

Photo by Lily Hodgson

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On the front page - "Mahé Rabesa reads her travel memoir 'On Three Continents' at BU's 'Creative Extravaganza' at the downtown Public Library on Wednesday, November 29th. The event was great, featuring a handful of Creative Writing students sharing their favourite works with the audience. Hopefully the Creative Writing department puts on more events like this in the future!"
- Lily Hodgson, Editor-in-Chief

THE QUILL'S WINTER BREAK WRITING CONTEST!

The Quill is holding a Short Story Contest over the 2023-24 Winter Break! Use your break from schoolwork to exercise your creativity. Entries should be between 500-1300 words, and can be from any genre. Submissions will be due January 15th, and the winner will be announced January 24th. The winner will receive a gift card!

Writers can choose from one of these three prompts:

- 1) Write the story of a family holiday dinner gone wrong.
- 2) Write a story about "the perfect gift".
- 3) Write a story from the perspective of a snowflake.

Questions and submissions can be sent by email to eic.thequill@gmail.com!

ARSON DESTROYS BRANDON BUILDING

By Angel Anowuru, Junior Reporter

On November 20th, in the small hours of the morning, there was an arson charge at 144 12th St. in Brandon.

The building that caught fire was home to two businesses, ABC Taxi and a non-profit called Turning Leaf, as well as a few tenants, including several international students. A 33-year old man broke into the building and started the fire, and someone inside called the police to report the incident. The building was completely destroyed.

The police played a part in assisting in the safe evacuation of the building's occupants.

By effectively managing the incident, the Brandon Emergency Services did not fall short

of expectations. The perpetrator was quickly arrested.

The extent of the fire was astounding, and among the losses were valuable resident records and possessions, among other things. Ese Auroror, a Nigerian international student, who was a resident of the building stated, "There are quite a number of things that are sentimental, some of them from my late father, some of them from my wife who's not here with me in Brandon" (Brandon Sun).



Photo by Janine Campbell

DISNEY ON ICE RETURNS TO WINNIPEG

By Janine Campbell, Junior Reporter

Disney on Ice often performs at various venues worldwide, including the Canada Life Center in Winnipeg. These shows bring together the magic of Disney characters like Mickey Mouse, Elsa, Anna, and many more, showcasing their adventures through mesmerizing ice skating performances. The Canada Life Center provides a fantastic setting for these enchanting shows, allowing audiences to experience the wonder of Disney stories coming to life on the ice.

I went on a mini trip to Winnipeg with a friend of mine and watched the November 23rd showing. The different sets included: Frozen, Tangled, Beauty and the Beast, Coco, Cinderella and

Moana. My favourite performance was by Rapunzel and Flynn, they were soaring through the sky. I found myself surrounded by the excitement of seeing my favorite Disney characters gliding across the ice, performing incredible routines to iconic Disney songs. The atmosphere was filled with joy as families gathered to witness the magic of these beloved stories come to life. From the dazzling costumes to the impressive skating skills, it's a treat for both kids and adults. Plus, the energy of the crowd and the immersive storytelling make it a truly memorable and fun-filled day for everyone involved.

J. COLE'S "MIDDLE CHILD" ACHIEVES MONUMENTAL SUCCESS

By Olorunfemi Gbenga, Junior Reporter

In the ever-evolving landscape of the music industry, achieving platinum status is a significant milestone that only a select few artists can claim. However, J. Cole's "Middle Child" has surpassed even these lofty expectations, reaching an extraordinary 9 times platinum. This article will delve into the journey of "Middle Child," exploring the factors that contributed to its success and the impact it has had on J. Cole's career. Released on January 23, 2019, "Middle Child" emerged as the lead single for J. Cole's Dreamville compilation album, "Revenge of the Dreamers III." Produced by T-Minus, the song quickly gained traction for its catchy beat, insightful lyrics, and J. Cole's distinctive delivery. The track addresses J. Cole's position in the rap industry, encapsulating the essence of being the "middle child" between the old and new generations of hip-hop. "Middle Child" didn't take long to make its mark on the charts. Debuting at number 26 on the Billboard Hot 100, the single showcased J. Cole's ability to create commercially successful music without sacrificing his lyrical prowess. Its staying power was evident as it continued to climb, eventually peaking at number 4 on the chart. The critical reception mirrored the song's commercial success. Critics praised J. Cole's introspective lyrics, citing his adept storytelling and social commentary. The track resonated with audiences, earning J. Cole newfound respect as a rapper who could balance mainstream appeal with artistic integrity.

