



At Mitchell Woods 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!



(Below is the speech that I gave at our Mitchell Woods 101 event in October. I share it with you today.)

"Two years ago, at our very first Mitchell Woods 101, I had the pleasure of introducing the first line of our motto, and this year we are adding the third and final line, CONTRIBUTING.

What is Contributing?

One definition is to give something in order to help achieve or provide something, another definition is to help to cause or bring about.

And what are we trying to achieve? To bring about?

"An awesome school community!!"

So what does contributing look like in action?

At our last PA day, I showed a short video clip to staff (See link - it's about 2 minutes long).

[Video link: What makes you happy \(contributing\) :\)](#)

and asked them to reflect and discuss the following questions:

"What is this man contributing?"

"What do the others around him seem to be thinking while he is doing these acts?"

"What is the impact of his contribution?"

The movie prompted some great discussion. When we chatted about the video, we noticed several things:

One, what the man is contributing are small acts of kindness - not big showy demonstrations of how awesome he is, but quiet, compassionate, life-giving generous acts.

Two, sometimes the people around him were impatient, embarrassed, judgmental... but he does what he believes to be right anyway.

Third, the impact of his contribution takes time to unfold, is not immediate, and perhaps it goes unseen.

When we are challenging our school community (our students, staff, parents and guardians) to contribute, these are the types of behaviours we are trying to emphasize... not just the big gestures of contributing, such as leading a team, being the best in your class, or being an excellent fundraiser - these actions are needed and appreciated... but we are asking our school community to go deeper... to move toward acts of kindness, compassion, understanding, forgiveness and patience. We are asking our school community to give a little piece of their day, their time and their heart to continue to make Mitchell Woods the warm, loving, welcoming and accepting community it is!

We don't have to spend money, or bags of time.

We can simply speak gently to one another.

When you wait day after day for your children to be dismissed, make conversation with one another - even if it's awkward at first, and you'd rather just be checking Instagram on your phones!

Come to community events.

Volunteer to help put away the chairs at the end of community events.

Be patient when there is not enough parking and you are pulling your hair out!!

Walk your children to school whenever you can, to keep the parking open for people who maybe aren't physically able to walk.

Show gratitude.

Our children are watching us. They learn more from what they *see us do*, than they ever do from what *they hear us say*.

Just so you know, we are well on our way to creating a contributing school community. This Thanksgiving weekend I had the pleasure of reading all 269 of the parent surveys that were returned in September from our school families.

What a wonderful activity to align with Thanksgiving.

Over and over and over again families expressed their appreciation for the wonderful, welcoming, diverse, friendly, school community we had created together. Honestly, it was like all 270 families had filled out the form in unison... that's how consistent the feedback was. And I completely agree!!

I feel blessed every day to walk into this building and serve these children, this staff and our community.

All I can say is keep up the great work!!"

- Mair Ann Gault - Principal MWPS

One final quote:

In this life we cannot always do great things. But we can do small things with great love." Mother Teresa

November 2018 School Council Update

Thank you to all families who attended the Mitchell Woods 101 event on Saturday morning, October 13. The 115+ members of our MWPS community who attended were treated to a pancake breakfast to start. Afterwards, while the children were entertained, parents heard from our Principal, Mair Gault, and a speaker from Guelph CHC and then all family members were able to visit the information booths around the gym illustrating details about the various activities our students can be involved in. Thank you to all the teachers, students, staff and parents for volunteering their time to make this morning such a great success!

Two fundraisers are just wrapping up – thank you to all the friends and families of students who supported the school in these two initiatives:

1. Fresh From the Farm. Because of all the fundraising efforts of our students and families we raised approximately \$600. Pick-Up Day is Thursday, November 15 from 3pm – 6pm in the Front Foyer of the School. Thank you to all the families who supported this fundraiser.
2. QSP Magazine Subscriptions and Cookie Dough. Sales are currently being tallied and the money raised will be published in the December newsletter. A big thank you to all the families and friends who bought magazine subscriptions and cookie dough.

A third fundraiser is in progress – the annual Gift Card Fundraiser. Order forms went home last week and if you still need one please download it from the school website. Order forms are due back on November 20. Gift cards will be available on December 5.

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

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.

November Student Council Update

November 3-12th - Operation Christmas Child

A letter went home on November 1st outlining how to participate.

Boxes will be on display to pick up in the front lobby

Operation Christmas Child is an opportunity to provide a gift to children around the world at Christmas.

1-Take a shoebox and fill it for a child.

