

HUMBERWOOD DOWNS JMA

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

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School Website: <http://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/humberwood/home.aspx> Twitter: @HumberwoodDowns



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It has been a very busy two months of school as staff and students settled into their routines and are now well on their way with program development and learning. We strive to improve and we welcome feedback from our parents, guardians and community. Thank you for your many suggestions, observations and compliments. Keep them coming!



PIZZA DAYS

Now that our chocolate fundraiser is finally over we are beginning our pizza lunch days at Humberwood Downs. Pizza lunches take a great deal of time and staff to help organize so that

they run smoothly. And although we'd like to continue running them, we cannot do so unless all families pay using cash online. We simply cannot sort, count money and order for over 800 students at our school. We are asking that if you'd like your child to participate on pizza days that ALL orders must be made on cash online.

The online link may be accessed from our school's website for your convenience at <http://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/humberwood/Home>

If you do not have internet at home please see Ms. Upward and she will assist you to sign up online. The Humberwood Toronto Public Library has computers and internet access for free that you can also use.

All money raised this year is going towards subsidizing field trips and for the purchase of technology (Promethean Boards, Chromebooks and iPads for classroom use).

Pizza days this year:

- Friday Dec 21
- Friday January 25
- Friday February 22
- Friday March 29
- Thursday April 25
- Friday May 17
- Friday June 14

These dates are also posted on our school's website- click on the calendar.

OUR SCHOOL'S AREAS of FOCUS

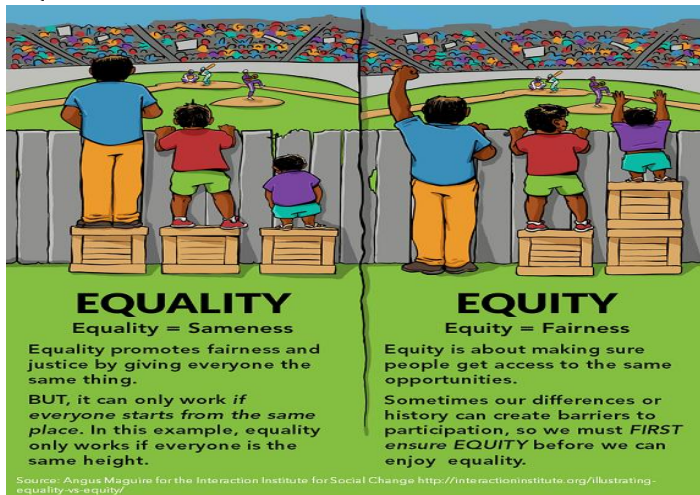
Every school in the TDSB must identify 3 areas of focus in Student Achievement, Equity and Well-being. In the next newsletter we will continue to inform you about how we are doing in our areas of focus. Below is a general description of our plans for this school year:

MATHEMATICS

- Continue to use the 3-part math lesson as a matter of regular practice.
- All classes have Marian Small's resource Open Questions for The Three Part Math Lesson and are expected to incorporate this evidence-based resource in the classroom.
- Support all classroom teachers to build their expertise and understanding of math diagnostics so that they better understand students' strengths and areas of weakness in specific strands.



EQUITY



- Training for all staff: understanding personal biases and how these impact our teaching practices and interactions with our students and families.
- Training to understand Indigenous Education. All staff was trained for two hours on October 23rd. Indigenous leaders had all of us experience the history of Aboriginal People and how their land and personal experiences were changed over time. Students will also be receiving this training in the New Year (grades 4-8).
- All classes will be learning about the Indigenous Grandfather Teachings.
- Classroom libraries- Teachers (grades K-6) have been given money in their classroom budgets to purchase books which better reflect our students' lived experiences, interests as well as provide them with stories about experiences from the perspective of different people and cultures.

WELL-BEING

- All staff members were trained on the MindUp curriculum in the fall of 2017 and are expected to use this resource as a matter of practice. This resource is based on brain-research and the activities support students to develop resiliency by identifying and managing stress, understanding how their body reacts when at rest and when stressed

and becoming mindful learners and citizens.

- Staff will also receive training to better identify students stress and anxiety and what it may look like in the classroom.
- A detailed Wellness Plan is being developed and will be shared with our community in the next school newsletter.

STUDENT HEALTH and WELL-BEING

We have seen an increase in aggression amongst our students during outdoor recess times. We are also noticing that students are engaging in aggressive behaviours towards others in classrooms, washrooms and changerooms; when questioned about incidents students often say to us, "We are just fooling around." These words and actions are often harassing in nature and, at times, have resulted in bullying behaviours. Many of our students have said that they are playing violent video games for hours each day. Many games that students are playing are not appropriate for their age or level of maturity. As a school we are beginning to see that some of our students are becoming desensitized to violence and aggressive behaviour which is alarming.



