



MySchoolROCKS Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

Summer/Fall 2019

MySchoolROCKS personifies the synergy between music education and youth wellness. Through the connective power of music, we inspire young people to unlock creativity, embrace well-being and recognize collaboration as a pathway to reach their full potential!



MySchoolROCKS is a registered Canadian charity (# 787689520) and globally recognized NGO dedicated to addressing the issue of youth mental health. Over the last number of years, numerous [studies](#) have identified that the numbers of youth in crisis are on the rise. A report commissioned by **Children's Mental Health Ontario** stated that nearly half of the students surveyed reported missing school due to issues related to mental health (*Beattie; Toronto Star: November 14th, 2017*).

Alarmed by these troubling trends, [MySchoolROCKS](#) aims to engage young people through innovative methods that spark creativity while modeling strategies for life-long wellness. Supported by the framework of progressive music instruction and anchored by best practices in social emotional learning, **Music and Wellness R.O.C.K.S.** is an empowering, FIVE part workshop that inspires participants to embrace growth mindsets by **"Thinking Like A Musician"**! Forward thinking programming that ignites cultures of creativity and collaboration are at the heart of our methodology. **MySchoolROCKS** wants to energize vulnerable youth through the foundation of the acronym **R.O.C.K.S**:



"Respect" others, **"Open Up"** to empathy, **"Confidently"** approach challenges, practice **"Kindness"** daily and **"Step Up"** to make a difference! Since the launch of our original programs in 2014, the **R.O.C.K.S** message has connected with over 12,000 students in the Greater Toronto Area. Developed by our team of artists, education and technology professionals, MySchoolROCKS guiding vision encourages participants to embrace **AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION** through guitar, keyboard, percussion, cloud based digital music, and targeted wellness workshops!

MySchoolROCKS strives to:

- Be the catalyst that unlocks a young person's POTENTIAL through progressive music instruction.
- Utilize music's positive impact on the brain to cultivate GROWTH MINDSETS.
- Emphasize and apply 21st CENTURY SKILLS such as collaboration, problem solving and goal setting.
- Model age appropriate INTERPERSONAL SKILLS & EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE to help youth navigate conflict.
- Initiate meaningful DIALOGUE that addresses the frustration & anxiety experienced by young people today.
- Partner with stakeholders to research, develop and distribute The Music and Wellness R.O.C.K.S App

Music as a Pathway to Grassroots Success & Community Transformation

Breakthroughs in the science of neuroplasticity continue to highlight the cognitive power of mindfulness. Imagine a community where participants tap into the creative potential of right brain modalities and apply these pathways to guide authentic learning! What better immersion into design thinking, the craft of songwriting and emotional intelligence than immersive activities that simulate the role of musicians in a band?

“When participants are engaged with innovative, experiential learning, and educators unleash the power of personalized arts activities, we have the ability to transform a community one inspired workshop at a time”



***R.O.C.K.S* injects untapped energy into our FIVE PART Music and Wellness programs, empowers users to drive their own creative content and models strategies that promote positive mental health. Focusing on a longer view, *MySchoolROCKS* will:**

- Continue to develop innovative programming that empowers vulnerable citizens
- Research the viability of creating a digitized version of *Music and Wellness R.O.C.K.S* to reach diverse global audiences
- Take this concept to the next level by creating a unique *MySchoolROCKS* App
- Identify community partnerships that will help create *MySchoolROCKS* satellite studios in at risk and marginalized communities

Music as a Pathway to Grassroots Success & Community Transformation



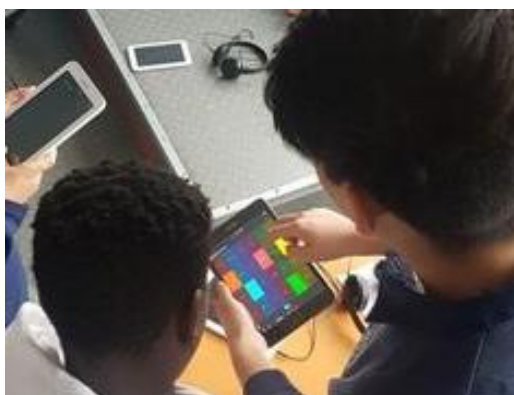
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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Music and Mindfulness R.O.C.K.S aligns our signature lessons with Ministry of Education expectations focusing on students in Grades 3-8 (ages 8-13):

