

SOUZA Newsletter

Winter 2016 | Issue 1

Photo by Anas Wattar

Ice Ice Baby

Sure, winter in this city is pretty cold. I'm sure many of you have considered becoming a squirrel or bear and hibernating within the last few weeks, but you would be missing out! Winter in Montreal is when the city is most vibrant, and here is how you can get the most out of it!



By Hannah

mtnguide.net



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Join the McGill Outdoors Club!

Ever wanted to learn to destroy pesky ice with sharp objects attached to all your limbs? How about cross-country skiing, hunting for skating ponds in the woods, or an innovative form of winter camping where you're not allowed to use any gear with zippers? The McGill Outdoors Club is the most dedicated winter fun club on campus, with trips for all levels (especially introductory!) run at-cost in downhill and cross country skiing, winter hiking and camping, backcountry skating, and ice climbing! You can sign up for their email list at www.mcgilloutdoorsclub.ca/online/listserv for more information on upcoming trips, or drop by one of their meetings Wednesdays at 7:30 pm!



Photo by Anas Wattar

Go Skiing!

There are tons of skiing options in the area! There are many mountains about an hour outside the city, including Mont Saint Sauveur, Mont Gabriel, Mont Olympia, Morin Heights, Sutton, and Bromont to name a few! Most of them also offer night skiing from 3pm to 10pm; Saint Sauveur has a great deal where you and a friend can get night passes for \$19 each on Monday nights! The SSMU Ski club also runs trips every weekend; visit www.ssmuski.com/the-club.html to find out more.



blog.reship.com

Go to Mont Royal!

As a small nature reserve that serves as McGill's backyard, the mountain has many opportunities for winter fun! Aside from tobogganing, there are many groomed cross-country skiing trails to enjoy as well. The McGill Gym rents out cross-country skis and snowshoes for \$10 a day (www.mcgillathletics.ca/sports/2012/12/5/Winter%20Equipment%20Rental.aspx), and the McGill Outdoors Club rents them to members on a weekly basis. You can also take a one-hour cross-country ski lesson from the Beaver Lake complex at the top of the mountain for \$40 (call 514 843-8240 for more information). Last but not least, you can go snow tubing for \$9!



tourisme-montreal.org



Photo by Anas Wattar

Go Ice Skating!

Ice-skating and hockey are quintessential Canadian winter pastimes. If you own skates, there are many places you can skate for free! You can skate outdoors on the Iron Rink on the lower field of campus from the Engineering Undergraduate Society (as long as there's not a game of broomball), Parc Jeanne Mance at the base of the mountain, and Parc La Fontaine (skate rental \$9). Indoor options include McGill's McConnell Arena for \$1 at 1:30 on Tuesday-Thursday. If you don't have skates, you can get them new for around \$70 at Sports Experts or Canadian Tire, along with hockey sticks for \$15! For used, try on skates at a store to find your size then hunt on Craigslist, Kijiji, or the McGill Free & For Sale group on Facebook.

Student Mental Health *By Alice*

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, about 1 in 5 youth will experience some form of mental health distress. In a university setting, it could be caused by a build up of academic, social, emotional and psychological stress, or experiences of assault and pregnancy. If you are feeling unwell or experiencing a crisis, you are not alone. A variety of on and off campus resources are here to support you.



mcgilltribune.com



The McGill Mental Health Hub is a great platform that contains lots of information surrounding mental well being by empowering its visitors. www.mcgillmentalhealthhub.ca/ offers resources from crisis support to information on puppy therapies!



Photo by Anas Wattar

Need an ear to tune in to your worries, struggles, and experiences? Dial 514-398-6246 to the [McGill Students' Nightline](#) from 6pm to 3am any day during the semesters! This operation is completely run by trained McGill student volunteers, who offer active listening, information and referral as well as crisis management services.

For services during the day, the [Peer Support Centre](#) offers a confidential, non-judgemental one-on-one active listening and referral service.

For individualized mental support with access to prescription medication, you may consider visiting the [McGill Mental Health Service](#), which offers psychiatric services. You may book an appointment ahead of time over email or the phone. Alternatively, you may drop-in during the walk-in hours from 11am to 2pm from Mondays to Fridays. The Mental Health Service also offers mental health first aid trainings and group therapy depending on your needs.



If you think you may benefit from behavioural or cognitive therapy, study skills workshops, feel free to drop-in at the McGill Counselling Service. They also offer a variety of workshops that range from academic success to wellness and life skills. They are offered periodically throughout the semester and some may require you to attend consecutive sessions. For the entire list of workshops and support groups, visit www.mcgill.ca/counselling/workshops. Most of the workshops are free!



