

# February

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# 2022

[ParentsEngagedInEducation.ca](http://ParentsEngagedInEducation.ca)

PARENTS ENGAGED IN EDUCATION



# SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 65

Welcome to Parents Engaged in Education's February newsletter.

WE hope for the majority of families, it has been a successful return to school. While I am sure we are all still concerned about how the virus will play out as restrictions loosen, but we are happy to have our kids learning and socializing together with their friends in school.

While the weather is still cold and snowy, we are seeing some sunny days which help remind us that spring is coming.

Some of you may recall that Parents Engaged in Education normally hosts a fall conference offering school council training on various subjects and bringing parents together across the province. We are considering planning one for fall 2022 and would like to gauge school council members interested in attending a hybrid model of our annual conference.

If this would be of interest to you, please email [parentengagementgroup@gmail.com](mailto:parentengagementgroup@gmail.com) and we will send a short survey to determine topics of interest. I think it's time we move forward and train new members to help school councils come together and focus on community and not fundraising. We ask that you reply within 14 days so that we can begin the planning process if there is enough interest.

March will offer spring break for our kids and I encourage all families to get outside, get active and burn off extra stress and energy. Most of all appreciate that we can still be together as families and take a moment to think of those families who have lost so much in the last two year.

Signing off, but looking forward to receiving your response regarding a conference preference.

Stay Safe,

Theresa Pastore,  
Founder and Executive Director,  
Parents Engaged in Education



# 10 WAYS TO INCREASE INVOLVEMENT ON YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE

*By Adrian Marmara*

**HERE IS SOME ADVICE ON HOW TO BUILD INVOLVEMENT AND INCREASE ENGAGEMENT ON YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE.**

## **1. ADD VIDEOS AND PHOTOS WHEN POSSIBLE**

A 30 second to 1 min video from your last school event will tell a much better story than a couple of lines of text. Be sure to always include an image when possible.

## **2. ADD EYE CATCHING IMAGES**

Nothing catches the eye more than an attractive image. Try using a free graphic design tool like Canva to make plain photos standout. Canva is a browser based graphic design tool loaded with enough easy-to-use features and functionality that anyone can use.

### **3. HAVING TWO ADMINISTRATORS ON YOUR PAGE IS KEY**

You need a backup in case someone gets sick, moves away, or has to give up her duties for whatever reason.

### **4. BE CAREFUL HOW YOU RESPOND TO NEGATIVE COMMENTS**

If someone complains about a group event, for example, politely explain your point of view (and listen to theirs). Use the opportunity to turn a negative into a positive. Ask questions, such as what didn't you like about the event? And ask for opinions, what would you like to see happen differently at next year's event? Using this strategy will help to get out the correct information or to clear up any misunderstandings. Remember you want to show people that you hear their concerns and that you're open to feedback.

### **5. POST SCHOOL AND PARENTING TIPS REGULARLY**

Not only do they provide helpful info to your school community; they also help parents feel more connected to your group, which will make them more likely to get involved on your page. It is also a good opportunity to ask parents for feedback. Have they tried this tip before? What did and did not work for them?

### **6. FRIEND PARENTS YOU KNOW PERSONALLY, THEN TAG THEM WHEN YOU POST TO YOUR GROUP PAGE.**

Those posts will show up in their notifications, and they may be compelled to share with others who might then join your Facebook community.

### **7. ASK PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED ON YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE.**

Remind your school community at school council meetings, at school council events, in emails and in other correspondence. Let them know that this engagement tool is available to them.

### **8. ASK FOR INPUT, AND USE IT WHEN YOU CAN.**

People like sharing their opinions—and they want to see them translated into action.

### **9. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FACEBOOK'S EVENT CALENDAR**

Take the time to post upcoming school events using the Facebook calendar and invite your group to participate. Facebook events are the perfect way to get users' attention and keep it.

### **10. POST YOUR PARENT COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA IN ADVANCE**

Let your school community know what is going to be discussed at your next parent meeting. Posting your meeting agenda will help keep parents informed and will encourage meeting attendance.

## **KEEPING UP YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HARD.**

Following the above tips should put you in the right direction to increasing involvement on your school council's Facebook page. Still looking for more tips on making your school council's page even better? We suggest reading our 7 things to avoid doing on your school council's Facebook page blog.



