October 2018 Newsletter

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<td>7:00 PM - SCC Meeting</td>
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<td>Dec 01</td>
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Walter Murray Collegiate
1905 Preston Avenue
Saskatoon, SK S7J 2E7
Main Office: 306-683-7850
Attendance: 306-683-7855
Facsimile: 306-657-3953
Email: WalterMurraySchool@spsd.sk.ca
Web Site: https://www.spsd.sk.ca/school/waltermurray

Principal: Mr. Tom Sargeant
Assistant Principal: Mr. Dave Sloboda
Vice Principal: Mr. Dave Earl
School Superintendent: Mr. Dean Newton
School Trustee: Ms. Charmaine Bellamy
Email: bellamyc@spsd.sk.ca
Phone: (306) 683-8469
PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

We are off to a great start to the 2018/19 school year. The learning agenda is in full swing and the extra-curricular activities are busy with great student participation. The SRC did a fantastic job of Welcome Week and the Link Crew made sure all grade 9 students felt comfortable in their new school. We appreciate the role of our teachers for creating such a positive space to learn and participate.

On Wednesday, October 3rd we will be hosting a SCC meeting from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. and a student/parent portal presentation from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. with Jay Salikin. These sessions will take place in the library.

As we look into the future, our student progress conferences will take place on Thursday, October 18th from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and then on Friday, October 19th from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. The whole purpose of these conferences is to provide feedback on your child’s learning and to create positive next steps. We are always striving to create positive communication between home and school.

On behalf of the staff, it is our privilege to serve this wonderful community we call Walter Murray Collegiate.

Tom Sargeant

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SCC MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3 @ 6:30 P.M.
IN LIBRARY

The School Community Council at Walter Murray Collegiate is proud to sponsor a Student/Parent Portal navigation session with Jay Salikin on Wednesday, October 3rd in the Walter Murray Collegiate LRC. Jay Salikin is a Coordinator of Technology and Curriculum with Saskatoon Public Schools. This presentation will be timely for booking Student Progress Conferences, as well as, learning how to navigate the portal.

Along with this presentation we are going to incorporate a graduation planning meeting and a school community council meeting.

The schedule will be as follows:

- SCC meeting 6:30—7:00
- Student Parent Portal presentation with Jay Salikin 7:00—8:00
- Graduation Planning meeting 8:00—9:00

Please attend any or all of these important information sessions. Please call Walter Murray Collegiate if you need to reset your username and password. Bringing a digital device is recommended.

Students and parents are encouraged to get involved with the planning of the grad celebration. More information to follow from the Grad meeting for parents and students held on Oct. 3. Next grad meeting date is Wednesday, November 7. Tentative date for Grade 12 Grad Celebration is Friday, May 3, 2019.
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18 ————-6:30 to 9:00 PM
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19 ————-1:30 to 3:30 PM

****** Interviews are 5 minutes with each teacher. ******

There is a lot of very important information on the portal throughout the year and we encourage you to check it regularly for announcements, reviewing your student’s attendance and other tasks.

Walter Murray parents will schedule their own student progress conferences using an on-line scheduling program. The window for booking conferences opens at 10:00 AM on Wednesday, October 10. At that time you will be able to access the scheduling program directly, or through a link on the Walter Murray parent portal.

In order to book the conferences, parents will need to have a username and password for the WMCI portal. Use the username and password that was supplied to you by e-mail. Please use the following username format P, your area code, your telephone number (e.g. P3066837850@spsd.sk.ca). If you change your e-mail address or home telephone number, please notify the office. Also check your SPAM filter to be sure the e-mail wasn’t placed there. Keep this username and password in a place that you will be able to find when you go to access the site at a later time. Please note: you need an e-mail address on file at the school for access to the portal.

If you have any difficulties, please call the school at 306-683-7850 to make sure that you are able to use the on-line scheduling program when the link is open Wednesday, October 10.

Please access the portal in advance of the scheduling open date to ensure you have a working username and password.

Online Scheduler OPENS at 10:00 AM. on Wednesday, October 10th
Note: NO access before this date and time

Please remember to print a copy of your scheduled appointments. Locations of the conferences are not available online, however, there will be a directory available when you enter the school. Please note—not all interviews will be held in the same locations as the classes.

