



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters**  
OF WEST ISLAND

**2022 - 2023**

# **Annual Report**

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**Charitable Business Number: 11901 5881 RR 0001**





# All that you touch you Change. All that you Change changes you”

- Octavia E Butler

Change can be an engine of progress. While growing up, kids experience a vast amount of changes in their lives. To many, this can be very overwhelming. BBBSWI can help make these transitions easier, and a lot more fun, by offering youth in our community a caring mentor. These volunteer mentors can help guide their Littles through these changes and can help them learn and grow to be the best they can be.

I was fortunate enough to have important role models in my life growing up, and understand the impact that one individual can have on a child. Volunteering at BBBS has been an amazing experience. I had the opportunity to mentor a kind-hearted, funny and charismatic teenager who is on the path to becoming a great man. We've both experienced milestones in the past years, and it's been fun sharing them together.

**- Big Brother in the traditional program**

*If nothing ever  
changed, there'd be  
no butterflies.  
-Unknown*

I enjoy being a Big Sister, mentoring young girls, where I encourage and inspire them to be the best version of themselves. My Little and I do various educational and fun activities together.

The impact of my involvement with BBBSWI over the past 3 years, have provided culturally relevant mentoring to numerous young girls that have helped to improve their confidence, and prepare them for success in their future endeavors.

By exposing them to positive interactions, they can see what is possible for their own lives. The program has also helped to foster positive relationships between young girls and adults, which is critical to their development and well-being.

**-Big Sister in the traditional program**

# ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Our Vision All young people realize their full potential

Our Mission To enable life-changing mentoring relationships to ignite the power and potential of young people.

BBBSWI is an accredited agency, having successfully met the review standards outlined by the national governing body, Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada (BBBSC). Conducted by professionally-trained reviewers, the accreditation certificate is granted upon approval of agency practices in the areas of child safety, service delivery, and organizational excellence. Agencies are accredited every five years. The most recent accreditation for BBBSWI took place in November, 2019.



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Welcome to the 2022-2023 general assembly of Big Brothers Big sisters of West Island.

This past year the agency was able to transition back towards its normal operations following the global pandemic. It must be said that we fared well considering we also had three maternity leaves starting during the summer and fall of 2022. New team members were added, including Interim Executive Director Mr. Val Pietrantonio who I personally wish to thank for his hard work and dedication in taking control of the reins and guiding us through a year that brought changes and improvements to our daily operations. Of course our staff, Board of directors, donors, partners and volunteers were ever present and with the help of all we were able to accomplish our mission statement in 2022-2023.

This past year the return to in-person interactions between our Bigs and Littles was finalized. We also saw a return of our Big Bunch program. We saw our In-School mentoring program service 12 new matches. We are now also present in 2 francophone schools. We served 190 Littles through all of our programs. This spring we signed an agreement with Le Centre Intégré Universitaire de Santé et de Services Sociaux de l'Ouest de l'Île and then launched a new program for youths aged 16 to 21 who are receiving services under the youth protection act or the young offenders act. We are now matching these youths with adult mentors.

In 2022, our Montreal Ribfest made its full return at the same location on Pierrefonds city grounds. I wish to thank Mayor Jim Beis for all the help in once again helping with the hosting of this landmark event. Since last year's event a committee was formed, and we will be bringing some changes in 2023. You will soon see some of these changes during our AGM.

We of course thank our donors for their continued support, but this past year we saw a drop in funding due in part to the loss of an important contributor. This, combined with an important increase in operating cost, brought us to a situation where we are showing a deficit for the past year. Not to worry though, BBBSWI is still in sound financial condition. We have recently formed a new committee to organize a fundraising strategy which we launched in the last few weeks. This past year saw positive changes in our marketing and social media and publicity campaigns to recruit Big Brothers and Big Sisters. This is due to the hard work of our staff member Ashley Tillotson and our board members Nicole Antoine and Sebastiano Stabile. We are very happy to announce that with these campaigns, we made 32 new matches in the past year with many more to be completed in the coming weeks and months. Big Bunch is now fully active post-pandemic and allows us to service those on the waiting list.

