

Willow Road Public School

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December 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

December has quickly come upon us and the holiday season will soon be here. We have a number of events that our students will participate in, ranging from concerts to holiday assemblies. We hope that you can join us in the celebrations.

I hope that you had an opportunity to review your child's progress report and to meet with their classroom teacher. At this time of the year it is important to reflect on where our students are at and where we can be of support to their progress.

The weather has become extremely cold and we will continue to take students outside for play. If you are in need of support to provide appropriate clothing to keep our students warm, please feel free to reach out to the school. We have a number of items on site that we can provide.

If your child is in need of a new backpack or classroom supplies, please inquire at the office as we have a number of these items in stock that can be easily provided to your children.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me personally. Have a wonderful month and holiday season!

Mr. S. Viveiros
Principal



Wellness Day

To kick off our Intermediate Wellness Day on Friday, November 17, 2017, the whole school came together to perform our cover of “End of an Era” by The Strumbellas for the CBC’s 2017 Canadian Music Class Challenge. Every year, CBC Music in association with MusiCounts, challenges music classes around the country to choose a Canadian song from a pre-approved list of songs to perform and submit to their contest. The goals of the contest are for students to learn Canadian music, to draw attention to music programs, and to reinforce the importance of music in a well-rounded education.

We loved The Strumbella’s music video for this song so much that we decided to recreate the living room party in our gym and invite the whole school, from kindergarten to Grade 8, to sing along! The result is awesome! Please check out our submission and share in our celebration of song and community here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qu-TDjBJnv0&t=2s>

Hugest thanks, again, to our incredible staff, students, and choir members for their efforts, enthusiasm and creativity in pulling this off! Thank you CBC for being the catalyst for this awesome endeavor! Enjoy the party!

Ms. Leach

Give Back

During the month of December our whole school will be taking time to talk about being kind and caring citizens. We will be helping children to continue to be thankful and grateful for what they have. We will be teaming up to give back to our local community in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are shoveling peoples drive ways, buying and preparing turkey dinners for local families and caroling at senior centers.

Safe Arrival Program

Schools operate a Safe Arrival Program in conjunction with daily attendance. It is the parents and guardians’ responsibility to notify the school in writing or by telephone when a child will be late or absent. Parents are expected to provide the names and current telephone numbers of emergency contacts to be notified in the case of an unexplained absence. In all cases where a child is absent from school, the school will initiate phone calls in this order: child’s home number, parent/guardian’s cell number, parent/ guardian’s work number, emergency contact, police (as necessary).

Inclement Weather Procedures

The Board has procedures in place to deal with inclement weather. These include cancelling bus transportation on days when it is not safe to operate school buses (due to snow, sleet, fog, ice, extreme cold temperatures, etc.) and in cases when severe weather requires the closing of schools to all students. Procedures are also in place to ensure the safety of students during their outdoor breaks at recess and lunchtime during periods of extreme cold.

Information about bus cancellations – and closures for schools dependent on transportation – is posted on the Service de transport de Wellington-Dufferin Student Transportation Services

website, www.stwdsts.ca and on Twitter @STWDSTS. Announcements are also made by local radio stations.

In the event of severe weather, the Director of Education will make the decision whether or not to close schools. If schools are closed, the information will be posted on the Board's website: www.ugdsb.on.ca. Please note: school closures that result simply from bus cancellations (because the school is dependent on transportation) will be posted on the STWDSTS website and not the Board website.

Scent Free Zone

We would like to remind parents and students that our school is a fragrance/scent aware environment. There are staff members and/or students who could suffer adverse reactions and health effects when exposed to even a small amount of fragrance or scents.

We are asking that the community support us in our efforts to promote a scent-aware environment by refraining from wearing fragrances or scented products to school when visiting the school, even if your visit will be short.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and for becoming part of our solution to providing a scent-free environment.

Email

Email can be a powerful communication tool between school and home. Parents can contact the school and provide an active email address to the office.



Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet

December 10th is HUMAN RIGHTS Day!

“For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects & enhances the freedom of others”

- Nelson Mandela

Celebrate Human Rights Day on December 10th!