Photo by Anas Wattar

With psychiatrists and professional staffs, counselling offers great emotional and mental support for managing chronic stress or crisis situations. This service is especially helpful if you need academic accommodations such as requesting a deferral, longer exam writing time or a quieter space as the counsellors may refer you MyAccess at www.mcgill.ca/osd/office-students-disabilities.

What is MyAccess?

It was formerly known as the Office for Students with Disabilities. This service is mandated to facilitate and support the inclusion of diverse learners. It is the place to go if you face any barriers in learning at McGill. There are also drop-in hours available! Visit MyAccess for details.

Beating the Winter Blues



By Sydney

Ah, wintertime at last. You've probably noticed how short the days are, decreasing your exposure to sunlight. These seasonal variations in light can have an effect on your biological clock and the chemical messengers that regulate sleep, mood and appetite. If you've noticed that you've been feeling more down than usual or your motivation is low, it may be more than the winter blues. Seasonal affective disorder, also appropriately referred to as SAD, does exist and may explain the distress you've been experiencing. So how do you know if you're suffering from SAD? Here are the symptoms:

Overeating

Specifically the desire to consume carbs, (sweet and starchy foods), and leading to a noticeable weight gain.

Social problems

Avoiding company and finding yourself irritable with others to the point where you really only want to be alone.



Photo by Anas Wattar

Sleep Problems

Oversleeping but not feeling refreshed and have difficulty getting out of bed or need a nap in the afternoon. It's common for us all to feel the struggle of getting up early in the morning to get to class but this is a more serious need for sleep out of exhaustion.

Lethargy

Day-to-day activities that you never had any problems with now seem too exhausting to complete, simple tasks require more effort than usual and you are having difficulty concentrating.

Physical symptoms

Mental health problems can translate into your physical health in the form of joint pain, stomach aches, and you may find yourself becoming more frequently ill due to a reduced immune functioning.

Depression

Feelings of despair, guilt, anxiety, hopelessness, lack of normal interest in activities and things you would normally find pleasure in. You may be finding that you don't feel quite like yourself.

These symptoms can take a toll on your daily functioning, and rather than just waiting for spring, there are treatment steps you can take. The best option to produce overall wellbeing is to counteract the lack of sunshine with light – either naturally by going outside during the day and keeping blinds open, or with light therapy. Light therapy involves subjecting yourself to an artificial, bright light as you go about activities like reading or watching TV. The intensity of these lights is equivalent to a sunny day and exposure for less than an hour a day can help alleviate symptoms. Thankfully, McGill has some resources where you can rent one of these “happy lights”. Here are a few places where you can find your own:



Photo by Anas Wattar

Happy Lights Lending Program

25 lamps have been made available for undergraduate students and they can be borrowed for a 2-week period with a deposit of \$30. This service is located in the SSMU office, (Suite 1200, Brown Building), and the office is open from 9 am to 6 pm Monday to Friday.

McGill Mental Health Service

8 lamps are available and can be borrowed for 2 weeks at no cost. The McGill Mental Health Clinic is in the Brown Student Services Building and is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 5 pm. If you have any concerns related to your well-being visit www.mcgill.ca/mentalhealth/

Your results will be best if you also improve your sleeping habits. It's recommended that you get an average of 7-9 hours a night, keep your bedtime and waking time constant and avoid naps. When using the light, you don't need to stare directly at it, but it will work best when the light is able to reach your eyes.

If you think that your symptoms are more severe, seek out help from friends and family and use the services offered by McGill because other treatments such as medication, counseling or therapy may be more beneficial. Remember that resources are available to help and you should never be ashamed for reaching out, your mental health should be a priority.



http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_vzMXlfzgosE/TBnkV2wtgKI/AAAAAAAAADjI/Pywd5CHTn6A/s1600/aapz+bright+light

Counselling 514-398-3601
Mental Health 514-398-6019
Student Health 514-398-6017
McGill Nightline 514-398-6246



Photo by Anas Wattar

Volunteering

Why volunteer? It may seem like a paid internship or job is ideal for your summer, but they can be hard to come by. Volunteering can be a great way to broaden your experience, build a social network, and enhance some important life skills, especially if you enjoy social work! Just because a position isn't paid doesn't mean it isn't exactly as intense or valuable as another position; some of the best charity operations run on a volunteer basis in order to keep their services affordable, and often times allow you more freedom to explore and take initiative in your position. Volunteering can be found everywhere, so it can be an opportunity to stay in Montreal, return home, or travel over the summer. Ben Carson, a famous neurosurgeon, once said, "happiness doesn't result from what we get, but from what we give", and volunteering your time is definitely the most rewarding way to give back to the society.



By Alice

There are a plethora of volunteering opportunities that you may engage in during the summer! Even if you are not sure what you enjoy doing, it is easy to try one out and discover your passion while helping out others. Finding summer positions in a local office of a non-governmental organization (NGO), hospital, community centre, or charity initiative in your neighbourhood can be a great way to start. Keep in mind that some volunteering positions may require specific time or length commitments and extensive training periods.



