



SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2016 • VOLUME 12

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topic of the month

EXCITING PROGRESS

The first couple of months of the new school year have been exciting ones for Parents Engaged in Education. We have made significant progress in the development of the first ever parent engagement app. The purpose of this mobile game style app is to challenge parents to move through the same curriculum that their children experience from JK – Grade 12.

In addition, we have launched a province wide Parent Engagement Research Project that will provide school boards and other parent groups to develop tools and resources that are relevant to our school communities in 2016-17.

In this issue, we focus on engagement in the secondary level and some ideas to teach children to give back during the upcoming holiday season.

*Get the latest downloadable brochures at our website
www.parentsengagedineducation.ca*

TEACHING KIDS TO GIVE BACK DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Ontario is a diverse province full of communities that celebrate the holidays in many wonderful ways. It is important at this time at celebration that children understand that there are others in their communities who struggle, especially at this time of year.

It is a great time for parents and school communities to involve students in activities that demonstrate the importance of giving back to those in need during this special time of the year.

It is hard to change the expectation of children to receive gifts at this time of the year. But, we must also teach them the important value of giving. How do we impart values, like compassion and charity? How do we teach children such practical skills such as the value of money and that not all families are in the same situation when it comes to their financial means? How do we teach an 8 year old child to come with us to buy his favourite toy and donate it to the local children's hospital?

Schools and school councils can work with parents in imparting these important values by arranging activities where students in the school work together to sponsor a special holiday service project.

Perhaps there is a local hospital, children's charity or family shelter that are in need of toys or other items that will support kids and families in their care. Some schools might consider:

- Ask parents to refrain from giving teachers gifts and instead suggest they honour their teachers with a contribution to the school's identified charity.
- It is imperative to make these contributions private in order that no family at the school feel they should give more than they can afford or feel less than equal to others in the school community. Giving is in the spirit, not in the pocketbook.
- This gift would be given on behalf of the whole school.
- A gift card for a local charity which allows them to purchase what their community needs the most.
- A class collection of non-perishable food items for a local food pantry.
- Purchasing holiday gifts for a homeless family.
- Encourage students in each grade to identify a toy they would like to have this year and use school collected funds to purchase them and give them to a children's charity with the class name on the donation.
- A fun activity can be made by having students create an art project making a box decorated for the holidays, then filling the box with non-perishable food items to donate to a local food bank.

In addition, it is the time of year to teach kids the importance of being kind to others. It is a good time to encourage your child to reach out to someone who always seems to be alone in the playground.

School councils may know that there are students in the school who do not have warm clothes for the winter. Perhaps a hat, scarf and mitten drive would serve the community well.

There are many ideas that can make a difference for others, but, at the end of the day it is important that all children learn compassion and have a broader view of the world than the state of their own family.

Inspiring

Your Child

to Learn and

Love Math

WHEN YOU SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO LEARN, YOUR POSITIVE APPROACH HELPS INFLUENCE YOUR CHILD'S SUCCESS.

To access this important resource from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education is available at:

http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/parent_engagement-math/en/index.htm

Parents Engaged in Education highly recommend this resource that provides simple ways to engage with your child in exploring new ways to remove math intimidation and enjoy learning math!

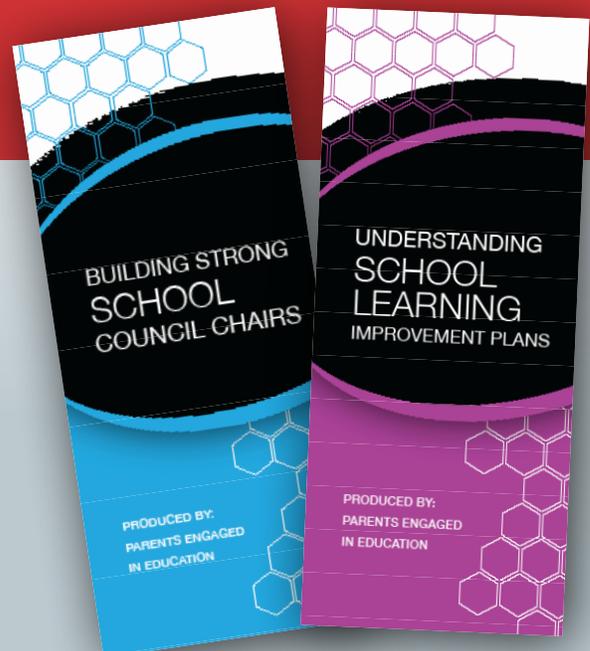


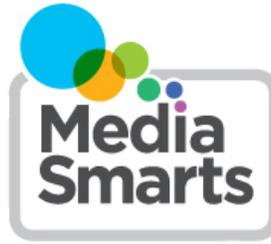
Parents
ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

FREE
this
month

DOWNLOAD TWO
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FROM OUR WEBSITE.

