



Monica Pink Pet Shrink

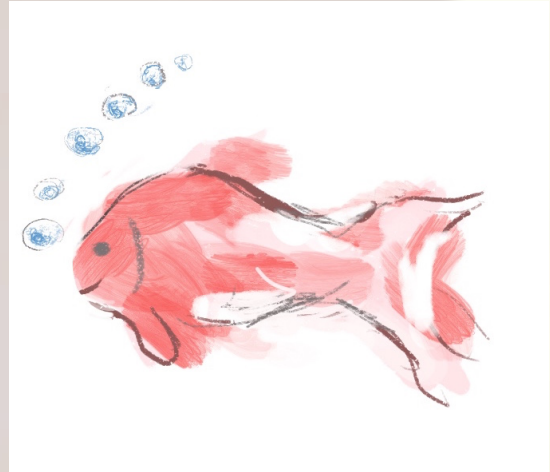
A Children's Comedy Series

Proposal

Monica Pink Pet Shrink is a children's comedy series that looks at the intricacies of human and animal behaviour as seen through the eyes of two oddball 9 year old kids. Monica Pink and her best friend William Strange are really good at investigating and analysing pet behaviour but they can find human behaviour perplexing.

The series uses humour and pet problems to teach children some basic psychological concepts which will equip them with coping strategies for the expected and unexpected events in their lives.

Each episode will feature a pet with problems and the pet's psychological issues will be reflected in the stories of the people in Monica's world. Denial, Fear, Repressed Anger, Dominance and Confidence Issues are just some of the subjects covered in this children's comedy series.



Synopsis

Monica Pink is a self-taught pet shrink. She has a hut at the bottom of the neighbour's garden where she listens, records, observes and gives out advice to the neighbourhood kids and their troubled pets. Monica is in therapy herself, she has unresolved abandonment issues – her dad passed away a few years ago. Monica likes to prolong her therapy sessions with Dr Brian Dickson, the school psychologist, as she uses the insights she gains from him in her own pet shrink practice.

Dr Dickson has ulterior motives in continuing to see her as a patient - basically he has designs on her glamorous single mum Barb Pink. Monica and her best friend William Strange investigate everything from sibling rivalry in parrots to the mood-swings of rabbits and jealousy in hamsters.

Monica amazes the pet owning kids, as she is extremely good at pinpointing the problems with their pets, however sometimes pets and people can be more complicated than they first appear. Sometimes there is no substitute for grown up common sense, which is usually enthusiastically supplied by their lovely schoolteacher Miss Appleby.



Synopsis

Miss Appleby has a crush on William's dad and is always making excuses to pop round. One of William's many projects involves planning elaborate ways to make his (single) dad Joe Strange and Monica's mum fall in love. William's matchmaking is however an uphill struggle.

Joe Strange and Barb Pink are polar opposites. Joe runs an animal sanctuary from his house and garden and is happy to live surrounded by chaos – however Barb craves order and beauty.

Will Barb and Joe ever fall in love? Will Dr Dickson and Miss Appleby keep getting in the way? Will Monica and William get the happy family they so desperately desire?





Monica Pink

Monica Pink

Monica's analysis doesn't stop with pets, she also analyses the pet owners, her fellow classmates and the grown-ups around her.

Monica can sometimes be too bright and too inquisitive that she has difficulty fitting in with other kids.



William Strange

William has amazing array of random facts at his fingertips. He can tell you why dogs are colour-blind, why catnip tastes so good (to cats), and why slugs hate salt.

He has few of the normal fears associated with kids his own age - mainly because he does a risk evaluation before engaging in any type of adventurous activity.

Barb Pink

Recently widowed mum Barb likes everything to be perfect. Barb may appear a little shallow but she has a heart of gold and William adores her, he would love it if she were his mum.

Barb enjoys Joe's company and thinks that he is a great boss but she just cannot see how this walking catastrophe could ever be husband material.



Joe Strange

Recently divorced dad Joe is eccentricity personified, in Barb's eyes at any rate. Joe is grounded, amiable and ever patient. He lives for his son William and perhaps he's over indulgent with him allowing the entire house to be taken over by William's experiments.

Joe has a crush on Barb but he knows that his feelings are completely unrequited and so he keeps them under wraps.