"Middle Child" not only benefited from J. Cole's individual star power but also from the collaborative efforts of Dreamville, the record label founded by J. Cole himself. The song was a key component of the "Revenge of the Dreamers III" compilation album, a project that showcased the talent within the Dreamville roster and featured collaborations with a diverse array of artists. The album's success served to elevate "Middle Child" further, as fans of other featured artists

discovered the single through the compilation. This collaborative approach not only propelled J. Cole's career but also solidified Dreamville as a powerhouse in the hip-hop industry. One of the reasons behind "Middle Child"'s widespread appeal is its thematic depth. J. Cole, known for his introspective and socially conscious lyrics, uses the song to comment on his position as a bridge between the older and newer generations of hip-hop. The struggles of being caught in the middle, seeking validation from both sides, resonated with listeners facing similar challenges in their own lives. The relatability of "Middle Child" contributed to its longevity on the charts and its enduring popularity. Fans found solace in the fact that even a successful artist like J. Cole faces internal and external conflicts, adding a layer of authenticity to the track that transcended traditional hip-hop narratives.

Accompanying the track was a visually striking music video that further enhanced its impact. Directed by Mez, the video complemented the song's themes, featuring symbolic imagery and cinematic storytelling. The visual representation of J. Cole's journey added another dimension to the overall experience, making "Middle Child" a memorable and complete artistic package. In the digital age, streaming numbers are a significant indicator of a song's popularity. "Middle Child" dominated streaming platforms, amassing millions of plays across platforms like Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube. The accessibility of the song on these platforms contributed

to its widespread reach, ensuring that fans worldwide could easily engage with and share the track. Beyond its commercial success, "Middle Child" had a notable cultural impact. The song became an anthem for those who felt overlooked or misunderstood, transcending its status as a piece of entertainment to become a cultural touchstone. Memes, references, and social media discussions further propelled the song into the public consciousness, solidifying its place in the cultural zeitgeist. "Middle Child" marked a crucial point in J. Cole's artistic evolution. While he had already established himself as a respected rapper, the success of this single displayed his ability to navigate the changing landscape of hip-hop without compromising his authenticity.

"Middle Child"'s universal themes and relatable content demonstrated J. Cole's growth as an artist who could connect with diverse audiences. The journey to 9 times platinum is a testament to the song's popularity, and a reflection of the industry's acknowledgment of its impact. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) awards platinum certifications based on a combination of sales and streaming numbers, making "Middle Child"'s 9x platinum status a rare achievement that underscores its enduring appeal.

J. Cole's "Middle Child" stands as a testament to the power of authentic storytelling and the ability to bridge generational gaps within the hip-hop landscape. Its journey from the lead single on a compilation album to 9 times platinum is a remarkable feat that reflects not only the song's inherent quality but also J. Cole's strategic approach to music-making and his impact on broader culture. As "Middle Child" continues to resonate with audiences, it serves as a blueprint for artists navigating the complexities of the modern music industry while staying true to their artistic vision.



J. Cole in the "Middle Child" music video, directed by Mez

THE ARTISTIC EVOLUTION OF MAHÉ - AN EMERGING ARTIST

Emerging artist (and Brandon University student) Mahé immerses herself passionately in the world of poetry and writing. Her inspiration comes from nature, and she cultivates a deep appreciation for the beauty of words to weave captivating narratives. The fusion of electro and acoustic influences in her work testifies to her constant drive for innovation. Mahé has shone at various musical events, taking part in the Tremplin de Dégelis in 2023 and wowing audiences at the 7th edition of Talent d'Afrique in 2022. In recognition of the exceptional quality and creativity of her lyrics, she won a special mention in the Prix Mouffe competition in 2023. Armed with her guitar and auto-harp, she creates a unique musical experience, fusing her delicate poetry with a varied palette of musical styles.

