

PAISLEY ROAD PUBLIC SCHOOL

May 2021 Newsletter

Talking About Mental Health:

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.

Math Website for Families

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.

Celebrate Biological Diversity Day on May 22nd!

The United Nations has proclaimed May 22 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.

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!

Class Placements

Making a request for a specific class placement for your child(ren) is an extraordinary step which must be supported by specific and detailed reasons. If you are going to make a request please outline in detail the extraordinary circumstances and needs of your child. This must be done in writing and addressed directly to the Principal.

Please note that when school staff draft class lists a variety of factors are taken into consideration and some of these are as follows:

- *total number of students
- *balance of male/female
- *balance of ability
- *number of exceptional students and programming
- *positive and negative combinations of students
- *formation of interactive learning groups
- *teacher experiences

Split grades are a direct result of staff being allocated by the total student population. The most important factor is not whether your child is in a split class - it is the teacher that makes the biggest impact. Excellent teachers will provide great programs in either a split class or a straight class.