

École Arbour Vista

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Newsletter for March 2020

From the Principal's Desk

It was wonderful that so many parents and students attend School Council's sixth annual Spaghetti Dinner on Wednesday, February 26th. School Council's Fundraising Committee is commended for their outstanding job of organizing this event that was attended by approximately 90 people. We are very fortunate to have such an engaged School Council that works tirelessly to help our students...thank you for all you do!

In only a few weeks the winter season will be in the rear view mirror and spring (hopefully!) will be upon us. In advance of spring of course is the March Break, from March 16th to March 20th. Whether traveling during the holidays or enjoying a "staycation", the Arbour Vista staff wishes our school community a safe, happy and healthy March Break. We look forward to seeing everyone on Monday, March 23rd.

Vision Health

If you suspect that your child is struggling with vision issues, there are several things that you can do. First, book an eye exam with an optometrist. Basic OHIP coverage for eye exams, is available free of charge, for children from birth to age 19. Speak with your child's teacher regarding your concerns and encourage your child to clearly express to the teacher the difficulties they are having (Are they having trouble seeing things on the board? Are they having trouble copying information? Are they having trouble seeing the information in novels/textbooks/notebooks etc.?) There are a number of accommodations that can be made to quickly address potential problems, including seating closer to the board or larger print on computers or photocopies. You can also discuss with the classroom teacher or SERT the possibility of making a referral to one of the Vision Itinerant Teachers who provide support to the school.

Your Child's Hearing is Important!

Seventy-five percent of a child's day is spent listening; listening to complex language, directions and instructions which need to be comprehended. Being able to hear peers is important for developing social skills and friendships. That is why it is important that any hearing difficulty be discovered as soon as possible because even mild hearing loss can put a child at risk for academic and communication difficulties. **Audiologists** are experts who assess hearing sensitivity and functioning that provides a window into the language/listening parts of the brain. Since listening is a critical learning skill, test results can be helpful in planning a program of intervention. Students who wear hearing aids, cochlear implants, or use personal FM systems should routinely visit an Audiologist to have their equipment checked. If you suspect your child has difficulty with hearing or attention it is recommended that you have your child tested by an **Audiologist**. To find an Audiologist in your community, visit the website of the College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario (www.CASLPO.com) and click on "Find an Audiologist" and search for Private Practice. At UGDSB, you can call 519-941-6191 ext. 231 for information.

Presentation – Let’s Talk (Not Text) About Screen Time

Are screens the new smoking? Parents and students are invited to learn more about the many impacts of screens on our lives and how we might foster a healthier relationship with them. Come and join us Thursday, April 23rd from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the John F. Ross CVI - E.L. Fox Auditorium, 21 Meyer Drive, Guelph. Admission is free, but tickets do need to be secured in advance by visiting <https://screenagersbyugdsb.eventcombo.com>.

This free event will present two documentary films (SCREENAGERS: Growing Up in the Digital Age and Screenagers and NEXT CHAPTER: Uncovering Skills for Stress Resilience) followed by a discussion moderated by Sylvie Smith, an addictions counselor at Homewood Health Centre.

ABOUT THE SCREENAGERS FILMS:

Physician and filmmaker Delaney Ruston was compelled to make a movie when she found herself constantly struggling with her two kids about screen time. Ruston felt guilty and confused, not sure what limits were best, especially around mobile phones, social media, gaming, and how to monitor online homework. Hearing repeatedly how other parents were equally overwhelmed, she realized this is one of the biggest, unexplored parenting issues of our time.

SCREENAGERS: Growing up in the Digital Age (2016) was the first feature documentary to explore the impact of screen technology on kids and offer parents and families proven solutions to help youth and their families find their way in a world with instant access to screen time. In Next Chapter: Uncovering Skills for Stress Resilience (2019, 69 minutes), the filmmaker finds herself at a loss on how to help her own teens as they struggle with their emotional well-being. She sets out to understand these challenges in the context of our current screen-filled society. In particular she explores the issue of how as parents and educators we can empower teens to overcome challenges and build emotional agility, communication savvy, and stress resilience.

Summer Camps

Summer is fast approaching and many people are starting to think about how to keep their kids busy. There are many camp opportunities offered in Guelph and the surrounding area. Here is a list of options and registration dates: (there are too many to include all of them)

Brick Works Academy: ages 6 to 13, registration now open <http://brickworksacademy.com/guelph-summer-camps/>

City of Guelph: ages 4 to 17, <https://guelph.ca/living/recreation/recreation-programs/camps/camps-offered/>

Guelph YMCA: ages 6 to 12, registration open <https://www.guelphy.org/en/kids-and-families/summer-day-camps--ages-6-to-12.aspx>

University of Guelph: ages 3 to 16 (some of the sports programs go to 18) <https://fitandrec.gryphons.ca/camps-kids/activity-camps>

Rainbow Day Camp: ages 4 to 16, <http://www.rainbowdaycamp.com/> (this is a very popular camp and fills up very quickly)