Mahé recently released a new single called Story. Story is a song written from the heart, highlighting the fact that we are all made up of stories. Our lives are little stories filled with triggers, twists and turns. As the author of our story, we sometimes have the choice to decide on certain trajectories, but other times, life takes us far from the path we had mapped out. The song revolves around this question: How do you want to write your story?

As an artist, she stands out for her creative approach that transcends conventional artistic boundaries. Through a unique combination of theatre, poetry and music, she builds a universe where characters interact, nature comes alive with a consciousness of its own, and contrasts blend harmoniously.

Her creative process is deeply rooted in the construction of characters, each bearing specific values that she explores and reflects through her music. Her compositions, beyond celebrating simplicity, also serve as vehicles to embellish complex and sometimes sad themes, while highlighting life's inherent contrasts.

Her recent exploration of electronic music and the fusion of electro and acoustic influences in his work testify to her constant drive for innovation. Drawing inspiration from both natural sounds and electrical elements, Mahé creates a depth of sound that enriches her repertoire. Her creative process is a journey where nature takes on a conscious dimension, and contrasts intermingle to create a unique sensory experience.

As an author, composer and performer, Mahé draws her

inspiration from poetry and nature. Using mainly guitar and auto-harp, she brilliantly blends her gentle poetry with the chords of her guitar. Each piece is a piece of the puzzle that forms her creative world. The result is a sensory journey where nature, consciousness and contrasts combine to offer audiences a unique and unforgettable artistic experience.

Mahé is a versatile and talented artist, determined to make her unique voice resonate in the world of music.

Mahé's show is a captivating immersion into a world where music becomes the vehicle for expressing profound values.

Mahé fashions characters who become standard-bearers for these values. Each performance becomes an artistic exploration, a journey where nature consciously comes to life, weaving subtle links between sounds and natural elements. On stage, Mahé comes to life. She sings, tells stories and shares her energy with the audience. Vibrating to the rhythm of cheers and applause, she creates a space of freedom where everyone can feel authentic. Her guitar becomes the extension of her poetry, marrying the sweetness of her lyrics to the different musical styles that characterize her repertoire.

In short, Mahé aspires to create a deep connection with her audience, sharing her love of music, poetry and authenticity on stage.

She will soon be playing a concert in Montreal at Café Tuyó on December 22, accompanied by her sidekicks Christopher on guitar and Pauline on piano.



Pictured: The Cover Artwork for Mahé's newest single, "Story"

You can discover her other songs such as La Fille du Soleil and the popular Your hand on all streaming platforms, including Spotify, Apple Music, and Amazon music.

To become a real fan, however, you'll need to subscribe to her Instagram account @mahe.musique and her TikTok account @mah_erabesa. You'll discover more about the artist, her personality and her sense of humour through the short videos she frequently posts. And best of all, you'll always be the first to know!

Instagram : @mahe.musique

Tik Tok : @mah_erabesa

Spotify : Mahé

E-mail : mahelianarabesa@gmail.com

"ELF" - A HOLIDAY CLASSIC

By Janine Campbell, Junior Reporter

"Elf," directed by Jon Favreau and starring Will Ferrell as Buddy, is a delightful Christmas movie that continues to enchant audiences with its charm, humour, and heartfelt story.

At its core, "Elf" is a whimsical tale about Buddy, a human raised as one of Santa's elves in the North Pole. When Buddy discovers he's not an elf but a human, he embarks on a journey to New York City to find his biological father, Walter Hobbs (played by James Caan), while experiencing the wonders and challenges of the real world for the first time.

The film's strength lies in its endearing characters and the heartfelt performance by Will Ferrell as Buddy. His childlike innocence, exuberance, and unwavering belief in the spirit of Christmas are not only hilarious but also endearing. Ferrell's

portrayal captures the essence of Buddy's genuine and infectious joy, making him a memorable character that resonates with audiences of all ages.

The contrast of Buddy's naive, elf-like behaviour against the cynicism of New York City creates a wealth of comedic moments. From his exuberant excitement over everyday experiences to his quirky interactions with strangers, the film maintains a lighthearted and whimsical tone throughout. It's this blend of humour and heart that makes "Elf" a beloved holiday classic.

