

Burkevale Protestant Separate School

MAY NEWSLETTER



Mental Health Week is from May 1-7, 2023, it will be the 72nd annual Mental Health week celebrated in Canada. Mental health week is a time to come together as communities to share ways to support mental health as individuals, families and communities.

This year's focus is on sharing stories of mental health. Storytelling can help us process our emotions, invite empathy and understanding/reduction of stigma for all. 1 in 5 Canadians struggle with mental health, we all have mental health and can have challenges that make staying healthy hard.

COME JOIN US May 10th @6pm Online for a one hour webinar with Dr. Jennifer Saltzman-Benaiah. Dr. Jen offers us a unique perspective on behaviour and its connection to skill development. Come join the discussion on how to support your child in building skills to change their behaviour. Free and open to the community, just let us know you want to join by emailing chamill@pssbp.ca or fill out the registration form so we can send you the webinar link: <https://forms.gle/JBkVxgrjZLWTJXKG9>

You can find more information here: [Children's Mental Health Week 2023](#) and here: [CMHA Mental Health Week](#)



Part of what children learn through social emotional learning at school is how to recognize and name emotions. Most classes have time during the day when students can share part of their story, what's happening for them and gain support and compassion from the class.

The main components of mental health are: a sense of who we are, a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and knowing that we can contribute to our school, communities, families, and have experiences that we enjoy. All of these things build resilience so we can bounce back when times are tough. We can't bounce back on our own, though; we need strong social connections, friends and family to support us along the way.

There are some great ideas and links to resources to explore what mental health means to you and your family from our partners at School Mental Health Ontario.

Some highlights of the resources are:

1: a mental health **resource hub for youth:**

<https://jack.org/Resources/COVID-19-Youth-Mental-Health-Resource-Hub?lang=en-ca>

2: a **tip sheet for caregivers** noticing if your child is experiencing a mental health challenge: [Noticing Mental Health Concerns for Your Child](#)

3: And **some fun family activities** that support mental health: [Do you have elementary school children at home? Try these easy and fun mental health activities](#)

We know that getting outside helps our mental health. It can help clear our minds and get our bodies moving out those chemicals that cause stress. We've seen some positive results for our staff and students participating in daily walks at Burkevale. Moving, eating, connecting with others, sleeping enough, and limiting our screen time all help support our mental health. All of our emotions are created in our bodies by what we put in them and what we think and experience.

At Burkevale, we are working hard to ensure that all of our students are supported, feel safe and have a sense of belonging. We are using our Mental Health Strategy and this year's action plan to focus on positive mental health for everyone in the school community. We have been providing opportunities for staff and students to learn more about positive mental health and well-being.

It is through the leadership of the board and school that we have been able to implement programs that support well being in a holistic way, supporting all of the key areas, academic, social, spiritual and physical well-being. Here are just a few:

- Zones of Regulation and Mind Up - programs to help students recognize and manage emotions
- Eat Well to Excel - healthy foods are available and support positive well-being
- Art classes and Kindness projects - supporting creativity, community and a sense of accomplishment

- Outdoor Education
- Indigenous support and community connections

As we celebrate positive mental health for our students and staff during the nationally designated week for mental health, we continue our work to support mental health awareness,

As part of the Burkevale community, you have access to our social worker, Heather Johnston, who provides confidential counseling services for students and Christy Hamill, our Mental Health Lead, who supports parent consultations and links to community resources and questions/concerns. To connect with our social workers, email Christy Hamill (chamill@pssbp.ca), or Heather Johnston (hjohnston@pssbp.ca).

DON'T BE AFRAID TO CONNECT: Strong social connections are one of the most powerful influences on our mood. Those who are dedicated to spending time with friends and family show the highest levels of happiness. If you can't see your loved ones every day, you could connect online, over the phone, or outside.

If you or someone in your family need extra support, reach out to the Youth HUB for 12+ (705-427-5639), [North Simcoe](#), New Path Youth and Family Services for all ages, (705-728-5044) <https://newpath.ca/>, and [Kids Help Phone: Get Support](#), (1-800-668-6868) now have adult and child based services.

