

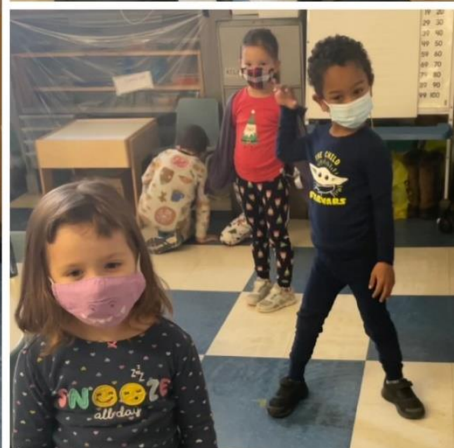
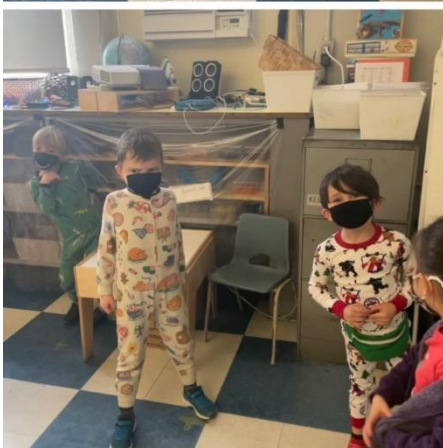
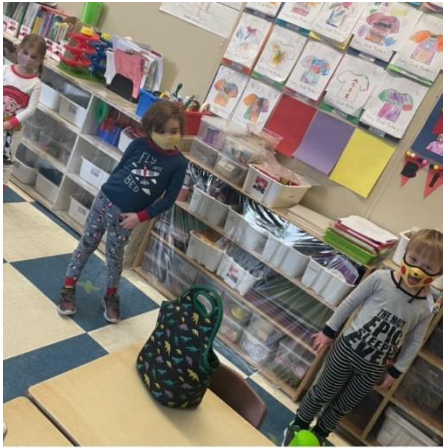


DUKE OF CONNAUGHT



DECEMBER 2021

Pajama Day!







It's strange to be writing about the end of 2020. This has been a year like no other. Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa! We wish everyone an uneventful and happy winter break. Stay home and stay safe so we can see you all in 2021!

Welcome Winter! Duke SAC Community Event: Please

join SAC on Sunday, Dec. 20 at 2PM for our first virtual community event!

Duke parent, Tamara Robbins Griffith, and her children will lead us through the steps to create a beautiful and easy winter craft! To register and review the list of supplies, [click here](#).

Do you have a special skill or talent that you'd be willing to teach virtually? We're looking at different ways to engage and connect our in class and virtual families while still remaining safe. If you'd be willing to help us with a virtual workshop, please email us at info@dukesac.ca



Food Drive Update: A heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated to the Food Drive. We were able to deliver over 25 boxes of food to Kapapamhchakwew Wandering Spirit School for their winter solstice food bundles. Your generous support for this event was very much appreciated.

Read-A-Thon: Our Read-A-Thon wrapped up this week and we are still tallying up pledges. Thank you to everyone who donated. With your help we will be able to purchase new technology for our school and share funds raised with a partnered school. There is still time to donate! All donations can be submitted through your SchoolCashOnline.com account.

Each week we distribute information via email in the "Need to Read" (NTR) to keep you tuned in to the goings-on at Duke. If you have not done so already, you can sign up on the DukeSAC.ca home page. If you are a parent or caregiver of a Duke student and would like to be involved, please email us at info@dukesac.ca.

Attending a SAC meeting has never been easier and we hope to see you **online** at the next one. We won't be hosting a meeting in December but will be back again on Monday, January 25, 2021 – a link to join the meeting will be provided in future communications.

Helping at Home: Cubed



Students in Mme Kirk's Grade 1 French Immersion class have been working on cube timelines. When completing this project, they were encouraged to reflect on how they change over time and why their responsibilities would also change.

Art in Room 306: Mr. Naimji's class has been busy beautifying their space!



