

École Arbour Vista

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Newsletter for January 2021

From the Principal's Desk

Happy New Year! Though this holiday season looked very different than previous years, I hope you were able to enjoy quality family time together. As you are aware, students will work online during the first week of January. We hope online learning only lasts for one week, allowing staff and students to return to the school for the duration of the year. The school staff would like to take this opportunity to express a sincere thank you for the tremendous support we have received during this challenging time. The school community has been very supportive of our efforts to keep students safe, while ensuring quality programming continues. Thank you!

Best wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year! We look forward to seeing everyone on Monday, January 11th.

JK Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration is from January 5th to 22nd at all elementary schools in the UGDSB.

Important information regarding JK French Immersion;

Each UGDSB elementary school that offers FI has a Junior Kindergarten enrolment cap. ***JK is the only entry point for French Immersion in UGDSB.***

***The 'on-time' application window closes at 4 p.m. on Jan 22, 2021.**

*Parents/guardians may continue to apply for JK FI after this date and time, however those applications will be considered 'late'. For more information on the JK FI application process, visit www.ugdsb.ca/jkregistration.

* If the number of registrants exceeds a school's enrolment cap, students will be placed into Junior

Kindergarten FI or onto a waitlist in the following prioritized order:

- * Registrants with siblings in FI home school in UGDSB (in-area)
- * Registrants without siblings in FI home school in UGDSB (in-area)

Waitlists

*Waitlists will be created where the number of on-time applicants exceeded the number of spaces available. Students not offered placement as a result of random selection will be placed on a waitlist.

*A waitlist may also be created where a school which didn't require random selection has more applications than available spaces at any time during the school year.

Late applications will be placed on a waitlist on a first-come, first-served basis.

*To remain on a waitlist the student must be registered in a UGDSB regular track (English language) school.

*The waitlist will remain in place for the length of the child's JK Year.

*Late, in-area, applicants will be considered on a first-come first-serve basis, subject to available space.

Talking About Mental Health: *Self Compassion*

Welcome back from the Winter Break. This has been a different break than any other year I can remember. We all had to adjust to different traditions, different expectations, different connections and different situations to manage in our lives. January is the beginning of a new year. January's Umbrella Theme for Upper Grand District School Board is Self-Compassion. What better way than to remind ourselves that we, too, deserve the same kindness, compassion and care that we give to so many others.

Here are some ways to help yourself with your own self compassion:

1. Remember it's okay to say "this is really difficult right now." What do you need to take care of yourself? What does your self-care look like? Is it a walk outside? A few minutes of deep breathing in a quiet space? A conversation with a friend or family member? Writing down your thoughts? There are so many different things we do to take care of ourselves. Find your "thing" and give yourself permission to do it. You deserve it.
2. Are you judging yourself? Your situation? Your decisions? Try to notice when you are self-judging and hit the pause button. Can you try being gentle with yourself? Give yourself a moment of compassion and kindness. Words can be very powerful. What you say to yourself has an impact. Speak and think kindly of yourself.

Here are some family activities that you can explore this month alongside your child/ren.

1. Have everyone write a letter to themselves. You can choose to share it with the rest of the family if you want or just spend the time writing together and keep your letter in a special spot
2. Have everyone go around the table and do "rose, bud, thorn". What is one thing you really like/appreciate about yourself (rose), What is one thing that you are working on for yourself (bud) and what is something that you are finding difficult (thorn).
3. Have everyone brainstorm ways to be kind to yourself. You can make a big chart or picture and put it up on the fridge. When someone is needing some self-care they can always go to this and choose something that works for them in that moment

There is no doubt that these are difficult times. It is so important that we are kind to ourselves. Remember to reach out to someone if you are feeling alone and look out for others as well. Remind your kids that they can talk to you when they are feeling sad or down or confused.

