

# Newsletter

## October 2016



### **PRINCIPAL MESSAGE**

Another great start to the school year! September has been a busy month at Parkinson Public School! A big shout out to Mr. Peeters our new Vice-Principal who is learning on the go at our busy school!

The School Council has also had a very active month. Tammy Filsinger is returning as school council co-chair, and Kimberly Zettle is our newly elected co-chair. Tanya Young was acclaimed as treasurer, and Jenny Ptryna-Brownrigg was acclaimed as secretary. Thanks to all the returning parent representatives. Our council kicks off their number 1 fundraiser – the sale of World’s Finest Chocolates. Funds raised from this event are dedicated to our playground improvement project (a five year plan). School council meets the first Monday of each month in our Learning Commons (Library) at 7:00. You are always welcome to attend!

This month has been filled with meetings and planning for school improvement and student achievement. Along with academic success, at Parkinson Centennial we are also concerned with the whole child. Character Education is a cornerstone of who we are and this is emphasized in class, in the halls, at our assemblies, and on the yard. We are continuing to encourage students to be gritty which means making an effort when things get tough and never giving up. Research shows that a child’s ability to persevere in the face of challenges is a great predictor of future success, both academic and life success. Be sure to praise your child for effort because effort matters!

Our junior soccer team, coached by Mr. van der Wijst, participated in a tournament and demonstrated great heart and grittiness! We had two dozen soccer players come out and play. Cross Country runners will be participating in a tournament on October 5<sup>th</sup>.

I would like to acknowledge everyone from the staff, students, parents and community members who have helped to kick off a great year at Parkinson Centennial Public School. Your dedication, hard work, and enthusiasm are appreciated.

Enjoy the fall and the colours of the season!

P. Argentino



## What Is Bullying and What Isn't Bullying?

Do you know?

As a parent you are likely concerned about bullying. Some questions to ask yourself: Will my child realize they are being bullied? Will they come to me (or another trusted adult) for help? How will I be able to recognize if someone is targeting my child? How will I handle that? What will I do if my child is bullying others?

In order for children to thrive and learn, they need to feel safe. As parent, it's important to understand what bullying is and is not, and how to help your child.

**Bullying is** defined as a form of **repeated, persistent and aggressive** behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is **intended to cause** (or should be known to cause) **fear and distress and/or harm** to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

There are 4 main types of Bullying:

**Physical** – hitting, shoving, stealing or damaging property

**Verbal** – name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist or homophobic comments

**Social** – excluding others from a group or spreading gossip or rumours about them

**Electronic** (commonly known as **cyberbullying**) – spreading rumours and hurtful comments through the use of cellphones, e-mail, text messaging and social networking sites

### **Bullying is NOT:**

**Excluding someone** - It is not considered bullying if children exclude someone on the playground now and then or don't invite someone to a party. Repeated and deliberate exclusion, however, can be bullying.

**Disliking someone** - Children may verbally or nonverbally communicate their dislike of another child. This is okay, as long as they don't start rumors or verbally abuse the other child.

**Accidental physical harm** - A child might unintentionally bump into or trip another child. This it is not bullying if it is not deliberate.

**Being "bossy"** - It is natural to want friends to play a certain way, and some children take the role of being the director. Learning to lead skillfully is a lifelong process, and most kids haven't mastered it.

**Telling a joke about someone (once)** - While this is not great behaviour, it is not considered bullying unless there are repeated instances. Of course we should teach our children that one single joke about someone may hurt that child's feelings and it's not okay.

**Arguments** - We all argue, and arguments will inevitably happen at school. Although the above behaviours are not ideal, they are not bullying. It's important to understand the difference between bullying and general conflict or unskilled behaviour.

### **What should I do if I think my child is being bullied?**

Set up a time to come to school and discuss your concerns with your child's teacher and administration. Here are some other resources –

<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/bullies.html>

<https://www.empoweringparents.com/article/is-your-child-being-bullied-9-steps-you-can-take-as-a-parent/>

<https://www.empoweringparents.com/article/my-child-is-being-bullied-what-should-i-do/>



"Report Bullying", is an online bullying reporting tool that is now available to students in every grade. The tool was designed to be user-friendly for both web browsers and mobile devices such as smartphones.

The tool can be accessed at [www.ugdsb.on.ca/reportbullying](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/reportbullying). A bright pink "Report Bullying" button is now on the board's website, and will appear on the PCPS website.

## First Nation, Métis, Inuit Self-identification

If your child is a member of a First Nation, the Métis or the Inuit, then please consider having him or her self-identify.

Self-identification helps in several ways:

1. Students will have access to more culturally relevant programming and opportunities for unique cultural and academic experiences.
2. The school system will have an opportunity to focus efforts and resources, as well as an increased awareness of the diverse needs of indigenous families.
3. The school community will have an opportunity for building relationships to increase student success and well-being.

Share your pride in your heritage!

Please come to the office (or have your child do so) to get a card that can be filled in and submitted if you wish to self-identify.

*Data will be protected and governed by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.*

## Asthma Friendly Schools Policy

Asthma is a very common chronic lung disease that can make it hard to breathe. The Upper Grand District School Board adopted a new 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.

## Talking About Mental Health October 2016 – Promoting Mental Health

Helping kids grow up mentally healthy is an important part of parenting. Here are a few things that CHEO (<http://www.cheo.on.ca/en/Promoting-Mental-Health-parents>) suggests you can do to support good mental health in your children and youth.

### 1. Put your device down.

When you are with your children and youth, show them that they are more important than your electronic device. Lead by example: **put your own devices aside and spend face-to-face time with your kids.**

### 2. Listen when they're upset.

When children and youth are upset, they just want you to listen and understand how they're feeling. Try not to jump in with advice or reassurance. **Listen is spelled with the same letters as Silent.**

### 3. Focus on their strengths.

Support your children and youth's self-esteem by helping them to see their own strengths. **Show that you see and appreciate kindness, empathy and trying hard**, and not just achievements like good grades. For example, "That was kind of you to think of your brother" or "You worked so hard on that and you didn't give up!"

Have a mentally healthy October!

*Dr. Lynn Woodford is the Mental Health Lead for the Upper Grand District School Board.*

*Follow me on Twitter @drlynnwoodford.*



## Asthma Friendly Schools Policy

Asthma is a very common chronic lung disease that can make it hard to breathe. The Upper Grand District School Board adopted a new 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

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.

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.



## Dates to Remember

October 5	Cross-country Running World Teacher Day
October 10	Thanksgiving
October 11	MADD Presentation gr. 7 & 8
October 12	Free Parenting Workshop – DSPN <b>Helping Your Child Manage Anxiety</b> Parkinson 7:00 – 9:00 pm
October 20	Free Parenting Workshop – DSPN <b>Fostering Healthy Self-Esteem</b> Parkinson 7:00 – 9:00 pm
October 28	PA Day
November 2	Picture Day



## Life-Threatening Allergies

We have children in our school with potential life-threatening allergies to various foods and other materials called anaphylaxis. This is a medical condition that causes a severe reaction to food or other materials, and 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 may refrain from sending foods to the school that contain peanuts and nuts. 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 contacted by the classroom teacher.

Our school has procedures in place to help manage 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.