In closing, I wish to thank all of those who made this past year a success. First and foremost, thank you to our donors, partners, and volunteers because without your continued support none of this would be possible. A special thank you to Traffic Tech for their enormous support. Thank you to our staff who finalized the return to regular business. Thank you to our Dawson college students in the "Community Recreation & Leadership Training" program who helped us during their internship with us, as well as the students who helped us thanks to the Canadian Summer Students Employment program. Thank you to our Concordia University students who set up workshops to help kids 14 years and up address mental health, self-esteem and relationship issues and more. Thank you to our board of directors which worked tirelessly thru our Team meetings. A very special thank you to Kirby Coussa, who after 8 years of service to the agency as the board treasurer is stepping down. He has of course offered his help and guidance in the coming months/years to make the transition as smooth as possible. The agency and the Littles owe you a huge thank you for your time and dedication.

May Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Island continue to help our youth become all that they can be.

Thank you for your support.

Riichard F. Pihoda  
Chairman



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

We emerge from a year of post-pandemic changes and uncertainty with continued resilience throughout our West Island community and our agency. BBBS West Island experienced a year where our agency was unwavering in our commitment to children and youth across our territory. The needs of the region continue to change and evolve as we continue to see mental health challenges that further drives our resolve to better support the needs of our key community stakeholders. The social services landscape within our territory continues to experience change and BBBS West Island is best positioned to continue to support much needed mentoring relationships.

Our service offering is very much anchored on the Development Relationships framework. These relationships enable close connections through which young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them. These connections are based on expressing care, pursuing personal growth, providing support and expanding possibilities. This is our raison d'être at BBBS West Island as we continue to support our mission as we have been for the last 48 years.

Our focus in the last 12 months has been to continue to grow our existing programs and explore new possibilities. We recently completed our 2023-2026 strategic planning review which positions our organization towards a future of sustained growth and new program offerings to better serve our community. Our staff has continued to remain focused, despite an ever-changing landscape, to continue to grow programs. We experienced a 10% increase in mentorship arrangements in the last year. Our In School Mentoring program has also grown as we have 9 school agreements in both Francophone and Anglophone schools in our territory. The Mentorship 16-21 program has been another area of focus for the agency, despite the many challenges facing the youth protection environment. We continue to remain confident that the growth of this program will respond to the ever-growing needs of positive role modeling needed in our community.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the community and volunteers for dedicating their valuable time in supporting vulnerable youth. This dedication truly ignites our potential to offer robust mentorship support to our youth and enable personal growth. We would like to thank our staff for their relentless focus and commitment to the agency and to its mission. We would also like to thank our donors for their unwavering support of the agency and the cause we defend every day. This would not be possible without your generosity, commitment and the passion to support our community.

Finally, a special thank you to the Board of Directors for volunteering their precious time and to support the long-term viability of our agency in these ever- changing times in the last 12 months. I am particularly grateful for your continued support, inspiration, collaboration and advocacy.

Thank you for your sustained support.