- Students work collaboratively and flex creative muscles as we cover **Ministry Expectations** such as rhyme, rhythm, melody and harmony
- Similarly, we encourage students to **“Reflect, Respond, and Analyze”** using the critical analysis process to communicate their feelings, ideas, and understandings in response to a variety of musical experiences

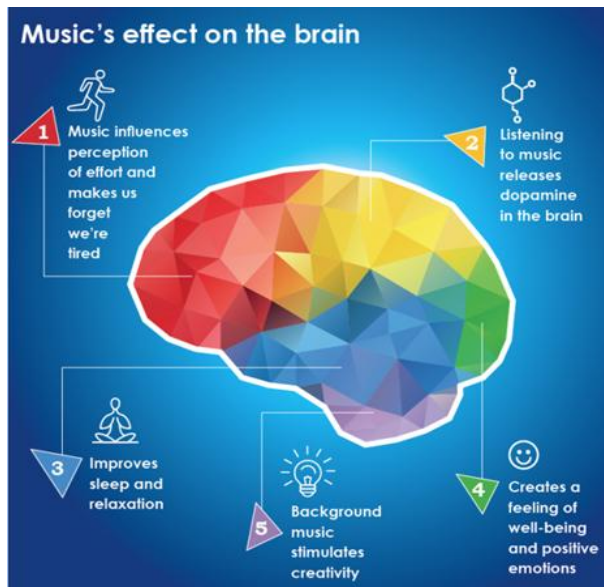


STRENGTHS:

- Academically sound, evidence based program that bridges gaps between curricular outcomes and both learning modalities and the emergence of 21st century competencies
- Very well received during pilot launches by educators, administrators, international organizations, student wellness advocates, health practitioners, artists and social media followers (*e.g. endorsed by the Mental Health Innovation Network of London/Geneva, awarded a major grant by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation/MISK Foundation of the Middle East*)
- Near unanimous positive rating by educators and students who have participated in the studio, classroom and road-show program (exit interviews on-going)
- Timely and topical with educators commenting that “*Music and Wellness R.O.C.K.S* fills a definite gap in classroom instruction...”
- Gaining momentum in the GTA with 1000 students visiting *Rock Pro Studios* in 2018/19 (waiting list), 2500 student audience in 2017 (*MySchoolR.O.C.K.S LIVE!*) and over 20,000 student audience for original program *Rock Out Bullying* from 2014-2016
- Strong team with professional, accredited leadership; sound fiscal management and tight/responsive governance structure
- 90% of Leadership Team, award winning artists and support staff are community residents

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Mental Health is a growing challenge in all sectors of society with youth in particular reporting escalating levels of school related anxiety, stress and illness
- A growing body of scientific evidence points to the profoundly positive impact that music and the arts have on learning and youth mental wellness
- Substantial gap in curricular programming and teacher comfort in both students wellness and the musical arts (looking for partnerships)
- MySchoolROCKS’ long term goal of program digitization (App) fits into the Ontario Ministry of Education’s agenda of mandatory on-line courses
- Teachers, parents and administrators are reaching critical mass with escalating issues and will be forced to address the need for capacity building whether voluntarily or through the ramification of legal action(s)
- Mississauga (and the GTA Horseshoe) continues to grow as a vibrant & viable hub for emerging artists-transiting from bedroom community to a hotbed of cultural innovation—waiting for emerging music!
- Technological innovation has eliminated borders thus opening MySchoolROCKS educational reach to a global audience
- International partners (i.e. US based interests) have reached an educational crossroads and are reaching out to us for global partners to recalibrate struggling systems that are leaving students unprepared for 21st century citizenship



Graphic created by Pascale Héon, Audiologist, [Polyclinique de l'Oreille](#)



Courtesy of: Cool To Be Me SEL

KEY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. How will MySchoolROCKS expand their audience?

