

# Mitchell Woods Public School Newsletter

Principal: Mair Ann Gault

Vice Principal: Sarah Garrett

MAY 2021



*Note: This year in honour of our Everyday Hero Award winner and graduating School Council Chair, I have chosen to give my "spot" to Amanda Dawson, in order for her to share her monthly message under the banner of "From the Principal". M. Gault*

*Dear Mitchell Woods Families,*

*I know this is not where we wanted to be, in another lockdown with our kids learning remotely. Facing loneliness, stress with juggling online learning and work, anxiety about your family's health and wondering when we will go back to normal. I have spent a lot of energy on these very worries myself. I have been very grateful for our supportive staff who take such good care of our children and for other resources that have been provided. As Mrs. Gault always says, you are not alone, we will get through this together.*

*One of my concerns has been and continues to be how much time my children are on screens. A resource that I have found helpful is a website called, "Screenagers". There are many resources and anecdotes there that I have found very helpful in*

*setting boundaries around screens.*  
<https://www.screenagersmovie.com/resources>

*Also, a reminder that our school board has put together excellent resources surrounding mental health, so make sure to check those out if you are someone in your household is in need of some help:*  
<https://sites.google.com/ugcloud.ca/mhugparents>

*Just a couple of reminders for you: Mabel's Labels fundraiser continues to run. Visit [mabelslabels.ca](http://mabelslabels.ca) and click "support a fundraiser" then select "Mitchell Woods Public School (Guelph)". (Family and Friends Sale ends May 6th) A portion of your purchase will go towards supporting our school.*

*Fundscrip fundraiser is ongoing. Visit [fundscrip.ca](http://fundscrip.ca) and create an account. Gift cards are great gifts for Mother's & Father's Day, birthdays and can be used for everyday shopping. Thank you to those who continue to purchase cards, every purchase helps!*

*Finally, due to restrictions for gatherings, our final two meetings will be held on-line. If you are interested in attending those meetings please contact Amanda Dawson at*

*scmitchellwoods@gmail.com* and she will make sure you have access. Meetings are held from 7:30-9:15PM. Our meeting will be held on:

• June 9

*If you have any questions about school council, please contact Amanda at [scmitchellwoods@gmail.com](mailto:scmitchellwoods@gmail.com).*

*-Amanda Dawson - School Council Chair  
MHPSP*

Please join us at 7PM on Monday, May 10 for a virtual presentation of the Every Day Hero Award: <https://vimeo.com/ugstream>

\*PLEASE NOTE THAT SOME OF THIS INFORMATION IS ONLY RELEVANT IF WE RETURN TO IN-PERSON LEARNING

## “WHEELS” AT SCHOOL

Several students have begun riding their bicycles, scooters or skateboards to school. Please make sure that your children have the appropriate helmets, bike locks and that they remember they have to walk all wheels once on school property.

## RECORDING SCHOOL EVENTS AND PRIVACY

As we come to the end of the school year, there will be many opportunities to record (virtual) school events. Please know that personally recording school events and then posting them on social networks such as Facebook or YouTube is not respectful of the privacy rights of all those parents, staff and particularly students whose images are being shared without their knowledge and permission. Please join us (virtually) for these special events, record them for your memories and respect the privacy rights of all students, parents and staff. Thanks!

## MOVING SCHOOLS

If you are moving houses or schools this year, we would appreciate a call, so that we can staff our school and assign students to classrooms for next year with as much accuracy as possible. Note: there is someone in the office every day, even during lock-down. So, feel free to leave a message, it will be retrieved.

## PETS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

While we have many dog lovers in our school, please understand that during school hours, due to safety reasons, **no pets of any kind are allowed at school without permission.** Teachers may give permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special display or project, but must be consulted first. Some children are highly allergic to certain animals, while others are sometimes fearful of them due to prior experiences. While walking your dog or playing in the playground with your children outside of school hours, please encourage all who use our school and city walks and grounds to be sure and scoop whatever is left behind! We appreciate your understanding in this matter.



## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION



If you have not yet had an opportunity to register your child, please do so by visiting the school board website at [www.ugdsb.on.ca](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca)

## FIRE, TORNADO and BOMB DRILLS

As a reminder, each year our school must conduct drills to ensure staff and students are prepared in the event of a real emergency. While our school has been conducting fire drills,

lockdown drills and tornado drills for the last several years, beginning this school year, we are also required to conduct a bomb threat drill. The following number of drills are required each school year:

- Three (3) fire drills in the fall and three (3) fire drills in the spring
- Two (2) lockdown drills
- One (1) tornado drill
- One (1) bomb threat drill

All drills are conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of our students.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

During our Fire Drills students do not have time to put on shoes. Please make sure they have a pair to wear inside and a pair for outside. During these drills anyone in the school is asked to evacuate the building and follow the same procedures as the students and staff. Staff will be reviewing these procedures with their students so that they feel comfortable and confident in what is expected of them during these procedures.

