

Northeastern Catholic District School Board



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

401 Cedar St. South
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Principal: Roslyn Gauthier

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November 20, 2013

Dear Parent/Guardian;

This week has been designated 'Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week'. During the week of November 18-22, Ontario students, school staff and parents are encouraged to learn more about bullying and its effect on student learning and well-being. We would like to take this opportunity to tell you what we have done, and will be doing, this week to help promote a safe school and a positive learning environment.

During our Bullying Awareness and Prevention Assembly, our "Bug and a Wish" program was reviewed with all grade 1-6 students. Students were reminded to fill out a "Bug and a Wish" card should they have an issue on the schoolyard or in class that they feel needs added attention. Once cards are handed in anonymously in the "Bug and a Wish" box or handed to their teachers, they are reviewed by staff members and dealt with accordingly. Cards are kept for tracking purposes (repetitive issues, types of incidents, frequency, etc.) to help us monitor whether changes are necessary to promote a safer school and a positive environment.

Students were also taught the difference between conflict and bullying. As schools start to raise awareness of bullying issues with students, it is common for there to be a sudden increase in the identification of 'bullying' situations. We feel it is important that students become familiar with the definition of bullying and then learn to apply the definition to situations. It is important that we all realize that everyone faces conflict in daily life and students, as well as parents, need to understand the difference between the two.

Key differences between bullying and conflict are:

Normal Conflict	Bullying Behaviour
Occasional	Happens repeatedly
Not pre-planned, occurs in the heat of the moment	Premeditated, on purpose, intentional, planned
Genuine upset to both parties	Person being bullied is more upset
Trying to work things out	Trying to be the one in control
Not trying to take something from someone	Want to take power or possessions from someone
Both parties admit/have some responsibility	Blame is laid on the person who is bullied
Effort to solve the problem by both parties	No effort to solve the problem by the person who is bullying

(based on work of Dan Olweus, 1993)

We are smart. We do our part. We take pride in Sacred Heart!

Sacred Heart School has just recently registered for an online reporting system called 'Stop a Bully'. This online program allows students and parents to report bullying situations. Once a report is completed it is forwarded to me, the school principal, so that I may look into the bullying behaviour. Again, this system will allow us to track situations as they arise and help us monitor our efforts to maintain a safe school environment. The website is stopabully.ca. We want to stress that this program only be used to report bullying situations, not conflicts, and be taken seriously. Remember, conflicts can be reported on our "Bug and a Wish" cards.

Throughout the week, Mrs. Boucher, our Child and Youth Worker, and I will be conducting an activity with all classes to try to have the children learn how our words can hurt others and demonstrates how hard it is to take those words back.

Constable Rick Lemieux will be visiting our grade 5 class to discuss bullying awareness and prevention on Wednesday. At the same time, Constable Ainsworth will be discussing dealing with peer pressure during the D.A.R.E. program.

We would also like to ask students to wear pink on Friday, November 22 in support of 'Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week'. The class that shows the most support will be able to chew pink gum that day.

Sincerely,

Roslyn Gauthier
Principal