



JOHN BLACK PUBLIC SCHOOL

150 Lamond St., Fergus, Ontario, N1M 2A1

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*Principal: Sarah Schoettler*

*Office Coordinator: Sheri MacKenzie*

Dear John Black PS Families,

December is already upon us and staff and students have really settled in. Our school has become busier with extra-curricular activities such as art club, rock band, student council, GSA, football, cross country, soccer intramurals, basketball intramurals, volleyball and more. Our School Council has been busy striving to support our students and ran their first school event with great success. We enjoyed seeing our families dress up and enjoy their time at the Fall dance. The first Winter FUNdraiser is currently underway and we would like to say a thank you in advance to those families who can contribute. All funds go directly to supporting the students with their learning at school. Student Council has been busy planning Badger days and running assemblies for our students – the last one focused on learning about Treaties for Treaty Recognition Week. We look forward to our December Badger days as we get into the holiday spirit.

It's the season of giving and spreading kindness and care, and so our annual Food Drive will run again this year to support our community through the Centre Wellington Food Bank. Some of their most needed items are rice and pasta side dishes, cold cereal, canned kidney beans, canned six bean blends, canned vegetables, crackers, peanut butter, carrots and onions and instant coffee. Our goal is to reach 1000 items and we are sure we can reach this and surpass it!

With the holidays ahead, the staff and I at John Black would like to extend our warmest wishes to all of our families. Wishing you a holiday full of quality time spent with friends and family. See you in 2023!

Sincerely,

Sarah Schoettler  
Principal

# Annual Food Drive



We will begin collecting non-perishable food items on **Monday, December 5th until Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>** for the Centre Wellington Food Bank. Some of their most needed items are rice and pasta side dishes, cold cereal, canned kidney beans, canned six bean blends, canned vegetables, crackers, peanut butter, carrots and onions and instant coffee. Our goal is to reach 1000 items!

**December's Badger Days:** In December many of our families are recognizing religious celebrations including Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Yule-Winter Solstice, and Christmas. We wish all of our families joyous celebrations!

<b>Monday, December 19th</b>	<b>Blue and White Day</b> (In celebration of Hanukkah)
<b>Tuesday, December 20th</b>	<b>Black, Red and Green Day</b> (In celebration of Kwanzaa)
<b>Wednesday, December 21st</b>	<b>Red, Green and White Day</b> (In celebration of Christmas)
<b>Thursday, December 22nd</b>	<b>Holiday Comfy Cozy Day</b>
<b>Friday, December 23rd</b>	<b>Happy Holidays! No School Today</b>

**Salad Day!** We are excited to announce that we will be having our first special food day of the year! On **Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>** we will be having a salad day. Students are asked to bring a plate or bowl and a fork to make up their salad. We will be doing Caesar salad, with dressing, cheese, croutons and broccoli and bacon on the side. If you would like to help out and you are set up as a volunteer for our school (with a completed vulnerable sector check), we would love to have you. We could use help with things such as cutting and preparing vegetables, as well as helping with set up and serving. Please let us know by emailing Ms. Matheson at [tmatheson@ugcloud.ca](mailto:tmatheson@ugcloud.ca).



As always, thank you for your support.

## Student Pick Up – Kiss ‘n Ride:

This is a reminder that students can be picked up at the kiss ‘n ride located in our parking lot which begins at the two orange lines right in front of our side door of the school. Parents are asked to use this area for pick up or to wait on St. Andrew for their Junior/Intermediate children. Vehicles are not to be stopping and picking up students on Lamond St. in front of our school between the times of 3:20 and 3:40 as this is our bus lane and it is unsafe for students to be crossing the street during this busy time. As well, the exit of our parking lot is not an area to be used for parking and waiting as this space is to be clear for cars to exit. Thank you for helping to keep our students safe.

# Looking for Gently Used Cross Country Skis and Boots

The school would like to increase the number of cross country ski sets available to our students. We are looking for donations of all sizes of skis and ski boots. If you have any gently used cross country skis and boots, please contact the school. Thank you!



## School Council Message

Greetings from your **John Black School Council!** School Council is running a **Winter FUNdraiser - Nov 24 - Dec 9th**. Classes who raise \$100+ earn a frozen treat reward for the whole class. In addition, top fundraising Primary, Junior & Intermediate classes will win some fun recess equipment! Funds raised go directly back into your child(ren)'s school and help support things like technology, and new equipment for the classrooms and playground. *We appreciate your support!*

**Next School Council meeting will be held virtually on January 12th, 2023** - all are welcome!! A binder with the minutes from John Black School Council meetings is available in the office and this year's monthly minutes are also available on our school website in the School Council section.

Our **School Council Lending Library** is now available! Currently we have the following materials which have been provided by the UGDSB's Parent Involvement Committee: Unlearn Posters, Street Data by Shane Safir and Jamila Dugan, Settler by Emma Battel Lowman and Adamn J. Barker, Why Indigenous Literatures Matter by Daniel Health Justice, Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer. To borrow these items, email Mr. Swan at [jswan@ugcloud.ca](mailto:jswan@ugcloud.ca) or send a note or email to your child's teacher. Include a student name and homeroom. Mr. Swan will sign out the items to the student and send it home with them. You can also drop into the school and sign out anything that's available.