Kindness Elf in Room 28

Ms. Yip's class got an unusual package recently – a Kindness Elf along with some writing journals, so students could write about how they shared/experienced kindness. Here are some of the entries!

IAN Jeffrey

Room 28 | Duke of Connaught School | Toronto, ON

The elf arrived on Tues. Dec 15 2020.
He arrived in a box when Mr.
Gambacourt said in the announcements that
we had a package. When we opened the box
we found Kameron and some kindness journals.
she/he is a kindness elf. The elf
goes around the room hiding at
night. If you touch him/her she/he
will disappear. He/she gives out kindness
tasks. Kameron hid on the chalkboard.
Once the task was to say 'I love you'
to someone. I think he/she will go
back to the north pole.



Max Gibson

On december first Mr Gambacourt said on
the announcement there was a present
for the class. Mr Gambacourt gave the
present to us. Mrs Yip opened the
present and she read a card in the
present. After she looked in the present
and saw a kindness elf. Its name is
Kameron. If we touch Kameron it will dissaperr.
Every day Kameron moves to a spot. My
favourite was when he was on the
white board. We also have a
task to do. The task today was to tell
some one you love them. We dont know



if it is a she or a he I think it is
a he. Kameron might move till
christmas and go to a different class.

Angus

Room 28 | Duke of Cornwall School | Toronto, ON

How the elf arrived

The elf came in a present.

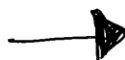
Mr. Gambaourt said on the announcements that it was for Ms. Yip's class.

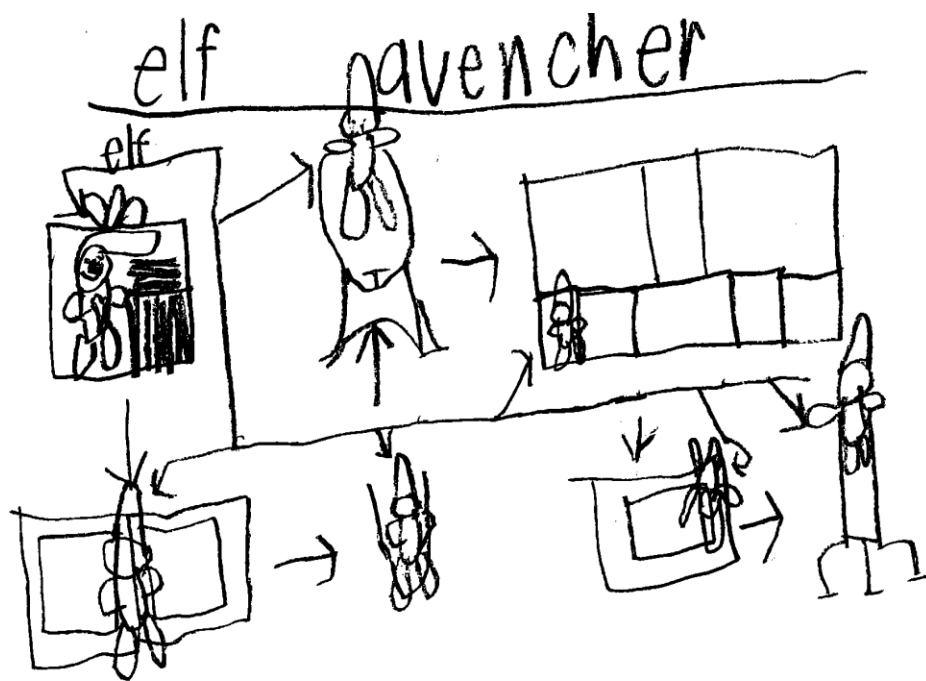
Ms. Yip opened it. An elf was in it and a note and 17 kindness journals.

Who the elf is

The elf is a kindness elf we do not know if the elf is a he or she.

The elf's name is Kameron.





What the elf does

Kameron gives us a task every day.

Kameron moves over night and some time

Kameron moves at recess.

things about Kameron

Kameron is a cousin to elf on the shelf.

Do not touch Kameron or Kameron will

disappear.

