Burkevale Protestant Separate School

January Newsletter

January 1st, 2023

Happy New Year One and All! The tradition of New Years can be traced all the way back to 2000 B.C. in Mesopotamia. From a Protestant lens, New Year's Day liturgically marked the Feast of the Naming and Circumcision of Jesus. Much of the western world looks at New Year's as a time to decide upon what our New Year's resolutions might be. Whether they be "to continue good practices, change an undesired trait or behavior, accomplish a personal goal, or otherwise improve behaviour," the beginning of the year is a time of reflection and goal setting. In fact, making a New Year's resolution has even been connected to positive mental health because it is forward thinking and shows optimism toward the future - not to mention raising cortisol levels. Regardless of your New Year's traditions and/or routines, on behalf of the entire Burkevale community we wish you and your family a blessed, loved and productive 2023.

December Activities:

Christmas Concert: We were happy to host an in-person Christmas Concert again this year. The number of spectators was overwhelming, with an estimated 700+ combined among the four concerts. Thanks to the staff, students and parents for all of their hard work in making this a memorable event.

Entrepreneur Fair: The Entrepreneur Fair took place in the gymnasium on December 15th with many vendors selling out by noon. Once again, there were some very creative products. They made about $2300.00 to go toward their year end trip and next year's start up costs. The fair allows for so many cross-curricular connections and has become a favourite for our intermediate students. Thanks so much to the students and staff for keeping this alive.

Student Council: The student council organized daily activities for the last week of school. Thanks to all student council members for such thoughtful and inclusive activities.

Food Drive and Adopt a Family: Thanks to Ms. Lahaie and the grade two students for organizing this year's Food Drive. Thank you also to all of the families and students who were so kind and generous during this time of the year, whether it was through canned goods, donation items toward our Adopt-a Family, or kind words. We have collected over 2000 cans of food, a personal best for the school, and such a kind gesture when groceries are so expensive for everyone right now!!

Singing Group At Town Council Inauguration: We were excited to be invited by the Penetanguishene Town Council to sing Oh Canada at the inauguration of the new council members. Thanks to Mrs. Gilchrist and Madame Lucie for accompanying the students to this event.

Grade 6 Group Wins Rover Project: The contest was created by Let's Talk Science and supported by Canadensys, Avalon Space Incorporated, and the Canadian Space Agency. The contest was open for students from grades 6-9 across Canada to promote interest among students in space-related industries. The winning team placed first of 48 total entries and beat 3200 students. Our winning team was an all-girls team. To win the competition, the girls had to complete missions in the classroom that would simulate a lunar mission to look for ice in craters. The girls completed several missions and determined their viability. Their entry included a brief video in both English and French, a slideshow presentation with data, and their justification for their mission route and mistakes along the way. We completed the project in 2 weeks in our classroom. The winning team won the chance to control the Canadensys Lunar Rover, which will be aboard a NASA mission to the moon scheduled in 2026.

January:

Extra- and Co-Curriculars:

Girls Volleyball and Boys Basketball: Beginning in January, the intermediate girls' volleyball and boys' basketball team tryouts will take place

Skating and Skiing: We are looking into providing the grade 1-8 students with some form of cross-country skiing and some skating options for our J/I students in the New Year, but are still trying to negotiate pricing and availability. We will keep you posted!

Academics:

Term one will be wrapping up in late January, or early February and report cards are scheduled to come home on February 17th.

Grandfather Teachings for the Month of January:

For the month of January, our school community will focus on the grandfather teacher of **WISDOM**. Everyone has a special gift. We can show wisdom by using this gift. How can we show wisdom? Help out a friend who is struggling, gain knowledge by asking questions, be attentive and share your knowledge by answering questions. The beaver represents wisdom because he uses his natural gift wisely for his survival.

Video Series: The Seven Sacred Laws

Episode 6: Beaver (Wisdom) | The Seven Sacr…

Presenters in December:

This month we also were excited to partner again with Awenda Provincial Park to participate in online interactive learning. We are fortunate to have this fabulous park and its staff minutes away from our school. Awenda park staff came to do 4 different programming sessions through zoom. They discussed Ecosystems with the grade 7's in Miss. Wright's class, the Diversity of Living Things in grade 6 in Mr. Vavrovic's, and a turtle presentation to grade 4 in Ms. Armstrong's class and grade ⅘ Ms. McLeod and Ms. Hartman's class. These naturalists have created in-class programming and graciously donated their time to come into our classrooms and show us the wonders of Awenda Provincial Park.