The supporting cast, including Zooey Deschanel as Jovie, Buddy's love interest, and Bob Newhart as Papa Elf, complements Ferrell's performance brilliantly. Deschanel brings warmth and charm with her role, while Newhart's

portrayal as the wise and caring Papa Elf adds depth to Buddy's journey of self-discovery.

"Elf" is not merely a comedy; it's a film that celebrates the spirit of Christmas and the importance of family, love, and acceptance. Underneath the humour and joviality, there's a meaningful message about embracing one's uniqueness, finding belonging, and spreading joy to others. The film's visual aesthetics, including the vibrant set designs and colourful costumes, evoke a sense of holiday cheer. The North Pole sequences are whimsical and enchanting, while New York City during the festive season creates a visually stunning backdrop for Buddy's adventures. (Continued on next page)

“ELF” REVIEW (CONT.) *By Janine Campbell*

(Continued from page 4) The soundtrack, featuring cheerful holiday tunes and a memorable score by John Debney, complements the film’s joyful atmosphere, enhancing the emotional impact of key scenes. “Elf” succeeds in capturing the essence of Christmas by delivering a heartwarming and entertaining story that resonates with audiences year after year. Its enduring appeal lies in its ability to evoke laughter, tug at heartstrings, and remind us of the magic that surrounds the

holiday season.

In conclusion, “Elf” is a timeless holiday gem that combines humour, warmth, and a sprinkle of Christmas magic. Its universal themes, lovable characters, and uplifting message make it a must-watch movie that continues to bring joy and laughter to audiences, making it a cherished part of the holiday tradition for many.

THIS WEEKEND AT THE EVANS THEATRE: THE ROYAL HOTEL (2023)

After running out of money while backpacking in a tiny, male-dominated town in the Australian outback, two friends resort to a working holiday at the Royal Hotel. When the locals behavior starts crossing the line, the girls find themselves trapped in an unnerving situation that grows rapidly out of their control.

Showings on December 8, 9, and 10 at 7:30 PM.



