



# Home of the **PANTHERS!**

March 2016 Newsletter

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## Principal's Message



Dear Parents,

Although it doesn't feel like it right now, spring is just around the corner. We would like to thank you for your continued support of our Catholic school community.

Whether your family is travelling over the March Break, or staying home, we hope everyone is able to spend some good quality family time together.

Lent provides a perfect time to reflect both outwardly and inwardly. It is important to take census of what's important, what we need to change and ultimately, how we can live to meet the Gospel Values we proclaim. During the Lenten season, students will be encouraged to help others and to prepare their hearts for Easter. Our Lenten charity focus will be the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Food Drive. We are asking students to bring in 5 non-perishable food items.

In 2014, Pope Francis said the following in his Easter Vigil Homily, "The Gospel of Easter is very clear: we need to go back there, to see that Jesus has risen, and to become witnesses of his resurrection. This is not to go back in time; it is not a kind of nostalgia. It is returning to our first love, in order to receive the fire which Jesus has kindled in the world and to bring that fire to all people, to the very ends of the earth."

Dear Lord, we strive to do your will. We don't follow the goals of this world because people often make material gain or power their goals. We choose your path, a path that is worthwhile, a path of love and service. In this way, all that we do is good, all that comes from what we do will be good.

Amen

Yours in faith and education,

Mr. Berthier

Principal

## **School Updates**

Registrations for our Full Day Junior/Senior Kindergarten are ongoing. If you have a child that is eligible for JK (must be 4 years old by December 31, 2015), please come by the office to pick up a registration package.

## **Kids and Mental Health**

Please see the attached "Quick Facts for Parents – Learning about Mental Health"

For more information on kids and mental health please visit [www.kidsmentalhealth.ca](http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca).

### **Reminders:**

#### **Monthly Virtue: Hope**

#### **The Importance of HOPE:**

Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life. We are at our happiest when we place our trust in Christ's promises and rely not only on our strength, but on the help of the grace from the Holy Spirit. Hope is God's gift to us at Baptism and unites us with the risen Christ. Hopeful people work for peace and justice on earth despite facing many obstacles. They trust that God's plan will be fulfilled, even if not in their lifetime.

### **HOME AND SCHOOL - WORKING TOGETHER FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS**

#### **Building Understanding and Excitement for Children – Math and Science**

**Math** – When your child explains how he/she solved a math problem, it helps them to understand the math concepts involved. With these ideas, you can encourage them to talk about how they figured out that  $3 + 9 = 12$ ... and much more.

**Roll and add** - Play a simple dice game. Each person rolls two dice, adds the numbers together, and tells how he/she got the total. For instance, your youngster might say, "I know that  $4 + 5 = 9$  because  $4 + 4 = 8$ , and 5 is 1 more than 4, so I have to add 1 more to 8." After five rounds, the high score wins. TIP: Boost the challenge by rolling three dice.

#### **Science**

**Gravity in Action** : Gaze into the night sky with your youngster and talk about why the moon stays "near" the earth. Have your child crumple a piece of newspaper into a ball and help your child tape it closed. Tape the ball to a piece of string. Now, ask your child to hold the end of the string and spin the ball around your child's head. Tell your child to pretend he/she is the earth, the ball is the moon and the string is the gravity that keeps the moon in orbit around the earth. What happens if he/she lets go of the string? (You can explain that without gravity, the moon and the earth wouldn't stay together.)

**Basketball Season:** The Panthers will be competing in the annual Board Tournament, which will take place on March 9<sup>th</sup>. GO PANTHERS!

### **Report Cards**

First term report cards were sent home on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Please note that while there were no formal interviews scheduled, you may arrange a meeting with your child's teacher at any time.

### **A Message from the Spirit Team.....**

Winter Carnival is happening on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Dress warm for the activities which will be taking place outside for the day. We will be serving up hot chocolate all day to the students.  
Do not forget to wear your "Bullying Stops Here" t-shirts on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **"What is going on at Sacred Heart?"**

On Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, we will be celebrating the Last Supper and the Stations of the Cross, as part of our Catholic Faith. We come together to remind our students of the sacrifice that Jesus made for our sins. Each class will be sharing the body and the blood of Jesus, in commemoration of the Last Supper. Later in the day, we will begin our procession "following Jesus to Calvary Hill". Students will proceed solemnly through the hallways, following "Jesus" as he carries the cross to the gym. Once at the gym, we will be completing the Stations of the Cross. Parents are welcome to join us in the gym at 1:00 for this celebration.