Stay tuned for details about School Council's **Movie Night** in the New Year! ***Have a safe and happy holiday!***

## John Black PS has Bus Patrollers!

A group of student volunteers in grades 5-8 have participated in the CAA bus patrol training program and are now ready to support our bus drivers and students when on the bus. Our patrollers are trained to help ensure student safety when getting on and off the bus and to provide reminders to students when on the bus. They are also trained to support the driver in the case of an emergency. We are excited for this leadership opportunity for our students!





## Wellness Works: Empathy

Hello parents, guardians and families!

This month we are exploring the theme of EMPATHY with students as a part of their mental health skill building. Empathy is about being able to consider what someone else may be going through and imagining how they might be feeling or thinking. It is about walking in another person's shoes - about listening to another perspective non-judgmentally. It's about voicing our understanding of their emotions and validating them. It's about recognizing the humanity of others and challenging ourselves to be present. Empathy is often the first step towards compassionate action and helping others.

Empathy is important because with empathy we:

- Are more likely to treat people the way they wish you would treat them
- Are better able to understand the needs of people around you
- Are able to more clearly understand the perception you create in others with **your** words and actions
- Are able to better understand other people's needs

Here are some activities you can do at home to reflect and build on EMPATHY:

- Help younger children understand how to recognize emotions so they are better able to understand how others may be feeling. You can draw "feeling faces" or take pictures of family members with different feeling faces. Or take turns role-playing different emotions (what would you look like if someone knocked down your Lego? Found a puppy? Etc.)
- You can take turns coming up with situations or scenarios and have each family member share how that would make them feel. It's important for all of us to remember that how we may feel is not always how other's feel
- Encourage your child/ren to consider how other's may experience certain situations. For instance, if they came home excited about a presentation, they really felt good about - celebrate with them and then ask them to consider how the student who didn't present so well may be feeling. Or how the "new" student in the class may feel? Help your child understand that people have specific and unique identities, and these identities mean that different things are available to them, they have different experiences in the world, different interests, and different struggles.
- Help your child understand that different people have different things available to them, different experiences in the world, different interests and different struggles.
- If you are reading to your child, stop and ask how different characters may be feeling in the story. How do the character's different behaviours and choices tell us information about how they may be feeling?
- Designate a wall to share ideas/thoughts/pictures about empathy as a family and reflect on it together

Jenny Marino, Mental Health and Addictions Lead, in collaboration with the Wellness Works Team at UGDSB.

## Upper Grand District School Board

The UGDSB strongly recommends everyone to continue to follow public health's preventative measures to reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses in schools and help keep children and youth healthy.



# HEALTHY SCHOOLS UPDATE

### PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDS

- Screening daily for illness
- Staying home when sick, until you have no fever and symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours
- After staying home - wear a mask in public for 10 days after symptoms started

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### PREVENTATIVE MEASURES IN SCHOOLS

- Hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette
- Strongly recommend masking
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting
- Ventilation, 2500+ HEPA filters: in all classrooms and learning spaces, including work spaces
- Protocols to manage individuals ill at school
- Availability of rapid antigen tests
- Continued access to Personal Protective Equipment
- Including availability of masks
- Open windows for increased fresh air, when possible
- Outdoor learning

UPDATES ARE  
POSTED ONLINE:

[www.ugdsb.ca](http://www.ugdsb.ca)



# STRESS BUSTERS PROGRAM

Help support your child's stress management and well-being



**Strong Minds Strong Kids, Psychology Canada** is delivering a virtual after-school program for kids ages **8-12** in the Upper Grand District School Board community.

Stress Busters was designed from our evidence-based Kids Have Stress Tool (KHST!) program with an added peer-to-peer support component to help kids put their learning into practice. This program has had a positive impact on children's ability to identify and manage their stress. It provides children and their families with education and support to help them build stress management skills and to foster resilience.

"If you feel stressed, and can't really control it. You need to join the stressbusters after school program. It really helps, and I can confirm that because I have been stressed too. But when I joined I felt a lot better."

-Participant, 10 years old

## Themes

- What stress is and how it impacts our mind, body, emotions, and behaviour
- Reflect on stressful situations and think about ways to cope
- Learn simple breathing exercises to help manage stress
- Learn to react to situations in a more positive way
- Think about worries and fears in a realistic and productive way
- Kids learn to break down problems so they can address them proactively
- Explore creative self-expression as an effective stress buster
- Kids learn how to give and receive support by talking, listening, and connecting



**Register Now**



[CLICK HERE](#) to register your interest for Group 1:

- Thursdays: January 12th-March 2nd, 2023 (4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST)

[CLICK HERE](#) to register your interest for Group 2:

- Thursdays: January 12th-March 2nd, 2023 (6:00 pm-7:00 pm EST)

Space is limited and registrants will be notified if their child is entered into the program or added to a waiting list.

We would like to thank the Quinn Family Futures Foundation for their generous support of this program

For more information on our programs and services, please visit

[www.strongmindsstrongkids.org](http://www.strongmindsstrongkids.org)