Dr Brian Strange

Dr Dickson is Monica's shrink and is fast becoming a friend of Barb's, he is one of her main admirers and therefore one of Monica, William and Joe's main adversaries.

Dr Dickson is a child psychologist and likes to think of himself as charming, sophisticated and good with children. He is allergic to pets.

Miss Appleby

Miss Appleby is the perfect schoolteacher.

She is young, enthusiastic and pretty and has lashings of common sense. Monica and William's pet investigations often leave them confused and Miss Appleby, slowly but concisely, explains how the animal world and the grown-up world work.

Miss Appleby falls in love easily.



Jessica Parker

Jessica is Monica's rival.

She is the most perfect girl in school
and she judges people by their appearance.

Jessica has a perfect pet Poodle called Pinky.





Mark Dickson

Mark is Dr Dickson's nephew and he is really mean.
He is the school bully and all the younger kids
are scared of him.

He has an untrained badly behaved dog called Fido.

Episode One - Acceptance

The extremely messy and eccentric new neighbours move in next door to Monica and open up an animal sanctuary. Monica likes William and his dad Joe Strange immediately, however Barb initially judges them by their appearance. Monica persuades Joe to allow her to set up the Monica Pink Pet Shrink office in a hut at the bottom of the garden.

Monica's first client is Jessica Parker's perfect poodle Pinky who has accidentally been turned green in the pet beauty salon by Joe Strange - he used the wrong shampoo. Pinky is temporarily rejected by Jessica Parker and is being looked after at the sanctuary. Monica tells the green poodle she understand what it is to be abandoned - and goes on to teach the poodle some ego strengthening techniques - one of which involves looking in the mirror and saying; I like myself.

Barb tries very hard to be more accepting of people and less judgmental even though it makes her rather anxious. She accepts a job as a pet beautician in the animal sanctuary in an effort to prove how accepting she is.



Episode Two - Fear

Alexandra (a nervous girl from school) has a very nervous rabbit called Hamilton who is afraid of everything from spiders to dogs. Monica gets Hamilton to confront his fears step by step – initially by surprising him with the other pets. She then teaches him a few strategies for dealing with frightening situations.

Meanwhile Joe is nervous around Barb, when he tries to help in the salon he is clumsy and awkward. Monica teaches him to confront his fears and just when he is going to ask Barb to dinner Dr Dickson calls round, he appears suave and sophisticated compared to Joe. Dr Dickson asks Barb out on a dinner date.

William asks Dr Dickson what he is afraid of and he says he is not really afraid of anything but that his body is allergic to dogs and shorthaired guinea pigs. William surreptitiously puts a shorthaired guinea pig into Dr Dickson's pocket. Dr Dickson sneezes and scratches himself during the entire date.

Barb is embarrassed to be seen with him and gets so anxious that she has an anxiety attack.

The next day Dr Dickson prescribes her some 'pink perky pills' – she tells Monica that the pills stop her from being nervous. Monica tells her that she can teach her strategies to stay happy. Barb makes it quite clear to Monica that she is not one of her pets.



Episode Three - Dominance

Mark Dickson is the school bully and he picks on William. Monica does a deal with Mark - she will train his badly behaved dog Fido if he stops bullying William.

After a very strict dog training session, Fido disappears. Mark is really upset and cries like a girl in front of Monica. Fido is picked up by the police and is brought to Joe at the animal sanctuary.

Dr Dickson calls round to collect Fido – Monica and William notice that Dr Dickson is not particularly pleased to see the dog back safe. The next day at school Mark makes Monica swear on her pet goldfish's life that she will never tell that he was crying, Mark is back to being a scary bully!

William finds the dog's collar in Dr Dickson's coat pocket and realises that Dr Dickson tried to get rid of Fido. William does a deal with Dr Dickson, he tells him that he will not tell Mark about how he tried to get rid of the dog if he gets Mark to stop bullying him and Monica. They shake hands on it.



Episode Four - Confidence

Barney Brown the unconfident, allergy prone kid from school tells Monica that he would love to have a pet but that he is scared that it would set off his allergies. Joe invites Barney over to the animal sanctuary and gives him the job of looking after the hamsters. Joe tells Monica that allergies are all in the mind.

After a day of hard work, Barney is suddenly filled with confidence and he tells William he is going to ask for a hamster for his birthday. When Barb and Joe find out that Monica and William were using Barney to do all their chores in the sanctuary, they insist that they have to use their pocket money to buy Barney a pet of his choosing. Barney wants a Parakeet.