PARENTS ENGAGED  
IN EDUCATION



# FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE

FEATURING  
CANADA'S FIRST  
EDUCATION BANK



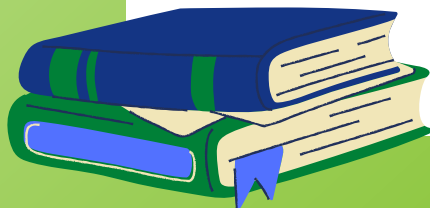
*A diverse, inclusive  
and safe space for  
ALL*

THE FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE IS LOCATED AT  
857 MILNER AVE. UNIT 104, SCARBOROUGH, ON M1B 5N6

**Our Hours of Operation Are:**

Monday, Tuesday & Saturday 10am - 3pm  
Wednesday & Thursday 12:30pm - 7pm  
Friday & Sunday Closed

**DUE TO COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS, FAMILIES MUST MAKE  
AN APPOINTMENT TO COME INTO THE FAMILY SERVICE  
CENTRE/EDUCATION BANK BY CALLING: 416-546-1467**



[www.educationbank.ca](http://www.educationbank.ca)



# 12 QUICK HOMEWORK TIPS



*By Parents Engaged in Education*

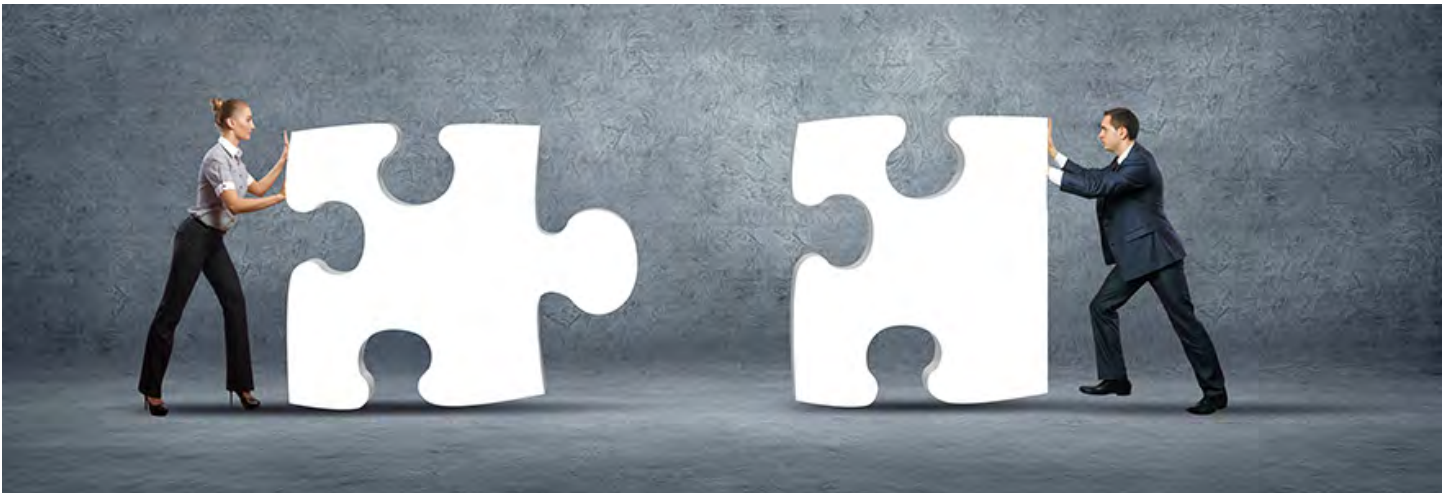
**CHILDREN ARE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL WHEN PARENTS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE AND SHOW INTEREST IN THEIR HOMEWORK — IT SHOWS CHILDREN THAT WHAT THEY DO IS IMPORTANT.**

**TRY USING THESE 12 QUICK HOMEWORK TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD BE MORE SUCCESSFUL.**

1. Know the teachers and what they are looking for.
2. Setup a homework-friendly workspace.
3. Schedule a regular study time.
4. Help them make a plan.
5. Check what needs to be done early.
6. Keep distractions to a minimum.
7. Make sure kids do their own work.
8. Be a motivator and monitor.
9. Stay calm!
10. Set a good example.
11. Praise their work and efforts.
11. If there are continuing problems with homework get help. Reach out to your child's teacher, administration, resources such as tvoLearn or TVO mPower, or parent support groups such as Parents Engaged in Education.

