



BLUE MET
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BLEU
FESTIVAL
ENFANTS
CHILDREN

PRESS RELEASE
UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL MARCH 16, 2023, 5 P.M.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING WITH AN EDGE OVER 55 ACTIVITIES IN APRIL AND YEAR-ROUND



Montreal, March 16, 2023 – The TD Blue Metropolis Children's Festival runs all year long, offering young readers month after month of reading pleasure... not to mention the endless benefits of reading! As Sylvie Demers, Chair, Quebec Market, TD Bank Group puts it, “by giving children the gift of reading and providing them with an interactive environment for learning and sharing, Blue Metropolis contributes to their development and confidence.” Between September and June, over 55 themed activities are available for children, youth, and families across the greater Montreal area.

DEEP DIVE INTO THE SAINT LAWRENCE

Thanks to support from the Port of Montreal, Blue Metropolis once again presents its Maritime series in communities along the river on the South Shore and in Montreal's riverside boroughs. For over five years, young audiences have been delighted by storytimes and poetry workshops about the Saint Lawrence river and its environment, led among others by author **Caroline Barber**. In the fall of 2022, we also called in a biologist to come talk about habitat protection and show off some bat and swallow boxes. It was a huge success!

REGIONS ALIVE

We're thrilled to present the inaugural edition of the new Regions in the Spotlight series thanks to the support of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec. **Amy Lachapelle**, **Carolyn Chouinard**, and **Keven Girard** have agreed to write original pieces about their respective regions, the Abitibi-Témiscamingue, the Chaudière-Appalaches, and the Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean. The texts will be recorded as podcasts and made available on the Blue Metropolis website. At the end of the winter, the three authors will also meet with school groups and encourage students to participate in a writing contest about their own regions.

TEN BOOKISH DAYS

When spring has finally sprung, from **April 21 to 30, 2023**, the TD – Blue Metropolis Children's Festival will be in full bloom with a new edition of in-person activities. Numerous authors will be meeting children in libraries—for school groups during the week and on weekends for families—as well as in schools, in bookstores, and in hospitals. In addition to TD Children's Literature Award finalist **Hugo Léger** and Prix jeunesse des bibliothèques de la Ville de Montréal finalist **Mario Brassard**, children will have a chance to discover, laugh, and dream with **Danielle Chaperon**, **Paul Martin**, **France Desmarais** and **Richard Adam**, **Lydia Lukidis**, **Lea Beddia**, and many others. Comedian **Marco Collin**, star of the Radio-Canada series *Pour toi Flora*, and author and visual artist **Christine Sioui Wawanoloath** will host the new Indigenous Storytime series. Authors **Kate Lalic**, **Cathy Faucher**, and **Tania Baladi** will visit young people in hospital as part of our Reading to Heal series.

WORLDS OF WORDS

Presented in association with Metropolis bleu, **Les mots secrets**, based on **Louise Dupré's** moving collection of poetry for young people, will be presented at the Plateau-Mont-Royal and Ahuntsic Maisons de la culture. Actors Holly Gauthier-Frankel and Eric Davis and cellist Myelle will perform a reading of excerpts from the novel *What World is Left* by Blue Metropolis 25th anniversary spokesperson **Monique Polak** at the Westmount Library.

NUMBERS AND ECOLOGY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The second edition of Childcare and Daycare Days will be held across Quebec on April 21, 2023, on the theme of ecology. The first event, which was about numeracy, was held last fall. The event includes a contest that gives two childcare centres a chance to win a \$250 gift certificate to an independent bookstore; more importantly, the series helps increase children's awareness of various issues and promotes their academic success.

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Ecology and numbers have been on our mind at Blue Metropolis for a few years already: the Numbers Spelled Out and Young Ecologists Club series feature activities, videos, podcasts, and reading suggestions on the Blue Metropolis website (click on the Youth tab). There are scores of authors involved, including **Bonnie Farmer**, **Fabienne Gagnon**, **Catherine Austen**, **Dominique de Loppinot**, and **André Marois** for Numbers Spelled Out, and **Andrew Katz**, **Elise Moser**, **Sylvain Rivard**, and **Mireille Messier** for the Young Ecologists Club.

TWO EXCITING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Blue Metropolis Foundation offers bilingual educational programs each year to raise kids' awareness of various issues and encourage them to speak out. In 2022–2023, two programs are available to children and youth in French and English schools in the Greater Montreal area and across Quebec.

Veggie Patch Adventurers offers a unique second-language learning experience based on literature, cooking, and ecology to students at Sainte-Bernadette-Soubirous school in Rosemont–Petite-Patrie and Allion Elementary School in LaSalle. Participants will have a chance to compose a bilingual song that will be made into a professional video. The video will be launched on April 1, 2023 on the Blue Metropolis website.

Quebec Roots is also going ahead, for a 17th consecutive year. This always popular educational program is offered to young Anglo-Quebecers in seven classes from seven different schools in the Montreal, Lanaudière, and Nord-du-Québec regions. Last fall, participating students were mentored by professional writers and photographers who helped them express what they face in their own lives. The students' texts and photos will be gathered and published in a book and in an exhibition. The exhibition will be launched during the 2023 Blue Metropolis International Literary Festival.

BLUE METROPOLIS AT A GLANCE

Established in 1997, the Blue Metropolis Foundation is a charitable organization whose mission is to bring together people of diverse languages and cultures around the joy of reading and writing, fostering creativity and cross-cultural understanding. The Foundation presents the annual Blue Metropolis International Literary Festival and offers a range of activities throughout the year through its TD – Blue Metropolis Children's Festival as well as educational and social programs in classrooms, libraries, and online, using writing and reading as therapeutic tools, to encourage students to stay in school, and to combat poverty and exclusion.

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MERCI AUX PARTENAIRES MAJEURS DE LA PROGRAMMATION POUR ENFANTS ET À CEUX DE NOS PROGRAMMES ÉDUCATIFS 2022-2023
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