Valentino Pietrantonio





# THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Richard Prihoda – President**

Legal



**Suzanne Labonté – Vice President**

Policies & Procedures / Board Development / Human Resources



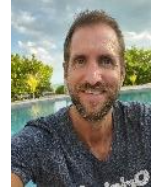
**Kirby Coussa – Treasurer**

Finance



**Scott Moon – Secretary**

Strategic Planning / Impact & Measurement



**Sebastiano Stabile – Director**

Marketing & Communications



**Samantha Ramsli – Director**

Fundraising / Community Outreach & Support



**Nicole Antoine – Director**

Marketing & Communications / Diversity



# THE BBBSWI TEAM

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

**Valentino Pietrantonio – Interim Executive Director**

**Cathy Kudzman – Office Manager**

**Ashley Tillotson – Outreach and Fundraising Coordinator**



## SERVICE DELIVERY STAFF

**Stacey Waks – Caseworker – Traditional Program**

**Emilie Williate-Battet – Caseworker – Traditional Program**

**Ariane Weber – Caseworker – Traditional Program**

**Kesso Diallo – Caseworker – ISM Program**

**Kaitlyn Beauregard – Caseworker – Traditional Program**

**Shari Endleman – Caseworker – 16-21 Program**

**Katrina Starr – Caseworker – Traditional Program**



## STAFF ON MATERNITY LEAVE

**Megan Semenchuk – Executive Director**

**Camille Demers – Caseworker – ISM Program**

**Emily Ruel – Caseworker - 16-21 Program**



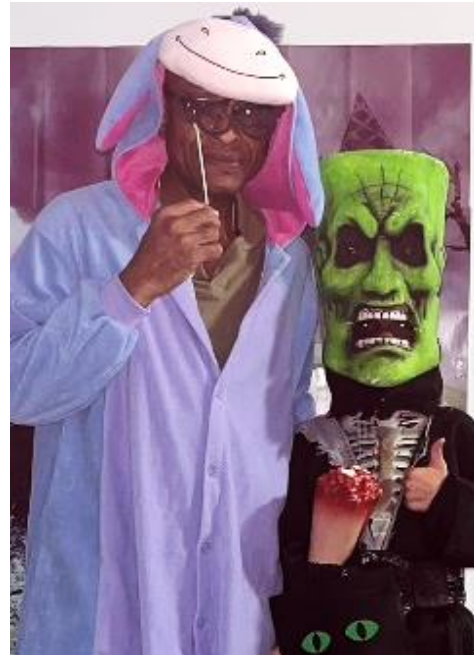


# BBBSWI PROGRAMS

## TRADITIONAL PROGRAM

The Big Brothers Big Sisters Traditional program aims to match young boys and girls within the West Island and the surrounding areas with a volunteer mentor. They can be matched with the same gender (example: Big Brother, Little Brother), cross-gender (Big Sister and Little Brother combination only) and couples match (partners matched with one child). Through shared experiences, common interests, and consistent hangouts every week or second week, the relationship between the mentee and mentor grows and deepens over time.

Throughout the duration of the match, all match participants are supported by their designated caseworker through regular phone, email and in-person follow-ups. Within the traditional program, matches can last anywhere from one year (the minimum commitment), and/or up until the child turns 18-years-old. On many occasions, even after the youth turns 18 and the match ceases to be followed by BBBSWI, they continue to remain in contact!



Belonging to BBBSWI has been an amazing experience for us. My son has met wonderful people, engaged in activities that were fun and memorable and most importantly, he has obtained a forever friend, as well as mentor, with his Big Brother. We are so grateful that these programs exist and thankful for all the opportunities afforded to us!

Mostly, we are ever so fortunate that men and women selflessly volunteer their time, energy and knowledge toward the betterment of children that might have particular obstacles to overcome.

Come join our big family! We love you BBBSWI ❤️

- Parent of a Little Brother



## BBBSWI PROGRAMS

### BIG BUNCH (GROUP PROGRAM)

The Big Bunch program is a monthly program that brings together our Littles in a group environment, guided by positive male and female volunteer mentors. Each mentor is matched with a small group of kids so that more attention can be given to each child. The program is geared to service children who are either in the process of waiting for their very own Big Brother or Sister or for children who simply wish to socialize occasionally in a small group setting. This concept allows for an increase in social skills, social interaction and the possibility to make new friends. The activities provide the children with something fun and exciting to do at no cost to the families.



BBBSWI has been such a positive, comforting and exciting experience for my son. He has loved all the activities and events. When my son first started the Big Bunch activities he was very shy and reluctant, and now two years later he is thrilled and confident to attend any activity with his Big.

Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity of community and fun for him!!