# 10 KEYS FOR COMMUNICATION TO BETTER IMPROVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT

*By Parents Engaged In Education*



## USE THESE 10 KEYS FOR COMMUNICATION TO HELP YOU REACH OUT TO MORE PARENTS.

Remember the ways you reach out to parents can either help build involvement, or it can work against your school council. These tips should help put you on the right path.

### 1. INVITE PARENTS TO GET INVOLVED.

Make sure your school community knows that they are welcome at all school council activities.

### 2. MAKE IT EASY TO VOLUNTEER.

Be sure to use a bulletin board in school, or get familiar with and use Google Forms as a place where parents can sign up to volunteer for events. Be sure to include a photo to attract volunteers to your event. Most importantly, remember to include contact information on all your correspondences.

### 3. SHOW VOLUNTEERS YOU VALUE THEM.

Being appreciative is key. Remember to always thank your volunteers.



#### 4. COMMUNICATE REGULARLY.

Send newsletters, e-newsletters and update your school councils social media channels regularly.

#### 5. PROMOTE SCHOOL COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

so parents know how the group's efforts are benefiting the school.

#### 6. RECOGNIZE VOLUNTEERS.

Include the name and photo of each person along with their accomplishments. Use your various communication channels to applaud these volunteers.

#### 7. DISPLAY PHOTOS OF VOLUNTEERS AND SCHOOL COUNCIL PARTICIPANTS

to show that the school council is fun and inclusive.

#### 8. USE TECHNOLOGY TO INVOLVE PARENTS.

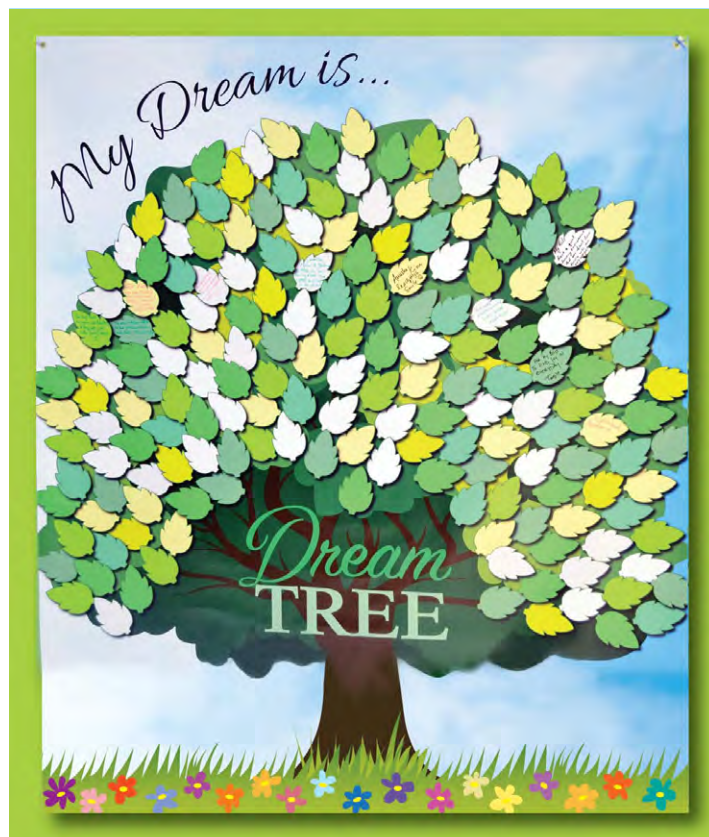
If parents at your school are online, you should be too. Just be sure to keep paper copies of your communications available for those who want or need them.

#### 9. TRANSLATE SCHOOL COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

for non-English speaking members of your school community. Doing this whenever possible is a great way of making them feel included.

#### 10. USE PERSON-TO-PERSON CONTACT.

Recruit others to pass on flyers and school council information. Never miss an opportunity to engage parents, especially those who might view the school council as a clique. Sometimes the simplest method of word-of-mouth works best.



Parents Engaged in Education have designed a **"DREAM TREE"** banner. This vinyl banner is 5' x 6.5' with hundreds of blank leaves for parents and students to write their dreams.