Refer to the following pages for instructions and support navigating through the online scheduler site.

♦ Scheduler Website—to access the scheduler site directly: https://Webapps2.spsd.sk.ca/PTI/

♦ Parent Portal—to access the PTI Scheduler Site link (right hand side of main portal page): https://Portal.spsd.sk.ca/school/wmc/

♦ Parent Support — for assistance with your username and password: Email school at: waltermurrayschool@spsd.sk.ca or https://www.spsd.sk.ca/parentfaq
WHAT PARENTS WILL SEE IN THE UPDATED PTI SCHEDULER

How to access:
School Portal – https://portal.spsd.sk.ca/school/WMC (enter school’s 3 letter code)

PTI Scheduler – https://webapps2.spsd.sk.ca/pti

Welcome to Saskatoon Public Schools’ Parent/Teacher Conference Scheduler

Step 1) Select the Parent/Teacher Conference Event you want to work with (if applicable):

School: WMC
Event: WMCI Student Progress Conferences October 2018

Step 2) Select your action option:
- Schedule an Interview
- View a Schedule

You will automatically be taken to the school’s Interview Scheduler

You have two options:
Schedule an Interview
View a Schedule

Schedule a Conference
Once you click on Schedule an Interview, a new screen will open with your child’s name. If you have more than one student, click on the down arrow to get your other children.
In **Elementary Schools** if your child only has one Teacher it will automatically fill in all the information (Class, Teacher)

In **Secondary Schools** you will click on the down arrow and a list of your child’s classes will appear and you choose the class you are scheduling an interview with. Then you pick your Date and Time.

This is also where you can go to cancel an Interview time.
**ORANGE SHIRT DAY**  
**September 28**

Walter Murray students and staff honoured Orange Shirt Day on Friday, September 28. All were encouraged to wear orange and given an “Every Child Matters” pin to recognize the losses sustained by many families due to residential schools.

The Province of Saskatchewan has proclaimed September 28 to be Orange Shirt Day—a day to honour the Indigenous children who survived residential schools and remember those who didn’t.

Orange Shirt Day began in Williams Lake, B.C. in 2013 where, at a commemoration event at a local residential school, a story was told about a young female student named Phyllis who had her brand new orange shirt taken away on her first day at the school. The orange shirt is a symbol of the many losses experienced by thousands of students and families due to residential schools. Since it began in 2013, the phrase “Every Child Matters” has been used as part of the movement to recognize the value of every child and for communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for future generations. Learn more at www.orangeshirtday.org

All Saskatoon public schools will be recognizing Orange Shirt Day. Students are encouraged to wear orange that day. There will be activities and lessons in the school that will foster students’ understanding of the impact of residential schools.

This is just one of many actions Saskatoon Public Schools will be undertaking as part of the school division’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action.

**MECHANICS REPAIR SHOP**

We are looking for auto mechanic jobs as learning opportunities for our willing and able Mechanics 20 students. Parts are significantly discounted, and labour is free, although it takes more time to repair things than it would in a regular auto shop. Oil changes, tire repairs, antifreeze or oil leaks, electrical problems, brakes, vibrations, and check engine lights are the kinds of work they can do (among others).

If you are interested in having a vehicle worked on, please contact: Mr. Rob Fenske, Auto Mechanics Teacher, Walter Murray Collegiate. Email: fensker@spsd.sk.ca, and leave phone number in your e-mail.

**You are invited to Walter Murray Collegiate’s REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICES**

The staff and students of Walter Murray Collegiate would like to invite parents and members of our community to our REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICES on **Wednesday, November 8, 2018** held at Walter Murray Collegiate.

Special Parking is available for veterans and seniors. There will be one morning service starting at 10:00 a.m. **Please RSVP to Mrs. Matieshen by phoning (306) 683-7850 before November 7 to indicate how many seats and parking stalls you will need reserved.**

If you know a veteran or senior, please share this information with them.
GERMAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM

My name is Vanessa Coutu, and I have been in Frau Prefontaine’s German class for 2 years. Last summer I had the incredible experience of living in Germany for 6 weeks. I stayed with my partner, Lilly Bäumer, at her farm in Northern Germany, and attended school in Flensburg. This exchange hugely improved my German skills, as well as exposed me to the German culture. I met lots of new friends and had a very fun time. Since I was on the 6 week exchange I didn’t have to miss very much school and had a homework free trip. This is an awesome opportunity to travel and learn about other cultures, as well as to make great international connections.