Welcoming 2023: We are so grateful for this great school community, the students, families and staff that support Burkevale. We are wishing everyone a very Happy New Year**!** We are focusing even more this year on kindness at Burkevale and it's really great to see so much kindness in the halls and rippling out to the community. We continue to have Heather Johnston at Burkevale providing social work support to our students including one on one counseling, small group options and supporting social emotional learning. These supports are available at the school 3 days a week, so don't hesitate to get in touch if your student is struggling, you can email hjohnston@pssbp.ca, or Christy Hamill chamill@pssbp.ca for more information.

Your provincial team that supports Burkevale has some great resources for family and youth available at: https://smho-smso.ca. If you have any questions you can get in touch with Christy Hamill, chamill@pssbp.ca or 705-715-6775.

Children's Mental Health Ontario has a great page with tips on how to support you and your family's mental health over the winter months Winter mental health tips
It's a time of less sun exposure so you can talk to your doctor about taking vitamin D to support your mental and physical health. The basics for physical health and mental health are the same, we need to get enough sleep, eat regularly, connect with others and movement (simply walking) can help buffer stress and low mood. Research shows that the impact of movement on your mood and overall mental health is very significant, and moving/exercising with family or friends outdoors has extra boosts for your mood.

Please remember that we have community partners who are ready to help as well. The Youth Hub is active and provides some really great and innovative supports for youth aged 12 and up; https://youthhubs.ca/en/sites/north-simcoe/. Youth can call the hub phone line at 1-705-427-5639 and hub staff will provide navigation support and a warm hand-off to other hub partners and/or community services. They also have a new van service that can help get youth to the variety of services they have available.

Catholic Family Services (you don't have to be Catholic to use) have had some fantastic workshops and resources, you can check them out here: Group Counselling | Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County

New Path has quick access counselling sessions for youth and families at any age. You just call to connect with a counsellor: 705-725-7656 or 1-866-566-7656, https://newpath.ca/quick-access-child-and-youth-mental-health-clinic/

Kinark is also offering services virtually and are based on self referral, so you just have to call: 1-888-454-6275 https://www.kinark.on.ca

Kids Help Phone has been working hard to offer easy to access adult and child resources: https://kidshelpphone.ca, or call anytime 1-800-668-6868

Ready to take on WINTER

Expert Advice for Child and Youth Mental Health

Recognizing that this winter may be a difficult time for a lot of families, especially those whose children have mental illness, we have rounded up expert child and youth mental health tips to help you through the season.

Focus on Gratitude

Take a few minutes to think of the things you are grateful for and encourage children to do the same. That is not to take away from how challenging things have been over this last year, but rather, it's an opportunity to recognize that some good things have been happening, too.

Embrace Winter

Having a positive mindset about winter may encourage you and your family to think of new ways to get outside more.

Collaborate with Kids on Plans

Take time to collaborate with your kids and family on activities to stay busy. If your teen is feeling unmotivated to go out, try to really understand what's behind their feelings. Ask if there is anything new that they are interested in trying. It gives you a chance to help them shift how they may be feeling.

Stay Connected

Talk to children and teens and ask what methods of connecting with friends is best for them. Is there a virtual program they could do? Depending on your child's interests, it could be something like a shared online yoga or dance program.

Stay Active

Going out, even on cloudy days, will give you a dose of much-needed natural light.

Keep Healthy Habits and Routines

Prioritize the healthy habits that you normally have, such as getting enough sleep, eating healthily, and exercising regularly. Routines – and knowing what to expect in the day – can be especially helpful to children with mental health issues.

Reach out for help

If you are not sure what your child is experiencing is normal or if they need help, reach out to a child and youth mental health centre in your community. Help is available from child and mental health experts who can talk to your child or you, or both.

CMHO Children's Mental Health Ontario Santé mentale pour enfants Ontario

www.cmho.org