



Special Education Superintendent Update

June 2021



Surrey Place offered the following webinars on the June 4th PA Day.

Self-Regulation and Autism Spectrum Disorders Module 1

This half hour module will introduce participants to the concepts of self-regulation and co-regulation. The module will identify how anxiety and stress impact self-regulation in students with an ASD. By the end of the session, participants will begin to identify skill gaps in their students that will facilitate teaching of self-regulation skills and tools.

Self-Regulation and Autism Spectrum Disorders Module 2

This presentation is the second module in the Self-Regulation series, which is geared towards Elementary school staff supporting students with ASD in ISP classrooms. This half hour module will take a closer look at the environmental strategies that were introduced at the end of the first module.

Self-Regulation and Autism Spectrum Disorders Module 3

This is the final Module in the Self-Regulation in Students with ASD series. Focus will be on when to intervene with the strategies previously discussed in Modules 1 and 2. The use of a “break” strategy will also be introduced along with some examples of modifying both “The Zones of Regulation” and the “5 Point Scale” for elementary and ISP classrooms.



The Social Work Department welcomed Olympian Sarah Wells to share her *Believe Initiative* program in order to recruit student leaders. Sarah also provided an inspiring and uplifting talk to encourage staff in their role.



The Social Work Department engaged in professional development from Wellspring and the FCJ Refugee Centre, two centers offering a variety of services for those who qualify.



Social Work, Psychology and Mental Health staff continue to plan and support Focus On Youth Summer Camp planning. We are providing training and support around Mental Health education and promotion to student leaders and camp coordinators every Monday and look forward to rolling out additional supports for all those engaged in summer learning.



In the months of May and June, the Mental Health team engaged in the following activities to support the mental health and well-being of students and staff across the system:

- The mental health professionals who support our secondary schools facilitated mental health workshops for students and staff in schools. This year, they have facilitated 32 mental health workshops in 19 high schools, reaching over 4000 students and 500 staff members overall on topics such as *Tips for Stress Management, Gratitude, Strength and Hope*, etc.
- Facilitated a workshop for elementary Support Staff on *Creating Mentally-Healthy Classrooms*.
- Shared a Pride Month Infographic for *Mentally-Healthy Conversations in Supporting our 2SLGBTQ+ students and families* for staff.
- *Self-Directed Suicide Awareness Course* offered to 50 School Administrators followed by a webinar on TCDSB Suicide Guidelines to allow support staff to be better prepared to support students who may present with suicidal ideation.
- In collaboration with Safe Schools, 112 Social Workers and Psychology staff members received a workshop on *Cannabis and Youth* by Dr. Abby Goldstein from OISE.
- Facilitated Staff Well-Being presentations on *How to Foster our Own Well-Being during COVID-19* to Secondary School Vice-Principals Association team members.
- Share the monthly system-wide Staff-Well-Being messaging focused on *Kindness* with embedded videos and activities for staff as well as activities for the classroom.
- **Mental Health Awareness Week** was celebrated from May 3-7 across the system by inviting educators to practice social-emotional skills in their classrooms with their students:

Get Real About How You Feel!

Mental Health MATTERS

Mental Health Awareness Week May 3rd -7th

Monday May 3rd	Tuesday May 4th	Wednesday May 5th	Thursday May 6th	Friday May 7th
<p>Morning Announcement</p> <p>Bible Quote</p> <p>Read Aloud Lesson: The Thing You Couldn't Do - Elem.</p> <p>Feelings Charades - Elem.</p> <p>Managing Stress - Sec.</p> <p>TCDSB Culturally Responsive Virtual Library</p>	<p>Morning Announcement</p> <p>Bible Quote</p> <p>Name it to Tame it! - Elem.</p> <p>Conversation Jamboard - Sec.</p> <p>School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) Student Mental Health Action Kit Educators SMHO Students SMHO Parents</p>	<p>Morning Announcement</p> <p>Bible Quote</p> <p>Breathing Strategies - Pr. Breathing Strategies - Jr. Breathing Strategies - Int. Breathing Strategies - Sr.</p> <p>What Comforts You? - All</p>	<p>Morning Announcement</p> <p>Bible Quote</p> <p>Tense and Relax - Elem.</p> <p>Healthy Sleep - Sec.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>Win a prize by sharing activities on social media, <u>using the hashtag below</u>, to show how your class is getting real about how they feel!</p> <p>#TCDSBMHW2021</p> </div>	<p>Morning Announcement</p> <p>Bible Quote</p> <p>How Do You Feel? - Elem.</p> <p>Get Real About How You Feel - Sec.</p> <p>Mental Health Week Canada</p>