Human Rights Day calls on everyone to stand up for someone's rights. It starts with each of us. Step forward and defend the rights of someone whose voice is not being heard. Recognize that human rights include the right for all of us to have access to clean water, unpolluted air and healthy food.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/>



<http://calendarholidays.xyz/holiday/168/human-rights-day>

Simple yet meaningful ways for your family to celebrate the rights and responsibilities that we all share as human beings!

- **Learn about how children live in other parts of the world.**
- **Read the book: We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures** by Amnesty International.
- **Read the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights.** Decide if there is a cause your family wants to support, or an Ecojustice action you want to take on.
- **Talk to someone you know who is from another country.** Where are they from? What was their life like there? What language did they speak? Did they go to school? What do they miss? What do they like about their new country?
- **Start a tradition of doing a family service project on Human Rights Day.** There are many opportunities to volunteer, such as preparing and serving meals at a local homeless shelter or simply gathering enough to put together a bunch of care packages of simple needs and necessities. <https://humanrightswarrior.com>

“For the bigger picture we can (and should) do what we can to fight injustice. But on a smaller scale, in the day-to-day, practicing kindness can help knit a web of compassion to give humanity a boost of resilience” by Melissa Breyer

Talking About Mental Health December 2017 – Taking Care of Ourselves and Our Families

As we head through December and towards the holidays, it is important to be aware that this can be a very exciting time of year, but for some it is also a difficult time of year. Here are some tips and resources to make sure that you and your family have a safe and mentally healthy holiday season.

Self-care

What you do to support or take care of yourself? What do your children/youth do?

It is important to look after yourselves:

- exercise
- sleep well
- eat well
- reach out to and spend time with family & friends
- reading, writing
- music, art
- spend time with pets
- spend time outside

Stay connected

- Have dinner together as a family, no phones or devices

- Plan a family outing to a friend's or a park or a local event
- Have friends or family over for a game night
- Have a family movie or game night
- Take a few moments each day as a family to say what you are all grateful for
- Volunteer at the foodbank or other community organization as a family

Signs to look for that someone is struggling

- *Sometimes it's hard to tell that someone is suffering. Here are some signs that someone is struggling.*
- not coming to school or work
- not engaging with friends or family
- not participating in activities that they used to enjoy
- withdrawing
- feeling hopeless
- increase use of drugs or alcohol
- changes in behaviour
- anger/irritability

Getting help

If you, your child/youth or someone you know is struggling, it is important to know where to reach out for help.

Who would you talk to if you were distressed, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to make a list of at least 3 people or resources you would reach out to.

Who would your child/youth talk to if they were upset, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to sit down with your child/youth and ask them who they would talk to. Put the kidshelpphone and HERE247 or DCAFS number in their phones (see below).

All children and youth need caring adults in their lives to talk to about their feelings. Parents/guardians can be some of those caring adults, but it is important for the children/youth to have other caring adults in their lives such as:

Family members, friends of the family

School staff (teachers, guidance counsellors, principals, child and youth counsellors, social workers, librarian, custodial staff)

Coaches, instructors

Spiritual or religious community

Community members (police, family doctors, librarians, etc.)

Who you can call for mental health support:

- Here 24/7 (for crisis and support with mental health or addiction concerns in Guelph/Wellington) <http://here247.ca/> 1.844.437.3247
- Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS) (for crisis and mental health supports for children/youth in Dufferin) <https://dcafs.on.ca/> 519 941 1530
- Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/> 1 800 668 6868
- Your family physician or family health team

Have a mentally healthy holiday season!

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

Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford



Parents, Mark Your
Calendars...



Kindergarten Registration for September
2018 is Just Around the Corner.

The UGDSB will be hosting registration information evenings to share our ***new online registration process*** for both English and French Immersion JK and new SK students. Parents are welcome to attend any evening that suits them.

Kindergarten Registration Information Nights

Monday November 27th, JD Hogarth P.S., 7 p.m.
Wednesday November 29th, Westminster Woods P.S., 7 p.m.
Monday December 4th, Palmerston P.S., 7 p.m.
Thursday December 7th, Mono Amaranth P.S., 7p.m.
Monday December 11th, King George P.S., 7p.m.

For more Registration information visit www.ugdsb.ca/kindergarten

Registration will occur January 9-19, 2018