If you are in crisis and live in Wellington you can call Here247 at 1-844-437-3247 (HERE247)

If you are in Dufferin and are in crisis you can call Dufferin Child & Family Services at 519-941-1530

Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868

Holiday Food Drive

A very big thank you to the families who helped support the Holiday Food Drive and Mitten Tree initiative. As a result of our families' efforts, the school forwarded 1503 food items to the Guelph Food Bank and 329 mittens, hats and sundries to the Women In Crisis Centre. Thank you!

Family Literacy Day – January 27th

ABC Life Literacy Canada is encouraging Canadian families to have "15 Minutes of Fun" learning together. Learning can happen at any time. Practicing literacy together every day has tremendous benefits for both children and parents. Here are some great ways to get started:

- Read a "wake up" story in the morning (after reading your bedtime story the night before).
- Search online for fun places to go in your community. Pick out a spot for your next family day trip.
- Make up a new recipe together and post it online.
- Tell knock-knock jokes together while doing the dishes.
- Create a story with your family: take turns writing one sentence at a time, then read the whole story aloud when you're done.
- Write a review of a book you read together as a family. Send it to the author through email or snail mail

- Organize a book swap at your school or with your friends.
- Track your trip to school, the park, and the grocery store on a map. Find a different route to take to each place.
- Learn to play a musical instrument. What about the ukulele? • Write a note to include in a grown-up's lunch – ask them to write back!
- Make a popsicle stick model with your family.
- Write your names graffiti-style using chalk on your sidewalk – you may need to shovel first!
- Play a board game together.
- Look up the words to your favourite song online. Have a sing-off with your friends!
- Count how many steps it takes to get from your bedroom to your kitchen. Find out who in your family has the most steps to a snack!

From: <http://abclifeliteracy.ca/fld/15-minutes-of-fun>

No Bus Days!

On days when school buses are cancelled in the morning, ***they will not be running*** at the end of the school day. If you wish to drive your child(ren) to school on days when buses are cancelled, you must pick them up at the end of the day. Parents can access bussing information through the Student Transportation Services website at <http://www.stwdsts.ca/>. If you use the Student Transportation Services website, please focus on the Division 1 yellow card to access transportation information specific to schools in Guelph.

When Schools Are Closed To Students and Staff

On the rare occasions when schools and board sites are closed to staff and students (e.g. power outages, weather closures formerly known as “System Shutdown”), all students will pivot to remote learning for the day and will be supported by their teacher. Teachers will plan for the possibility of emergency school closures and will be prepared to pivot to remote learning.

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!

Though we have experienced a warmer than usual winter so far, students should be wearing hats, mitts, boots and a winter coat during recess. Proper attire during the winter months will help ensure our students enjoy their time outside while being comfortable in the process.

Use the Six E's to Teach About Responsibility

You can help your child develop the trait of responsibility by using the six E's:

1. Explain it. Talk about what responsibility means. Give some examples
2. Examine it. Look for examples of responsibility. Did a character on a TV show take responsibility for his actions? Point it out. Talk about it with your child.
3. Exhibit it. Your personal example is still the strongest way you teach.
4. Encourage it. Help your child think about ways he/she can be responsible. He might start to clean up his/her room every day. When he/she does, be sure you notice what he/she's done and give praise.
5. Expect it. Set rules and consequences. Now that your child knows what you expect, make sure he/she follows through. It's not enough to pick up after your child two days a week. Expect your child to do it every day and invoke appropriate consequences if he/she does not.
6. Evaluate it. How is your child doing? After a few weeks, talk again. Communication is imperative!

Is It Bullying Or Conflict?

Is conflict the same as bullying? People may sometimes confuse conflict with bullying, but they are different. Conflict occurs between two or more people who have a disagreement, a difference of opinion or different views. Conflict between students does not always mean it's bullying. Children learn at a young age to understand that others can have a different perspective than their own, but developing the ability to gain perspective takes time and the process continues into early adulthood. In conflict, each person feels comfortable expressing his or her views, and there is no power imbalance. Each person feels able to state his or her point of view. How people deal with conflict can make it positive or negative. Conflict becomes negative when an individual behaves aggressively by saying or doing hurtful things. Then the conflict is an aggressive interaction. Conflict only becomes bullying when it is repeated over and over again and there is a power imbalance. Over time, a pattern will develop and the situation will worsen through repetition.