2- bring in gift donations

3- bring in a monetary donation

Donations need to be in by Nov 14th

Food Drive - all donations will be sent to the food bank

November 19th-29th

There will be a friendly...(competitive), contest between classes for the amount of food that they collect.

A prize will be awarded to the class with the most donations.

School Drills

In the interest of student safety, the Upper Grand District School Board has directed all schools to conduct at least six fire drills, two lockdown drills and one tornado drill each school year.

A lockdown is used when it is suspected that an intruder has entered the school and poses a threat to the safety of our students and staff. Detailed procedures have been developed in conjunction with our local police services and provided to all schools as part of our emergency procedures manual.

In a lockdown, students and staff are directed to secure areas where doors can be locked and the children are kept out of sight (such as classrooms and portables). No one may leave their secure area until they receive an "all clear" from the authorities.

Students and staff will be instructed on what they are to do when a drill is held. Lockdown drills are becoming familiar to students just like fire and tornado drills which we are also required to do every year.

If you have any questions or concerns about Lockdown drills, we would be happy to discuss them with you.



Lost and Found

Did you label, with a permanent marker, items your child brings to school that could go missing? Our lost and found bins are filling up fast and it is more likely an item can be returned if you have labelled

sweatshirts, coats, lunch bags, backpacks, shoes, etc. All items not claimed in a timely manner will be donated to a charitable organization.



Cold Days - Wet Weather- Recess

It is getting chilly out and the snow may fly soon. Please remember to assist your child in wearing the proper clothing to school. This includes a warm jacket, hat, mittens, and waterproof footwear. Thanks for sending extra socks in your child's backpack just in case. All students are expected to participate in outdoor recess, as this important active break aids concentration and success in the classroom. Indoor shoes are essential to help keep our classrooms clean and dry.



Inclement Weather

It is the parent's responsibility to determine whether or not it is safe for his or her child to leave for school in inclement or severe weather. A parent must be aware of the following:

- When a bus does not travel a route in the morning due to fog, ice, snow conditions, it will NOT travel that route in the afternoon.
- While we have an excellent transportation system, buses may be delayed in the morning due to traffic, poor road conditions, mechanical breakdowns etc. To ensure your child is not stranded at his/her pick up point, please make sure they know what to do and where to go if their bus is more than 15 minutes late
- Remember to listen to CJOY 1460 AM or Magic 106.1 FM in the event of inclement weather. They will broadcast bus cancellations or school closures.

Procedures are also in place to ensure the safety of students during their outdoor breaks at nutritional breaks during periods of extreme cold.

In the event of inclement weather, the Director of Education will make the decision to close schools. Announcements are made by local radio stations and this information is also posted on the Wellington-Dufferin Student Transportation System website.

Website: www.stwdsts.ca

Sign In and Sign out Procedures

We take the safety of your child(ren) very seriously!

Adults entering the building are asked to come to the office to sign in. If you are staying to volunteer or as a visitor for an event, please pick up and wear the appropriate badge from the office. Adults in our building

who are not wearing a visitor's badge will be asked to return to the office and sign in. Please remember that the safety of our students is extremely important.

If you are dropping your child(ren) at the office, please allow them to proceed to class on their own.

To keep disruptions in the classroom to a minimum, parents picking up students during the school day are asked to come to the office and wait for their children there. Please remember to sign your child(ren) out at the office. If children are reminded in the morning when to come to the office to meet a parent and the teacher has been aware of the absence, this will go a long way to keep disruptions in the classroom down.

Lunches, clothing, homework etc. must be dropped off at the office. We will make sure that your child(ren) receive the items before breaks.

Finally, parents needing to speak to a teacher are asked to phone ahead or write a note and request an interview time, rather than dropping in when the teacher is busy with other responsibilities. The home/school connection is so important for your child's success. You are more than welcome to call your child's teacher to discuss any issue.

Child Custody

Unless otherwise directed by a court of law, both natural parents have full access to their child and their records. If for some reason these rights are restricted, it is important to notify the Principal with a photocopy of any legal documents that outline a parent's access rights (e.g. Custody Order). Should the situation change, please ensure that the Principal is notified.

Head Lice

Here is our friendly head lice reminder; as you are aware, having head lice is not an indicator of poor hygiene – lice like clean hair best! They can happen to anyone. If there was a report of head lice in your child's class, we will send home a head lice notice. Please check your son/daughter's hair regularly, and contact the school if you discover your child has lice or nits. If your child has head lice, please treat them with a remedy from the pharmacy that kills the live lice and then using a special comb or other technique; and remove nits from the hair. Since no product can effectively kill all nits, you will then need to check for nits and remove them from the hair every day for 7-10 days at which time treatment is redone with a pharmacy product.