SPECIAL SERVICES

- Parents were also invited to celebrate **Mental Health Awareness Week** by engaging in mental wellness activities with their children and youth through this Special Edition Newsletter:



A Special Edition TCDSB Mental Health Newsletter in celebration of...

Mental Health Awareness Week: May 3 – 9, 2021

Good mental health isn't about being happy all the time. It is important that we acknowledge the full range of emotions we feel, even the uncomfortable ones. When we can identify and name our emotions we can better understand, process, and cope with them, allowing us to ultimately feel better ([CMHA](#)).

We encourage you to use the following resources to help with continued learning at home. These family-friendly strategies are meant to benefit everyone. Remember, children are more likely to learn and develop good habits when they see adults practicing them.

Activities for School-Aged Children:

- **EMOTION CHARADES:** On slips of paper write or draw different emotions. Family members take turn pulling slips from a bowl and acting out the emotions for others to guess.
- **DEEP BREATHING** can help to relax the body and mind and can be done anywhere. Help your child to practice this skill using the [Kids Help Phone Breathing Balloon](#).
- **PRAYER** can be a healing act in times of difficulty. Teach your child the [Pope Francis Five Finger Prayer](#).
- **WALK AND TALK.** Physical activity releases feel-good chemicals into our bodies which can improve our mood. Walking with your child provides opportunity for candid conversations, with the added benefit of connection time which is so important for our mental health.
- Visit the School Mental Health Ontario website for more [SIMPLE MENTAL HEALTH PRACTICES](#) that will help your family to cope with stress.

Activities for Youth and Teenagers:

Try these **CONVERSATION STARTERS:**

- How are you feeling about (school, friends, stay-at-home order, etc.) lately?
- How does your body and mind feel when you're feeling anxious due to stress?
- What helps you calm your body when you are feeling anxious due to stress?
- Learn with your child about how **MINDFULNESS** can support identification and acceptance of emotions [here](#).
- If your child struggles with sleep, this [video](#) provides some great tips for good sleep hygiene and how to create a good **SLEEP ROUTINE**.
- At times, **DISTRACTION** can be a good way to cope with intense emotions. [50 Ways to Take a Break](#) may offer your child some inspiration.
- Check out the [COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub](#) and [Anxiety Canada: How to Chill](#) for **MORE STRESS MANAGEMENT IDEAS**.

This newsletter is brought to you by the TCDSB Mental Health Team. Feel free to contact us with any comments, questions or suggestions at 416-222-8282

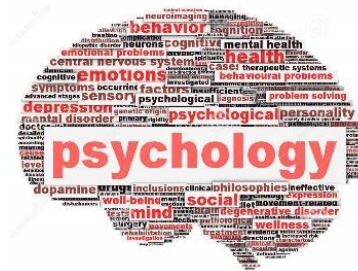




SPECIAL SERVICES



Our Assessment and Programing Teachers (APTS) and our Programing and Assessment Teachers (PATs) have been completing INTAKES for new students to our school board. They are welcoming new students as they speak with their families and help the school prepare to welcome the students.



The Psychology Department continues to serve students, families and the school community. This includes the focus on in-person psychoeducational assessments, as well as ongoing counselling and mental health supports, school team consultation, and psychology education for school staff and community.

The Psychology Department continues to support school staff through professional development in June. Offerings include continuing presentations of the *Trauma-Informed Classroom*. A new webinar, *Helping Youth Co-Regulate Intense Feelings*, introduces the practice of Emotion Coaching: a set of tools and skills to assist staff in supporting students (and one another) in navigating strong emotions, such as anger, sadness, and anxiety.