This is a wonderful example of positive messages which will inspire the entire school community all year round.

GREAT FOR CURRICULUM OR  
PARENT/TEACHER INTERVIEW NIGHTS!!

Our aim is to raise enough funds this year to offer priority schools in challenged communities a **"DREAM TREE"** to encourage their communities to strive for the best they can be.

While we work on this program, if your school would like to purchase a **"DREAM TREE"** for your community you may do so by contacting [Theresa.pastore@parentsengagedineducation.ca](mailto:Theresa.pastore@parentsengagedineducation.ca).

**The cost is \$200.00 plus shipping**

(This is cost recovery only,  
we do not charge in excess of our cost)

# PARTNERING WITH THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

*By Theresa Pastore*

**THE SUCCESS OF A SCHOOL COUNCIL OFTEN RESTS WITH THE PARTNERSHIP THEY FORM WITH THE PRINCIPAL. THERE ARE SOME PRINCIPALS WHO ARE NATURALLY ENTHUSIASTIC AND SUPPORTIVE OF THE COUNCIL. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE SOME WHO ARE SLOWER TO FORM A COMFORTABLE WORKING PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENT LEADERS.**





**Here are nine tips on how to help build a positive partnership with your school administrator.**

1. Establish a good communication plan at the beginning of the school year. The Chair should ask to meet with the Principal at least one week before a council meeting. The Chair and Principal should use this meeting to prepare the agenda for distribution to members. Remember to use this opportunity to share ideas and establish a rapport with the Principal.
2. While parent leaders play an important role in the school, it is important to remember that the Principal has the final responsibility for all operations in the school.
3. Running meetings effectively and respecting the time commitment for both parents and the principal will allow the council to accomplish a great deal. Getting bogged down in details can be frustrating. This can cause everyone to lose interest in the meeting. It is a good idea to identify what needs to be done. Once that is established, delegate to a sub-committee that can handle the issues at a later date or time.
4. Do not bring personal matters to council meetings. School council Chairs should make sure that no other members raise personal issues. Council meetings should be limited to school activities that affect all students in the school.
5. Developing an annual budget as a council, in conjunction with the Principal, will help the council move towards a common goal that aligns with everyone's priorities.
6. Ask the Principal what their priorities are and how the council might assist in achieving these goals.
7. Appreciate your Principal and thank them for their efforts.

8. Treat your Principal with respect. Remember that they have many responsibilities in running a school besides school council work. Understand they may not be able to respond immediately to your emails or needs put forth by the council.
9. Remember your Principal is a person, just like you. They will have good days and bad. Try to be compassionate and understand that there may be a better day to present new ideas or concerns.

I know that there are school council Chairs that feel like no matter what they do, they simply cannot build a positive relationship with their Principal. There could be many reasons that this is the case.

**SOME OF THESE REASONS MAY INCLUDE:**

- The Principal had a negative experience with a previous school council. This could be the reason the Principal now holds back from supporting the current council.
- There could be some very stressful situations at the school that require the Principal's attention. This can affect their relationship with council members.
- It could be that there is a perceived "power struggle" between the parents and the Principal. It is to everyone's benefit to identify this problem immediately. Remember the goal is to have everyone work together effectively for the benefit of all the students in the school.
- It simply could be that the Principal does not recognize the value that parent leaders bring to the school. In this case, demonstrating how the council could work with them to support the students and the school community may be helpful. Starting with small things and working towards a plan that is a truly collaborative effort that benefits all.

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**IN CANADA WE CELEBRATE SO MANY WONDERFUL CULTURES AND THESE DEDICATED WEEKS OR MONTHS GIVE US THE CHANCE TO LEARN, REFLECT AND GROW AS LOVING COMMUNITIES.**

**THIS MONTH WE ARE CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY AND WE ARE SHARING SOME ACTIVITIES TODAY WHICH WE HOPE THAT YOU COMPLETE WITH YOUR CHILD(REN) AND TAKE A MOMENT TO APPRECIATE THE AMAZING CONTRIBUTIONS MADE TO OUR HISTORY.**

# All About Misty Copeland

Misty Copeland is a dancer. She is a ballerina. She worked hard to become the first African American woman to become a principal dancer at the American Ballet Theatre in New York City.