ParentsEngagedInEducation.ca





CANADA'S CENTRE
FOR DIGITAL AND
MEDIA LITERACY

Promoting Ethical Online Behaviours with Your Kids – Tip Sheet

RESPECT PEOPLE'S PRIVACY

RESPECT PEOPLE'S FEELINGS

RESPECT PEOPLE'S PROPERTY

Most kids live as much of their lives online as they do offline. But on the Internet there are lots of moral and ethical choices that don't have to be made offline. These tips lay out ways you can help your children develop a moral compass to guide them through those choices.

The foundation for helping kids to behave ethically is to teach them to respect themselves and other people. Online, this mostly falls into three categories: respect people's privacy, respect people's feelings and respect people's property.

RESPECT PEOPLE'S PRIVACY

Because nearly all of the services and platforms young people use are networked, every time a friend posts something they have to decide if – and how – to share it. Unfortunately, they often ignore the ethical issues of this choice, expecting others to tell them if they don't want something to be shared.

Teach kids to:

- Consider other people in photos or videos they are posting or sharing:
 - Do I have their permission?
 - How will they feel if I post this?
 - Is there anything they'd be worried about?

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Behaviours with Your Kids*,
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- Think about what might happen if something that they post or share gets sent to people they didn't expect:
 - How will the people in this photo or video feel if their parents see it? Their teachers? Their friends, girlfriends or boyfriends?

Parents can also model good habits by thinking about their children's privacy before posting videos, photos or other personal things about their kids. Having clear and consistent family rules about respecting privacy is a great first step in helping kids to make good choices.

RESPECT PEOPLE'S FEELINGS

Sometimes it can be hard to remember that the people we communicate with online are real people who have feelings. This is because we don't see or hear many of the things that trigger empathy in us, like a person's tone of voice, body language or facial expression.

To help kids better understand and respond to bullying, teach them:

- How some online spaces, especially ones that are popular with boys, encourage trolling (annoying people on purpose to get a response, which can include annoying pranks all the way to posting threatening or hateful comments) and the ways that trolling can be hurtful. Talking about this from an early age will help kids understand what is - and isn't - acceptable online behaviour.
- How to react appropriately to online drama (flare-ups with peers). This includes learning skills to mediate between friends to prevent situations from spiraling out of control as well as strategies that can be used to avoid drama themselves. This includes taking time to "cool down" before posting a reply, assuming the best about other people and not automatically thinking that comments are meant to be mean and talking face-to-face to make sure you haven't misunderstood an online conversation.
- Signs of an unhealthy relationship, like jealousy, possessiveness and constantly wanting to keep tabs on someone. As well, pay attention to what your kids are watching, playing and listening to and be ready to talk about how romantic relationships are depicted.
- Strategies for when they witness any kind of bullying. Confronting bullies publicly can be effective, but there are also times when a private conversation might be better, especially between friends. Remind your kids not to automatically take sides just to defend their friends; this can turn drama into harassment. Instead, suggest they mediate between the participants.
- What is and isn't acceptable online behaviour. Having clear and consistent family rules is a great way of communicating to your kids how you expect them to treat other people online
- What to do if they are targets of bullying. Make sure your kids know you will support them if they come to you. Find out what their school's policies and procedures are for reporting bullying and make sure your kids know these as well.