- Parent of a Little Brother



## BBBSWI PROGRAMS

### IN SCHOOL MENTORING (ADULT AND TEEN 15yrs+)

The In-School-Mentoring (ISM) program provides children from kindergarten to grade 6 with a role model and a friend to talk to and share experiences and activities with, all while being on school grounds during school hours. The mentor and mentee spend one hour per week together at the child's elementary school, sharing stories, doing activities and learning from one another. The activities can vary - from arts and crafts, board games, science experiments, to sports and playing on the playground outside; anything they want to do together. The weekly activities take place throughout the school year, ending when school breaks for the summer. The ISM program is continuing to expand further by moving into more francophone elementary schools.



I have been at Christmas Park Elementary school for almost 12 years. Since I started working here, I have been the contact person for the in school mentoring program.

The children that participate in this program benefit so much from having an adult who is focused only on them even if it is only for an hour. One of the volunteer mentors used to be a student here at Christmas Park. She used to have a mentor too and so she is paying it forward. The benefits of this program are too numerous to mention.

Some of the children that are matched have difficulties with academics or have social skills problems. Which means that having a mentor couldn't be more wonderful for some of these kids who are left out or ignored or made fun of. I am very grateful to have this program in our school. I hope the tradition continues long after I have left.

- Martha Farley - Daycare Technician/contact person for BBBSWI's ISM Program (Christmas Park Elementary)



## BBBSWI PROGRAMS

### MENTORSHIP 16-21

Just over a year old, the newest program at the BBBSWI agency is the Mentorship 16-21 program. The objective of this program is to find mentors for young people aged 16 to 21 who are receiving youth protection services and/or who have a history of placement, so that they may be better guided in their transition to adulthood. Parallel to the traditional program, mentors will provide the youth someone with whom they can talk to and share their life experiences. This initiative follows the recommendation of the Laurent Commission to promote a better transition to adulthood and to set up a 'post-placement support' program.

The program is beginning to take shape and since the beginning of 2023, we have officially accepted 3 youths into the program with another currently in process, plus have one match. Presentations with DYP and the CLSC to promote the program are in the process of being scheduled and with this brings hope that they can refer their clients who could benefit greatly from having a mentor.



Although there has been more growth and interest in the program since the beginning of the year, we are still hoping to have more youth referrals as well as volunteer intakes to be able to start making more matches.