Grade 2/3 Structures

Students in room 16 created mini playgrounds as their culminating task for their Science Structures and Movement Unit. As you can see, their structures have features such as strong foundations, posts and beams, arches and levers. They added additional fun and creative components such as park benches, shade, park rules signs, garbage cans, lemonade stands and fences to keep little children or pets safe. They could only use items found around the house to make these mini playgrounds!



Grade 4/5 Wycinanki Evergreen Tree Paper Cuts-outs

To celebrate the upcoming winter holidays, the grade 4's and 5's in room 21 have been creating "Wycinanki" pronounced Vee-chee-non-kee. Wycinanki is the Polish word for 'paper-cut design' and it has been a popular folk craft in Poland since the 1900s. Though traditionally hung as decorations in windows, on walls, and from ceiling joints, today the classic designs are found everywhere. They hang in museums, may be printed on all manner of souvenirs, and even adorn airplanes (British Airways decorated the tails of some of their jets with the folk design in the 1990s).





HEARTS & MINDS



From TDSB Psychological Services to Your Family



Volume 2
Issue 4
December 2020

Happy Holidays!

As 2020 draws to a close and we look ahead to a new year, we might be feeling a mix of emotions.

This holiday season will not look the same as it has in years' past. We may not be able to celebrate in the same way that we did before. We may not be able to rest and relax as easily as we once did.

This December issue of our newsletter invites you and your family to slow down, savour small moments and focus on gratitude and reflection, through conversation, mindfulness & finding our inner child this winter season.

Check out these conversation starters that you can use to encourage discussions with your family over the winter break.



"WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST SURPRISING THING ABOUT THIS YEAR?"

"THIS YEAR HAS BEEN REALLY DIFFERENT. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT WENT WELL FOR YOU THIS YEAR?"

"IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU LEARNED ABOUT YOURSELF THIS YEAR THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE?"



"WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR?"



**FROM ALL OF US TO ALL OF YOU,
WISHING EVERYONE A HAPPY AND
HEALTHY HOLIDAY SEASON
AND A BRIGHT NEW YEAR!**

WINTER MINDFULNESS

by Patricia Bellantone C. Psych. Assoc. (Candidate)

As the colder months are upon us, we are embracing the slower pace of winter. Let's consider this an opportunity to celebrate the season of change and move our attention positively inwards. Winter is a terrific time to cultivate a mindful way of living. Use this time to slow down and savour the holiday season. Let us focus on the good, such as gratitude, joy, laughter, love, and the beauty of nature. If anything, this year has helped us shift from a mode of *doing* to a mode of *being*.

The practice of slowing down is a good way to engage in mindfulness.

CULTIVATE MINDFUL AWARENESS

There are many ways to build mindful awareness. Listen to music mindfully, have longer lunches, take longer walks, and wake up everyday with a thankful heart. Practice mindful breathing and stretching to help you and your children remain grounded. Another idea may be to engage in mindful colouring. This allows us to focus on how we choose to apply colours and practice bringing our attention to the present moment.

ENJOY BEAUTIFUL NATURE

Take in and absorb the crisp winter landscapes and invigorating fresh air. Go by a lake and notice the stillness of the water. Experience how calm and serene it can be by the water. Other ideas for you and your family may include bird watching, noticing the frost on the ground, watching the snowflakes fall, or going on a nice hike.

DEVELOP NEW ROUTINES

A changing season is a new opportunity to build new habits. Practice some healthy family routines that you find manageable. Some ideas may include family movie night or board games night, having a relaxing bedtime routine, going on daily walks, or creating nice meals together.

EXPRESS MORE GRATITUDE

Complete a winter break mindfulness journal. Express what you have gratitude for. Reflect on what you have learned about yourself this year, think about the ways you have persevered, and who has helped support you. One activity idea is to create a gratitude tree: Decorate a tree with the things that you are grateful for. Your children can draw people, things, or experiences that they are grateful for on small pieces of coloured paper. These simple activities can be a really nice way to practice mindfulness and enjoy the things that make winter special. Set the intention to infuse relaxing moments for yourself, children, and your family. Less doing, more being.