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten Registration for the 20198/2020 school year will take place in the New Year. More information will follow.



School Safety Patrols

Our safety patrols have been doing an excellent job in safeguarding our students and parents as they walk to and from school. We would like to remind parents of the following:

*Please come to a **full** stop at stop signs.

*Please do not stop to let your children off at the crosswalk or wave for students to cross.

*Please do not obstruct the sidewalk by parking in neighbours driveways.

*Please take care in attending to our patrols and be patient.

*Please do not park/stop in no parking/no stopping areas. This choice of parking spots blocks the line of sight for our patrols.

Bullying Awareness Week **November 19th - 23rd**

During the week of November 19-23 the students and staff at Mitchell Woods are going to be discussing and exploring the issue of bullying and its effects. Throughout the week, students will participate in activities and discussions in their classrooms.

What is a bully?

A bully can be defined in many ways but some of the common elements of the definition include:

- an imbalance of power - the bully or bullies may be physically stronger or may be part of a larger group and/or may have a stronger social status within the school
- the action is repeated over time - two friends arguing and calling each other names is not bullying
- there is malicious intent - a bully means to hurt the other person. Bullying is not accidental nor is bullying just teasing
- bullies enjoy the power and strength they feel when hurting others

Anyone can be a bully, although the approach a bully takes usually differs from boys to girls. Boys tend to bully physically; pushing, tripping, bumping, kicking, etc. The bullying pattern of girls tends to be harder to observe as they tend to exclude, intimidate or verbally bully their target. If you suspect that your child may be a bully you need to take the problem seriously and talk to your child. Let your child know that you will not tolerate bullying behaviour and use non-violent consequences. Establishing family rules, spending more time with your child and increasing supervision of their activities will help your child feel valued and lessen the likelihood of bullying behaviour.

How do I know if my child is being bullied?

Anyone can be a target of bullying although bullies tend to choose victims who are passive and are less

likely to be assertive and stand up for themselves or less likely to tell an adult.
Some signs that your child is being bullied *may* include:

- being afraid to go to school
- changes in mood or behaviour (ie. quiet, withdrawn, argumentative)
- coming home with unexplained injuries
- having damaged property
- experiencing restless sleep

What to do if your child is being bullied?

- ask your child directly
- listen
- talk with staff supervising your child
- teach your child assertiveness and social skills
- know your child's strengths and weaknesses
- encourage special interests and activities that focus on strengths
- teach your child positive ways to resolve arguments
- seek help

What is a bystander?

A lot of recent research indicates the role of a third group in the occurrence of bullying. This third group is the bystanders. Bystanders allow bullying to occur by standing and watching or by actively encouraging and cheering the bully on thereby reinforcing the bullying behaviour. Bystanders often say that it's none of their business, the bully is my friend, the victim deserved to be bullied or that there is nothing they can do about it. Bystanders are now being encouraged to empathize with the victim, to report (not tattling) when someone is in danger of being harmed, to accompany the target to get help, and to join together with their peers to protect targets.

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 view point. 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 of behaviour may emerge where the person who behaves aggressively in the conflict may continue or even make it worse. The person who is the recipient of the aggressive conflict may feel less and less able to express his or her point of

view and feel more and more powerless. That is when negative conflict may turn into bullying. A school will respond to bullying and conflict differently. For example, in the case of a conflict, a school staff member may try to have the students come together to tell their side of the story and help them resolve the situation together.

In the case of bullying, a principal will consider progressive discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion. - Ontario Ministry of Education

See our 2018 Bullying Prevention Plan

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/mwoods/our-school/bullying-prevention-plan/>



Monthly Environmental Activities to help celebrate our planet

NOVEMBER 25TH IS BUY NOTHING DAY!

Don't buy, give. "No one has ever become poor by giving", Anne Frank

Celebrate Buy Nothing Day on November 23rd!

Buy Nothing Day is an awareness day highlighting society's habit of buying too many things. It is a day for society to examine the issue of over-consumption and is held on 'Black Friday', which is one of the busiest shopping days in the United States. <https://en.wikipedia.org>

"We are also consuming and trashing clothing at a far higher rate than our planet can handle.

Today's trends are tomorrow's trash. The only solution is to reduce our levels of consumption." *Dr Kirsten Brodde of Greenpeace Germany*- <https://www.telegraph.co.uk>

Repair, reduce, re-use, recycle – 4 R's are best!

