

École Arbour Vista

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Newsletter for December 2019

From the Principal's Desk

A feeling of the holiday season is definitely in the air and another calendar year is almost over as we approach 2020! Please note that the last day of classes prior to the Christmas holiday is Friday, December 20th. The school will re-open on Monday, January 6th, 2020. On behalf of the staff and students, I would like to wish everyone in the École Arbour Vista Public School community a peaceful, restful, and joyous holiday season. Have a great holiday and may the New Year bring prosperity, good health, and happiness to all!!

Poinsettia Pickup Reminder

This is a reminder that poinsettia orders for the Grade 8 Quebec trip can be picked up in the school gymnasium on Thursday December 5th, from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

We Scare Hunger Food Drive

A very special thank you goes to the Grade 6 students whose *We Scare Hunger Food Drive* resulted in 3920 cans/packages of non-perishable food items for the Guelph Food Bank. This is an increase of more than 1500 items over last year's food drive! Thank you and congratulations on a job well done!

Bake Sale!

The Grade 6 class will be hosting a Bake Sale on Friday, December 13th. This fundraiser will help subsidize their end of the year trip to the Mansfield Outdoor Education Centre. Students are reminded to purchase tickets for their treats through School Cash Online.

Students Repeatedly Arriving Late

We continue to have a number of students arriving late to school each day. A helpful strategy for students who are often late to school is for parents to set their alarm clock ten minutes earlier each morning. Students who arrive late not only impact their own learning but also that of their peers as they disrupt classrooms upon entering, when they are in session. Please be mindful of the fact that being on time is an important life skill. Assisting our students to be on time helps them develop a sense of responsibility, which will benefit them as they grow and mature into adults. Thank you for helping to ensure the timeliness of our students to their jobs.

Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Do Not Throw!

As the season changes to winter, we are faced with an issue that over time has remained the same...the inherent danger in throwing snowballs. For everyone's safety, École Arbour Vista Public School **does not allow the throwing of snowballs.** We encourage students to let 'gravity do its thing' and keep the snow on the ground. Students will be reacquainted with the phrase, "If you pick up snow, you pick up trouble." Please reinforce this message at home, helping to remind our students about the dangers of throwing snow.

Cold Weather and Warm Clothing!

Now that winter is finally upon us, students should be wearing hats, mitts, boots and a winter coat while on the yard during recess. Proper attire during the winter months will help ensure our students enjoy their time outside while being comfortable in the process.

Talking About Mental Health December 2019 – GIVE THE GIFT OF RESILIENCY

As we head through December and towards the holidays, it is important to be aware that this can be a very exciting time of year, but for some it is also a difficult time of year.

REMEMBER

- eat well
- get good sleep
- don't over schedule
- stay connected to family and friends
- keep daily routines going
- avoid over-use of technology
- get outside and enjoy the crisp, fresh air

HOLIDAY “CONNECTING & REFLECTING” IDEAS

23 Days of Giving

Every day in December have everyone put something that they don't use or need into a basket. Later in the month you can go as a family and donate to a shelter or community center

Reflection Wall

Have a wall in the house where everyone can add sticky notes of what they are grateful about from the year. Focus on lessons learned, new skills and strategies used throughout the year

Rose, Bud, Thorn

Have everyone identify one or two things that they feel were successes from the year (rose), something that was a struggle (thorn) and what they did to overcome the struggle, and something they are looking forward to in the new year (bud).

Signs to look for that someone is struggling *Sometimes it is hard to tell that someone is suffering. Here are some signs that someone is struggling.*

- not coming to school or work
- not engaging with friends or family
- not participating in activities that they used to enjoy
- withdrawing
- feeling hopeless
- increase use of drugs or alcohol
- changes in behaviour
- anger/irritability

Getting help

If you, your child/youth or someone you know is struggling, it is important to know where to reach out for help.

Who would you talk to if you were distressed, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to make a list of at least 3 people or resources you would reach out to.

Who would your child/youth talk to if they were upset, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to sit down with your child/youth and ask them who they would talk to. Put the kidshelpphone and HERE247 or DCAFS number in their phones (see below).

All children and youth need caring adults in their lives to talk to about their feelings. Parents/guardians can be some of those caring adults, but it is important for the children/youth to have other caring adults in their lives such as:

Family members, friends of the family

School staff (teachers, guidance counsellors, principals, child and youth counsellors, social workers, librarian, custodial staff)

Coaches, instructors

Spiritual or religious community

Community members (police, family doctors, librarians, etc.)

Who you can call for mental health support

- Here 24/7 (for crisis and support with mental health or addiction concerns in Guelph/Wellington) <http://here247.ca/> 1.844.437.3247
- Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS) (for crisis and mental health supports for children/youth in Dufferin) <https://dcafs.on.ca/> 519 941 1530
- Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/> 1 800 668 6868
- Your family physician or family health team

Have a mentally healthy holiday season!

*Jenny Marino is the Mental Health Lead for Upper Grand District School Board
Follow me on instagram #ugdsb_mental_health*



Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet December 10th is HUMAN RIGHTS Day!

“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.” — *Jane Goodall*

Celebrate Human Rights Day on December 10th!

Human Rights Day calls on everyone to stand up for someone's rights. It starts with each of us. Step forward and defend the rights of someone whose voice is not being heard. Recognize that human rights include the right for everyone to have access to clean water, unpolluted air and healthy food.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/>



Simple yet meaningful ways for your family to celebrate the rights and responsibilities that we all share as human beings!

- **Learn about how children live in other parts of the world.** Find out about their schools or traditional food and language.
- **Read the book: We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures** by Amnesty International.
- **Read the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights.** Decide if there is a cause your family wants to support, or an Ecojustice action you want to take on.
- **Make a World Wishes Dove with your family.** Cut feathers from white paper. Have everyone in the family write their wish for the world on a feather. Cut out the body of a dove and glue all the feathers on it.
- **Start a tradition of doing a family service project on Human Rights Day.** Find an opportunity to volunteer in your local community and make a difference.

“For the bigger picture we can (and should) do what we can to fight injustice. But on a smaller scale, in the day-to-day, practicing kindness can help knit a web of compassion to give humanity a boost of resilience” by Melissa Breyer