OUR ARTICLES, TIPS, AND SUGGESTIONS DO NOT CONSTITUTE TREATMENT ADVICE.

IF YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER IS IN CRISIS, PLEASE CONTACT KIDS HELP PHONE: 1-800-668-6868 OR THE DISTRESS CENTRE: 416-408-4357

Imagine a conversation between a parent and a teen...



Parent: What's up Sam? What are you doing here sitting by the windowsill by yourself?

Sam: Meh....just wondering about the coming December break....I mean...we have a lot of time on our hands. We can't even meet with our friends and family. This is so boring! I hate it.

Parent: Yeah, I get that. You're feeling bored and annoyed because you can't visit with people during the break. I am feeling some of it too. It's frustrating that the best thing we can do right now is to stay home! I'm thinking about ways we can make the winter break less frustrating and boring. We could try to think of it as a unique December break!

Sam: Unique? Yah, like unique in that we can't do anything any longer!!!

Parent: I meant unique as in, hopefully, we never have a December like this ever again! We can make some new memories during this December like never before!

Sam: (with a bored expression) I'm listening... keep going.

Parent: I was wondering if we could spend December differently. Sort of like when we pushed our brain to come up with a creative Halloween costume this year.

Sam: Hmmm... yah that was fun! Different... but, how?

Parent: Different like solving a math problem in many ways - it pushes our brain and it can be fun. It also makes us smarter!

Sam: Smarter! What! I don't believe you.

Parent: Yes, this is how we grow, by going through things that feel hard or even boring at first!

Sam: So, you're saying we can always learn new ways of having fun and this helps us grow....What are you thinking?

Parent: It is "our" break, so let's talk through this together. I have a calendar that has lots of ideas for winter break activities. Why don't we look through and pick a few things that you want to do by yourself, virtually with friends, and some as a family. How does that sound?

Sam: Sounds good. Feeling better already!

See page 4 for a Printable Winter Activity Calendar

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES DURING THE WINTER BREAK

Mental Health TO
& Whats Up Walk-In clinics:
Call 1-866-585-6486

Kids Help Phone:
Call 1-800-668-6868 or
Text 'Connect' to 686868

If there is an emergency, call 911

Distress Centres of Greater Toronto:
Call 416-408-4357

Multilingual Distress Lines:
Call 905-459-7777

TeleHealth Ontario:
1-866-797-0000 TTY: 1-866-797-0007



[@TDSB_Psych](https://www.instagram.com/TDSB_Psych)



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Brought to you by the
HEARTS & MINDS
Committee