The 6 week German exchange is an amazing experience.

I’m Lilly and this year I went to Canada with an exchange program. I stayed in Canada for almost two months. The first two weeks in Canada were during the summer holidays, which was nice because in this time I got to know the family before school started. I also traveled in this time with my Family. We went on two horse camping trips and to Edmonton. We also did a lot of stuff with the other German exchange students, for example, a movie night and bowling. In the first two weeks I saw much of the beautiful Canadian landscape.

After these two weeks school started. One of the cool things was that I could choose my subjects, but History and English were mandatory. So, I chose cooking, English, dancing, photography and Native Studies (which also counts as History). I was a little bit nervous on my first day as I had no classes with my exchange partner. After the first day however, I realized that there was no reason to be nervous, because everyone was very kind. After the first day, I made new friends and I already decided that I want to come back in a few years. School here is very different than the school in Germany. Here I had every day the same subjects, and I think that the schools in Canada also have better technique. I have a lot of fun in school, I wish I could finish this semester in Canada.

After school we also were often very busy. Vanessa (my exchange partner) does speed skating, and she also teaches the small kids to learn to skate. I help with that three times in a week. On the other days, I go horseback riding or I meet friends.

In general, I would say that this trip is a very nice experience; it’s very cool to see how other cultures live, and you make many new contacts and friends. I would say that I’m now more independent and I gained self-confidence. I’m very happy that I have done this exchange and I just can say to everybody that it is an experience. If you get the chance to do the exchange you should do it, because it is worth it.

One-month cultural exchange:
Next opportunity June –July 2019
German Language skills not required.
Information meeting: Wednesday, Oct.17th @ Aden Bowman Collegiate in the library
Direct inquiries to:
Mrs. Prefontaine @ prefontainel@spsd.sk.ca
Mr. Funk @ Ensfunkj@spsd.sk.ca

Marauder Academic Tea

Top Ten academic students from grades 9 to 11 in 2017-2018 and their families will be celebrating their achievements on Wednesday, October 24 at 4:15 p.m. in our school library. A formal invitation will be mailed to each household prior to the event.
WALTER MURRAY COLLEGIATE PRESENTS

Walter Murray Collegiate presents

**BRING IT ON THE MUSICAL!**

Courtesy of Music Theater International, Walter Murray is proud to present *Bring It On The Musical*. Bitingly relevant, sprinkled with sass and inspired by the hit film, *Bring It On The Musical* takes audiences on a high-flying journey that is filled with the complexities of friendship, jealousy, betrayal and forgiveness. Uniting some of the freshest and funniest creative minds on Broadway, *Bring It On* features an original story by Tony Award winner, Jeff Whitty (*Avenue Q*), music and lyrics by Tony Award-winning composer, Lin-Manuel Miranda (*In the Heights, Hamilton*), music by Pulitzer- and Tony Award-winning composer, Tom Kitt (*Next to Normal*), lyrics by Broadway lyricist, Amanda Green (*High Fidelity*), and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Musical.

Students interested in being involved in backstage, tickets, publicity, ushering, light & sound, and make-up for *Bring It On* are to contact Mr. Soucy in Room 212 or email at soucyj@spsd.sk.ca.

Show dates for *Bring It On The Musical* are 7:00 p.m. nightly November 25, 26, 28, 29, & 30. Saturday, December 1, there will be an afternoon matinee at 1:30 p.m. and an evening performance at 7:00 p.m. Tickets go on sale starting Tuesday, November 13 and will be sold at noon hour in the front foyer of Walter Murray Collegiate. Please note the following Walter Murray noon hour times:

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday – 12:19 to 1:09
- Thursday – 12:32 to 1:17

Tickets will also be sold at the door prior to all performances.

