

Victoria Cross Public School

Newsletter

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October 2017

We want to thank all of the families that came out to the Open House in September. We appreciate that you took the time from your busy schedule to come and meet your child's teacher and perhaps to visit our book fair.

When dressing your children for school, please remember that we make every attempt to have the children outside and playing. If there is a slight mist, we will keep the children outside and playing. Dress appropriately for the weather.

Thanksgiving is just around the corner. On behalf of the Victoria Cross staff we wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving!

Karen Sims
Principal

Laura Cozzarin

Vice Principal

Bullying VS Conflict

Is conflict the same as bullying? People may sometimes confuse conflict with bullying, but they are different. Conflict occurs between two or more people 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.

Used Gift Cards and Hotel Room Keys

With our new music program up and running, we are looking for used gift cards and hotel room keys. Mrs. Schenk is able to recycle these cards into guitar picks for our students. Please consider recycling these cards and sending them into the office.

Dates to Remember

October 4	Walk to School Day
October 5	Gr. 6 Safe Communities Trip
October 5	Intermediate Soccer Tournament
October 6	Chocolate Bar Kick Off Assembly
October 9	Thanksgiving Day
October 10	School Council 6:30-8p.m.
October 10-13	CCAT Testing Gr. 3
October 12	Immunization Gr. 7
October 16-20	Waste Reduction Week
October 17	Dental Screening JK-Gr. 2
October 17	Author Visits 6:30-7:30 p.m.
October 17	IEPs go home
October 18	Special Olympics
October 19	Cross Country Meet
October 20	MADD Assembly
October 20	Chocolate Bar Sales end
October 24	Wear Purple Day
October 25	Take Me Outside Day
October 27	PD Day
October 31	Hallowe'en

Small Parking Lot

Please do not park in our small parking lot at the west end of the property at any time. There are lines painted in this lot which indicate 3 parking spots (1 designated handicap spot and 2 Board designated spots). The rest of that area is marked "No Parking". This is to assure safe travel areas for our walkers and bus students.

As always, we encourage you to park in less busy areas and walk to pick up your child, or have your child meet you. Such areas are:

Durham Street (west of school property)

Normanby Street (west side only)

Foster Street

Please do not park anywhere in our bus loading zones across the front of the school. OPP have been working with us to keep these zones safe.

Head Lice

It is the responsibility of the parent to check their child's head for lice and to inform the school if you notice an outbreak. Please be diligent in checking your child from time to time. Children should not attend school if they have live lice.

School Safety Check

We are into our second month of school. As a community, we continue to stress the need for the following to occur to help keep our students and school safe:

Park in designated spots to ensure the bus and fire routes are clear at all times.

Visitors are asked to always check-in at the office.

Supervision of students begins at 8:30 am. Students are asked to not arrive on the playground before this time, as the playground is unsupervised. Your child's safety is always of the greatest concern to our school staff.

Inclement Weather

Information regarding transportation in inclement weather will be available at a later date. In the meantime, if bad weather occurs, please continue to listen to any of the following weather stations:

CJOY 1460, CIMJ 106.1, CKKW 1090 AM, KOOL 105.3 FM, CKGL 570 AM, CHYM 96.7 FM, CKNX 920 AM & 101.7 FM. Or check the UGDSB website: www.ugdsb.on.ca

Board Policy for Bus Students

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

- a) When a bus does not travel a route in the morning due to fog, ice or snow conditions, it will **not** travel that route in the afternoon.
- b) If a parent elects to drive their pupils to school, they are responsible for their pupils' pick-up at dismissal time.

Important Notes

- 1) Each driver is ultimately responsible for deciding if it is safe to complete their route. If they decide to cancel or delay their route, they will ensure that every effort is made to inform parents of their decision.
- 2) 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.

Child Abuse and Prevention

The Upper Grand District School Board places a high priority on the safety of our students. The Child Abuse Prevention Policy is evidence of our commitment to this priority. The following is a quote from the policy:

"Every citizen in the community shares a responsibility for our children. School officials and teachers share this collective community responsibility for creating safe and nurturing environments for children. Under the Child and Family Services Act, this responsibility includes the legal requirement to report to the local Children's Aid Society any suspected child abuse or other situations where a child may be in need of protection. Teachers and other Board employees have a special opportunity to know and understand children during their most influential years of development. They are in a unique position to be able to see early signs of maltreatment, and to know or hear about the abuse and neglect that is often suffered by children."