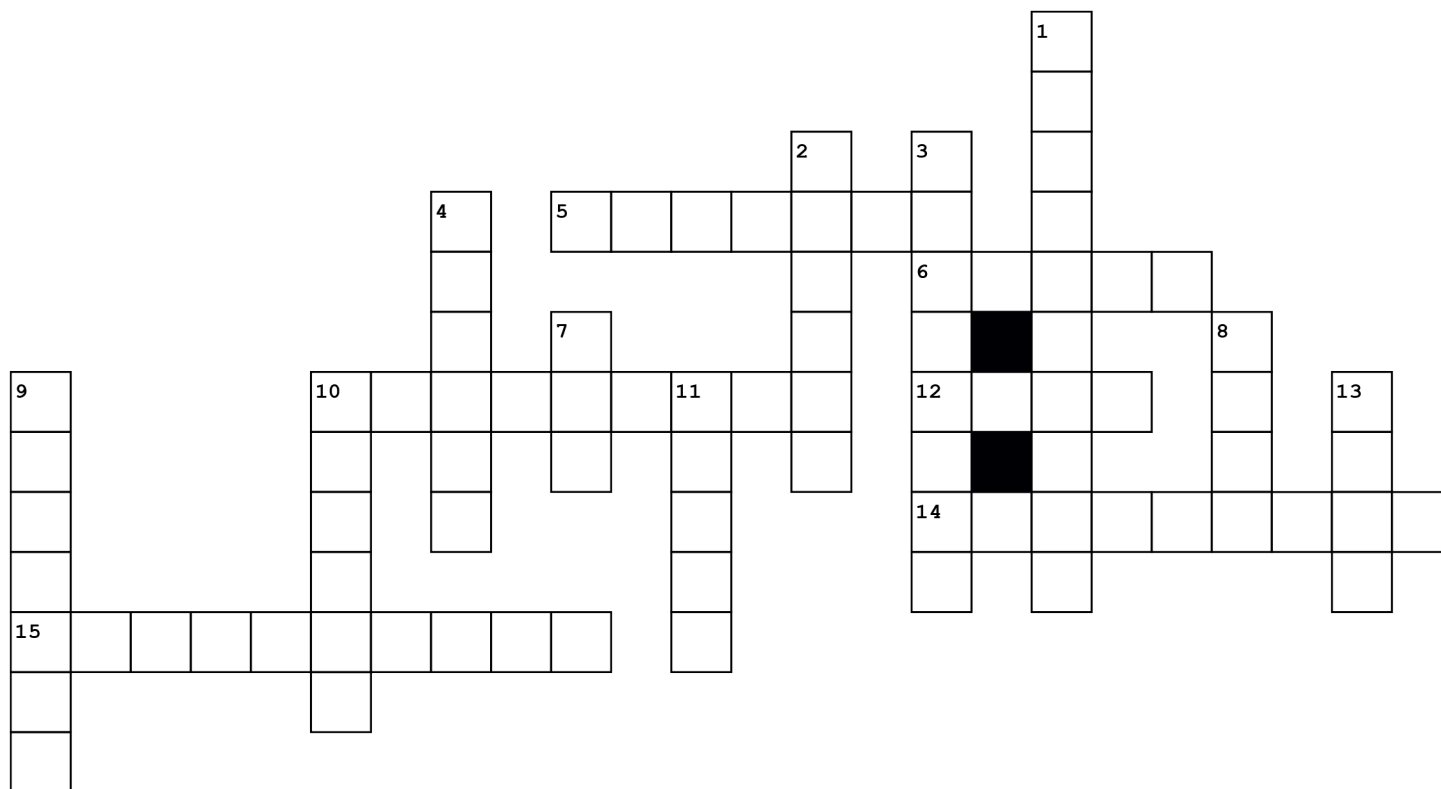
Drawing by Adeniyi Ayodele

Doodle by Celia Boganes



Puzzle by Alicia Maki

The Crossword



Across

- 5. a reindeer with a red nose
- 6. a vegetable that will make you cry
- 10. the fruit that SpongeBob lives in
- 12. a toy where you build things out of bricks
- 14. what are you doing right now
- 15. a type of bee that leaves holes in plant leaves

Down

- 1. the capital city of New Zealand
- 2. a plant part made up of petals
- 3. what ties up your shoes
- 4. the birthstone of January
- 7. a flying mammal that uses echolocation
- 8. a cat makes this noise
- 9. used to hold multiple papers together
- 10. infectious disease
- 11. where is the Eiffel Tower
- 13. Phineas and

Pet Corner



“Bagel is my cat back in my hometown. She is a bit of a shy girl but when she wants cuddles she’s super sweet <3 She loves treats and making biscuits on soft fluffy blankets. She was my first cat after having begged for a kitten my whole life. We got her (and her sister Annie) during the Covid lockdown.”

Send a photo of your pet to eic.thequill@gmail.com to be featured in the next Pet Corner!

LONG NIGHT AGAINST PROCRASTINATION: REVIEW

By Angel Anowuru, Junior Reporter

“LNAP” events were initially introduced in 2010 at the European University Viadrina in Germany. Originally, it was a way of encouraging students to read before their coming exam. Still occurring all over the world today, Brandon University’s Long Night Against Procrastination took place on Wednesday, November 22, 2023.

The event began at seven o’clock in the evening. There were a ton of students that took part in this. A huge thank you to all the events sponsors of this event like Pepsi Beverages Company, Vice President Admin & Finance, BU faculty, staff, Bailey’s, Office of the Vice President Academic & Provost, Student Services and the Library who made available refreshments, including snacks and drinks that were served on the library’s main floor. It can be asserted that this served as a motivating element in encouraging students to read and learn for extended periods of time.

To kick the night off, the Music Library hosted a free concert from 5:15 PM till 6:15 PM. Performers included professionals like Fabio Luisi, The Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Henriette Bonde-Hansen, Matthias Rexroth, and Markus Marquardt. Other activities throughout the night included beading, friendship-bracelet-making, rock painting, and a visit from a therapy dog. The Indigenous People’s Centre and the Brandon University Library served as the event’s locations. In an effort to make the occasion more pleasurable and convenient, some Student Services were on hand, and those who required aid in certain courses could also get it from other students.

The event wrapped up at 2:00 AM, although many students who don’t own automobiles, don’t live near the school, or have no other way to get out of the school grounds other than taking the bus, left at about 11:00 PM due to the final bus pickup being at 11:30 PM. The library had an announcement at that time asking students who needed to take the bus to be ready in advance so they could get to the bus terminal on time. Students who had study companions and friends strolled in groups in an orderly manner to the bus stop and other sites. The Brandon Bear Clan was also present to guarantee a safe walk home.