A: Building on our referrals and positive reputation in the educational community, MySchoolROCKS will leverage our youth foundations and extend our philosophy to teachers, principals, support staff as well as a much larger on-line community. This can be capitalized through a digital App.

Q: Besides students, who may benefit from Music and Wellness R.O.C.K.S?

A: MySchoolROCKS has reached out to program providers for Seniors and administrators at Alternative Education Centres to facilitate pilot projects connecting with more diverse users. (To be continued...)

Q: What might one of these projects look like?

A: We are looking at opportunities to pilot digital applications with in-school workshops and live assemblies to benefit a larger demographic

Q: Will MySchoolROCKS expand? (I.e. Board of Directors, networks, professional contacts)?

A: 2020 will likely see an expansion of the Board to reflect members of the community who bring more depth and diversity to our programming (the mental health/medical community, Arts stakeholders, university technology experts and representatives of international organization who support our research and mission at home and abroad.



www.myschoolrocks.org



[@My_School_ROCKS](https://twitter.com/My_School_ROCKS)



<https://www.facebook.com/MySchoolROCKSCharity>

Resources

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/encouraging-students-develop-resilience>

<http://kristopherchilds.com/podcast>

<http://zhaolearning.com/2016/10/08/from-deficiency-to-strength-shifting-the-mindset-about-education-inequality/>

<http://www.musicalfuturesinternational.org/soundtrap-songwriting.html>

<https://markmanson.net/emotional-intelligence>

<https://www.cbcmusic.ca/posts/21122/study-brain-activity-opera-de-montreal-hec-carmen>

[Why Montreal researchers are measuring the brain activity of opera-goers - CBC Music](#) www.cbcmusic.ca

<http://futuresongwriting.eu/2019/03/28/future-songwriting-launched/>

<https://www.transformingeducation.org/ready-to-be-counted/>

<https://www.wired.com/story/tech-effects-how-does-music-affect-your-brain/>

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2019-03-13-how-improving-student-feedback-and-teaching-data-science-restored-our-classroom-culture>

Helping Struggling Students Build a Growth Mindset <https://www.edutopia.org/article/helping-struggling-students-build-growth-mindset-donna-wilson-marcus-conyers>

[http://ggoodhart.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Why Music Education Matters in Academics.pdf](http://ggoodhart.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Why_Music_Education_Matters_in_Academics.pdf)

<https://www.youthmusic.org.uk/sound-of-the-next-generation>

Mental Health Innovation Network Welcomes MySchoolROCKS <https://mailchi.mp/07d247212ec9/6e657m3euk-3242495?e=59a741dcc3>

[The Struggle Is Real: How Difficult Work Strengthens Student Achievement - ascd.org](#)

Energy and Calm: Brain Breaks and Focused-Attention Practices

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/brain-breaks-focused-attention-practices-lori-desautels>

[Navigating the Future of Learning: KnowledgeWorks Future Forecast 5.0](#) knowledgeworks.org

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-playing-an-instrument-benefits-your-brain-anita-collins>

https://www.edsurge.com/amp/news/2018-06-04-the-future-of-education-depends-on-social-emotional-learning-here-s-why?_twitter_impression=true

<http://www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/m/episodes/i-got-rhythm-the-science-of-song>

<https://casel.org/resources/>

<https://www.transformingeducation.org/making-sense-of-social-emotional-survey-results-using-the-core-districts-benchmarking-data/>

<https://www.unitedwaygt.org/research-and-reports> Opportunity Equation (Income Inequality and Community Marginalization)