

Mitchell Woods Public School

October 2018

Mair Ann Gault, Principal – Sarah Garrett, Vice Principal

“At Mitchell Woods Public School we are:
BEING respectful, resilient and positive members of our school community.
BELONGING –everyone is accepted and welcome.
CONTRIBUTING our best to make our school community awesome! ”

SCREENS, SCREENS, SCREENS

As a school principal, 27 years into my teaching career, I am often asked what concerns me most about children’s lives “these days”? One of the first things that comes to mind is children spending too much time on screens and the impact that time is having on their physical and mental health. I see first hand children who are not getting enough time outdoors, children who are not socializing with others, children who are not getting enough sleep or physical activity, even children who are not attending school because they are up all night on devices, and they can’t get up in the morning. I even hear disempowered parents questioning their right to take these devices away from their children, or wondering about the extent to which they are “allowed” to limit their child’s access to screens. I cannot express strongly enough, that as parents we *must* get involved and help our children navigate this issue. We *must* put limits and boundaries in place in order for our children to be physically and mentally healthy. To help with this work I have provided some information below - I have taken some of this information from the Public Health Website. The link to the whole article is below.

First question many parents ask is “How much screen time is okay?” There’s no minimum amount of screen time kids need.

The Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines say that:

- Children under the age of 2 should not have any screen time (11-14 hours of sleep)
- Children ages 2-4 should have less than one hour of screen time per day (10-13 hours of sleep)
- Children and youth ages 5-17 should have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time per day (9-12 hours of sleep)

At home, try following these three steps to make Powering Off a bit easier:

1. Meet the screen time guidelines. *The less screen time the better! Try tracking your screen time and/or the fun activities you do as a family, using this sheet: [Keep Track of All the Ways You Power Off and Play \(PDF\)](#)*
2. Put away screens during meal times and at least one hour before bed. *Meals with screen time have been linked to overeating, and screens in the bedroom may cause a delay in falling asleep and poor sleep quality.*
3. Find other activities to do! *To power off and play you can draw, play board games, or head outside and throw a disc around! The possibilities are endless and don't have to be costly.*

[Public Health Blog](#)

[Sleep Guidelines for Children](#)

Physicians are now beginning to recognize the unhealthy impact of some people's gaming habits on their ability to function in their daily life. This concern is so critical that the World Health Organization has named this illness as "Gaming Disorder" and is encouraging the medical field to research and gain a better understanding of the impact of Gaming Disorder on people's lives. For more information, please go to the link below.

[Gaming Disorder World Health Organization](#) (see video on linked website)

Please know that I understand that most of our children do not have the medical condition of Gaming Disorder. I also know that devices can often provide us, as parents, a much needed break from the demands of a busy household. If our children, however, are spending several hours on screens each day, if screens are preventing them from going outside, playing, being physically active, and socializing face to face with other people, if screens are affecting their ability to get enough sleep, if they get distressed or angry when you try to put limits on their screen time, if our family time (in the car, at the dinner table, doing chores) has been replaced with screen time, it is essential that as parents, we get involved and put some boundaries in place. The time to act is now.

Sincerely,

Mair Ann Gault

Mair Gault - Principal - Mitchell Woods Public School

IMPORTANT – P.A. DAY/ HOLIDAY

Monday October 8th will be the Thanksgiving Holiday and there will **NO SCHOOL**. On Friday, November 2nd there will be **NO SCHOOL** due to a PA day for students. More information can be found at www.ugdsb.on.ca

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Please be advised that outside supervision does not begin until 8:30 in the morning. We request that children do not arrive at school before that time, as there are no teachers/staff watching them and colder weather is coming.

Also, please remind your child(ren) to go directly home or to their caregiver after school. We want to ensure that your students are safely on their way. (519) 829-3123

ABSENCES AND LATE ARRIVALS

It is very important that you phone the school if your child is going to be late or absent for any reason. (There is an answering machine on twenty-four hours a day so please use this system to keep us informed). You can also call in advance if you know of an upcoming appointment or absence. We will contact you when our attendance check indicates that your child is absent and we have not heard from you.

When your child arrives to school late, please make sure that they check into the main office for a late slip.

SCHOOL COUNCIL UPDATE

The School Council have met twice this year on September 10 and October 1 where we welcomed new and returning parents, teachers and staff. Thanks to the staff and parents who attended, your participation is really valuable.

School Council is a great way for parents to get involved in your children's school. Meetings are held monthly and this year are scheduled to start at 6:15 in the library on the following Mondays:

- November 5
- December 3
- January 14
- February 4
- April 8
- May 6
- June 3

For more information please contact Jane Brown at jane.brown@rogers.com or call the school to leave a message for Jane, who will follow-up with you.

We hope many of you were able to attend the Open House/Meet and Greet Social on Thursday, September 27. Lots of families attended and enjoyed food from 3 local, family run businesses:

Kirtida's Kitchen <http://www.kirtidaskitchen.com> 519-341-0055

Na-Ha-Thai's Kitchen <https://nahathaikitchen.weebly.com/> 519-362-1467

Sam's Sub <http://www.samsub.com> 519-767-2557

Families enjoyed the opportunity to have their children show off their classrooms and meet their teachers.

