



# SPECIAL SERVICES

## SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

### APRIL 2025



## UPCOMING APRIL/MAY PARENT WEBINARS

### #1 Parent Webinar Information Session for Project SEARCH

#### *A New Opportunity For Eligible Students Beginning In the 2025-2026 School Year*

We are excited to share an opportunity for eligible students entering their final year of high school in 2025-2026 who are on the Employment Graduation Pathway. We are able to provide this program to our student through the Ministry of Education Grant, *Developmental Disabilities Pilot- Student Transitions*.

In collaboration with our partners, The Hospital For Sick Children and Corbrook Awakening Abilities, we will be offering the Project SEARCH program. This is a non-credit bearing internship for students diagnosed with an intellectual/developmental disability.

The goal of Project SEARCH is to support youth with disabilities in gaining skills needed for competitive employment. Eligible students will gain experience in 3 unpaid and non-credit bearing internships at our host business, The Hospital For Sick Children.

Eligible students must:

- be at least 18 years of age
- be enrolled in their final year of high school in 2025-2026
- be diagnosed with an intellectual/developmental disability (may also include physical disability, Autism, or other health conditions)
- be on the employment graduation pathway



**Title:** Project SEARCH: An Opportunity that may lead to Employment  
**Target Audience:** Parents/Guardians of eligible students (criteria noted above)  
**Date/Time:** Friday, April 11, 2025 12:00pm – 1:00pm, **or**  
Monday, April 14, 2025 7:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Registration:** [Please register here](#) or use the QR code below  
**Note:** Registrants will receive the webinar link after registration.



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## #2 Parent Webinar Series - Substance Use, Addictive Behaviours and Youth Mental Health

We are excited to share a valuable opportunity to support your child's well-being. School Mental Health Ontario is offering a free webinar series as part of the [By Your Side learning hub](#), designed to help parents and caregivers navigate important topics related to substance use and addictive behaviors.

This expert-led series will provide insights and practical strategies on:

- ✓ **April 22, 2025 7:00pm- 8:00pm**  
The intersection of addictions and mental health
- ✓ **May 7, 2025 7:00pm – 8:00pm**  
Recognizing signs of substance use and behavioural addictions
- ✓ **May 14, 2025 12:00pm – 1:00pm**  
How to talk about substance use at home
- ✓ **May 22, 2025 12:00pm – 1:00pm**  
Current trends in student substance use in Ontario
- ✓ **Dates to be announced**  
Technology overuse and problematic gaming

The webinars will also include answers to questions that parents/caregivers can provide ahead of the webinar, giving you the chance to ask questions and gain practical guidance.

 Sessions run throughout April and May

 [Register for free today](#)

We encourage all parents and caregivers to participate in this informative series. Together, we can support the well-being of our children and communities.

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## LOOKING AHEAD

May is  
**SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND HEARING**  
Month



Next month mark Speech, Language, and Hearing Month – a time to raise awareness about the importance of communication health. We'll be sharing valuable resources from the Speech & Language and Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing departments to support and celebrate this initiative. Stay tuned!

## DEAF/HARD OF HEARING



Deaf/Hard of Hearing students participated in the Social Butterflies Grades 7- 10 event at Monsignor Fraser, Isabella Campus on February 28, 2025 to connect them with other students who have the shared experience of having a hearing loss. Students engaged in a day of fun, STEAM-related skill-building activities in a welcoming and accessible environment. During the morning, they participated in collaborative activities that build on communication and social-emotional learning. In the afternoon, the students visited the Museum of Illusions to engage in interactive, hands-on science and math focused activities.



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## AUTISM AND PROGRAMMING & ASSESSMENT



On March 25<sup>th</sup> the Toronto Catholic District School Board Special Services department hosted a virtual information webinar led by Surrey Place to assist families in preparing their adolescent for life after high school. In this webinar, parents were introduced to navigating postsecondary planning, exploring available resources, and developing useful skills for their young adult's transition into the community. The session emphasized the vital role parents and guardians play in supporting this important transition and offered practical tips and insights. The session was well attended and positively received by the families. The webinar was recorded and is available on our Transition website: [Preparing for Life After High School](#)

## MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOLOGY

During the month of March, the mental health team has continued to support the well-being of students through the system through the following activities:

- In March, for Black Mental Health Week, we facilitated an information session for staff on the RiseUp program from KidsHelpPhone that offers counseling supports for diverse Black students. As well, a system communication and a parent/guardian Newsletter was distributed through principals.
  - In collaboration with Guidance team, we facilitated a professional development workshop on the Grade 10 mental health literacy modules to our career educators to help support the implementation of these modules with students.
  - A professional development workshop on Suicide Prevention, entitled SafeTalk, was facilitated to all secondary Guidance educators to empower them with tips and strategies to support students with suicidal ideation. As well, the TCDSB Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion protocol was presented to showcase the guidelines on the steps to follow in cases of suicide ideation, including the involvement of our mental health professionals to do a thorough risk review of the students.
  - A staff well-being workshop and an overview of the TCDSB Suicide Prevention Protocol was facilitated for all elementary and secondary vice principals.
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