- Emilie Williate-Battet, caseworker for the Mentorship 16-21 Program





## 2022-2023 AT A GLANCE



**190** Youth Served



**32** New Matches

**144** Total Matches



**421** Agency Volunteers



**15,227** Volunteer Hours



**9** Partner Schools



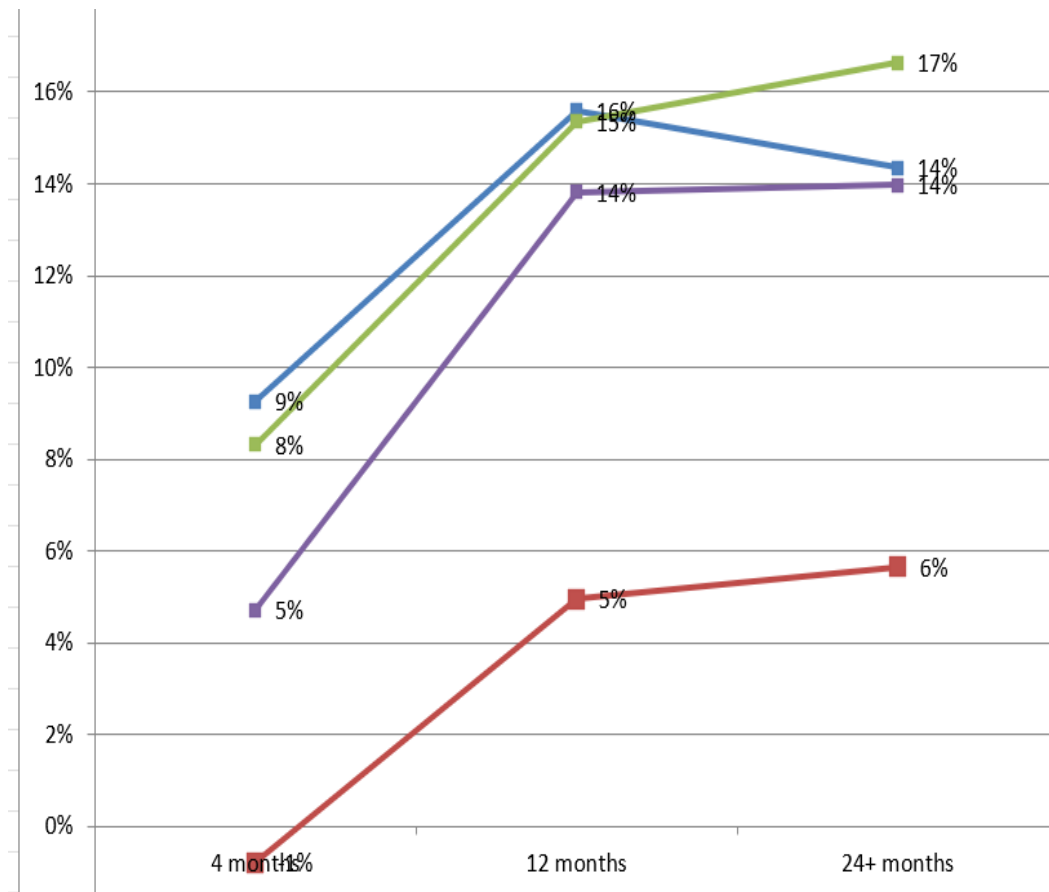
**6** Key Supporters





# BEING MATCHED WITH A MENTOR HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON LITTLES

This information is gathered from the Littles at the 4-month mark of their match, after 12 months of being matched and once more at 2 years of being matched. As can be seen, having a mentor in their lives increases and then maintains the quality of their life by positively affecting their social skills, self-esteem, social inclusion and by exposing them to new experiences, thus broadening their horizons.



|                         | 4 months | 12 months | 24+ months |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Total Self Esteem       | 9%       | 16%       | 14%        |
| Total Social Skills     | -1%      | 5%        | 6%         |
| Total Broadens Horizons | 8%       | 15%       | 17%        |
| Total Social Inclusion  | 5%       | 14%       | 14%        |

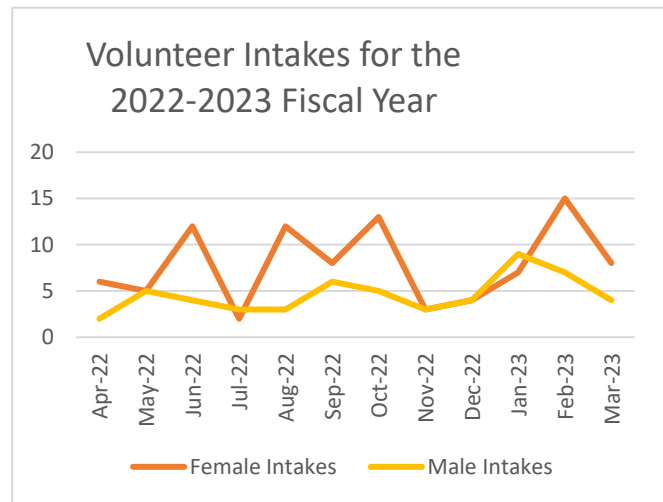
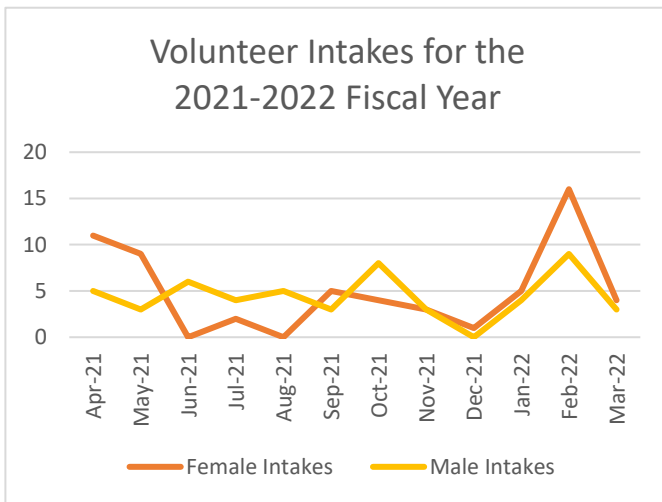