Please direct all questions to Jeff Soucy at soucyj@spsd.sk.ca. Thank you.
TAKE OUR KIDS TO WORK PROGRAM  
Wednesday, November 14, 2018

On November 14, Grade 9 students will not be coming to school, but they will be experiencing the ‘Real World of Work’. Each Grade 9 student at Walter Murray has received information and consent forms from their Health and Career Teacher. If you attended the Grade Nine Parent Orientation, information was provided as well. If the parent does not work or the work site is unsuitable, then we would ask you to contact a friend or close relative and have your child accompany that person to work. If you know someone who works in an industry that is of particular interest to your child, you may ask that person if accommodations could be made for your child.

When the Grade 9 student arrives at the work site, it is very important to adequately orientate the student to the security, health, and safety issues relevant to the work area and the tasks that are being performed. Each student also receives a one-hour safety presentation from a Health and Career teacher in the upcoming weeks.

Your job as a parent is to be sure that the consent forms are signed and returned immediately to their Health and Career teacher. No student will be allowed to work without this step being completed. Even if the student does not have a work site, the consent form must be completed.

If you would be willing to accommodate enthusiastic students other than just your child, we would be thrilled to hear from you. There are always a few students who have difficulty finding a work placement to suit them. We are aiming for 100% of our grade 9 student population to be at work on November 14. We appreciate your support of your child’s career adventure.

SEE YOUR FUTURE

See Your Future – Education & Career Fair is once again pleased to present our annual event in Saskatchewan. The education and career fair will be held in Saskatoon on Monday, November 5, 2018 at TCU Place (35 22nd Street East) from 9:45 to 3:00 p.m.

See Your Future – Education & Career Fair is the premier event in Saskatchewan that makes significant connections between post-secondary institutions and secondary students in our province. At this event, students can explore educational opportunities, examine career paths, and plan vocational goals. We host over 120 exhibitors from organizations across Canada, the USA, and overseas.

The event is presented in a high quality trade show approach with interactive display booths. The universities, colleges, and organizations with in-house training bring expertise and innovation in a variety of fields. Students are provided with in-depth information in the form of literature, technological demonstrations, seminar presentations and one-on-one consultations. For more information, see Student Services.

The Junior Achievement program gives you the opportunity to start your own business with other students around the city. You will be working with real products and real money. Don’t miss out on the chance to meet new people, build lifelong skills and even earn an Entrepreneurship 30 credit. The benefits of the program are endless, such as: traveling opportunities, local business discounts, and meeting some of the wealthiest CEO’s. Please visit Mr. Funk in room 123 for more information.
COUNSELLORS’ CORNER

Walter Murray students can go to the following websites to access information in the following areas regarding scholarships, career information sessions, tutoring opportunities, and post-secondary events.

*Check Counsellors’ Corner on the school website or our Facebook page (Student Services at Walter Murray Collegiate Institute) as well for scholarships, post-secondary updates, work, and volunteer opportunities.

Internet Addresses:
https://www.ewc-rdc.ca Encounters with Canada
www.seeyourfuture.ca See Your Future Education and Career Fair
www.scholarshipscanada.com Saskatchewan scholarships, bursaries and awards
https://yconic.com Career, scholarships, and much more

NUTRITION PROGRAM

Beginning in the 2015 School Year, Student Services began working with the WMCI cafeteria, CHEP Good Food Inc., and HelpOne to initiate a Nutrition Program within our school. Currently, we provide fresh fruit and vegetables to our school community through bowls set out in Student Services and the Library. While this is a start to meeting the nutritional needs of students in our building, we could always use additional support.

If you are interested in supporting the Nutrition Program with a monetary donation or a fruit/vegetable/milk donation, please contact Megan Larson-Wilkie at 306-683-7850 or email Larson-wilkiem@spsd.sk.ca.

TUTORING

Need some help with your academic classes? Greystone Scholars tutors are available every Tuesday in the cafeteria from 3:30 to 5:00 PM. Not necessary to sign up. Just show up and be ready to work!

What is the Saskatoon Industry Education Council (SIEC)?

The Saskatoon Industry Education council (SIEC) is a non-profit organization with three school divisions (Saskatoon Public, Greater Saskatoon Catholic and Prairie Spirit), and the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

Through a partnership among business, secondary and post-secondary schools, the SIEC provides unique hands-on career exploration programming, helping students find a career that connects their passion and natural talents with current and future workforce needs.