Psychological
Services

Mental Health Winter Activity and Well-Being Calendar for Families

MINDFUL MONDAY	TORONTO TUESDAY	WINTER WEDNESDAY	THANKFUL THURSDAY	FAMILY FRIDAY	COMMUNITY SATURDAY
<p>Go on a mindful 'safari'! Go for walk & use your senses to connect to nature. What do you hear? smell? see? feel? Share with others!</p> <p>Practice mindful eating as a family. Engage all senses - set the table (fancy or simple!), put on some music, minimize other distractions, savour each bite & discuss how the meal tastes!</p> <p>Take a <u>mindful break</u> (in 5 minutes or less!) as a family before bed, using free apps like <u>Breathe Kids</u> (<u>Butterfly Body Scan</u>), <u>Calm</u> (<u>Mindful Walk with Malika</u>) or <u>Smiling Mind</u> (<u>Scrunch & Relax</u>)</p>	<p>Visit the Royal Ontario Museum at home (for free!). Explore and create with the <u>ROMKids Show</u>, with videos for all ages!</p> <p>Visit the <u>Toronto Zoo</u> at home (for free!). Explore the gorilla, giraffe & penguin habitats live & talk to a zoo keeper about animal life!</p> <p>Sharks, jellyfish & rays, oh my! Visit Ripley's Aquarium <u>live feeds</u> & play "Reef Bingo" or "I Spy" while you watch!</p> <p>You can visit the Toronto Public Library at home! <u>TPL Kids</u> has quizzes, virtual books & fun for the whole family! <u>Escape room</u> anyone?!</p>	<p>Any snow on the ground today? Head outside & try one of these <u>fun winter games</u> - there is something for all abilities, outdoor spaces & ages!</p> <p>Go on a <u>winter scavenger hunt</u> together, on a walk, in the car, or looking outside from your window! How many items can you find?</p> <p>Watch a winter-themed movie tonight! <u>Happy Feet</u>, <u>Small Foot</u>, <u>White Fang</u>, <u>March of the Penguins</u>, <u>Our Planet: Frozen Worlds</u>, to name just a few ideas! Enjoy your movie with some winter-themed snacks!</p> <p>Make a winter craft: <u>Northern Lights</u> art, winter <u>bird feeder</u> or <u>snow paint</u>!</p>	<p>Do an <u>act of kindness</u>. Shovel a neighbour's driveway; write or draw cards to send to family, friends or a nursing home; help your sibling with their chores; or choose a charity to support as a family.</p> <p>Make a family <u>Gratitude Jar</u>! Write or draw notes of gratitude, about things, places, events or people you are thankful for. Take a note from the Jar each day and read out loud as a family.</p> <p><u>Did you know?</u> RESEARCH SHOWS THAT PRACTICING GRATITUDE LEADS TO MORE HAPPINESS, LESS STRESS, STRONGER FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS & MORE RESILIENCE IN KIDS AND TEENS!</p> <p>Find more gratitude practices for the whole family here!</p>	<p>Time to get creative as a family! Build a fort or a snow maze, create a photo collage using old photos or newspapers, or make up a dance routine! Assign roles to each family member.</p> <p>Plan a family game night! You can also organize a virtual game night with family outside your bubble, and play charades, pictionary or online games!</p> <p>Create a family 'vacation at home'! Choose a theme (<u>camping</u>, beach day, <u>amusement park</u>) or <u>destination</u>, use your imagination and get creative to transport your home into a mini-vacation!</p> <p>Organize a room in your home as a family. Decide what you want to keep, donate or throw away.</p>	<p>Go for mini 'Winter Parade' (in the car, on bikes or on foot): dress up & take in the seasonal decorations in your neighbourhood!</p> <p>Head to a local skating rink for some winter family fun! Remember to <u>reserve your spot first</u>!</p> <p>Find a <u>winter market, festival or event</u> happening near you, or explore a new community - many <u>events</u> are free & fun for all!</p> <p>SELF-CARE SUNDAY</p> <p>Cook a comforting meal or bake a special treat together as a family.</p> <p>Have a family body break! <u>Stretch</u>, dance or <u>move your body</u> any way you like!</p> <p>Read a story together. Have each member of the family choose either a story to read, a story to tell or a story to listen to!</p>

Click on the links for activity information!

Getting to 'Gnome' You in Room 305!



This is a photo of some tiny origami Santa's or, if you don't celebrate Christmas, Gnomes. These were made by students in room 305. We really hope you enjoy these adorable creations!

Winter Well-Being

While this year is definitely a little different, let's get cozy and try to appreciate what the winter season has to offer. There are lots of great activities to enjoy, both indoors and out, and it may be an opportunity to explore new places or try new experiences or activities.

This year, it will be important that we:

- Anticipate, plan for, and talk together about how things are different
- Focus on what gives you and your family joy and meaning
- Focus on the positive - and what you can do
- Take care of ourselves and reach out for help if needed
- Invite family members to use their imaginations, get lost in a book, try a new game, or make the most of the winter weather
- Create opportunities to connect with others through virtual meets, walks in nature, telephone conversations, sending cards/letters
- Show gratitude to ourselves and others - giving and receiving thanks helps everyone feel better
- Respect and support health guidelines for the good of us all

Read our whole [Winter Well-Being Guide](#), which includes lots of great mental health and well-being resources, services and more, including lots of safe ways to stay busy and active.

Here are some tips to get you started:

Winter Programming/Activities in the City for Families

- [Welcome to Winter – City of Toronto](#)
- [A New Way to Play: Recreation During COVID-19](#)
- [Holiday CampTO](#) - Registration is ongoing for holiday CampTO programs-a new day camp program featuring smaller group sizes and aligning with health guidelines.