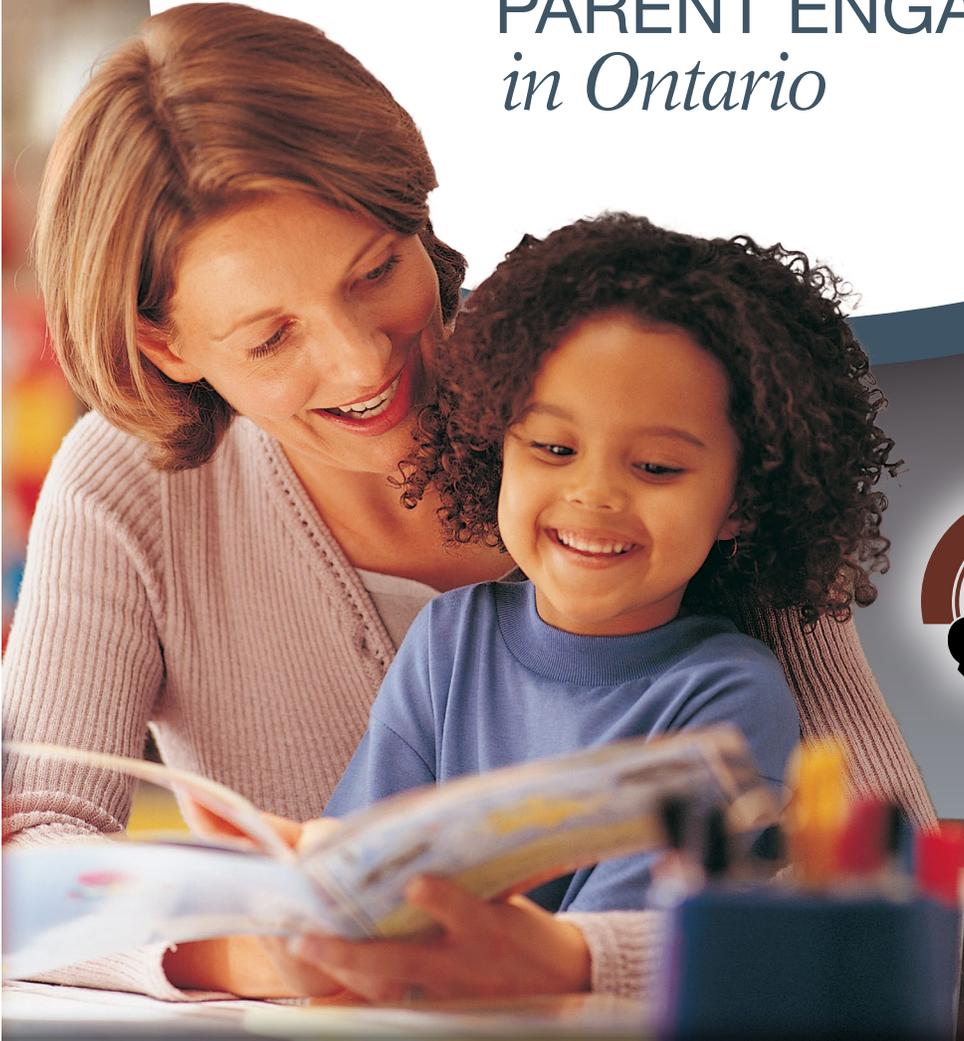
RESPECT PEOPLE'S PROPERTY

One of the most common ethical decisions kids face online has to do with how they access and use things like music, games and videos. So much stuff is easily available online that it's hard to resist "putting your hand in the cookie jar," especially since we're not reminded – as we would be if we were to sneak into a movie or steal a video game from a store – that people are hurt by what we do. There's also lots of confusion, among both kids and adults, about what's permitted and what's not; while some things are clearly unethical (like illegally downloading movies), many common activities (like watching movie clips on YouTube and similar sites) are less clear.

We need to teach kids to think about whether they're watching, listening to and playing things online in a way that shows respect for the people who made it and own it:

- Teach kids that just because something's online doesn't mean you can take it and use it. For things you are allowed to use, always give credit to the person or company who owns the copyright.
- Correct the idea that any use is okay as long as the author is given credit. While it's important to do this, kids need to know that crediting the author may not always be enough.
- Remind kids that when an artist creates a work, they own it and they deserve to control what happens to it. They may choose to give it away, but if they want to charge for it that's their right. Given all the stuff that's freely available online, if something isn't free it's because the person who made it expects to get paid.

- Kids may think that cheating a media company is not the same as cheating a person, so we need to explain that selling and licensing copyright is an important part of how artists make a living. If companies stop doing this because they aren't making profits, it's the artists who suffer. (Not to mention the hundreds of thousands of Canadians working in jobs that are supported by the film, television, video game and music industries.)
- Address the idea many youth buy into that "copying isn't stealing". One way to help kids think through this is to help them understand that when they pay to access music, games and videos, they're not really paying for a product but for a licence to access and enjoy that product.
- Show them where and when they can use music, games and videos legally and for free. (MediaSmarts' tip sheet "Getting the Goods Ethically" explains how this can be done.)
- Explain that plagiarism is not a victimless crime; the victims are the students themselves who miss out on a learning experience, the other students in the class who didn't cheat and the author of the material that's being copied.
- Reinforce the idea that plagiarism of any kind is disrespectful by putting your kids in the shoes of artists and other copyright owners (for example: "Remember how you sold your drawings at the school craft fair? What if someone took a picture you drew, copied it and started selling it? How would that make you feel? Is it fair?").
- Set clear and consistent family rules on using and accessing online content and using Internet materials for school work.