Mark your calendars for another event, Mitchell Woods 101 on Saturday October 13 from 9am – 11:30am starting with a Pancake Breakfast. This will be a free event for Mitchell Woods families and will include a speaker from the Guelph Community Health Centre and a chance to meet and hear from our Principal, Mair Gault. There will also be an opportunity to visit information booths from both inside and outside our school. Don't miss this exciting event where you can learn about all of the amazing things that take place in our school. You must register for this event in advance to ensure we have enough food. Deadline to register is October 9.

We are currently running two fundraisers:

1. Fresh From the Farm. Great opportunity to buy Fresh Ontario Produce from Local Farmers, and pick it up at Mitchell Woods. There are two options available to purchase and orders are **due back October 10**. *Pick up Date will be one day arranged sometime in late November or early December and will be announced approximately 2 weeks before.*
2. QSP Magazine Subscriptions. Opportunity to purchase magazine subscriptions both in paper form and online. This year we again added delicious cookie dough and mini loaves to our program. Order forms are **due back October 9**.

Elections were held at the October 1 meeting and the following positions were filled:

Secretary Kate Borthwick

Treasurers Keilani and Jared Carroll

Co-Chairs Amanda Dawson and Jane Brown

STUDENT COUNCIL

October will be the kick off for the student council events for the year.

Our first spirit event will be happening on **Friday October 5th.**

Let's give thanks and get a bit wacky.

Students should wear their fall colours and favourite fall outfits and start a windstorm with wacky hair and clothes. The wackier the better! Student council will be looking for the most creative fall colours and themed dress up ideas and awesome spirit. Members of council will be handing out tickets for you to enter into a draw to win a variety of prizes for people with the best spirit. Prizes will include things like:

- pies - apple and pumpkin
- Thanksgiving decorations - fall mums, gourds, etc
- Harvest baskets

Student Council is going to take over the gym and host a **Hallowe'en Fair on October 31st.** Black and Orange are the colours to wear but creativity is encouraged.

What will be included:

-pumpkin carving contest - students will bring in their carved pumpkins, (8 different categories) and will have a chance to pick their favourites.

The famous haunted house will be open for the scaring!

-carnival style games- treats given out

-music and dancing

The schedule for your Halloween fair time is:

9:00 - 9:40 Kindergarten

9:45 - 10:20 Grades 1 and 2

11:10 - 11:50 Grade 3 and 4

12:00 - 12:50 Grade 5 and 6

1:40 - 2:30 Grade 7 and 8

Students will come with their class to judge the pumpkins and tryout the haunted house and some fun games.

Thanks for all your support in Student Council events.

PUMPKINS

On Thursday, October 31st teachers will have a one day opportunity to run pumpkin activities in their classrooms. *Due to a life-threatening pumpkin allergy, we must have all pumpkins in and out on this one day.* Stay tuned to individual class communication for details. **Please do not send pumpkins in any other day than October 31st.**
Thank you.

NO DOGS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Please note that there are children who have allergies to animal hair, and others who have a fear of dogs. There is also a possibility of a child being scratched or nipped by a dog (perhaps excited by all the children who enter and leave the school at the end of the day). We have also, unfortunately, had dog droppings deposited on our school property. As such, in order to prevent a potential concern for students, please do not bring your dog onto school property during school hours.

CHILD CUSTODY ORDERS

Unless otherwise directed by a court of law, both biological parents usually have full access to students and their records. If for some reason these rights are restricted, legal documentation must be on file at the school. Your child's emotional and physical well-being is of utmost concern to our school staff. Please ensure that copies of any Custody or Access orders affecting your child are on file at the school office.

HEAD LICE

When a child at Mitchell Woods Public School has head lice an information sheet will be sent home with the children in his/her class. We do not identify the child in the letter. This is a good time to check your child(ren) carefully for head lice. Many children are in close contact with other children over the summer and as a result these pests spread easily. If you do find head lice on your child, we request that he or she be treated before the child returns to school. Instructions for a second treatment should be followed 7 to 10 days after the first treatment.

VISITOR POLICY

All visitors/volunteers must report to the school office upon arrival. Please use the office counter clipboard to sign "IN" and "OUT" of the school. Wear a visitor badge while you are in the school away from the office. ***When bringing a child to/from school please wait for students at the main office or in the front foyer. For the safety of our students DO NOT proceed to the classroom to pick up or drop off a child.***

CHANGE OF PLANS

If you have a change in your child's regular plan for going home at the end of the day, please let the office know before 12:50 pm (our second nutritional break) if at all possible. It is very difficult to get a message to your children at the end of the day, when classes are preparing for dismissal or getting on the bus (if this is applicable). This is especially true if there is more than one child involved. Thanks for your help in this matter.

SHOES AND WEATHER

As the colder weather soon approaches, we are reminding children to dress for the weather. Students are **required** to have an indoor and outdoor pair of shoes. The indoor shoes should be comfortable and appropriate for gym, so running shoes are perfect.