Health and Physical Education Resources

- [Trails](#) - A list of Toronto trails for pedestrians, cyclists, in-line skaters and more!
- [Welcome to Ontario Parks](#) - Information about visiting Ontario Parks.
- [Participaction](#) - Resource to support families staying physically active.
- [Health and Physical Education Resources](#) - Resources to support parents and caregivers with health and physical education at home.
- [Heart and Stroke](#) - Tips for eating healthy and keeping active.

Stay at Home Activities

- [20+ Cool Virtual Field Trips for Kids](#) - take a virtual trip to amusement parks, national parks, museums and other attractions from your own home
- [Bring Dance Into Your Home - National Ballet](#)
- [Follow Along Dance Videos For Kids](#)
- [Indoor Winter Activities For Kids](#)

Holiday Traditions



Winter Solstice:

The celebration of Winter Solstice (also known as Yule) is one of the oldest winter celebrations in the world. Ancient people were hunters and spent most of their time outdoors. The seasons and weather played a very important part in their lives. Because of this many ancient people had a great reverence for, and even worshipped the sun. The Norsemen of Northern Europe saw the sun as a wheel that changed the seasons. It was from the word for this wheel, *houl*, that the word yule is thought to have come. The ancient Romans also held a festival to celebrate the rebirth of the year. Saturnalia ran for seven days from the 17th of December. The festival involved decorating houses with greenery, lighting candles, holding processions and giving presents. Celtic priests would cut the mistletoe that grew on the oak tree and give it as a blessing. Oaks were seen as sacred and the winter fruit of the mistletoe was a symbol of life in the dark winter months. It was also the Druids who began the tradition of the yule log. Many of these customs are still followed today. They have been incorporated into the Christian and secular celebrations of Christmas.



Christmas

Christmas or Christmas Day is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed most commonly on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. A feast central to the Christian liturgical year, it is prepared for by the season of Advent or the Nativity Fast and initiates the season of Christmastide, which historically in the West lasts twelve days and culminates on Twelfth Night; in some traditions, Christmastide includes an Octave. Christmas Day is a public holiday in many of the world's nations, is celebrated culturally by a large number of non-Christian people, and is an integral part of the holiday season, while some Christian groups reject the celebration. In several countries, celebrating Christmas Eve on December 24 has the main focus rather than December 25, with gift-giving and sharing a traditional meal with the family.



Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. It is observed for eight nights and days. It is also known as the Festival of Lights and the Feast of Dedication. The festival is observed by the lighting of the *menorah*. One additional light is lit on each night of the holiday, progressing to eight on the final night. The typical menorah consists of eight branches with an additional visually distinct branch. The extra light, with which the others are lit, is called a *shamash*) and is given a distinct location, usually above or below the rest. Other Hanukkah festivities include playing dreidel and eating oil-based foods such as doughnuts and latkes.



Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration. It honors African and is observed from December 26 to January 1, culminating in a feast and gift-giving.^[1] Kwanzaa has seven core principles (*Nguzo Saba*). It was created by Maulana Karenga and was first celebrated in 1966–67. Kwanzaa was established as a means to help African Americans reconnect with their African cultural and historical heritage. Seven candles in a candelabra symbolize the seven principles of Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa celebratory symbols include a mat (*Mkeka*) on which other symbols are placed: a *Kinara* (candle holder), *Mishumaa Saba* (seven candles) *mazao* (crops), *Muhindi* (corn), a *Kikombe cha Umoja* (unity cup) for commemorating and giving *shukrani* (thanks) to African Ancestors, and *Zawadi* (gifts). Corn being the primary symbol for both decoration and celebratory dining.

Wishing you a joyous Holiday Season and
best wishes for the New Year!



This year has been like no other. And this year, we have a special treat that helps put everything in perspective: a song called “A Different Christmas”. It was written and performed by Nova Carver-Cook, who is in Grade 7 Extended French. Thank you so much for sharing Nova!

Song: A Different Christmas