It's time for a new kind of materialism, based on an economy of better, not more... that makes things which last and can be repaired many times before being recycled, from furniture to tools, cars, fridges, clothes and food. 'Repair, reduce, re-use, recycle' could be the new model. <https://www.theguardian.com>

Some great ideas for your family on Buy Nothing Day!

- Instead of shopping, enjoy a day in the great outdoors by walking trails or going to the park.
- Recycle school supplies such as binders, workbooks, pens and pencils instead of buying new.
- Donate clothes, books, toys and games your family does not need any more.
- Think of things you can make or do for people as gifts without spending any money.

Either way, there's no doubt that going without buying anything for an entire day is quite a challenge in the modern world, and will serve to make you think about what your life is really about!

Special Class Placement in UGDSB

Students who require special education programs and services receive support through the classroom teacher and the special education resource teacher at their home schools. However, in some circumstances, students can be referred to a special education class placement where focused instruction in the area of need is provided. These classes have smaller numbers and can provide targeted instruction to meet student needs. In elementary there are four specialized class placements for the following exceptionalities: Learning Disability, Mild Intellectual Disability/Language-based Learning Disability, Developmental Disability (Intellectual Disability), and Intellectually Gifted. *Students need to have a diagnosis of an exceptionality before they can be eligible for class placement, and parents and the school team should feel like the placement would best meet the student's learning needs.* Contact your school team if you would like to have more information on special class placement options.

ECO Club News

Mitchell woods is collecting MILK BAGS that again! These are the coloured bigger bags that hold the three smaller bags. Mrs. Growden has located a neighbourhood business who will accept them. These milk bags will be used to make wonderful, durable sleep mats for families in need.

Information from Public Health

We're talking about weed – new cannabis information campaign launched!

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health has launched a cannabis information campaign to provide youth and adults with information about the health effects of cannabis use, ways to reduce health risks, and links to local resources and support. This campaign features a series of short videos, including one for parents, which encourages parents to talk to their kids about cannabis. More information for parents can be found on our website: www.talkingaboutweed.ca.

Looking for more information? Check out these other parent resources:

Cannabis: What Parents/Guardians and Caregivers Need to Know (by School Mental Health Assist and Centre for Addiction and Mental Health):

<https://smh-assist.ca/wp-content/uploads/PRINT-Cannabis-Information-Document-SMHA-CAMH-ENGLISH.pdf>

Cannabis Talk Kit (by Drug Free Kids Canada):

<https://www.drugfreekidsCanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/34-17-1850-Cannabis-Talk-Kit-EN-10.pdf>

Talking About Mental Health November 2018 – Nature and Mental Health

Fall is here and so is that pre-winter chill! Getting outside makes such a difference to how we all are doing inside. Spending time in nature improves our mental health and well-being. Being outdoors is a simple way to add some much needed down time from screens. Adding some time in nature is having some much deserved peace and quiet in our busy lives. One study showed that even 5 minutes in nature improves our mood. 5 minutes! We all can take 5 minutes (or more if you have it) to go outside and enjoy nature.

If you want your family:

- To be less stressed
- To be happier
- To be more resilient
- To feel better about themselves
- To have a better ability to learn

Then GO OUTSIDE! Take your kids outside! Enjoy and be a part of nature.

Try this:

Go for a walk

Head for the woods – make a scavenger hunt

Go birdwatching – make it a game to find the names of all birds you see

Go on a bug hunt

Watch the clouds float by

Make a game of identifying all the sounds you hear outside

If you are not sure where to go, check out the links below for lots of great parks in our area.

<http://guelph.ca/living/recreation/parks/>

<http://www.wellington.ca/en/discover/trailsandforests.asp?hdnContent=>

<https://www.grandriver.ca/en/grand-river-parks.aspx>

<http://headwaters.ca/experience/parks-conservation-areas/>

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/>

- Jenny Marino, Mental Health and Addictions Lead for the Upper Grand District School Board

Follow me on Instagram #upper_grand_mental_health

Your Future, Your Choice - Career event on November 14th, 2018

On November 14th, 2018 the Career Education Council is hosting their annual education, career and community resources fair at Centennial CVI. Everyone is welcome and UGDSB students and their families are encouraged to mark your calendars with plans to attend between 6-8pm. Exhibitors representing high school programs, community resources, future career opportunities and volunteer possibilities will be on hand to speak directly to students and their families. This event is geared to students in grades 8-12

