



CHES INSTITUTE
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INSTITUT D'ÉCHECS
DU CANADA

Bringing Chess to Life

Spring 2019

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Reaching children with chess

General Mercer Public School is one of TDSB's Model Schools for Inner Cities – schools in underserved Toronto neighbourhoods. The school has a diverse and dynamic population, and Principal Heather Wheeler is committed to providing her students with special programs that enrich their school experience and enhance the curriculum in innovative, concrete ways.

Ms. Wheeler invited CIC back to present our in-class program again this winter. Along with the fun of learning about and playing chess, the program uses chess as a platform to discuss ideas such as planning ahead, paying attention to what's around you, taking measured risks, and other skills that apply to many facets of life.

Thanks to our donors' support, which helps fund programs like these, we were able to offer the 8-week program to every class in the school so that all the children were able to benefit.



Ryan constructs the two rooks checkmate position as CIC instructor Rose Tuong watches on.

Ms. Wheeler was particularly pleased with how enthusiastically the program was received in Shannon O'Dell's Junior Learning Disabilities class, where instructor Rose Tuong used dynamic storytelling and tailored challenges to connect with students who have a range of abilities and learning styles.



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"Chess is a fun brain-bending game" – Evan is part of the new Hillcrest Chess Club.



News

CIC back at Hillcrest

This winter, CIC was thrilled to be back at Hillcrest Public School with a lunchtime chess club. Hillcrest is one of the first schools where CIC founder Ted Winick began to realize the profound benefits of thoughtful, multi-layered chess instruction.

When some of Ted's original students, now entering university, heard of his recent health issues, they made him a

get-well card which expressed the lasting impact of his chess teaching.

"Thank you so much for teaching me not only chess but also patience, tactics, precision, and kindness," wrote Tal.

"The lessons I learned from you brought me closer to my grandfather," wrote Emily. "He doesn't speak a word of English, but we were able to communicate through chess, and it's really beautiful."



Meet the new members of Hillcrest Chess Club. We look forward to hearing about your successes in the future!



Humans of Chess: CIC's Michael Humphreys

"It was when I was around 16 that I really started to get serious about chess. What happened was I lost a couple games against someone I was used to beating. I had to play that person again, I had to beat them, so I started studying. I realized how much that had benefitted me. The improvement was pretty obvious. So I kept studying. At that point I would have been around 1300, and I quickly went up to about 1600.

"Around then, when I was 1600, I started to get an appreciation for how deep a game it was. I realized people were not only farther ahead than me, but unimaginably farther ahead. A 2100 player could wipe me off the board. But then there were people unimaginably farther ahead than that, people who could eat that 2100 player for breakfast. And it just keeps going."

>> See the full article at chessinstitute.ca



Chess to Life



One important turning point in the use of chess in education is the move from seeing chess as a competitive activity for a few who excel in it to seeing it as a broader means of supporting learning for all students.

“Scholastic chess,” a term for this second approach to chess in schools, was the theme of the [London Chess Conference in 2017](#), attended by our then-CEO, Tal Granite.

Tal’s presentation, [Chess in the Hidden Curriculum](#), argued for the value of chess in the classroom. He described how CIC uses chess to promote emotional growth by developing fundamental life skills, such as embracing discomfort and fear in decision-making.

Social and emotional skills, according to a [19-year study](#) published in 2015, are some of the most important early predictors of future success.

Chess for emotional education

Chess has long been known to provide educational benefits. A 1992 *New York Times* article [“Playing Chess as a Tool in Learning”](#) expounds some of these benefits – from providing greater opportunities for higher-level thinking skills to promoting self-esteem: “you can’t always tell by testing what a child’s real academic abilities are; chess gives them another way to show what they know.”



Chess as comfort at Our Lady of Lourdes

Students from Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School in St. James Town participated in a free after-school chess club, offered in response to the fire in 2018 that left many families in hotels and shelters.

Children signed up for a structured 8-week program where off-the-board activities included “find the king within” to find inner focus, and “captured pawn pose” to find inner serenity. On-the-board skills included a review of castling, training on applying opening principles, and practice using mating nets in the endgame.

Become a CIC donor!

The generosity of community members who recognize the power of chess to improve lives enables us to present programs such as the free after-school club at Our Lady of Lourdes. If you would like to be a part of CIC’s benevolent community, we invite you to donate [here](#).



Events

Sign up for upcoming
CIC chess tournaments
and camps

Upcoming events



Small Humans of Chess: Max

"Chess helps me slow down, my head goes too fast."

Max is a member of a lunchtime kindergarten chess club at Withrow Public School. Max has high spirits and lots of energy.



Cameron Robertson leads a thumbs up for the medal winners at the Half-Day Tourney on March 30 – [Sign up now](#) for the May 25 and June 29 Tourneys!



Diya, wearing a chess crown, has a great time with her friend Ashylee at the January 18 P.A. Day tournament.



Ken wins the trophy and poses with friends at the January 18 tournament – [Registration](#) for June 7 is now open!

May 25 and June 29: Saturday Afternoon 1/2-Day **Tourney** – Gain tournament experience in a fun, casual setting. 1-4pm. **\$25**

June 1-2: Harbourfront Centre Chessfest – Come down to the waterfront to celebrate everything chess: giant chess, costumes and crafts, chess presentations, demo lessons, and more! **Free entry**

June 1 Saturday at Chessfest includes the **Annual Chessfest Children's Tournament**. **\$10**

June 7: P.A. Day tournament – A full day of chess fun, including CFC-rated tournament play, lessons for beginners and a pizza lunch. **\$55**

le 14 juin: Tournoi de J.P. – Programme bilingue comprend des parties classées par le CFC, des leçons pour débutants et un déjeuner de pizza. **55\$**

July 2-26: Summer Chess Camp – The best mix of chess lessons and play, creative arts activities, sports, and more! Save your spot today! **\$295/week**. Special rate for all four weeks.

Visit chessinstitute.ca/register or email info@chessinstitute.ca for more information