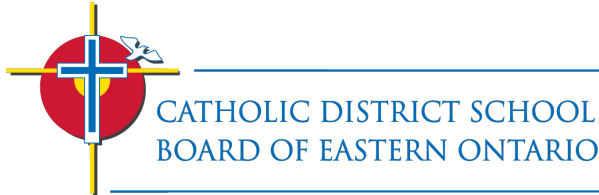




Mood Disorders Society of Canada
Société pour les troubles de l'humeur du Canada

www.mooddisorderscanada.ca | www.troubleshumeur.ca

November 6, 2013



“The adoption of the Elephant in the Room campaign supports a larger, ongoing Board-wide mental health initiative, which has fulfilled various stages of implementation since 2011. The Board has developed, and is committed to building student resiliency through a strength-based approach, and a Continuum of Support with key prevention, targeted intervention and specialized supports.”

Wm. J. Gartland, Director of Education

I am happy to announce that The **Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario** (CDSBEO) will partner with us on the implementation of the **Elephant in the Room Anti-Stigma Campaign**, raising awareness about mental illness in the workplace, and in the classroom. The CDSBEO is the first school board in the province of Ontario, to partner with The Mood Disorders Society of Canada on this initiative.

A blue elephant, which will be displayed in schools and Board locations, will signify that the CDSBEO cares about the wellness of others, and that the Board is a safe place to talk about mental health, without fear of being looked upon differently, thought of less, or punished. The initiative will help to build understanding around mental health issues, and to build a Board culture of empathy and support.

Mental health and illness have for too long lived under false knowledge and misconceptions, and sadly the stigma that clouds mood disorders often prevents persons who may have mental health issues from seeking treatment for their conditions.

Many people fear what ‘others will think’ if they publicly acknowledge their health issue and seek treatment. *Stigma and discrimination remain the number one concern for the majority of persons living with mental illness and their families because they live with its effects every day.*

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario *is working with Mood Disorders Society of Canada to battle against stigma, raise awareness of mood disorders, and provide those affected by mental illness with a voice.*

Through this partnership with the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO), *we are able make a positive impact* on the lives of people who suffer with bipolar disorder, depression and other mood disorders.

Phil Upshall
National Executive Director
Mood Disorders Society of Canada