Last year, the SIEC worked with 20,000 youth, 1000+ educators and > 900 business and post-secondary representatives to co-create 40 programs and events.
MUSIC DEPARTMENT

CHOIR

Welcomes new and old grade 9 to 12 members to an exciting season. We have begun singing tests Mondays and Wednesdays at lunch and students sign up in groups of four for a five-minute time slot. Testing takes place every 3 weeks usually out of class so we can maximize our rehearsal time (Driver Ed. students see me at break).

All students have been sized for a short-sleeved black shirt that will be worn along with black from the waist down for the Remembrance Day Services in the Girls’ Gym on Nov. 8 (period 2). Parents are welcome to attend. Please bring $20 cash or Cheque (to WMCI) for your choir shirt as it was not included in your school fee.

Our first concert is Thursday, Nov. 1 at 7:00 pm in the Girls’ Gym; it will take place with the Gr. 9 to 12 concert and jazz bands. Warm-up is 6:30 pm in the auditorium and admission is $5.00 (elementary students are free).

The student run show choir and jazz choirs won’t start up until musical is over. The late November musical is Bring It On. Remember that students have a review of a concert due Dec. 1; keep your eyes and ears open for suitable concerts.

Our choir tour destination is TBA but out first fundraiser of chocolates will begin in October. Sectionals will occur in class time periodically through the year with specialists. New members are welcome. See Mrs. Pittman between Room 124/126.

BAND

We are back in full swing with Gr. 9, Gr. 10, and Senior Concert Bands. Fundraising will begin shortly and notices will be sent by email and hard copy. Spring Trips are in the works with more information to come.

Smart Music Codes and instructions for the computer based testing/practice tool have been distributed to all Gr. 9/10 students. Please ensure you install this practice tool and have access to an internal microphone or purchase an external mic (around $10 at an electronics store). There are tests that can be attempted multiple times and sent from home and it enables practicing full ensemble literature with accompaniment. Gr. 11/12 students can purchase a subscription from a teacher for $55.

Practice records for Gr. 9/10 are due on the first band class of every month, and students should practice regularly and submit it with a parent signature for verification.

Grade 9, Gr. 11, and new students have been sized for a shirt/uniform. Payment was included in the school fee (unless new to Gr. 10/12 or requiring a different size). Fees must be paid before the first concert in order to receive the shirt.

The first concert is Thursday, Nov. 1 at 7:00 pm. Followed by a holiday themed concert on Dec. 11 in the Girls’ Gym. Please ensure your child has black pants, socks, and shoes. Grade 9/10 arrive at 6:00 p.m. for set-up followed by the warm up. Senior band arrives for warm-up at 6:30 and will be on clean-up. Admission is $5.00 (elementary students are free).

We try our best to include sectionals during class time with all grades and give notice in advance. Some sectionals have been included in your class fees.

Please contact Mrs. Pittman or Mrs. Titus if you have concerns or questions.

Saskatoon Public Schools gratefully accepts donations of gently used band instruments for band programs in elementary and secondary schools. If you have a flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, baritone, tuba, oboe, bassoon or other instrument, please contact a band teacher and a tax receipt based on a value of more than $100 may be issued for your donation.
### Walter Murray Math Club
**MATH CLUB...Additional Mathematical Opportunities Await You at Walter Murray!**

<table>
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<th>What?</th>
<th>Math Club</th>
<th>Math Circle</th>
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<tr>
<td>When?</td>
<td>Tuesdays @ Lunch starting October 2</td>
<td>Fridays after school starting October 19th</td>
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| Why? | • To learn additional math skills and concepts, as well as, to view them in different ways  
• To be challenged mathematically through the introduction of new ideas  
• To socialize with like-minded students  
• To meet new friends  
• To be informed about the variety of math contests and to prepare for math contests  
• At Math Circle, students plan and often direct/teach the sessions—hence an opportunity to develop leadership skills. Occasionally a guest speaker may direct the learning at Math Circle.  
*Games are often used to encourage the use of development of strategies* | |
| Where? | In room 304 | In room 304 |
| How? | Bring paper, duotang, and writing utensil along with an inquisitive mind.  
If you are interested in having your child who is in grade 6, 7, or 8 participate in Math Circle, have questions as a parent of a Walter Murray student, or have ideas for activities or guest speakers, please email Mrs. Christ at christj@spsd.sk.ca or phone Mrs. Christ at (306) 683-7850. | |
| Special Note | A list of all Math Contests that can be written by a Walter Murray student, their dates and reasons for participating in them is currently available in room 304 or from your child’s current Mathematics teacher. | |

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### LINK CREW

Remember your first day of high school? Was it awkward, uncomfortable, even a little scary? We’ve all been there. Well, those days are gone at Walter Murray. Thanks to a new program called Link Crew, grade nines’ first day of school is now a structured Orientation Day filled with welcoming activities, relationship building, and positive energy.

