



École FA Hamilton

December 2017

Newsletter

Important Dates

- Dec. 5 - Volleyball Tournament
- Dec. 6 - Pablo's Cartoon workshop for some classes; Eco Stars follow up for gr. 5s
- Dec. 7 - **WINTER EVENT starting at 5:30 PM! Fun for the whole family!**
- Dec. 11 - Pottery to Go for some classes; Humane Society visits for all classes
- Dec. 12 - Woodward & Mui classes to visit Stone Lodge Retirement Home
- Dec. 13 - Lion's Club Kindergarten vision testing
- Dec. 14 - Grade 6 Bakesale for Mansfield; School Council holiday social - details to follow; Holmes and Brown/Junemann classes to visit Stone Lodge Retirement Home
- Dec. 15 - Electives Day
- Dec. 19 - Milk and Pizza orders due; Holiday Sing-along
- Dec. 21 - Holiday Sing-along
- Dec. 22 - Monthly Assembly; CRAZY SOCK DAY; last day before the Winter Break (see you on Monday, January 8th!)



[Click here to see our whole calendar!](#)

Winter Event



School Council has been hard at work preparing a fun evening for all Husky families! On **Thursday, December 7th**, please join us at school starting at 5:30 PM. You can order a pizza to share with your family to make things easy and then you can snack on popcorn and cookies, have a cup of coffee, do some seasonal crafts, play some fun games, visit with friends, buy tickets for the raffle baskets and enjoy being part of our awesome school community. We hope to see you there!

Holiday Songs

During the final week before the winter break, we will be gathering as a school for two sing-along assemblies. We have some winter songs that are familiar to students, songs like Jingle Bells/Vive le vent or Frosty the Snowman. We also have some Hanukkah songs, but I would love to learn about songs that other cultures sing for winter celebrations or special



days. Please share YouTube links or even come into the school to sing for me! Then I can find the lyrics and we'll be able to share songs that are meaningful for everyone at these two fun assemblies.

Bake Sale for Gr. 6 Camp



On Thursday, December 14th, the grade 6's will be selling homemade baked goods to raise money for their trip to Mansfield Outdoor Education Centre in May. If you are able to send your child with a small amount of money to support a great cause, then that would be wonderful. Please don't send more than \$5.00 since the prices are pretty good and more than \$5.00 worth of baking is an awful lot for one child to eat on his or her own!

Electives Day

On Friday, December 15th, we are planning a fun day for our whole school. It will be our first ever Electives Day! Students will be offered the chance to sign-up for two workshops from a whole list of possibilities: bracelet making, hiking, flipbook animation, sports and more! Staff here at school will run the sessions and children will go to one workshop in the first block and a second in the middle block. For the last block, students will relax and watch a movie with some tasty popcorn to snack on.



Kindergarten students will be watching Dumbo, the original from 1941, and grade 1-6 students will be watching Born in China, a Disney nature documentary about three families of pandas, snow leopards and golden monkeys. We hope the day will be fun for our students and will give them a chance to connect with staff members and other student with whom they may not normally spend time. We hope our Electives Day builds connections between all the people here at school so that FAH becomes an even more supportive and safe place for our students and their families.

Second Step Social Skills Lessons

Almost every week, classes throughout the school do a lesson together that focuses on a different social skill like listening to others, using self-talk to learn or solve problems, being assertive, planning to learn, predicting others' feelings and more. Be sure to ask your child what lesson they are doing in class each week. They may not know it is a social skills lesson, but there is usually a picture card or poster that prompts some discussion. Mentioning that may help them remember the conversation and what they learned. You are welcome to ask your child's teacher for more details about what topics they have been exploring. Following up at home helps to consolidate new ideas and makes it easier for students to apply their new learning in real situations.

News from November



Fresh From the Farm

Many families from FAH ordered delicious local produce and supported our school in the process. The Fresh From the Farm fundraiser raised \$1119.40 for our Scientists in the School program this year! Thank you to everyone who ordered.

Operation Shoebox

Thank you to Mme Holmes' class and everyone who donated to Operation Shoebox. Our students made up 32 shoeboxes! That's 32 children who will have a special surprise over the holidays. Merci beaucoup.



Chapters Night



Many thanks to everyone who came out to our Chapters Fundraiser last week! We raised almost \$1000 to buy French books for our library! I reported that we raised \$3000 last year, but we actually had \$1200 to spend after the 2016 fundraiser night, so we did almost as well this year and M. Adams is very excited about shopping for new books for our students to enjoy. We are grateful for the generosity of our families.

Class Spirit Day

Each class decided on a theme and came dressed alike for our November Spirit Day! The Huskies showed amazing enthusiasm and we had classes dressed for the beach, for bedtime, and in black, plus lots more! Way to show class spirit!



Talking About Mental Health December 2017 - Taking Care of Ourselves and Our Families

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. Here are some tips and resources to make sure that you and your family have a safe and mentally healthy holiday season.

Self-care

What you do to support or take care of yourself? What do your children/youth do?

It is important to look after yourselves:

- exercise
- sleep well
- eat well
- reach out to and spend time with family & friends
- reading, writing
- music, art
- spend time with pets
- spend time outside

Stay connected

- Have dinner together as a family, no phones or devices
- Plan a family outing to a friend's or a park or a local event
- Have friends or family over for a game night
- Have a family movie or game night
- Take a few moments each day as a family to say what you are all grateful for
- Volunteer at the foodbank or other community organization as a family

Signs to look for that someone is struggling

Sometimes it's 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!

Dr. Lynn Woodford is the Mental Health Lead for Upper Grand District School Board

Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford

Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet

“For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects & enhances the freedom of others”

- Nelson Mandela

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 all of us 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.
- 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.
- Talk to someone you know who is from another country. Where are they from? What was their life like there? What language did they speak? Did they go to school? What do they miss? What do they like about their new country?
- Start a tradition of doing a family service project on Human Rights Day. There are many opportunities to volunteer, such as preparing and serving meals at a local homeless shelter or simply gathering enough to put together a bunch of care packages of simple needs and necessities.
<https://humanrightswarrior.com>

“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