# MENTOR RECRUITMENT 2022-2023!

One of BBBSWI's biggest challenges is obtaining male volunteers. To resolve this issue, one of our strategies is to hold volunteer recruitment campaigns through our social media.

The **2021-2022** fiscal year's campaign began in late September with an emphasis on "Putting the Men back into Mentoring". February 2022 and the focus was on recruiting Francophones in order to fulfill our growing need for more fully bilingual or Francophone volunteers.

In the **2022 to 2023** fiscal year, the October 2022 campaign's objective was an Awareness campaign. This campaign focused on highlighting our programs. This past February, 2023 was a Volunteer Recruitment campaign where the theme was "Shaping our Future Generations".



| 2021-2022 Fiscal Year | Female Intakes | Male Intakes |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Apr-21                | 11             | 5            |
| May-21                | 9              | 3            |
| Jun-21                | 0              | 6            |
| Jul-21                | 2              | 4            |
| Aug-21                | 0              | 5            |
| Sep-21                | 5              | 3            |
| Oct-21                | 4              | 8            |
| Nov-21                | 3              | 3            |
| Dec-21                | 1              | 0            |
| Jan-22                | 5              | 4            |
| Feb-22                | 16             | 9            |
| Mar-22                | 4              | 3            |
| <b>Total Intakes</b>  | <b>60</b>      | <b>53</b>    |

| 2022-2023 Fiscal Year | Female Intakes | Male Intakes |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Apr-22                | 6              | 2            |
| May-22                | 5              | 5            |
| Jun-22                | 12             | 4            |
| Jul-22                | 2              | 3            |
| Aug-22                | 12             | 3            |
| Sep-22                | 8              | 6            |
| Oct-22                | 13             | 5            |
| Nov-22                | 3              | 3            |
| Dec-22                | 4              | 4            |
| Jan-23                | 7              | 9            |
| Feb-23                | 15             | 7            |
| Mar-23                | 8              | 4            |
| <b>Total Intakes</b>  | <b>95</b>      | <b>55</b>    |

# FUNDRAISERS

## Ribfest 2022

With the pandemic restrictions finally lifted, Ribfest 2022 was able to fully proceed with live music, bars, market vendors and kids' zone! Thank you to the West Island and surrounding communities for coming out to partake in the event and support our cause. We raised just over **\$52,000.**

## Yule Log Fundraiser 2022

With our Yule Log campaign that took place throughout the month of November we sold 353 yule logs and were able to raise **\$2,000.** Thank you to all those who participated, whether it was by sharing with your networks or purchasing a yule log – 100% of the money raised goes towards supporting our needy families at Christmas through our Christmas basket program.

## Valentine's Fundraiser 2023

The annual Valentine's Breakfast fundraiser took place on Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, from 6am to 10am, at Jack Astor's Bar and Grill in Dorval! We were so happy to be able to have this event in person again! It was fantastic to have the support of so many members of the community, our board members, our Bigs, Littles and families at this fundraiser. For those who are not aware of this event, when you make a donation at the door, you receive a yummy, buffet-style, FREE breakfast. This year, we raised **\$4,800.00.**





# DONATIONS TO OUR AGENCY

Not only does BBBSWI help with important priorities such as food baskets and school supplies, but we also provide opportunities for kids just to be kids.