Photo by Anas Wattar

You can go beyond the “local”, and apply for volunteering positions abroad or in remote communities. Some may have a rigorous application process, but it’s still worth trying out! These opportunities can be building schools, helping out local clinics, taking care of endangered animals, disseminating information for health advocacy, and they would allow you to travel and explore a new culture, as well as take on challenges to solve real world problems. However, they can get expensive if the travel costs are not covered by the volunteer-hiring agency. Now, where do I start finding volunteering opportunities?

Local

- Check Career Planning Service (CaPS) myFuture and the Social Equity and Diversity Education (SEDE) for summer volunteering opportunities!
- McGill has many student clubs that engage in community outreach, and look for summer volunteers. Check them out at ssmu.mcgill.ca/clubs/community-outreach-and-volunteering-clubs/
- Hospitals are always looking for new volunteers for weekly or daily commitment over the summer months, but make sure to apply early!
- Medical Direction of the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) offers a variety of clinical volunteering opportunities that you may consider.
- There are many community organizations in Montreal: the Yellow Door, Santropol Roulant, Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre, Mission Old Brewery for the homeless, and Sun Youth. You can find many others with a simple google search!
- Did you know you could volunteer online with the UN? www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/index.html

With Travel

- AIESEC McGill offers ample global outreach internships, such as teaching in developing countries, taking up a role in NGOs or helping with awareness projects that may be paid or nonpaid.
- Global Medical Training (GMT), and MedLIFE offer some clinical exposure in developing countries! Please note that the travel costs are not covered.
- Global Affairs Canada also offers a variety of options to volunteer in remote communities in Canada, as well as abroad.



Photo by Anas Wattar

Summer Studies *By Karine*

Thinking about staying in Montreal a bit longer? Perhaps you want to take a summer course at McGill. In general, most summer courses take place in May with your exam at the beginning of June. However, not all science courses are offered during that time, so make sure to plan your course selection carefully! Here are some courses offered in Summer 2016: **BIOL 202, MATH 222, CHEM 212, CHEM 222, MATH 203, PSYC 100, PYSC 305**. If you cannot stay in Montreal this summer or you want to explore other possibilities, take a look below at the five options you have to earn credits or an additional title to your program where ever you are.

1

Summer Studies at McGill

This is a great opportunity to complete a required course while allowing more room for elective courses that you have been looking forward to take the next year. If this is an option that interests you, you may also want to consider applying to stay in residence if you haven't found an apartment.

Summer Accommodation:

www.mcgill.ca/summer/accommodations

Summer 2016 e-calendar:

www.mcgill.ca/study/2015-2016/faculties/summer/

Important Date: March 3 Summer Registration Opens for U2 and U1 students

2

Studying in your Hometown

Did you know that you could take summer courses at your hometown university and transfer the credits at McGill? There are some restrictions, but if this interests you, you should meet with your SOUSA advisor to discuss.

Study Away:

www.mcgill.ca/science/student/general/studyaway

Transfer credits:

www.mcgill.ca/science/student/general/studyaway/transfercredits



Photo by Anas Wattar

3

McGill Summer Studies in Greece or in Florence

Imagine yourself studying ancient drama in Tessaaloniki, Greece or Italian in Florence. If that is an adventure you want to take, you can read more in the links below.

McGill Summer Studies in Greece: www.mcgill.ca/history/moderngreek/summer-studies-greece

McGill Summer Studies in Florence: www.mcgill.ca/langlitcultures/courses
www.mcgill.ca/langlitcultures/courses/summer-courses/courses-florence
[/summer-courses/courses-florence](http://www.mcgill.ca/langlitcultures/courses/summer-courses/courses-florence)

4

Field Studies

Although the deadline has passed for the Barbados Interdisciplinary Tropical Studies (BITS) for this upcoming summer, right now is a great time to plan for next year.

Canadian Field Studies in Africa

Information Session

Date: Wednesday **March 16th 5:30 pm**

Location: Burnside Hall, Room 426

Panama Field Study Semester

Information Session

Date: Wednesday **March 9th 5:30 pm**

Location: Burnside Hall, Room 426

More Information on Field Studies:

www.mcgill.ca/science/programs/field

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Internships

Did you know that if you complete an internship, it could be mentioned on your transcript? There are more opportunities than just lab work; the last link includes global health internships in topics like HIV, surgical diseases and malaria.

Science Internship Program:

www.mcgill.ca/science/programs/internships/

Internships for B.A.&Sc, students:

www.mcgill.ca/science/student/general/internships/bascinternships

Faculty Internship Programs:

www.mcgill.ca/internships/programs