Families need to understand that there are negative results when students are online for long periods of time and/or being exposed to violent games, constant chats on Instagram, Snapchat etc. There is a direct link to excessive screen time and student behavior.

Hours of screen time is having a huge negative impact on students and many of them are now developing "gaming" addictions.



The Hospital for Sick Children has put together the following information for families. **Please review it carefully.**

Too much screen time has been linked to problems with fitness, mental health and social development such as:

- Obesity due to lack of activity
- Low self-esteem
- Low school performance due to lack of time completing school work.

Screen time is any time that a child is doing the following:

- Watching TV
- Using their cell phone
- Using a computer, tablet, iPad
- Playing PS4 or any other online game or game connected to a screen

The following are recommended amounts of screen time per day:

Ages 0-2
no screen time

Ages 2-4
less than 1 hour

Ages 5-17
2 hours maximum



As students get older screen time is important as many courses require students to access an online platform and/or submit assignments online.

You can help your child manage their screen time by:

- introducing and enforcing gradual changes to screen time limits
- talking to your child about technology

- helping your child change their screen time habits
- creating an environment that supports reduced screen time.

Introduce screen time rules

If screen time makes up a large part of your child's routine, you can start by setting rules that focus on gradual changes.



- Start *decreasing screen time* in small steps until it reaches the recommended limits for your child's age group. If your child has a lot more than two hours of screen time a day, for example, try decreasing it by 30 minutes a day for a week at a time and progress slowly towards meeting the recommended times for their age.
- Have a 'no television or screens' rule before bedtime. Your child will get a better night's sleep if they stop using screens at least 90 minutes before bedtime.
- Children tend to have most recreational screen time right after school and before bedtime. Encourage active play during these times instead.
- Set limits on time spent playing "active" video games. They are advertised as a good way to be active, but children and teens quickly learn how to play using minimal gestures (for example using wrist movement only). This greatly reduces the amount of energy they use.

Talk to your child about technology

Talking to your child about technology, in particular the negatives and positives of screen time, will help them understand the importance of having interests that go beyond the screen.

The negatives of screen time

- Sometimes your child may come across something on a screen that is not age appropriate. Encourage



your child to turn off the screen and alert you if something has scared them or does not feel right.

- Hanging out with friends and family face to face helps us experience positive emotions and feel closer to others. Social media and technology can make children and teens feel lonelier because it eliminates the need to call a friend or meet up with someone in person. It also increases the risk of being contacted by an online predator. A predator will usually pretend to be someone your child's age and try to make friends with your child.
- Staring passively at a screen usually does not require children to use their imagination. A healthy imagination is important for children and teens to generate ideas, solve problems and entertain themselves without technology.
- Without suitable limits, screen time can become addictive, leaving little energy or motivation for other activities.



The positives of screen time

- Technology can support your child's learning and education by giving them access to information and educational tools.
- A certain amount of screen time can help children and teens stay connected with important people in their life who may be far away.
- ***In moderation***, screen time can also help create fun family memories, such as enjoying a movie or video game together.

When teaching your child about screen time, make sure your child understands that it is a privilege. They should also understand the importance of balancing technology with other activities. Technology can open many doors for your child, but it can sometimes feel overwhelming. Ask your child how they feel about the screens in their life.

Change your child's screen time habits

Below are some tips on changing your child's screen time behaviour:

- Create a screen time budget that your child must follow. For example, only allow one hour of screen time a night or only charge the family tablet once every couple of days.
- **Be a role model by limiting your own screen time each day.**
- Encourage your child to move while enjoying some screen time (for instance stretching during a commercial break).
- Instead of playing video games as a family, try new active games.
- Think about some fun activities that do not involve a screen. Going for a walk, joining a sports team, drawing, painting or playing a board game are just a few examples of screen-free activities.

Create a supportive environment

Even with the best information and rules, it can be hard for a child to change their screen time habits if their environment does not support it.

The following tips can help you change your child's environment to reduce their daily screen time.

- Keep TVs and computers out of bedrooms.
- Choose an hour or two during the day that is "screen free". You can use this time to cook dinner with your child, play a board game or spend time outside.
- If you can, create a screen-free room in your home where your child can go to relax and play.
- Turn off the television while you are eating dinner.
- Make sure your child has access to physical activities in a safe environment, whether at school, at your local recreation centre or with friends.
- Make it easy for your child to choose healthy snacks while enjoying screen time.



**It's OK
to
Set
Boundaries**