## School Supply Drive

**41** kids received school supplies this past year

Thank you to the teams at FedEx Ground, Khalsa Aid and The Gap Vaudreuil



## The BBBSWI Camp Program

**19** kids received funding to attend summer camp for minimum one week. Discounts or free spots provided by Sport Life, Laurus Camp and the Canadian Tire Bon Depart. Other funding provided by the BBBS camp fund.

## Christmas Baskets and Cheques

**39** Christmas baskets were given to our families this year! **15** cheques were donated by The Montreal Gazette Christmas Fund to help families during the Holidays. 16 companies/individuals supported this cause, along with a BBBS fundraiser (Christmas log cake sales) where 100% of the profits went to the baskets.

## Christmas Present Donations

**56** kids received a Christmas present at our annual Christmas party thanks to FedEx Ground Dorval, and Centreville Volkswagen, who graciously bought and donated brand new toys for each child attending our party.

They also each received a gift of **\$10** from our longtime accountant, former treasurer of the Board, generous supporter and good friend of the agency, Mr. Randy Johnstone. A very special thank you to board member Sam Ramsli, for providing us with her superb catering skills, time and efforts for our various BBBS events over the years.







## DONATIONS TO OUR AGENCY

### Hockey and Football Ticket Donations

**18** kids got to see a Canadiens or Laval Rocket hockey game.

**22** kids had the chance to see an Alouettes football game.

For some kids, it isn't just a hockey or football game; it is a chance to connect and establish a strong, healthy relationship with someone who cares about them.

A special thank you to our donors of hockey tickets - **Mr. Paul Antoniadis, Ms. Ruth Fernandez, DD Humes Insurance Agency** and **Traffic Tech**.

Another special thank you to the **Montreal Alouettes** and **Mike Sayig at Centreville Volkswagen** for donating the football tickets that so many got to enjoy.



### Bike Giveaway Event Medtronic and Centreville Volkswagen

**47** children received brand new bikes purchased, built and donated by **Medtronic employees** at their office in Kirkland. Partial funding also provided by **Centreville Volkswagen** so every child who needed a bicycle received one.







# Outreach and Engagement

## Creating Awareness and helping out in the Community



**Easter Awareness Event  
at Plaza Pointe-Claire**



**Village des Valeurs  
Awareness Day**



**Volunteering at the  
Centre Omega**



**Planting at the Maxwell  
Senior's Residence**



**Canada Day Parade**



## KEY SUPPORTERS

*We wouldn't be where we are today without the help  
of our key supporters and the community.*

*Thank You for helping us help kids reach their full potential!*



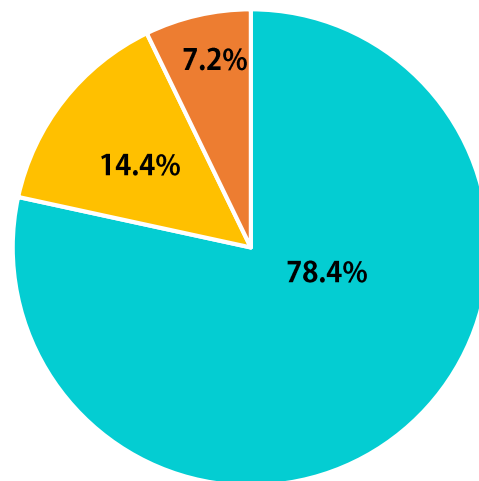
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West Island Community Shares

# Thank You

TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS FROM THE COMMUNITY  
EVERY DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

2022-2023 Donors from the Community



■ Individuals   ■ Corporate, Cities   ■ Foundations, Associations

| DONOR SECTORS             | NUMBER OF DONORS |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Individuals               | 98 (78.4%)       |
| Corporate, Cities         | 18 (14.4%)       |
| Foundations, Associations | 9 (7.2%)         |



# Big Brothers Big Sisters

OF WEST ISLAND