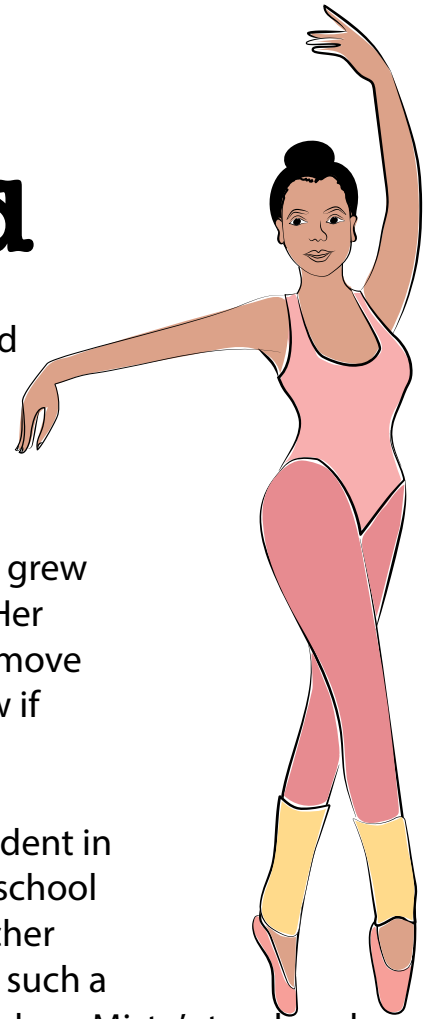
She was born in Missouri, on September 10th, 1982. She grew up in California. She has two sisters and three brothers. Her family did not always have enough money. They had to move to many different homes. Sometimes Misty did not know if there would be food for dinner.

As a child, Misty loved to dance. She was also a good student in school. When she was 13 years old, she tried out for the school drill team. She was made the team captain! Her drill teacher asked if she wanted to try a ballet class because she was such a good dancer. Most dancers begin to dance as young children. Misty's teachers knew that she could be a great dancer and encouraged her to train. She studied at the San Francisco Ballet School and the American Ballet Theatre.

In 2001, Misty joined the American Ballet Theatre. In 2007, she became the second African American female soloist in the company. She kept dancing. In 2015, Misty was the first African American woman to become a principal dancer.

Misty is a talented dancer and she is also a writer. In 2014, she wrote a book about her life called *Life in Motion*. She also wrote the picture book *Firebird*. She loves to help others as a volunteer.

Misty Copeland lives in New York City. She takes classes and dances with the American Ballet Theatre. All of her hard work shows that anyone can be a ballerina.



# Katherine Johnson Mini Book

To assemble the mini book:

1. Cut on the dotted lines.
2. Fold on solid lines.
3. Put pages in correct order.
4. Staple along left edge.



Katherine lived to be  
101 years old!



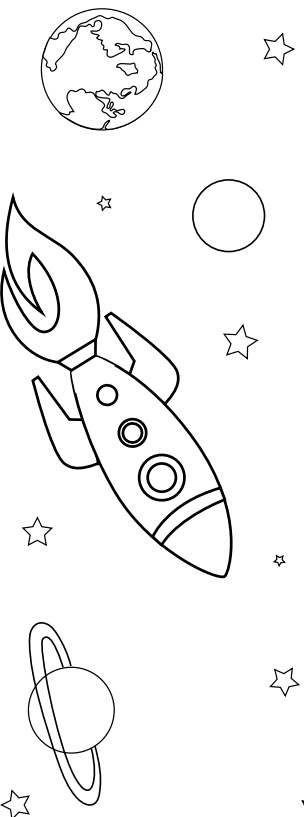
**All About  
Katherine  
Johnson**

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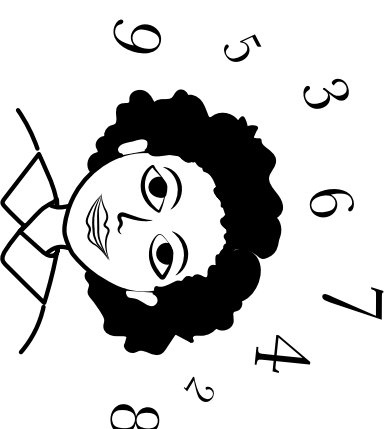
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Katherine's math helped  
astronauts go to space.