Local Partners and Resources for Youth Mental Health:

- Family Doctors and North Simcoe Family Health Team
<https://nsfht.ca/childrens-mental-health/>
- Kinark Child and Family Services: 788 Yonge St. Midland, 705-526-3708
1-800-230-8529 [Kinark Child and Family Services](#)
- New Path has child and family services; [New Path Youth and Family Services](#)
- Georgian Bay Native Friendship Centre, 175 Yonge St. Midland, 705-526-5589
- La Cle, 63 Main St. Penetanguishene; <https://lacle.ca/>
- Chigamik, has some fantastic programs, check them out at: [Welcome! Ahnii! Bienvenue! | CSC CHIGAMIK CHC](#)
- Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County [Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County](#) ; offer many great services supporting families. They've recently had mindfulness and parenting workshops that are great. Check them out online for more information. They have started the walk in clinic again, so please connect if you'd like services.
- Dr Rob Meeder a local pediatrician at Waypoint, who specializes in mental-health has a great podcast called Smart Family Podcast: [Smart Family Podcast Toni Nieuwhof & Dr. Rob Meeder](#) ; The March 3 and 17th/2021 podcasts are great starting points for learning more about parenting and children's behaviour as communication.
- Watch for local events supported by Waypoint in their “a week to be well; Get Your Mental Health in Motion” celebrations to support mental health week; <https://www.waypointcentre.ca> May 5th there is a community walk, scavenger hunt and wellness fair @ Little Lake Park 9am-1pm

**WEEK OF ACTIVITIES TO GROW YOUR MENTAL HEALTH:
SUNDAY:**



Take a walk with your family. During your walk notice how many spring things you see (birds, plants growing, leaves budding etc).

MONDAY:



Take some time to notice how you're feeling. Then share your feelings with someone, or through drawing, movement (dance) or music.

TUESDAY:



Find a joke (or anything that makes you laugh) and share it with someone in your home. Tip: find a video of a baby laughing online and try not to laugh.

WEDNESDAY:

Share something that you're grateful for. You can do this on your own, by writing down a list of things you're grateful for, or for double the impact, you can share it with someone else, and indicate why you are grateful for them or something they've done for you.

THURSDAY:

Take some time to exercise today. Getting sweaty everyday for 30 minutes is a major mental health booster! Double your impact by getting sweaty with a buddy.

FRIDAY:

Go on a hunt for a rock. You can use that rock as a worry stone to carry your worries for a while. You just hold the rock in your hand and imagine your worries going into the stone. Then you can throw it away, share it with someone and tell them your worries, or just keep the rock in case you have new worries you need to put in it.

SATURDAY:

Take some time to reflect on all the activities you've done this week to help grow your mental health. Which ones did you really like, and which ones can you keep going? Share this by making a list to remind yourself, or talk about it as a family and make a list of ways you can support each other's mental health. No one does it alone; we all need each other. Every time we are kind and support each other, we create a ripple of kindness, the impact of which can reach very far.



Grandfather Teachings for the Month of May:

For the month of May, our school community will focus on the grandfather teaching of Honesty “Gwayakwaadiziwin” and this trait is symbolized by Sabé, also known as Bigfoot or Saskwatch.

How do we demonstrate Honesty?

The Honesty Teaching tells us that it is important to not lie, gossip, cheat or steal. When we live honestly, we can have more peaceful and happy lives. When we are honest with ourselves and what we truly want to care about, we create a simple life for ourselves, which then makes us happier.

The Honesty teaching is symbolized by Sabé. Sabé teaches us not to deceive ourselves or others, and to speak honestly from the heart.

Earth Day Clean up!

Burkevale students participated in a community clean up on Friday April 21st!



Burkevale Happenings

Intramural Sports and Extracurriculars: Junior and intermediate basketball have taken place and/or are underway in the gymnasium during lunch breaks. The primary Skittles league, yearbook committee and garden club have all resumed this year again. Thanks to all students and staff who are participating in these activities and/or have volunteered their time. We are hoping school sports will be back to normal in the fall.

Volunteers: May is the time of year when we reflect upon and show gratitude toward all of the wonderful volunteers at the school. We are tremendously grateful for our school volunteers. Now that class trips are in full swing and BINGO is running, we are seeing more parent volunteers. Also, our School Council members work consistently to support all of our students and we are so blessed to have them attend monthly meetings and work behind the scenes to make Burkevale a better place. Thank you for your selfless commitment toward supporting our students and school!



Kindergarten Registration: The Burkevale families who are planning on having a child begin Year 1 Kindergarten at Burkevale in September (must be 4 years of age before December 31, 2023) are asked to inform Mrs. McIvor in our office immediately. Class lists will soon be made for the fall. Our Kindergarten @ Burkevale evening will take place on May 18th from 5:30-7:00. Families should have received an invitation via email if they have registered. Information may also be found on the board website @ www.pssbp.ca.

Grade 8 Graduation: The students are excited about their transition to high school. As part of the culmination of elementary school, a graduation ceremony will be taking place at the school on Tuesday, June 27th, 2023. The ceremony will commence at 6:30. Grads are invited to come 30 minutes prior to the commencement of the ceremony for photos. Details will be coming home in the next week or two.