Transitions and Transition Planning

While it may feel like it is early in the year to think about transitioning to the next school year, many plans are well underway to ensure that students have a successful transition. For students that are changing schools, such as Grade 8s moving to secondary school, visits may have already begun. Such transitions can be very stressful for students, just as it can be stressful for adults to move houses or change jobs. With careful planning and a collaborative approach toward supporting the transition, this stress can be minimized. New requirements from the Ministry of Education came into effect in September, 2014 requiring all students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) to have a transition plan. This plan includes goals and actions to meet each goal, and considers the strengths and needs of the student. Some goals may address smaller transitions throughout the day, such as moving from recess to the classroom or from one activity to another, or larger transitions, such as moving from one school year to the next, or from one school to another. For many students, the supports provided to the whole class are all they need to have a successful transition, which means they may not need a specific transition plan goal and actions on their IEP at this time. However, for students that have challenges with transitions -- large or small -- a plan should be in place.

When planning for any transition, the student's physical, emotional, and learning needs are considered. As a parent, your collaboration with the school team is crucial to make sure that the needs of your child are fully understood, and that actions taken at home and at school will ensure a successful transition. Physical needs, such as changes made to a washroom for a student in a wheelchair, may be part of a plan, just as visits and pictures of a new school may be helpful meeting the emotional needs of a child. A student's current teacher will also share successful strategies and accommodations with next year's teacher, this will help the new teacher prepare for the learning needs of the student. As a parent, you can play an important role in transition planning for your child, you know your child best. Whether planning for next year's new classroom, or for a new school, working together with school staff to provide visits to the new school, talking about the transition in a positive way, and looking at pictures of the new teachers and building may give the reassurance that your child needs. Preparation is crucial for transitions to be successful, and a team approach between home and school is key. More information about transition planning from the Ministry of Education is available. The new rules for transition planning for students with special education needs can be found at:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm156.pdf>. The Ministry also has a resource guide for transition plans with a focus for secondary students available at the following link:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/spiced/transiti/transition.pdf>



Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet

JANUARY is the time to carry out your Eco Resolutions!

“There will be more waste plastic in the sea than fish by 2050” Dame Ellen MacArthur

It's a brand new year and the perfect time for positive change. For example, let's end plastic pollution.

Based on the daily news, it's never been more critical to increase your environmental efforts. The *Earth Day Network* is calling to end plastic pollution. Imagine a future free from harmful plastic garbage! Single-use plastics are especially wasteful and many plastics are also not properly recycled and take up precious landfill space or pollute our oceans, killing marine life and washing up on pristine beaches. Plastic garbage 'islands' are appearing in seas and oceans all over the world.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/great-pacific-garbage-patch/>

Tips on how to reduce single-use plastics:

- Extend your use of cloth shopping bags beyond the grocery store. Use them at all other retail stores too.
- Avoid buying over-packaged food. The choice is yours. Do you need to buy the carrots that are shrink wrapped on a Styrofoam tray?
- Let the restaurants you frequent know that you would them to join the growing movement to ban the use of straws. Many have implemented a 'serve-straws-upon-request' policy.
- Tap water is best. Bottled water can deplete our precious groundwater resources and produce unnecessary green house gas emissions through the production and transport of plastic bottles. Carry a reusable water bottle instead.
- Lug a travel mug to your local coffee shop. (The plastic lining makes coffee cups unrecyclable, and they all end up in the garbage and in our overflowing landfills.)
- Write letters to the government asking them to fix a problem that you are concerned about such as: mandating the reduction of plastic packaging, banning Styrofoam, or promoting research for recyclable coffee cups or coffee pods, etc.