## APPROPRIATE DRESS

We ask students to dress appropriately at all times. Please go to the link below for details from our updated Dress Code. The information pertaining to appropriate dress is about half way down the page.

[School Code of Conduct](#)

## PRIDE FLAG

In keeping with our Equity work at Mitchell Woods Public School, the Equity committee has decided to fly a Pride Flag in the month of June. Morning announcements will be made to inform students of the meaning behind the flag. See link to more information on the Upper Grand District School Board Website:

[Pride Flag](#)

## MORE CHILDREN CAN GET FREE DENTAL CARE

More children have qualified for free dental care as of April 1, 2014 due to changes to the **Healthy Smiles Ontario Program**. The income thresholds have changed and now include the number of children in the family. This affects children and youth up to the age of 18 who are residents of Ontario and have no access to any form of dental coverage.

If you think a child may qualify for **Healthy Smiles Ontario**, contact Public Health at 1-800-265-7293 ext. 2661.

We will help you with the application process and answer any questions.



## REMINDER

If you or your child want to attend an event at the school (in the future) , for which there is a cost, and you or your child requires a support person (one who assists a person with a disability) please know the support person will not be charged to attend with the disabled person. Please know there are also Accessibility Feedback Forms available for anyone who requires them. Come into the office for your copy. Thank you.

## CELEBRATE BIODIVERSITY

The United Nations has proclaimed May 22, 2021 as The International Day for Biological Diversity to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues.

<https://www.un.org/en/events/biodiversityday/>  
Biodiversity simply means: "A wide range of life"  
Some of the things we do are harmful, so we need to learn more about how to protect all the different types of life on our planet.

<https://www.cbd.int/>

## **Ideas for your family to celebrate Biodiversity Day!**

- Visit farmers markets in your local area to try new types of produce. Whether you incorporate heirloom tomatoes into your cooking, or try one of the rainbow of colors of carrots, biodiversity can bring a great new experience to your table.
- View photos of endangered species on the Internet with your child and discuss the reasons why these animals are threatened and why they should be protected.
- Join a community group and help to remove invasive plants from your local environment.
- Get out into the world and enjoy all the different types of life your local area offers. Even your street or a local park can have an amazing variety of life you've never noticed, from insects, birds, chipmunks, to trees and flowers.
- Consider planting a pollinator garden in your yard (or in a flowerpot) to help save the bees and butterflies from declining.

For more ideas on how to increase the biodiversity of your own backyard, go to: <https://biodivcanada.chm-cbd.net/biodiversity-your-backyard>

Celebrate the diversity of our natural world every day!

## **Talking About Mental Health: May 2021**

### **Let's talk about AUTONOMY**

Autonomy, our theme for May, is our ability to make decisions and have a say in the direction of our lives. Autonomy helps with the development of independence and trust and is an important part of our individual growth and development. As a parent nurturing autonomy, we aim to create a cooperative bond between ourselves and our children while also paying attention to secure and reasonable boundaries and expectations. Autonomy goes beyond

teaching independence and is about supporting our children in a way that allows them a sense of comfort in themselves.

Why is autonomy important?

- Helps to create a sense of mastery – over body, mind and environment
- Supports independent and critical thinking
- Encourages intrinsic motivations
- Inspires confidence
- Allows for individuality and uniqueness to emerge

**So what can you do?** (adapted from Dr. Shenfield, What is Autonomy Supportive Parenting and How to Practice It, 2019, article)

- Involve your child/ren in household decision making – age appropriately of course!
- Give your child the opportunity to have input in their daily routine when possible
- Help your child to express their own emotions and opinions within safe boundaries
- Keep loving them! Let them know through your actions and words that you love them.
- Respect their preferences and choices when possible. And when they can't be met you can still acknowledge that you heard their preference/choice.
- Really listen to your child and help them label and express their feelings.

### **Social Justice**

You can use this month's focus to look at what your child/family are interested in in terms of the broader community. What is important to each of you? Where do they see that they could make a difference? Be creative and have fun while making a difference.

“I think there's great potential for autonomy, but we have to remember that we live in a world where people may have free will but have not invented their circumstances.” Thomas Frank

(Thanks to Edge Mutual for their support of the Umbrella Project at UGDSB)

-Jenny Marino - Mental Health Lead UGDSB

### **Math Website**

<https://sites.google.com/ugcloud.ca/mathgamesite/home>

The elementary curriculum department invites families to come and explore a new math website for Parents and Guardians called, Games and Activities that Support Mathematical Thinking at Home. The site is full of parent/guardian resources and activities you may use at home to strengthen foundational numeracy skills with your children. The purpose of this site is to share hands-on and interactive math games you can play in a home setting while also exploring how we can nurture a love of mathematics with our children. The site includes low prep activities meaning games require little to no materials and are suitable for children grades K-8. The games highlighted here are hands on and not digital. As technology continues to develop and provide wonderful learning opportunities, these games allow for a break from the screen and promote face to face interaction. There is also a form linked to the site inviting families to share their own math games as well. We hope this site is helpful to families looking to explore math together.