Link Crew is a program that creates a crew of grade nines who are paired with a Link Leader in grade 11 or 12. These Link Leaders spend time getting to know their crew through a structured set of activities that are designed to build community and offer grade nines a sense of belonging right from day one. Then, as the school year moves into October, Link Crew continues its work through social follow-ups, academic follow-ups, and other leader-initiated contacts. The structured nature of the Link Crew program builds and develops the leadership skills of the student leaders such that the program is actually students helping students succeed.

As the first high school in Saskatchewan to have Link Crew, Walter Murray is uniquely positioned to offer a program that develops student leadership skills at the same time as creating a safe and welcoming environment for its newest Marauders. For more information about Link Crew, please contact Link Coordinators Meng Sun (sunm@spsd.sk.ca), Myroll@spsd.sk.ca, Jill Harbridge (harbridgej@spsd.sk.ca), or Lindsay Wolter (wolterl@spsd.sk.ca).
Walter Murray Cross Country Team Wins League Championships!

The Walter Murray Cross Country athletes secured the League Championship title on Wednesday, September 26th by accumulating 163 points in total. Their score was 64 points ahead of the next school’s (Holy Cross) total of 99. The points were earned by the athletes performing well as a team in each of the six age divisions. Congratulations cross country runners for an amazing performance over the season. As well, the following twenty-five Walter Murray runners placed in the top ten overall performances based on their results in three major meets:

**Midget Girls:** Farren S., Shanna T., Nada E., Emily J., Avi P., and Hannah K.C.

**Midget Boys:** Fergus E., Matthew F., Wyatt C., Nicklas Y., Max G., and Anas B.

**Junior Girls:** Allison N., Nammi N., Shaela P., and Lauren M.

**Junior Boys:** Alexander W., Matthew N., Liam D.

**Senior Girls:** Sarah Z., Shannon D.

**Senior Boys:** Moktar A.S., Quincy F., Mathias Y., Nathan G.

On Wednesday, Oct 3rd the eighty plus member team will be competing in the City Championship, looking for its thirteenth title in the past fourteen years. The meet will take place at Lakewood Park starting at 4:00 PM. Please come and support the cross country team.

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**City Championships**

**Lakewood Park**

Wednesday, October 3 at 4 p.m.

**Provincial Championships**

Saturday, October 13 at 1:30 PM in Delisle

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As the RAP Facilitator, here at WMCI a large part of my role is to teach students how to be safe and respectful to all On and Offline. In the next few weeks, I will be presenting to Grade 9 students about Cyber Safety, Sexting, Digital Reputations and Interventions. Later on in the year, I will again present on the topic of Communication and Conflict Resolution.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the school. Teresa Michayluk

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The SSSAD High School Curling season will start in November. In the past, we have had teams curling at all levels from beginner (Open B) to experienced (Mixed A). Last year the “Mixed A” team captured the City Championship for the third straight year. The Open B teams finished in the top three for their league as well. Student curlers are encouraged to listen to announcements and watch for posters regarding start up time. All ability levels are welcome! Come and give it a try.

Coaches: M. Larson-Wilkie, D. Franklin, and L. Miscavish
HOW NOT TO BUBBLE WRAP KIDS

LEARNING HOW TO USE DAILY STRESS TO DEVELOP RESILIENCE

If you've paid attention to the media recently, you might now believe that any stress is bad for a child’s physical and mental health, that stress has reached epidemic proportions, that you need to do everything you can to reduce the amount of stress in your life and that various products from supplements to special water to squeeze balls will decrease your child’s stress and make them healthy.

