

École Arbour Vista

Kirk Runciman, Principal

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Newsletter for April 2021

From the Principal's Desk

It is hard to believe that April is already upon us. The weather is improving and baseball season is here! Let's Go Blue Jays! I know our students are looking forward to the Easter long weekend and March (April) Break, following a lengthy stretch of school without a break. Our students continue to demonstrate their resilience as well as their dedication to doing their best work during an atypical school year. In just a few short months your summer vacation will be here, and hopefully opportunities to re-engage with your entire social network. You are an amazing group of students!

K. Runciman
Principal

World Autism Day – April 2, 2021

Aside from wearing blue, what can you do to support World Autism Awareness Day?

Educate yourself about Autism;

Read books, magazine articles and blog posts about autism.

Talk to parents of children with autism to find out what their life is really like. Attend an information session or seminar on autism.

Visit the websites of local or national autism organizations.

- o Autism Ontario – Wellington Chapter <http://www.autismontario.com/Client/ASO/AO.nsf/Wellington/WellingtonHome>
- o Geneva Centre for Autism www.autism.net/
- o Kerry's Place Autism Services <http://www.kerrysplace.org/Public/Central-West-Region>

Requests For the School Garden

With planting season upon us shortly, a team of staff members will be using the containers adjacent to the Kindergarten yard for their Grade 3 Science unit on *Growth and Changes In Plants*. To support their teaching and subsequent student work staff are looking for the following donations.

- 8 bags of compost
- Twelve, 4 foot metal stakes
- Potting containers of various sizes
- Two shovels that families no longer want/use

Staff Parking Lot – Kiss and Ride Area

As you are aware, the staff parking lot has a kiss and ride lane that runs adjacent to the Kindergarten and tarmac play areas. This area of the school continues to be very busy at the start and the end of each school day, with parents parking when dropping off or waiting for their child(ren). This area is not intended to be used for parking, **but rather as a location to drop off your child(ren) only**. As our school population grows, as it will continue to do for the foreseeable future, this area needs to be kept free of traffic for safety reasons. Please respect the intended purpose of our kiss and ride lane and do not park there. A great idea is to park on Sweeney Drive and walk your child(ren) to/from the school, through Jubilee Park. Thank you for helping to ensure the safety of our students, your children.

Talking About Mental Health: Intrinsic Motivation – April, 2021

This month's Umbrella Theme is Intrinsic Motivation. Intrinsic motivation is when we can do something, enjoy something, complete something, which makes us feel good about ourselves and our accomplishments. It's about not needing anything external to make you feel better – grades, rewards, incentives, etc. We want our kids to WANT to do well because it feels good to them, not because it is a competition or there is a reward. Don't get me wrong – there are times for rewards and competitions for sure, but this month we want to focus on the ways we can foster that sense of internal satisfaction, accomplishment and motivation.

Consider your child is studying for a test. They are working hard and using solid strategies for studying. Then they bring home a grade that they don't feel great about. That can be very disappointing. Or the child who creates all sorts of creative pieces for the school holiday bazaar but hardly anyone purchases anything. Thoughts can quickly move to: I guess my stuff wasn't that great, or, why did I even try, etc. Our children need to know that not getting the grade, not making sales, etc. is okay. Try to help them see failure, frustration, disappointment, etc. as a beginning rather than an end point. If we help our children recognize the joy and accomplishment they feel when they are "doing", then the outcome is less of a negative impact. This is because the joy, the sense of accomplishment, the sense of success is in the process – not the product. Focusing on this area can increase confidence, school engagement, development of coping strategies, positive mood and our ability to stick to tasks longer.

“If parents want to give their children a gift, the best thing they can do is to teach their children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning. ... They will have a lifelong way to build and repair their own confidence”. Carol S. Dweck, Developmental Psychologist

Here are some tips:

- Make room for mistakes – encourage to keep trying
- Recognize hard work as much as outcomes – this is less about praise and more about helping your child reflect on their own feelings when they work hard on something
- Break down big goals into smaller steps – focus on process and recognize progress
- Celebrate successes – enjoy and share your child's successes which is the ultimate “reward”
- Foster gratitude – even on your child's worst days, what are they thankful for?

Remember, as parents we can also benefit from these same strategies! Have fun this month exploring and learning more about intrinsic motivation!

Jenny Marino
Mental Health Lead, UGDSB



Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet

April 22nd is Earth Day!

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” - Albert Einstein

Celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd!

Founded in 1990, Earth Day Canada inspires people of all ages across the country to connect with nature and build resilient communities as well as foster an intrinsically motivated, enduring commitment to stewardship and conservation. <https://earthday.ca/about/>



Earth Day 2021 Theme: Restore Our Earth

The theme is based on the emerging concept that rejects the idea that our only options to save the planet are to mitigate or adapt to the impacts of climate change and other environmental damage. Go to <https://earthday.org> for some quick facts and additional information about this problem.

Ideas for your family to celebrate Earth Day:

- **Review last year's Earth Day Theme on ending plastic pollution**, as this important work continues. Make a pledge to always carry a reusable shopping bag, use alternates to Ziploc bags, buy in bulk, refuse to buy over packaged products and make litter-less lunches. Download your Plastic Pollution Primer to learn more about this problem help **End Plastic Pollution!** <https://www.earthday.org/yourjourney2018/>
- **Spend a day outside.** In the garden with your family, plant vegetables, trees or native flowers and attract native animals and pollinators. Or join a local community event to help clean your neighbourhood or restore local plant life.
- **Make commitments to cut down on your energy usage as well as waste.** Turn lights off, power down electrical devices, turn down your thermostat and only do full loads of laundry and dishes.
- **Learn more about the environment and the effects of global warming.** Encourage awareness and promote the **Reduce** (buy less), **Reuse** (repurpose it) and **Recycle** (sort it right!) way of life.

Remember that every day is Earth Day! Don't restrict yourself to just one day a year. Make environmental actions and caring about the planet a habit - on Earth Day and every day.