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.

These lessons will occur during the month of November. 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. Students in grades 7 will also participate in a Red Cross program presented by the school's Child & Youth Counsellor entitled "It's Not Your Fault". These two hour presentations will occur in homeroom classes.

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

Lock Down Drills

Each year we are required to do three fire drills in the fall and three in the spring. We are also required to do one tornado drill and two lock down drills. One of the two lock down drills will be done with the support of the OPP who will be providing input and suggestions during the drill. Both of the lock down drills will take place in the month of October. We are also expected to do a Bomb Threat Drill which will also be done in October. If you have any questions about these drills please contact us.

School Council

It's been a fabulous start to the new school year. We are finalizing our playground plans and hope to begin construction in early spring. Look for the final design to be posted on the school website. There are still some administrative procedures to complete but we are close!

Our annual chocolate fundraising campaign starts on **October 5th** and will run until October 20th. This year, we are selling Laura Secord bars. It's a premium chocolate product at the same price as past years and it's certified peanut and nut free. Each case will include a selection of pure milk chocolate bars, crispy rice bars, French mint bars, sea salt and caramel bites and in celebration of Canada's sesquicentennial, creamy maple bites.

We are offering a spectacular array of prizes as part of our grand prize draw, a top sellers draw and daily early bird draws. Students will win a prize with each case sold. Chances to win grand prizes increase with the number of boxes sold. The first case sold, earns one ticket for the grand prize draws. The second case earns two tickets, in addition to the ticket earned for the first box sold, for a total of 3 tickets. The third case earns 3 tickets in addition to the 3 tickets already awarded.

The funds raised in our chocolate fundraiser support a wide range of activities from Scientists In the School, talks, primary arts day, swimming, electives and has been a significant source of support for our playground fund. It is school council's largest fundraiser and your support is vital.

On **October 17th**, School Council will host author Philip Roy in a special evening for parents and students, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The evening will be aimed at all students and parents.

Philip will read aloud from a selection of his books and then talk about how a book is constructed and how to create characters. He will also discuss ways in which parents can support literacy at home. The talk is designed as a 2 part series. The follow up talk will take place in January, 2018. The talks are free

Mr. Roy's books will be available for purchase at the talk – they are priced at \$10 and \$11 each..

In early November, with support from a Parents Reaching Out grant, school council plans to host Gary Direnfeld's "Raising Awesome Kids". Watch for information on this free presentation in the upcoming weeks.

Child Abuse and Prevention Month

October is Child Abuse Prevention month in Canada. On October 24, 2017 many boards of education and schools across Ontario will participate in **Dress Purple Day** as a way of collectively speaking up and sharing the message that child abuse and neglect can be prevented and that help is available. This year for **Dress Purple Day** the Upper Grand District School Board is partnering with Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County, and Dufferin Child and Family Services, who are key partners in keeping children and youth safe.

Dress Purple Day Classroom Resources have been designed by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) to support teachers from Junior Kindergarten to Grade Five to engage in important conversations with their students about safety and well-being, and how to identify helping adults in the community. The theme of Dress Purple Classroom Resources is "It takes a village to keep kids safe." These classroom resources can be found on the OACAS website at www.oacas.org.

Your child's class will participate in **Dress Purple Day** and learn how the village they live in helps to keep them safe. We hope that you will encourage your child to wear something purple on October 24 to help recognize the day. If this is not possible, your child's teacher may also have other purple options available to students in the classroom.

If you would like to learn more about **Dress Purple Day** and the Child Abuse Prevention Month campaign, please visit the OACAS website at www.oacas.org. You can also visit www.fcsgw.org (Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County) and <https://dcafs.on.ca> (Dufferin Child and Family Services) for more information on your local children's aid society.

Breakfast and Snack Programs

With Thanksgiving being the theme for this month, we are thankful for our breakfast and snack programs! We would like to thank these special organizations who provide funding to operate this much needed program: The Children's Foundation of Guelph and Wellington's Food & Friends Program, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and Breakfast Club of Canada. Together we are bringing healthy food to hungry minds!

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 policy 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.

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.