### **Catholic School Council**

2015-16 Catholic Parent Council members;

Co-Chairs – Mrs. Taylor and Mr. Dupont

Members – Mrs. Oliver, Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Fenton, Mrs. Alexander, Mrs. Bird, Mrs. Lauziere, Mrs. Savard, Mr. Corbett, Mr. Chenier and Mr. Westerling

Our next meeting will be held on March 8<sup>th</sup> at O'Gorman Intermediate, beginning at 6:30. This meeting will look at some of the Sacred Heart School options relating to the PAR process. Your presence and continue support is appreciated.

### **OUR SCHOOL DAY**

8:50 - Entry & Opening Exercises

10:10-10:25 - Morning Recess

11:45-12:15 - Lunch Recess

12:15-12:45 - Lunch Inside

2:05-2:20 - Afternoon Recess

3:20 – Dismissal

### **OFFICE HOURS**

Open from 8:00 am to 11:45 am

Closed from 11:45 am to 12:45 pm

Open from 12:45 pm to 4:00 pm

As a safety issue, we would like to remind you that the supervision of the school yard does not begin until 8:30 a.m. It would be best if students who walk or are dropped off at school do not arrive to school before then.

If you are coming into the school, you are reminded that you must report to the office and not go to your child's classroom or locker. We appreciate your support on this.

## Breakfast Snack Program

Just as a friendly reminder, the Breakfast Snack Program runs from 8:30 to 8:45 every morning in the Library. Below is a letter that outlines this universal program and ways that you can support this amazing program.

Dear parent/guardian,

Research has proven that students learn more effectively when they are nutritionally satisfied, particularly during the morning hours. There are a variety of reasons why young people may start their day hungry including lengthy commutes, hectic family routines in the morning, lack of hunger upon rising, and poverty. **Regardless of the reason, the first need of a hungry student is good nutrition!**

We are very excited to announce that with the assistance of the Canadian Red Cross, we will be offering breakfast to our students 5 days a week, through the Student Nutrition Program (SNP). The SNP is *universal* which means that any/all students are encouraged to access it. Participation in the SNP program is associated with positive educational outcomes including improved academic performance, reduced 'lates', improved student behaviour, and the development of long-term healthy eating habits beyond participation in the program. SNP also creates a positive social environment in which teachers, and the parent community can connect and engage with students in meaningful ways.

While the funding provided from the Red Cross kicks the program off to a great start, it does not cover the costs needed to sustain this program for the entire school year. Any contribution that you can make to this program, either by providing a financial or in-kind donation (ie plastic spoons and other disposable items will be used occasionally) or volunteering your time to help prepare/serve meals, would be very much appreciated.

To make a donation, simply come into the school and meet with Mrs. Belisle or Mr. Berthier.

Thank you for taking the time to help and to learn about the Student Nutrition Program – we very much appreciate it!

Sincerely,

The Sacred Heart Team

PS To stay connected to events, recipes and other SNP related news, connect to Student Nutrition Program- Timmins & District on Facebook.



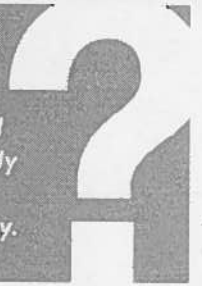




## QUICK FACTS FOR PARENTS

### Learning about Mental Health

*Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses in life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organization, 2014).*



#### UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is part of our overall well-being and relates to our ability to enjoy life, maintain fulfilling relationships, and cope with adversity and stress. It gives us a sense of spiritual, social and emotional well-being.

There may be times, however, when we experience mental health problems in which our thinking, mood, and behaviour limit our ability to function successfully in parts of our daily lives.

Some mental health problems are mild and temporary. Others can be more serious, last longer, and require specialized and intensive treatment. Mental health problems can affect anyone, regardless of age, education, or social position. The first signs often appear in childhood or adolescence.