When she was little,  
Katherine loved numbers.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

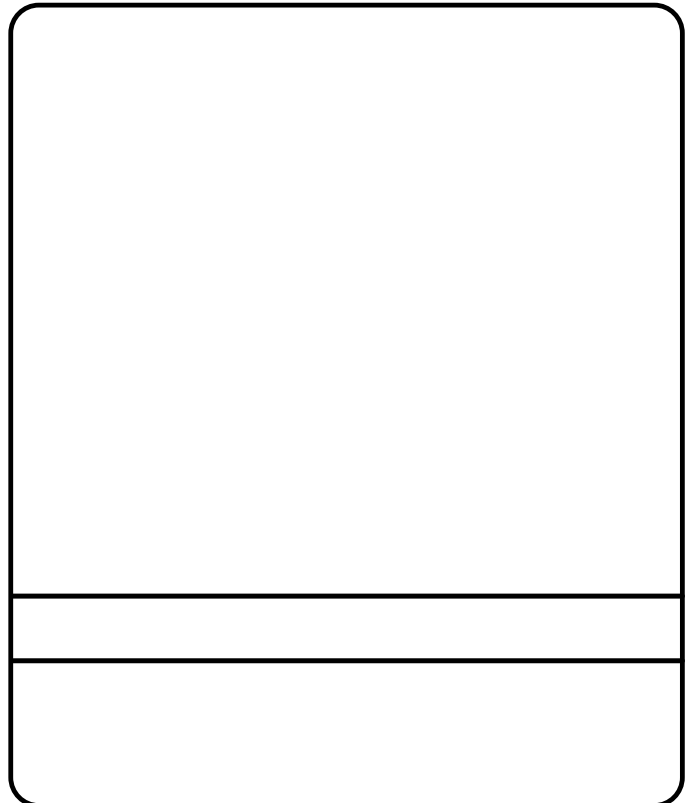
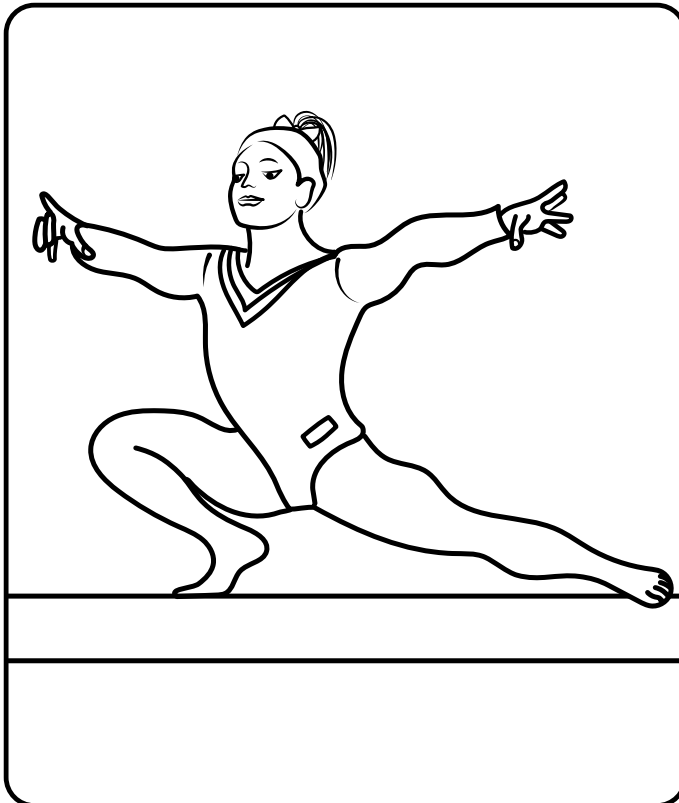
# Trace & Write Women in Sports: Simone Biles

She

She is a gymnast.

*\*Adults read this aloud\**

Simone Biles is a gymnast. She won 4 Olympic gold medals in 2016. She has also won 3 world championships. She is very talented and has been training since she was 6 years old! Trace the word and then color in the picture of Simone. You can then draw a picture of yourself on the balance beam.





# LEADING WITH EXAMPLE:

PRIORITIZING FAMILY TIME  
/ ACTIVE TIME



## **“... IT’S ABOUT FEELING GOOD, CONFIDENT & BEING READY TO NAVIGATE THE WORLD IN A HEALTHY WAY.” – KRISSY COLLINS**

Growing up in small-town Ontario, Krissy Collins was always on the move – competitive swimming, varsity basketball, enjoying the great outdoors – you name it – Krissy was there enjoying everything an active lifestyle had to offer.

