APRIL 2023  
7:00-9:00PM  
ZOOM

This presentation offers strategies to make homework a more pleasant experience for children and parents. Homework is presented as a means to enhance self-reliance and foster motivation in children. The concept of “mindsets” will be explored as it impacts the ability for children to understand that through “effort” they can “grow” their intelligence. [Register here.](#)

Parents often wonder what they should do to ensure their children have good friends. Participants will learn practical strategies for identifying the boundaries of their involvement and how to teach their children to effectively navigate their social relationships. Issues related to exclusion, bullying, fostering healthy relationships and encouraging independence in conflict resolution and relationship maintenance will be examined. [Register here.](#)

A graphic for the 'A Parent's Role in Their Child's Friendships' workshop. It features the Ometz and English Parents' Committee Association logos at the top left. The main title 'A PARENT'S ROLE IN THEIR CHILD'S FRIENDSHIPS' is in large, bold, purple letters. Below it, in smaller text, is 'A PARENTING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY AGENCY OMETZ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EPCA'. The date and time are listed: 'ON TUESDAY, 27 APRIL 2023', '7:00-9:00PM', and 'ZOOM'. The background image shows silhouettes of children jumping joyfully against a sunset sky.

**A PARENT'S ROLE IN THEIR CHILD'S FRIENDSHIPS**

A PARENTING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY AGENCY OMETZ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EPCA

ON TUESDAY, 27 APRIL 2023  
7:00-9:00PM  
ZOOM

A graphic for the 'Social Media and Internet Safety' workshop. It features the Ometz and English Parents' Committee Association logos at the top left. The main title 'SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET SAFETY' is in large, bold, purple letters. Below it, in smaller text, is 'A PARENTING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY AGENCY OMETZ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EPCA'. The date and time are listed: 'ON TUESDAY, 10 MAY 2023', '7:00-9:00PM', and 'ZOOM'. The background image shows a hand holding a smartphone with various social media icons floating around it.

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET SAFETY**

A PARENTING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY AGENCY OMETZ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EPCA

ON TUESDAY, 10 MAY 2023  
7:00-9:00PM  
ZOOM

This workshop, for both parents and educators, provides valuable resources for keeping children safe online. Participants will come away with tools for identifying and reporting cyberbullying, an understanding of current online trends, apps and social media sites, strategies for encouraging responsible digital citizenship online and an understanding of the permanent traces and real life consequences of children's online actions. [Register here.](#)



# Canadian Parents for French and EPCA co-host Family Movie Night

Supporting the journey to bilingualism, the Canadian Parents for French has many resources on their [website](#) to foster French second language learning. As well, EPCA will be partnering with Canadian Parents for French to host a movie night in French on 19 April – to register, click [here](#).



## *Gare aux Gnomes: 5-11 ans*

(Gnome Alone)

**5:30 PM Eastern Time, French with English subtitles**

*After moving into a new house with her mom, Chloe discovers a troupe of talking garden gnomes who need her help saving the world.*



## *l'Arracheuse du Temps: 12-18 ans*

(The Time Thief)

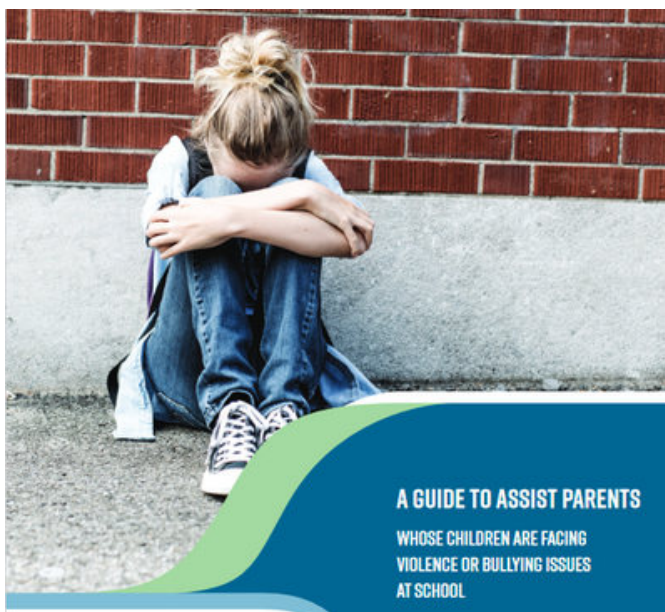
**7:30PM Eastern Time, French with English subtitles**

*Set in 1927, this is the story of how the inhabitants of the village of Saint-Élie-de-Caxton managed to eliminate the grim reaper, after a flash of lightning struck the apple tree of the church, foreshadowing misfortune.*





# Parent Resources



The Quebec Federation of Parents' Committees, with support from various partners – including EPCA's President Katherine Korakakis, has put together a guide to assist parents whose children are facing violence or bullying issues at school – click [here](#).

## Tutoring



## Homework Help



## ENGLISH ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATES

Explainer: What Quebec parents and students need to know about English eligibility certificates: At this [LINK](#) are details on how to apply for a certificate and who is eligible to attend English schools in Quebec.

# EPCA MISSION STATEMENT

The English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA) is a coalition of parents' committees of Quebec's English-language public school boards, representing more than 100,00 students in the youth sector.

EPCA advocates for a strong and sustainable English-language public education system to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for our children, while respecting the culture and language of anglophone Quebecers.

To do so, EPCA seeks to engage and motivate parents across Quebec to contribute to strong, representative and effective parent governance, to foster positive relationships with stakeholders across the educational spectrum, and to provide guidance and support to all member organizations.

What would you like to see in  
our upcoming editions?

[TELL US HERE](#)

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# EPCA STRATEGIC PILLARS

## INFORM

Using all communications tools at our disposal, offer up-to-date information on public education initiatives, parent governance interests, best practices and issues management to ensure a healthy, well-engaged anglophone parent community.

## CONSULT

Ensure strong, high-quality and consistent feedback mechanisms with members and partners across the English-language public school network through both electronic and in-person methods.

## SUPPORT

Provide training and professional development at all levels of parent governance, optimize the sharing of best practices and provide multiple support services for parent committees, governing boards and parent delegates in need.

## ADVOCATE

Push for appropriate policy change and improvement through enhanced partnerships with like-minded organizations, Government working groups/tasks forces, and related organizations, through well-considered political positions on behalf of English- Language parents committees across Quebec, taking into account regional difference and the urban/rural divide.