Meanwhile Joe gets up the confidence to invite Barb out for dinner. Barb accepts but dinner doesn't go well as Joe turns out to be allergic to mushrooms and his whole face swells up and he has to be rushed to hospital. When Joe gets back from hospital Monica says to him, I thought allergies were all in the mind, Mr Strange.

Barney pretends that he is allergic to his new Parakeet but really he brings him back to the sanctuary because he talks all the time, constantly saying "Who's a pretty boy". William offers to grant Barney visitation rights but only if he pays to see the parrot. For once Barney stands up for himself and William has to back down.



Episode Five - Attention Seeking

It is Monica's birthday party and Monica helps her mum to set up a party table in the garden. The hyperactive annoying twins from school, Jane and Rebecca, bring their kittens over for Monica to have a look at. Monica diagnoses them as having attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD).

Meanwhile all of the grown-ups at Monica's party seem to be looking for attention. Dr Dickson and Joe are vying with one another to capture Barb's attention, Miss Appleby flirts with Joe and Barb is a little jealous. They are about to serve chocolate cake and William knows that chocolate makes you fall in love. William decides that he has to do something to separate Miss Appleby and Joe – as he wants his dad to marry Barb and not Miss Appleby. He directs the cats with water pistols, they jump all over the table and end up in the chocolate cake.

Later Joe explains to William and Monica that food can have an effect on your mood but that it can't make you fall in love. Monica tells the hyperactive Twins, that they cats are born with ADHD and you cannot change their behaviour but humans are not pets and they can giveup chocolate and sweets which is what the excitable twins should do as it will make them nicer children.



Episode Six - Good Grief

Elliot is a neurotic kid from school. His pet mouse got run over and Elliot is really sad and forlorn. Monica and William are convinced that Dr Dickson is guilty of the 'hit and run' crime. Joe Strange arranges a funeral for the mouse and all the kids from school came.

Dr Dickson invites himself to dinner at Barb and Monica's house - he cooks an elaborate fish dish. Monica, thinking that she is acting on his advice, accidentally kills her goldfish. Monica becomes convinced that Dr Dickson is killing off all the pets in revenge, as he is allergic to all of them.

She holds a meeting in the Pet Shrink office and tells the school kids that she believes that no pet is safe as long as Dr Dickson is around. She gives them a set of strategies for keeping their pets safe. Mark Dickson tells Dr Dickson that all the kids are calling him Dr Death.

Dr Dickson decides to organise a project on bereavement at school. He calls it 'Good Grief'. He talks to the kids about the four stages of grief; disbelief, anger, sadness and acceptance. He thinks the talk has gone well but as he leaves the room, he hears Monica whisper to William 'assassin'.



Episode Seven - Unrequited Love

Mark Dickson follows Monica around at school and is mean to her for most of the day. Monica tries to be mean back but she is not very good at it. Monica complains to Barb about Mark Dickson's behaviour. Barb explains that boys are sometime mean to girls because of something called 'unrequited love'.

Eric, a boy from school, has a really cute looking pet bunny rabbit and he brings the rabbit to see Monica as the rabbit keeps trying to bite him. She tells him the rabbit is suffering from 'unrequited love' - that's why it's being mean to him. She asks him about his other pets and Eliot admits that he prefers his pet piglet to the rabbit.

William and Monica analyse the behaviour of Barb and decide that Barb is secretly in love with Joe and that Dr Dickson is suffering from unrequited love for Miss Appleby. Monica and William make a plan to get Barb to fall in love with Joe Strange. They beautify Joe at the pet beauticians salon.

They make him take over a heart shaped box of chocolates to Barb and create an elaborate romantic flower display in the garden with flowers and lanterns. Joe takes fright, leaves the chocolates at the door and runs away. Barb believes Dr Dickson has left the chocolates for her and softens to him instead of Joe.



Episode Eight - Mood Swings

Monica and William try to link Dr Dickson to every pet death or disappearance in the village. They carry out extensive interviews and stick up a big map in the Pet Shrink office - charting every pet disappearance and Dr Dickson's known movements.

Dr Dickson gives Monica two pet bunny rabbits to make up for the dead goldfish. William is jealous and goes off in a huff.

