

Mackenzie Forbes Society

Making plans today to give each child the brightest future



The Importance of Investing in Young People's Mental Health

By Renée Vezina, President

Almost two years in, we continue to live with the ongoing effects of the pandemic. While there are reasons to be hopeful, some such as our adolescents, have experienced an alarming rate of psychological distress. Hospitalizations for these teenagers rose by 40% in January and February 2021, and The Children's saw 35% more patients this year in the Emergency Department with psychological disorders.

To address this situation, The Children's Foundation has committed to fund a new \$12 million state-of-the-art Mental Health Day Centre where adolescents will have full access to therapeutic services without having to be admitted into the hospital. Set to open its doors in 2022, the Day Centre will change the way many teenagers cope with distress.

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Above: three generations of Elders, circa 2004. From left-right: James, Matthew, Anthony and Dr. John Munro Elder Inset: Matthew Elder

3 Generations Supporting The Children's

The Elder family's connection to the Montreal Children's Hospital started with their father, Dr. John Munro Elder, who was the founding Director of The Children's Adolescent Medical Unit.

Dr. Elder's father and grandfather were surgeons, but as he didn't inherit their hand-eye coordination, he went on to blaze his own trail in pediatrics rather than surgery. Confined to his family home

as a child due to tuberculosis, Dr. Elder gained insight into the fears and sadness that children experience and helped form his compassion for others, a defining characteristic that positioned him as one of Canada's leading pediatricians.

Over a 40-year career that began in 1956, Dr. Elder treated legions of young Montrealers and railed against the dangers of women smoking and drinking

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Eating Disorders

Elly's story of courage

When Elly, now 15, was 8 years old, she started to think her body looked different from other kids her age. By 12, she had started binge eating and creating bad habits. Becoming a teenager made her feel insecure and she started restricting her food intake.

During quarantine, Elly gained weight. "I wasn't doing much activity, gained weight and couldn't fit into my clothes. I started working out to online videos and eating less. I lost 20 pounds on top of the 30 that I had already lost, and got down to a dangerously low weight."

Elly's health became a growing concern and she ended up at The Children's.

"It got so bad that I was taken to The Children's and admitted right away for rehydration and gradual feeding. They told me my heart and kidneys could fail. "This was my wake-up moment and I realized I had a serious problem..."

Treatment at The Children's to help Elly overcome her anorexia was not easy.

"I had the feeding tube inserted for 5 days. I was very sick but did not want to gain any weight. I was battling with the anorexia.



It still had control over me," she said. "I was followed by many doctors and nutritionists who helped me a lot. I am in the Family-Based Therapy program where parents are encouraged to be part of the care team as they can play an active role in their child's recovery, just like my mom is for me!"

After 2 weeks, Elly went back home with mixed emotions.

"I was relieved. I had worked hard to defeat the disorder. But I was still scared to gain the weight back, scared to eat even though I knew it's what I had to do to get better."

Several months later Elly seems much better.

"I am feeling really good! I'm not completely cured and still have physical problems. I am following the program closely. I am doing really well in school and even got a job on the weekends. Next year I'm going to be in Secondary 4 (grade 10)."

Eating disorders can strike anyone. A good treatment program can help patients like Elly overcome this illness.

"Having good mental health is important because it keeps me focused and concentrating on the right things," Elly concludes with a smile.

Expert Corner

David Forest, David Forest Financial Services

What are the best insurance policies to donate and why?

What are the best insurance policies to donate and why?

Perhaps you have an old life insurance policy that has outlived its usefulness in your personal planning. Sometimes, old policies are no longer needed due to changes in your financial position, changes in relationships or even changes in your desires, yet the policies still provide tax-free capital on death.

If you give an existing policy to The Children's, you will receive an immediate deduction on your income tax this year, perhaps significantly reducing your tax burden or giving you a refund. You might feel better knowing that you will be helping sick kids in the future while enjoying a tax deduction today. The Children's Foundation will be happy to recognize your generosity if you allow. We have experts who can get your old policy professionally valued while ensuring your own estate plans are fully respected.

Can I convert my term policy (no longer needed) into a permanent policy and what is the best timing to do it? Can I donate the converted policy to the charity?

If your term policy has a non-medical conversion option, you can convert it to a permanent insurance plan by simply signing a form and paying the

associated premium. You can then donate the converted policy to the Foundation and deduct the premium from your income taxes.

If you have any questions regarding how to donate an insurance policy, please feel free to contact Samar El Soufi at sels@mchf.com. We can help guide you or refer you to one of our Legacy Advisory Council members.



Members of the MacKenzie Forbes Society have made a legacy gift to The Children's through a bequest, a charitable annuity, a gift of life insurance or by establishing an endowment. We are extremely grateful to these donors for helping to ensure the best pediatric care for future generations of young patients. Dr. Alexander MacKenzie Forbes founded the Montreal Children's Hospital in 1904 and served as its Surgeon-in-Chief until 1929.

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Experts agree it will take years – if not generations – to help young people affected by the pandemic. The Day Centre will be a central address for teenagers in crisis, serving thousands. Planned gifts such as endowments, insurance policies and bequests will become a vital source of support for the long term.

In this 4th edition of the MacKenzie Forbes Society Newsletter, you will read about a family endowment that focuses on mental health and how the fund holder's father, a former

pediatrician with The Children's, was affected by illness as an adolescent. You will also meet one of our patients, Elly, who suffered from an eating disorder during the pandemic and read about how she is coping.

In the Expert Corner, one of our industry experts, David Forest, explains how donated insurance policies can make a difference in the lives of sick children.

Your steadfast support of The Children's, and interest in planned giving, have energized us to do more. I am pleased

to share with you that the Foundation has joined forces with a national movement called Will Power to show Canadians how they can make a difference through their will. We invite you to visit our page, which features a tool to calculate the implications of a potential planned gift: willpower.ca/charities/fondationduchildren/.

As always, we are deeply grateful for all that you do for our sick children. I wish you and your loved ones a healthy New Year filled with hope and happiness.

3 Generations Supporting The Children's

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during pregnancy long before studies proved it to be true. He was also one of the first to consider adolescent stress and depression a bona fide condition. "Dad was a superman to many families who counted on him day and night," Matthew Elder says. "It's a bit like the cobbler story, though. When I complained of stomach pain as a child, he told me to take an aspirin and a hot bath. When I couldn't stop vomiting my mother insisted on taking me to The Children's and I

was treated for a burst appendix." Matthew and his siblings chose to honour their father by creating the Dr. John Munro Elder Adolescent Clinic Endowment Fund to support the Montreal Children's Hospital Adolescent Clinic, which provides medical and psychological care for teenagers. Their father understood the pressures adolescents faced and championed for adolescent medicine to be an accepted medical speciality.

"We are fortunate to help adolescents through our family endowment fund that honours our father and helps teenagers," says Matthew.

"Each year we raise funds from friends, family and former patients and colleagues, and this effort keeps the connection to a hospital so close to our father's heart, and an area of medicine he helped shape for generations to come."