All in all, the Winter 2023 Long Night Against Procrastination was a grand success, with lots of studying, snacking, and fun times had. It was very popular with students and we cannot wait for the next one in the spring.



Photo - “Michael V. Smith delivered a virtual poetry reading and Q&A in the John E. Robbins Gathering Space on Wednesday, November 29th. His newest book of poetry ‘Queers Like Me’ is out now. The impressively large crowd was wowed by the queer author’s beautiful poems and insightful advice. This event was followed by a screening of his film ‘The Floating Man’ at the Evans Theatre the following day, which dazzled the audience with its themes of identity, gender, and the physical body.” - Lily Hodgson, Editor-in-Chief

CHRISTMAS IN JAMAICA

By Janine Campbell, Junior Reporter

Located in the heart of the Caribbean, with lively reggae beats booming through the air and vibrant colors adorning the landscapes, Jamaica welcomes Christmas with a tapestry of tradition, faith, and cultural richness that resonates deeply within the hearts of all who celebrate it. For me, growing up amidst the sandy beaches and azure waters, Christmas in Jamaica was an immersion into a world where festivity blended seamlessly with faith. The rhythms of traditional carols sung in reggae tones filled the air during church services, weaving together a sense of spirituality and reverence that touched every heart. It was a time when my family and I gathered, cherishing the significance of the season and its message of hope and peace. The traditions during this time were as diverse and vibrant as the island itself. Despite the warm tropical climate, homes transformed into winter wonderlands, adorned with beautiful

scenes and our own Jamaican Christmas trees, radiant with colorful ornaments that spoke volumes about our heritage. The flavors of Christmas were just as vivid and tantalizing. From the savory aroma of jerk chicken and rice and peas to the unmistakable taste of sorrel drink and the cherished fruitcake soaked in rum, our tables were adorned with the culinary treasures of our island. Each dish was not just a meal but a testament to the richness of our culture, bringing us together in a celebration of flavors and togetherness. Yet, beyond the sights and tastes of Christmas in Jamaica, the essence of Christmas can be found in the spirit of giving and community. ‘Grand Market’ festivities filled the streets, bustling with crafts and local delights, showcasing the entrepreneurial spirit of our people. Gift-giving wasn’t just a tradition; it was an embodiment of generosity, spreading joy among friends and family.

The sounds of reggae and dancehall infused our celebrations, merging with traditional carols to create an unforgettable symphony of jubilation. “Dancehall Sessions” transformed the streets into lively parties, where music and dance became the backdrop to our joyous gatherings. Christmas in Jamaica, for me, is a combination of faith, tradition, and jubilation, a time when communities converge, embracing love, unity, and gratitude. Amidst the swaying palm trees and the laughter echoing across the island, the celebration stands as a testament to the enduring power of cultural diversity and the universal embrace of togetherness. In Jamaica, Christmas is not simply a season; it’s a melody that resonates in every heart, reminding us of the beauty in our differences and the warmth of our shared humanity.

MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES IN BRANDON

By Dorcas Adetundimu, Junior Reporter

Men should be provided with comfortability to discuss their mental health. However, it's common for men to experience several barriers when expressing their mental health to family, friends, community, and work environment. Generally, men report lower levels of stress and depression; contrastingly, suicide rates amongst men are four times higher than women. In Canada, suicide rates are elevated among rural men when compared to their urban counterparts and to rural women. Further research proved that Canadian men harbour more stigmatized perspectives about male depression than women, are less likely to seek support, and often express mental distress differently than women. The prevalent "silent crisis" in men's mental health has been linked to practices, values, and societal beliefs of masculinity. To address and improve this problem, this article discusses men's mental health resources in Brandon and the services/ programs they offer.