Monica's rabbits suffer from mood swings, she tries to teach them some ground rules but its mood swings are extreme. Happy one minute, snarling and biting the next – Monica gives up and stomps off telling the rabbits that they are untreatable.

Monica talks herself into making things up with William. Monica temps William back to being her friend by offering him her infrared tracking glasses – he takes them but tells her that he still prefers his puppy to her. Monica tries to tell Joe about Dr Dickson – but he isn't really listening and he tells her to give Dr Dickson a chance.

Monica cannot hide her disappointment in Joe and she goes off in a mood. She goes back to the rabbits and just cuddles them – no more rules. The rabbits almost purr in delight.



Episode Nine - Repressed Anger

Monica comes home from school to find that Dr Dickson is in her house. Monica throws the chocolates he has brought into the bin. Dr Dickson gives her a row, he tells her not to be rude to her mother. Mark Dickson's dog goes missing again and Monica helps him but William won't help as he is jealous of Mark Dickson spending time with Monica. Monica and Mark spy on Dr Dickson and overhear his mother telling him to marry a rich widow.

Monica tries to warn Barb that Dr Dickson is only interested in her money but she won't listen. Later Monica lets the rabbits out – she tries to get the rabbits to jump through hoops but the rabbits don't like the game, she tells the rabbits she doesn't like their attitude and forgets to put them back in their cage. Dr Dickson comes over to cut the grass and accidentally kills one of the pet rabbits.

Dr Dickson and Barb find that Monica's Pet Shrink hut is covered with elaborate notes trying to establish Dr Dickson as a pet serial killer. Barb and Dr Dickson tell Monica that she will not be getting anymore pets and that she can no longer work as a Pet Shrink.

Monica finds Barb's handbag and puts her 'perky pink pills' in the bin and replaces them with pink sweeties from the cupboard. No more happy pills for your brain, mummy. If I'm not happy why should you be? Barb gives up her job at the Pet Sanctuary.

Episode Ten - Guilt

Dr Dickson feels guilty about the pet rabbit and tries to make it upto Monica with a toy fluffy rabbit. Monica rejects the fluffy rabbit. Later she overhears Dr Dickson advising a (now) anxious and unhappy Barb to send Monica to a boarding school where she will be under the guidance of a full-time psychologist. Monica is horrified – she goes back upstairs and packs a rucksack.

In the dead of night Monica sneaks out of the house. Joe sees Monica running off with her rucksack on her back. Monica gets as far as the river, she watches two young otters play by the riverbank and her eyes fill with tears. She allows herself to cry for the first time and she says over and over again. I want my daddy. Monica is picked up and cradled in Joe's arms.

William stands next to him wearing his infrared goggles and Labrador pup stands proudly next to him. Joe delivers Monica to a baffled Barb, she didn't know that Monica was missing. Barb is very upset – the pink perky pills must really be wearing off! Barb shouts at Monica and then apologises.

Monica tells her it's better to let her anger out otherwise it kind of gets bottled up. Barb says; Stop analysing me Monica, I'm not one of your pets. Monica tells her that psychology is the study of pets and humans. Barb sends her to her room and then immediately feels guilty, she goes to her room and asks her where she was running away to. Monica tells her that she was going to the circus as she wants to be a lion tamer.



Episode Eleven - In Denial

Dr Dickson tries to explain to Monica what 'in denial' means. He says it is when you pretend something isn't happening. Later Mark Dickson tells Monica that she has no friends and that nobody likes her, when Monica says that it isn't true, but he says, "Maybe you're in denial Monica Pink".

Monica and William follow Mark and find him listening in to Dr Dickson's sessions through an air vent. Monica makes him give her some dirt on Dr Dickson. Mark tells her that Miss Appleby and Dr Dickson have been kissing.

At school whilst everyone is busy preparing for the school show, William sneaks into Dr Dickson's office and sets up a video camera. At the school show Joe and Barb sit in the front row. William switches on the big screen on the stage and the entire audience watch live footage coming from Dr Dickson's office.

Dr Dickson sits behind his desk and Miss Appleby comes in and kisses him. Joe switches the screen off and Barb runs out. Monica looks at Joe and says; I think mum is in denial Mr Strange.