Fast forward to today, and Krissy is just as involved in sports and physical activity as ever. Except now, she shares her love of movement with her husband, Denton, and young daughter, Clara. A passion that leads them to regularly get active together as a family.

“Everything about our background relates to physical activity and sports, for both my husband and I,” Krissy said. “We actually met playing in a rec basketball league in Toronto. It’s our main point of connection, we do everything together relating to sport. And now the same goes for our daughter, as well.”

That connection is constantly reinforced by Krissy’s family’s ability to prioritize getting active together, by making family time, active time.

“It’s a built-in part of our day. We do something active as a family every single day and we encourage our daughter, Clara, to do the same,” said Krissy. “It’s part of the culture of our family, we are constantly moving and active. On the weekends we go for bike rides, we shoot hoops, go jogging, we always schedule and plan the time.”

As highlighted in the 2020 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth, planning the time to be active as a family can go a long way to ensuring both you and your family hit the recommended amount of active minutes – kids (ages five to 17) need 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity each day and adults require 150 minutes every week.

Meeting, or exceeding, those guidelines is key to maintaining a healthy lifestyle – a fact that Krissy knows all too well.

**“WHEN WE’RE ACTIVE,  
WE’RE 100 PER CENT IN  
A BETTER MOOD, MORE  
PRODUCTIVE, KINDER  
TO ONE ANOTHER.”**

**#kidsmentalhealth**

# 9 MENTAL HEALTH ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH YOUR CHILDREN

 @BELIEVEPHQ

## WORRY TIME

- Set aside a time each day for your child worry. Discuss with your child how long the worry time will be for. In this time your child can write down their worries, discuss them with you or problem solve to overcome them

## THOUGHT CHALLENGING

- Help your child to write down any unhelpful thoughts they that experience. Try to challenge them with your child and come up with more realistic and helpful ones

## BEING PRESENT

- Help your child to be present and live in the moment. Go for a walk and see how many different things you can both take in with all your senses

## ACTIVITY PLANNING

- Create an activity diary with your child and help them to schedule in some pleasurable and achievement related activities

## TALKING ABOUT FEELINGS

- Why not create a time each week where your child can speak to you about their thoughts and feelings

## 3 GOOD THINGS

- Before bed spend some time with your child to identify and write down three good things they achieved from the day

## WELLBEING

- Support your child to look after their wellbeing. Cook healthy meals with them, exercise or play sport with them and make sure they are getting enough sleep

## IMAGERY

- Work with your child to imagine themselves in an imaginary future where everything has turned out in a positive way

## THOUGHT TESTING

- Try setting out some simple activities to help your child test out the validity of a thought.



# A NEW ERA FOR THE COLLEGE

- ✓ **More representative**
- ✓ **More efficient**
- ✓ **More effective**

The College's new Council is equally balanced between the public and the profession.

Meet the diverse group of Ontarians on our Council, committees, and rosters who will help regulate teaching in a way that puts the interests of students first. For more info visit [oct-oeeo.ca/newera](http://oct-oeeo.ca/newera).



Ontario  
College of  
Teachers

Ontario's Teaching Regulator



ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT  
AND SCHOOL COUNCILS IN ONTARIO

ONTARIO ENGLISH  
Catholic  
Teachers  
ASSOCIATION

**We're all  
in this *together.***



**Stay strong,  
stay safe.**



Unity is our strength.  
Education workers,  
students, parents,  
and families will  
get through this  
together.



## ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND SCHOOL COUNCILS IN ONTARIO



# THANK YOU

To educators and parents for everything you are doing at home  
We stand with you as your partners in learning

[nelson.com/learningonline](http://nelson.com/learningonline) **NELSON**



## Parents

ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

Parents Engaged in Education is a not-for-profit organization formed by experienced school council members to provide resources and skill building opportunities for parent leaders across the province.

[www.parentsengagedineducation.ca](http://www.parentsengagedineducation.ca)  
[info@parentsengagedineducation.ca](mailto:info@parentsengagedineducation.ca)

**647-408-2091**

Follow us on twitter  @parentengagcons