#### WHAT DO STUDENTS LEARN AT SCHOOL ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

Throughout the curriculum, students are taught living skills that provide a strong base for their future mental and physical well-being. These are skills that give a person a positive sense of self, that help them form and maintain healthy relationships, think critically and creatively, solve problems, and make wise decisions. Learning and talking about mental health can increase understanding of mental health issues and reduce the stigma associated with mental health problems. Key things that students learn across the curriculum include:

- understanding mind-body connections and the role of physical activity in supporting mental health and overall well-being
- understanding factors that contribute to emotional well-being, recognizing sources of stress, and developing the adaptive, management, and coping skills needed to deal with adversity and stress
- developing self-awareness and the ability to recognize warning signs of emotional difficulty, and understanding how to respond to them and seek support
- developing communication and social skills and the ability to identify and build healthy relationships
- understanding possible connections between substance abuse, addictions, and mental health, and knowing how to get help
- understanding the causes and nature of mental illness and ways of reducing the stigma and stereotypes associated with it.

Schools have an important role to play in building skills, knowledge, and habits that help mental well-being and can reduce the risk of social and emotional problems. Learning about mental health can help students both academically and socially, and create support for students who are experiencing social or emotional difficulties.

If you have worries about your child's mental health, discuss your concerns with a health-care professional.

## WHAT DO YOUNGER STUDENTS LEARN?

Students in Grades 1-3 learn to describe their emotions, appreciate the benefits of healthy active living for their mental well-being, and understand the importance of positive relationships with other children and adults. Learning in these areas helps students develop self-awareness and also includes strategies for seeking help.

In Grades 4-8, students learn strategies for maintaining mental well-being, coping with stress, and asking for help when they feel worried or sad. Topics that require greater sensitivity or maturity – managing anger, preventing bullying, and using social media responsibly, for example – are also introduced gradually at this time. In addition, students learn basic information about some common mental health and substance use problems, about ways of reducing the stigma associated with mental illness, and about supporting friends with mental health problems. One of the most important things students learn at this stage is that help-seeking is a skill, not a weakness, and that students should talk with a caring adult if they need assistance with their thoughts and feelings.

## WHAT DO OLDER STUDENTS LEARN?

Secondary school students learn more about the signs and symptoms of mental health problems as well as ways of checking the accuracy of on-line health information and finding sources of support. They also cover complex topics like substance use and other harmful behaviours, cyberbullying, responding to stress and peer pressure, and suicide prevention. Teachers are advised to introduce these topics with care and sensitivity, and to select resource materials in consultation with school board mental health professionals.

## MORE INFORMATION

### ABCs of Mental Health

<http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/ABC/Parent-Resource/Welcome>

A source of expert information about child development, signs and symptoms of difficulty, and supportive strategies that can help at home and school.

### Parents for Children's Mental Health

<http://www.pcmh.ca/>

PCMH is a support and advocacy network focussed on child and youth mental health. Parents who have children experiencing a mental health problem might value insights and resource recommendations from parents who have "been there".

### Children's Mental Health Ontario

<http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/parents/introduction.php>

Fact sheets and links to resources about child and youth mental health and information about getting help from Ontario's mental health system.

## TALKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Routine interactions with children provide them with much of the psychological support they need, but there may also be times when it is important to talk to them directly about mental health issues. These situations may arise if a child, or someone close to them, is showing signs of mental health problems.

Starting these conversations is not always easy, but the following tips may help:

- Help them describe their emotions (e.g., "You look like you feel sad. Saying good bye can be hard. I feel sad too.")
- Look for opportunities to talk informally in a relaxed setting.
- Let the discussion develop gradually over time rather than trying to cover too much in one conversation. Children may need time to become comfortable talking about their concerns.
- If children are uncomfortable speaking directly about their own feelings and experiences, approach the issues indirectly. Talk about imaginary situations or about characters in books or television programs.
- Let them know that you are there to talk and help, and that their mental health, like their physical health, can change over time.

If your child seems to be struggling with a mental health disorder, he or she can be referred to a mental health professional for further assessment and treatment. Ask your child's teacher if she or he has noticed behavioural changes, and discuss ways in which the school might provide support. Check with your family doctor about possible medical reasons for changes in behavior or emotions.