Episode Twelve - Sadness

William feeds Peter the budgie, chocolate cake as he wants his budgie to love him more but the budgie dies. William is very upset and Joe asks if Monica and Barb can come round to cheer him up. Monica spends most of her afternoon with a whole series of sorry looking pets. Barb looks after William.

Monica's saddest pet is a depressed lamb. She tells the lamb he doesn't have to be sad anymore because he is in the sanctuary and nobody is going to cook him for their Sunday dinner. She tells the lamb that he has to think positively and not think about the past. Joe asks Barb to come back to work and she tells him that she will but she can't start tomorrow as she has something she needs to attend to first.

Monica and William follow Barb as she clatters through the corridor in her high heels. She stops outside Dr Dickson's office before taking a deep breath and knocking on the door. Dr Dickson shouts Come in and Barb confidently goes into the office. Monica and William pull a chair up and stare through the window. Dr Dickson stays seated. Barb looks like she is shouting.

She throws all the presents he has given her onto his desk. Barb throws open the door. She sees Monica and William on the chair. She grins at them and stomps off. Dr Dickson doesn't follow her, he just shuts the door and sits back down in his seat. He suddenly looks exhausted and more than a little sad.



Episode Thirteen - Acceptance

Monica sees Fido wandering along the road she runs after him. She catches up with him but he doesn't have a lead. Come on Fido, I need to take you home otherwise the police will arrest you. Dr Dickson comes speeding around the corner, Monica is just up ahead and Fido is in the middle of the road. Monica turns when she hears Dr Dickson frantically beeping the horn.

She watches as Dr Dickson swerves to miss the dog and goes flying off the road and straight into the river. Dr Dickson sits motionless in the car. Monica thinks that they have killed him. The awfulness of their actions suddenly hits her and the realisation that Dr Dickson is not Dr Death as he swerved to miss Fido.

She and Fido stand and stare at the crash scene – they don't know what to do. Eventually the local policeman arrives. Monica puts her hands up to have them cuffed and asks to be arrested. Dr Dickson comes too and says it's the dog that should be arrested. Monica has dinner at Joe and William's. She tells them that Dr Dickson isn't as bad as she thought and that she and William got it wrong.

Monica, William, Mark Barb and Joe are all wearing matching outfits. They are having their photographs taken for some publicity material for the animal sanctuary. The children stand in front of them with a selection of animals and pets. They look like one big happy family. Children and their pets from all over the village are making their way to the animal sanctuary. Monica stands under new her bright pink sign, it reads Monica Pink Pet Shrink



Monica Pink appeared in the short film: The Problem With Pets

The Problem With Pets (English) - <https://vimeo.com/75287509>



The Problem with Pets (with Chinese Subtitles)

http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNjQxMTA2MzQw.html



Wins and Nominations - Awards

2nd Kuki International Children's and Youth Film Festival, Berlin,

Germany winner, Best Children's Short Film

Beijing International Student Film & Video Festival Audience Award

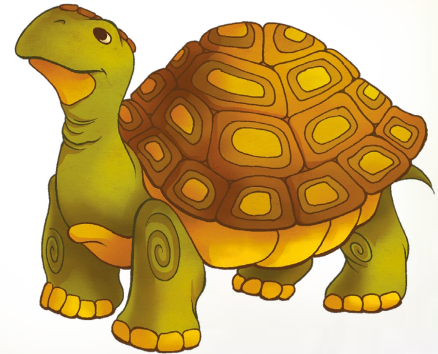
Southern Appalachian International Film Festival, Best Comedy

55th International Short Film Festival Oberhausen

Prize of the Children's Jury in the International Children Competition

Showcommotion Young People's Film Festival, Sheffield

UNICEF UK Short Film Award



Nominationed

7th Istanbul International Children's Film Festival

Oulu International Children's Film Festival, Finland

62nd Edinburgh International Film Festival

KIDS FIRST! Film Festival, USA

Leicester's International Short Film Festival, CAN

Short Shots, QFT, Belfast

Glasgow Film Festival

Eat Our Shorts, London

Women in Film Festival, Vancouver

Berkshire International Film Festival, Western Massachusetts

First Chester International Film Festival, Nova Scotia

Comedy Film Festival, Vienna

Palm Springs International ShortFest

16th International Film and Television Schools' Festival, Lodz, Poland

Baltimore Women's Film Festival

Nashville Film Festival April





Series written and devised by Frances O'Neill.

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