BUT the science says that this isn’t true. In fact, experiencing and learning how to use stress is an important part of having good mental health and there is no evidence that any of the highly marketed stress reduction products are any more helpful than going for a brisk walk!

Mental health is the capacity to successfully adapt to life’s circumstances. It does not mean happiness nor does it mean not having negative feelings, worries, or difficulties. It includes the experience of stress and the use of that experience to help your child learn new skills and effectively address the many and frequent challenges of life, now and in the future.

This means that someone with good mental health isn’t someone who avoids or is protected from experiencing stress, but instead, someone who uses the stress they experience to learn and grow.

THE LANGUAGE OF STRESS

Stressor: An event that triggers the stress response in your body. It can be an internal event, like a thought, or an external event, like a social interaction, sound, chemical, etc.

Stress Response: Your body’s signal that you need to adapt and change in order to accommodate or deal with the stressor. This signal includes your heart racing, palms sweating, shortness of breath, butterflies in your stomach, and more.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF STRESS

There are different types of stress and, actually, most daily stress is good for you!

Positive: Positive stress is short-term and it helps us learn how to adapt and grow. Situations that cause positive stress can be positive or negative (e.g., writing an examination, giving a presentation, calling someone you don’t know, not making the school team, etc.) and happen daily – often multiple times a day.

Tolerable: Tolerable stress is also short-term but involves situations where there is more serious impact (e.g., someone dying, parent’s divorce). It occurs multiple times throughout your life and as long as you have supportive relationships around, is unlikely to have any lasting negative consequences.

Toxic: Toxic stress is prolonged and extreme (e.g., abuse, neglect, violence), but for most young people, this is rare.

Many will go their whole lives without experiencing toxic stress.

Toxic stress is the only type of stress that’s actually bad for you. Experiencing positive or tolerable stress actually makes us stronger, healthier and more understanding human beings!
HOW NOT TO BUBBLE WRAP KIDS
LEARNING HOW TO USE DAILY STRESS TO DEVELOP RESILIENCE

Think about your immune system. Exposure to germs on a regular basis helps to make your immune system stronger. It teaches your body how to react so that when your body is faced with a larger challenge, such as an infection, it has the tools it needs to fight it off. Exposure to daily stressors works in much the same way. It teaches your brain how to react (or cope) so that when you are faced with a more intense stressor, you’ve already developed and practiced the skills you need to handle the situation successfully. You have learned to adapt. You are becoming resilient. If we deprive children and teens of the opportunity to learn how to cope with stressors by eliminating stressors or by intervening to solve their problems, we’re actually making it harder for them to grow into healthy and competent adults.

Young people need to be taught that the stress response is normal and a call to action, not anxiety. They also need to learn problem solving and healthy coping skills and be given the opportunity to practice those skills without adults hovering over them. If we remove kids from a stressful situation before they’ve had a chance to use their coping skills, the situation is going to feel even more stressful the next time they encounter it. And they will encounter those stressors again because no one lives a stress-free life. Persistent avoidance of stressful situations can lead to learned helplessness!

SO WHAT CAN WE DO?

Change how we think about stress. Reframe the stress response as your body preparing to tackle this challenge. Stop using the word anxiety when you mean stress response.

Model or teach effective coping. This includes problem solving, using social support, making healthy choices about food, exercise, and sleep, and much more.

Using stress reduction or relaxation exercises sparingly. This includes deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness, meditation, and more. These techniques may be useful for some people to help calm themselves but they do nothing to solve the problem causing the stress response. They should be used when a person feels so overwhelmed that they cannot effectively apply problem solving/coping strategies and they should always be linked to developing or using an effective coping strategy designed to solve the problem causing the stress response. Over-reliance on stress reduction techniques without changing the way we think about the stress response or learning how to solve the problems that this response is alerting us to may provide temporary relief but is not a substitute for engaging with life and learning how to navigate the often challenging and stormy seas of life.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, check out: http://www.teenmentalhealth.org/understanding-stress/

STUDENT FEES: Invoices were sent to student households early this week. It would be appreciated if students plan to pay student fees on Thursday, October 11 in their Advisory class. Fees can be paid by cash, money order, or cheque (payable to Walter Murray Collegiate). If you are paying with a post-dated cheque, payment is made to the main office instead of the Advisory.