Others to check out:

<http://onsideathletics.ca/guelph/>

<https://guelphgrotto.com/youth/kids-that-rock/>

<http://www.cuttenfields.com/Summer-Camps.aspx>

<http://guelphbulldog.com/>

Talking About Mental Health: Random Acts of Kindness

Did you know that there are scientifically proven benefits of being kind! That's right. Just the act of being kind has been shown to stimulate the same part of the brain as those who receive an act of kindness. The simple act of kindness can:

- Reduce the stress hormone cortisol
- Increase sense of positive mood and satisfaction
- Help with physical health including lowering blood pressure
- Increase sense of happiness
- Increase feelings of "calm"
- Improve the mood of somebody simply witnessing the act of kindness

Kindness is also something that is TEACHABLE. Dr. Ritchie Davidson of the University of Wisconsin states that: "It's kind of like weight training, we found that people can actually build up their compassion 'muscle' and respond to others' suffering with care and a desire to help."

As a family, you can:

- Make a conscious effort to recognize and say something kind about each other or someone else
- Give everyone in the family sticky notes to leave kindness notes to each other around the house
- Challenge everyone to do a random act of kindness every day for a week and have dinner time discussion about what everybody did that day
- Make an effort to identify and appreciate kindness that has been received

The weather may not be "playing nice" with us here in Southern Ontario these last weeks but we can still give our brain and our mental health a winter "boost"! So go out and notice kindness, receive kindness and give kindness this month.

Jenny Marino, Mental Health Lead

Follow me on Instagram @ugdsb mental health

THE NEW FOOD GUIDE - Brought to you by Lunchbox Orders

Amy Skeoch MHS, RD

Canada has a new food guide! This version is certainly a lot different than the 1940's original "Food Rules" that suggested Canadians consume specific portions of the six food groups. Although some things have changed, one thing that has stayed the same is the role of the food guide – to act as a *basic tool that allows Canadians to follow a healthy diet*. The guide is meant to provide variety and flexibility, as it translates complex science into practical patterns of food choices.

The main difference with this version of the food guide compared to previous versions seems to be less emphasis on the "what" and "how much" we are eating, and more focus on a general pattern of eating, and thinking more around "why" and "how" we eat.

WHAT'S CHANGED?

- The four food groups and rainbow have been replaced with a plate showing real food items
- There are no serving sizes provided, only behavioral statements
- There is also an inventory of tips, and recipes provided on the [website](#) to support the key messages

Variety Is Still Key

The variety message is still alive and well with this version of the guide. Canadians are encouraged to "eat a variety of healthy foods each day by":

- Eating plenty of vegetables and fruit
- Eating protein foods
- Choosing whole grain foods
- Making water your beverage of choice

Being Mindful

Canadians are also reminded that, “Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat”. So, emphasis is put on:

- Being mindful of your eating habits
- Cooking more often
- Eating meals with others
- Enjoy your food

Where’s the beef?

This guide definitely emphasizes more plant-based foods. Although lean beef is still seen in the plate visual, the emphasis is definitely put on the ½ of the plate that is loaded with vegetables and fruit. Instead of a Meats and Alternatives food group, meat is part of the “protein” area of the plate, and is grouped with other protein foods like yogurt, beans, lentils and eggs. So even though it doesn’t have its own food group, it’s still part of a healthful diet.

What about kids?

The current guide gives little direction on any nutrient differences for children, or any other life-stages. Health Canada has said there will be another supplement released in the spring of 2019 that will provide some direction about these important life-stages, so stay tuned!

As nutrition is an ever-evolving science, it’s great to explore this new version of our food guide – and I really look forward to seeing the next release of information on specific life stages this spring. To check out the new guide and get more information and tools visit: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

MONTHLY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES TO HELP CELEBRATE OUR PLANET



March 28th is Earth Hour!

It is vital to teach our children to respect and take care of the environment.

Join the global Movement! Celebrate Earth Hour on March 28th at 8:30pm.

Earth Hour’s mission is uniting people to protect the planet by raising awareness of about climate change and encouraging positive action.

“Earth Hour was famously started as a lights-off event in Sydney, Australia in 2007. Since then it has grown to engage more than 172 countries and territories worldwide.”

Earth Hour is more than an event. It is a movement that has achieved massive environmental impact, including legislation changes by harnessing the power of the crowd.”

Ideas for your family to do for Earth Hour!

Earth Hour belongs to you. Celebrate your commitment to the planet with your friends, family, community or at work - in your own way.

A simple event can be just turning off all non-essential lights on March 28th from 8:30-9:30 pm. For one hour, focus on your commitment to our planet. To celebrate, you can:

- *prepare a candle lit dinner,*
- *talk to your neighbours, or invite people over*
- *stargaze, or go camping in your backyard*
- *play board games, or charades*
- *host a concert, or a sing-a-long*
- *create or join your own community event*
- *have an Earth Hour every month*

The possibilities are endless!

Quotes and information taken from: <https://www.earthhour.org/>