SAFETY ISSUES

As required in the Policy, we will be teaching age-appropriate lessons to help our students identify abuse and protect themselves from abusive situations. The goal is to provide children with the tools they need to keep themselves safe. The lessons cover a broad range of safety issues including bullying, stranger danger and abuse by a known and trusted adult.

This will be taught over the course of the year. For grades one, three and five, the lessons will be team taught by our Child and Youth Counselor and classroom teachers. There is no formal program in grades two, four and six, although the safety concepts are reviewed by classroom teachers informally.

We encourage you to discuss with your child at home, the concepts taught in the Child Abuse Prevention Curriculum.

For more information concerning the Child Abuse Prevention Policy/Programs please contact Mrs. Gault, Principal or Mrs. Fonte, Child and Youth Counsellor.

REMINDER ABOUT ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT SCHOOL

A friendly reminder that no electronic devices (and related headphones) may be used on school property except within the classroom with teacher permission. These devices include, but are not limited to: game systems, computers, cellphones, MP3 players, tablets etc. Once students arrive on school property they are expected to put these devices in their backpacks or lockers. Students are aware that on the first offence their device will be put in a locked drawer in the office for the remainder of the day. Second offence (which rarely happens) the student will be required to park their device in the office drawer each day for a week. Third offence, (which I don't think has happened in the last year) there will be a call made home and a home/school plan put in place. Please keep in mind that the school is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.

TERRY FOX FUNDRAISING RESULTS

Thank you to all members of our school community who participated in our Annual Terry

Fox Fundraiser. With your support we surpassed our goal and raised a total of \$2025!!

SCHOOL SAFETY COMMITMENT

The Upper Grand District School Board is committed to providing safe learning environments for all students, staff, school visitors and community members. When a student behaves inappropriately, principals use progressive discipline to help a student take responsibility for their actions, change their behaviour, and learn from their mistakes.

When students' behaviour pose a potential threat to safety or serious harm, the Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol (VTRA) helps principals take further steps to protect students' well-being.

More information is provided on the UGDSB website.

INFORMATION FROM PUBLIC HEALTH - Lunchbox Essentials!

Are you getting back into the habit of packing school lunches? A balanced lunch includes a variety of foods to keep your child full and able to learn best. Try to include at least one food item from each of these 4 categories in your child's lunch every day.

Vegetables

Fruit

Protein-rich Foods (beans, lentils, chickpeas, cheese, eggs, meat, fish, plain yogurt, plain milk)

Whole Grains & Starchy Vegetables (whole grain pasta or bread, potatoes, corn)

Top 5 Tips:

Keep peeled and cut veggies and fruit on hand in the fridge, ready to grab and go!

Try to include a fruit or veggie at every meal and snack.

Involve your kids in planning and making school lunches. They're more likely to eat food they helped make and they build valuable life skills in the kitchen!

Save time and use your leftovers for school lunches.

Include a reusable water bottle every day.

Check out UnlockFood.ca for school lunch tips and recipes.

ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOL POLICY

Asthma is a very common chronic lung disease that can make it hard to breathe. The Upper Grand District School Board adopted a policy in June 2016 to provide support for students with Asthma. If your child has asthma, the policy requires an Asthma Management Plan (AMP) to be completed by parents, a child's doctor and the principal of the school. *A copy of this plan is available on the Board's website under Policy 516.* Parents are requested to complete the AMP and return it to the school as soon as possible at the beginning of the school year. Authorization for the collection of this information is in the Education Act. The purpose is to collect and share medical

information and to administer proper medical care in the event of an emergency or life-threatening situation. Users of this information may be principals, teachers, support staff, volunteers, bus operators and drivers. This form will be kept for a minimum period of one calendar year. Contact person concerning this collection is the school principal.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The Upper Grand DSB provides a smoke-free environment for its students, staff and others while on school Board property, in accordance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. This policy refers to all forms of tobacco, and any processed form of tobacco that may be smoked, inhaled or chewed, including e-cigarettes and vaping.

Smudging is the tradition of using sacred smoke from sacred medicines (e.g., tobacco and sage) that forms part of the indigenous culture and spirituality. Smudging is allowed in schools under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Parents will be informed using the school's usual forms of communication when smudging is going to occur in our school. Participation by staff and students is optional in a smudging ceremony.

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES

We have children in our school with potential life-threatening allergies (called anaphylaxis) to various foods and other materials. Anaphylaxis is a medical condition that can cause death within minutes. In recent years, anaphylaxis has increased dramatically among students.

Although this may not affect your child's class directly, we are letting you know so that you are aware that we aim to create an allergy safe environment at our school.

If your child is in a classroom with an anaphylactic child, or your child has anaphylaxis, you will be informed by the classroom teacher.

Our school has procedures in place for the prevention and management of anaphylactic reactions. If your child has health concerns of any kind, please tell your child's teacher or the office and we will take the necessary health protection steps. Thank you for your understanding in ensuring an allergy-safe environment for all of our students.