The Men's Resource Centre (MRC) is located on 153 8th St, Brandon, MB, at the back entrance of the John Howard Society Building. The MRC offers a haven of safety and support for men and their families, facilitating access to a wealth of resources and information. The centre is dedicated to delivering a comprehensive array of programs, services, and personalized support tailored to address the multifaceted issues impacting men and their families. The MRC is available either by appointment or by drop-in. Programs include Anger Management, Building Healthy Relationships, and the new Crossroads Programs, focused on encouraging the growth of positive life skills. The Men's Resource Centre provides access to numerous services, personalized one-on-one support, assistance with protection orders, third party reporting, and guidance with pardons and record suspensions. Drop-in workshops include information sessions about legal issues, health and wellness, as well as creative workshops for art and music. Upcoming events include a free group boxing lesson at Peak Performance, support groups, free haircuts, and more.

Movember is a men's mental health charity acknowledging the challenges

men face when discussing mental health. Their focus is on dismantling the stigmas attached to suicide prevention, prostate cancer, testicular cancer and more. The month-long movement, which just ended on November 30th, emphasizes the importance of men's mental health research and the importance of health services that reach and provide support for men. Movember is currently funding upwards of 1,250 health projects, globally uniting experts worldwide to collaborate on projects. The charity concentrates on funding research for the three biggest health issues facing men: mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.

The Canadian Men's Health Foundation, as a nationally registered charity, is committed to offering knowledge, resources and support to men and their families in their pursuit of healthier living. Unfortunately, Canadian men are facing a distressing trend of death by chronic illness. Remarkably, a staggering 70% of men's health issues can be preemptively addressed through the adoption of healthier habits. Walks, jogs, swimming, biking or routine tasks like lawn mowing any physical activity significantly contribute to the enhancement of both physical and mental wellbeing. Make healthier food choices with simple dietitian recommendations, healthy meal ideas, and cost-saving tips with "Guy's Guide to Eating Healthy", or listen to the informative "Guy's Guide to Eating Healthy" podcast.

The Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba (MDAM) cultivates profound relationships and establishes an environment where men can express themselves and share their experiences openly. They offer a broad array of mental health and wellness opportunities, ranging from workshops to peer support and one-on-one engagements. MDAM aims to enable an environment where dialogue about life's challenges

enables comfortability and support men prioritizing their own health. The men's online peer support group occurs every Wednesday 6:30pm-7:30pm. One-on-one support can be booked online, or in person out of Winnipeg. MDAM provides other information on their website about men's mental health issues, including eating disorders, erectile dysfunction in men with depression, andropause, and how to stay mentally fit.

We all have a role to play in men's mental health prevention. Family, friends, partners, and colleagues, it is our responsibility to help these statistics decline, and encourage healthy change for men. Make healthy choices, get screened, sustain a healthy diet, exercise, and check in with friends. Asking, listening, and being supportive of your friends can be lifesaving. If you need a hand in having a conversation with someone who's struggling, there are several guides online. Ask the question, listen without judgement or distractions, encourage action and check in. Let's all take part in reversing the stigma around men's mental health and prioritize the enrichment of personal growth.

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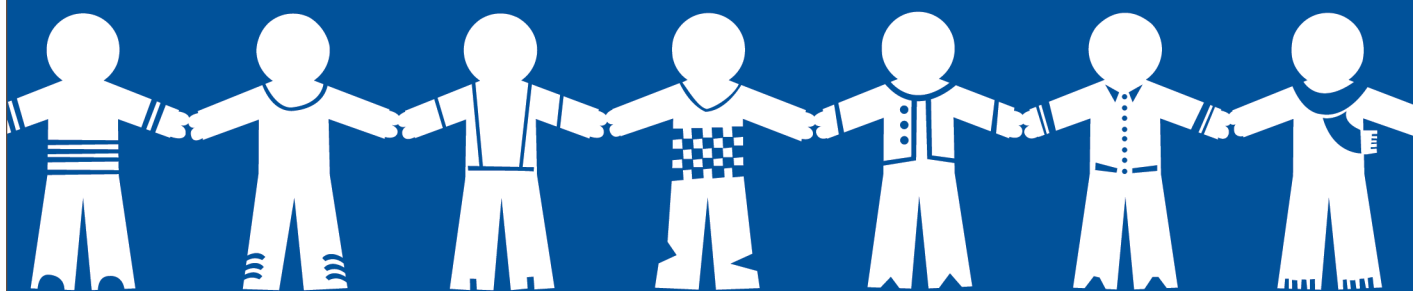
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