

Special Education Superintendent Update

June 2022



Deaf /Hard-of-Hearing Family Fun Day


Students and families celebrated a successful 31st Annual Deaf/Hard of Hearing Family Fun Day on May 30th. The TCDSB D/HH Itinerant teachers and audiologists arranged a morning of fun activities for students that helped give them a sense of community and belonging. Over a hundred guests were welcomed at the Catholic Education Centre to enjoy the activities and celebrate Speech, Language and Hearing awareness month. Community agencies attended and provided students and families with important information about available summer camps for our D/HH students.



The Speech-Language Department hosted a free, interactive webinar for parents, ***Supporting Communication through Play*** on May 31st as part of the Special Services Parent Engagement Series. This webinar was a great opportunity for schools to enhance the *Welcome to Kindergarten* experience and provide parents with practical tips to help support their child's early communication skills.



The Mental Health Team continued to promote mental health activities and resources throughout the system with the following activities in the months of May-June:

- Presentation on *Supporting Students' Mental Health* was facilitated for about 15 Student Success Teachers.
- A parent webinar was held on *Supporting Your Child Through Anxiety* on May 25, 2022. Over 1000 parents registered and 300 parents participated in the live webinar. All parents have received a recording of the webinar. The link to the webinar will also be shared on our website.  [Video Recording: Supporting Your Child Through Anxiety](#)
- In collaboration with Safe Schools, an information session on Sex Trafficking was facilitated for all school administrators with the help of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection.

- In collaboration with the Equity Department and staff from the Nurturing our Catholic Community Department, an information session on 2SLGBTQ+ highlighting the Catholic perspective was held for all school administrators with the help of Father James Martin.
- During the June 3 Professional Development (PD) day, all elementary school support staff were invited to participate in a half day webinar by School Mental Health Ontario on effective practices in mental health promotion.
- During the June 3 PD day, 20 elementary support staff were trained on *SafeTalk*, a Suicide Awareness and Prevention training workshop.
- Mental health resources and supports for students, families and staff were shared appropriately with the system in response to tragic world events that have taken place recently.
- Local schools were busy celebrating various mental health initiatives. The Stop the Stigma student team at Brebeuf College invited Wali Shah to share his stories of resilience and growing up as an immigrant child in Canada. St. Joan of Arc received an award from our Director of Education for “Innovative mental health initiatives that incorporate student voice into the teaching/learning journey”.



On May 13, the social work department engaged in a day of reflection. The team welcomed Metis Knowledge Keeper, Diane Montreuil at High Park where a professional development regarding self-care and self-compassion was welcomed by all. This learning will guide social work practice as we support students, staff and families. It was a day of deep learning where we engaged in compassion and stewardship of resources for our communities.