SCHOOL BOARDS THAT SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT *in Ontario*



Waterloo Catholic
District School Board

Wellington
Catholic
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

The logo for Wellington Catholic District School Board features a blue stylized cross with a white graduation cap (mortarboard) superimposed on it, all within a white circular background.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTED ON THIS PAGE,
PLEASE CONTACT PARENTENGAGEMENTGROUP@GMAIL.COM

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT ON STUDENTS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER IN SECONDARY SCHOOL.

INCREASED ACHIEVEMENT

HIGHER GRADUATION RATES

MORE LIKELY TO MOVE ON TO POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

INCREASED CONFIDENCE

INCREASED ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

IMPROVED BEHAVIOUR

PARENT ENGAGEMENT HIGH SCHOOL CREATING CONVERSATION

GRADE 9 - 12

When our kids reach high school we have to learn to ask new questions to engage them in talking about school. The old “what did you do in school today?”, will likely get you the standard “nothing” response.

Try some of these suggestions:

- Where in the school do you hang out the most? (for instance, a particular hall, classroom, parking lot) Where in the school do you not like to hang out?
- What would your school be better with? What would your school be better without?
- If you were a teacher, which class would you teach? What class would be the worst to teach? Why?
- What was the coolest (saddest, funniest, scariest) thing that you saw today?
- Tell me one thing that you learned today.
- If your day at school were an emoticon, which one would it be?
- If you had only one class every day which class would it be?
- If you could be invisible for one day at school what would you do?
- Who did you help today, who helped you?
- If you could read minds what teachers mind would you read? What classmates mind would you read? Whose mind would you NOT want to read?
- What are the top 3 things that you hear people say in the halls?
- What is your easiest class? What is the hardest class?
- What class do you learn the most in? What class do you learn the least in?
- Have you decided what you want to do for a career? If yes, what courses are you taking that will help you achieve your goals?
- What do you think you should do more of at school? Less?
- What do you think the most important part of school is?
- Which classmate is most likely to be made a Prime Minister, become a millionaire, be in movies, etc.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEES & SCHOOL COUNCILS THIS IS YOUR PAGE

Starting with next month's issue of this newsletter we will feature articles written by parent leaders who make up school councils and PICs across the province.

We are inviting school council and PIC members to write articles sharing best practices, challenges they have overcome or need input on from others, events that have made a difference to engaging parents in their school communities or any other topic relevant to parent engagement.

Our publishing deadline requires all articles to be submitted by the first of the month i.e. November 1st for the November newsletter.

This is an excellent opportunity for all of us to learn from each other and share great ideas that we can all use to build stronger school communities.

Please contact

*Theresa Pastore, Executive Director
parentengagementgroup@gmail.com
for questions or to submit an article!*



Parents
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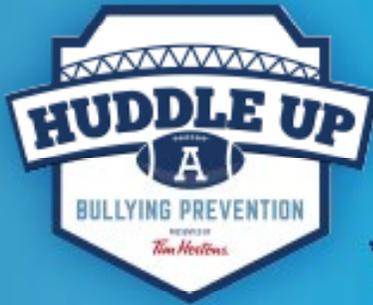
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THE TORONTO ARGONAUTS

ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE
THEIR PARTNERSHIP TO
SUPPORT PARENTS TO
ENGAGE IN THE EDUCATION
AND THE PHYSICAL /MENTAL
HEALTH OF THEIR CHILDREN.

*Watch for exciting
events and resources
coming soon!!*



BULLYING PREVENTION RALLY!

FREE FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 3-8

NOVEMBER 23, 2016
12:00 – 1:30
NATHAN PHILLIPS SQUARE

Join us to have the most people ever reciting a pledge to prevent bullying. Athletes, celebrities and expert speakers will lead the crowd in an inspiring program that celebrates acceptance, inclusiveness and uniqueness. Family Channel's Deepa Prashad will host the day's events alongside special guest Michael "Pinball" Clemons.

RSVP by: November 15, 2016 and you will receive a Grey Cup Curriculum Learning Resource Package to help prepare for the Rally: huddleuprally@argonauts.ca

Date: November 23, 2016

Time: 12:00-1:30

Location: Nathan Phillips Square

Please submit:

- School Name
- Contact information of chaperones on site (Cellphone & E-Mail)
- Number of students
- Whether you are coming via TTC or busing

We encourage public transit where possible.