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.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Individual Education Plans, or IEPs, are developed by schools when assessments show that a student needs special education programming and/or services. The development of the IEP should be a collaborative process that includes parents and the student (if possible). During the development phase, schools are required to seek feedback through consultation with parents. This is your opportunity to discuss and share information with the classroom teacher and/or special education teacher regarding your child's education. We appreciate the input that parents have returned to the school regarding your child.

If your child had an IEP last year, you will see a copy of this working document come home within the first 30 school days.

If your child has an IEP for the first time, you will also receive a booklet titled, *Parents' Guide to the Individual Education Plan*. This booklet is a resource to help parents understand how an IEP is developed, what is included in an IEP, and how an IEP supports your child. It also includes definitions and explanations to help parents understand some of the language that is part of an IEP, such as accommodations and modifications.

As always we want to work together with you to help your child be successful at school. If you have any questions please ask.

Adult Mentors Needed!

Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Wellington are in need of more adult mentors! If you know someone who would enjoy going in to the school for **just one hour per week** to work with a child one-to-one doing fun activities like games, cards, arts and crafts, please let me know! For more information call Teri Dykeman at 519-323-4273 or email at teri.dykeman@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Wellington North are offering Game On and Go Girls. Game On is open to boys 11-14 years of age. It will be taking place on Thursdays from October 19-December 7th (excluding Nov. 16th) at St. Mary's Catholic School.

Go Girls will be offered at Minto Clifford P.S. and is open to girls 11-14 years of age. This program runs on Wednesdays from October 18-Dec. 6th (excluding Nov. 15th).

More information will be coming home to interested children later this month.

Building Resilience

Resilience is our ability to recover from difficulties and adapt to change; to be able to function as well or better after a challenge. Resilience is an important part of good mental health. We all can develop resilience, and we can help our children and youth develop it as well. The following tips are taken from Resilience Guide for Parents and Teachers, by the American Psychological Association. For more information see:

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/resilience.aspx>

Tips for building resilience:

1. **Make connections**

Teach your child how to make friends, including the skill of empathy, or feeling another's pain. Encourage your child to be a friend in order to get friends.

2. **Help your child/youth by having them help others**

Children and youth who may feel helpless can be empowered by helping others. Engage your child/youth in age-appropriate volunteer work, or ask for assistance yourself with some task that they can master. At school, brainstorm with children about ways they can help others.

3. **Maintain a daily routine**

Sticking to a routine can be comforting to children, especially younger children who crave structure in their lives. Encourage your child/youth to develop their own routines.

4. **Take a break**

While it is important to stick to routines, endlessly worrying can be counter-productive. Build regular breaks into school and home routines.

5. **Teach your child/youth self-care**

Make yourself a good example, and teach your child/youth the importance of making time to eat properly, exercise and rest. Make sure your child/youth has time to have fun.

6. **Move toward goals**

Teach your child/youth to set reasonable goals and then to move toward them one step at a time. Moving toward that goal — even if it's a tiny step — and receiving praise for doing so will focus your child/youth on what they have been able to do rather than on what they haven't done, and can help build resilience.

7. **Nurture a positive self-view**

Help your child/youth remember ways that they have successfully handled hardships in the past and then help them understand that these past challenges help them build the strength to handle future challenges.

8. **Keep things in perspective and maintain a hopeful outlook**

Even when your child/youth is facing very painful events, help them look at the situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. An optimistic and positive outlook allows your child/youth to see the good things in life and keep going even in the hardest times.

9. **Look for opportunities for self-discovery**

Tough times are often the times when children/youth learn the most about themselves. Discuss with your child/youth what they learned after facing a tough situation.

10. **Accept that change is part of living**

Change often can be scary for children and youth. Help your child see that change is part of life and new goals can replace other goals.

Have a mentally healthy day!

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

Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

Are you frustrated by your child's eating? Would you like them to enjoy more vegetables?

Join us for **Getting to Yum: How to get kids to enjoy eating a variety of fruits and vegetables**. In this presentation, scientist and author Karen LeBillon will help you teach your kids to explore and enjoy eating. **Learn the 7 secrets of raising eager eaters and change dinnertime reactions from YUCK to YUM.**

Saturday October 21, 2017

2-4 pm Bishop Macdonell Catholic High School, 200 Clair Road W. Guelph

Cost is \$10 which includes the book "Getting to Yum"

Register by October 9th at <http://bit.ly/2wce1nh>