There are limited options for lunch at the square so you are encouraged to bring your own lunch.

Dress warmly as it will be in November.



The Canadian
Safe School
NETWORK



Parents

ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

Ambassadors



BECOME A PEIE AMBASSADOR AND BE A PART OF YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL COMMUNITY

A P.E.I.E. Ambassador will...

Promote the mission of the organization.

Share the organization's resources with their school community.

Work to engage other parents with their children and their school.

Be their child's CHEERLEADER in school!

Every P.E.I.E. will receive a certificate in recognition of their commitment to the organization.

Follow us on:  Parents Engaged in Education  @parentengagcons

Parents Engaged in Education's mission is to promote and engage parents in their children's education to increase their academic achievement and provide resources and skill building opportunities for parents/guardians and school council members to support children's education in Ontario.

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ARE PROUD TO
ANNOUNCE THEIR
PARTNERSHIP TO
SUPPORT PARENTS
TO ENGAGE IN
THE EDUCATION
AND IMPROVE THE
LITERACY SKILLS OF
THEIR CHILDREN.

*Watch for exciting
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SCHOOL COUNCILS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Parents often breathe a sigh of relief when their kids move on from elementary school where they spent so much time volunteering and taking part in school council activities.

They feel that now that their kids are in high school they don't need to be so involved – the kids are okay!!

WRONG, WRONG, WRONG

They have never needed you more. Every student needs a strong and involved school council!!

- Identify areas in the school that need improvement.
- How can the school council work to improve identified needs?
- What are the biggest challenges of the school i.e. overpopulation, under utilization etc. How can parents help work towards a solution for these challenges.
- What are the graduation rates at the school? If they need improvement, is there a role for the council to play i.e. advocating for improved services etc.
- Support student events that might require volunteer supervision.
- Promote the school within the community.
- Research community resources for teens and share with parents.
- Communicate with school community and keep them up to date on the activities of the council.
- Provide resources to prepare parents to stay engaged with their kids in secondary school.

MOST IMPORTANT!

BEING INVOLVED IN THE SCHOOL COUNCIL IN SECONDARY SCHOOL SETS AN EXAMPLE FOR YOUR TEEN THAT EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT!

Show this coupon during check-out and we'll donate 10% of your purchase total to: PARENTS ENGAGED IN EDUCATION



FRIENDS AND FAMILY WAREHOUSE SALE

FIVE WEEKS ONLY



November 18, 2016 to December 18, 2016

Friday - Sunday : 11am - 5pm

Monday - Thursday : By appointment (416) 785-5655

Visa, MasterCard & Cash - 3% off cash purchases

GREAT STOCKING STUFFERS! MOST ITEMS \$10 OR LESS

Hundreds of wholesale brand name gifts, toys and clothing for your friends, family, teachers and more. Most Items for \$5 or less.

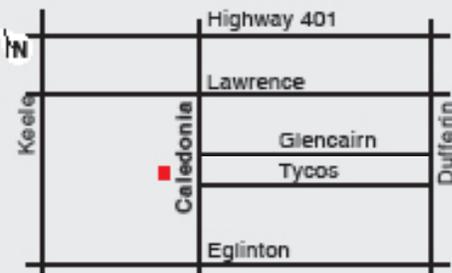
Shop for your charitable programs: Adopt-a-Family drives / Christmas Hampers / Mitten Trees / Shoe Box / Toy Mountain / Out of the Cold and more.

Charities : Buy in bulk and receive FREE donations!

- Winter Gloves, Hats, and Designer Scarves from \$2.50
- Toys, Games, and Stocking Stuffers from \$1
- Socks and Underwear 5 pairs for \$10
- Adult Flannel PJ Pants 2 pairs for \$20

& MUCH MORE

WHOLESALE BRAND NAMES: Maple Leafs | Snugabye | Marvel | Disney | Star Wars | Doc McStuffins | Toy Story | Spongebob | Crayola | Thomas & Friends | Hot Paws | & More!



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Keep up-to-date with timely College news.
Engage us in conversation.



Ontario
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for Great Teaching



Being here can lead to amazing things.

 **Georgian**
COLLEGE

In 2050, the first spoken language in the
WORLD will be **FRENCH**
Can you help your child with French homework?
WE CAN. FOR FREE. 


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Parents

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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.

Follow us on twitter  @parentengagcons