

Caring & Safe Schools



November 2014

Issue #2

Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week November 17 – 24, 2014



Agincourt CI, Bullying Awareness Quilt

Restorative Practices Framework

As a way of thinking and being, the Restorative Practices Framework provides a construct for acting restoratively in a 'community'. With application in a variety of settings, the aim of the framework is to focus on strengthening relationships and repairing harm as a way of building community. The framework draws on a variety of restorative approaches across a continuum of practices. In schools it is meant as an integrated and proactive approach where a major goal is the effective reintegration of students when addressing situations where harm has been done. The framework has direct application to teaching and learning and creating and maintaining safe schools.

Schools embracing the Restorative Practices Framework report a safer, more connected environment with higher levels of student achievement. New practices are framed through a restorative lens.

Caring and Safe Schools supported the Restorative Practices training for a staff member in every Family of Schools in May/June 2014. These trained staff members can provide Family of Schools with professional learning on the Restorative Practices Framework and on the use of Restorative Circles.

Caring & Safe Schools Programs

The Caring & Safe Schools Programs provide support to elementary and secondary students who are suspended for 6 to 20 days, expelled, or who are neither suspended nor expelled, but would benefit from being placed in a program located outside of their school.

The purpose of the programs is to provide academic and non-academic support to engage and support students within a caring, safe and accepting environment. A plan to support the student's individual academic and non-academic needs is developed. Students with identified special learning needs and Individual Education Plans (IEP) are accommodated with appropriate modifications.

The non-academic program assists students in the development of long-term positive attitudes and behaviours by identifying and addressing the areas where support is required. Non-academic support is provided by a combination of Social Workers, Psychologists, Child and Youth Counsellors/Workers, Guidance Counsellors and Educational Assistants. Professional Support Services staff within this group provide individual and group counselling, risk assessments, educational assessments and support academic program planning.

School Climate

As per the Ministry of Education, School Climate can be defined as “the environment, values and relationships found within a school. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included and accepted and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. Equity, inclusion and respect are critical components embedded in the learning environment.”

Building and sustaining a positive school climate is a complex challenge requiring evidence-informed solutions. A whole-school approach involving all education and community partners is needed to bring about necessary systemic change.

The following are some characteristics of a positive school climate:

- Students, staff members, and parents feel safe, included and accepted.
- All members of the school community demonstrate respect, fairness, and kindness in their interactions, building healthy relationships that are free from discrimination and harassment.
- Students are encouraged and given support to be positive leaders and role models in their school community.
- Open and ongoing dialogue takes place between the principal, staff members, parents, and students. All partners are actively engaged.
- The learning environment, instructional materials, and teaching and assessment strategies reflect the diversity of all learners.
- Every student is inspired and given support to succeed in an environment of high expectations.
- Bullying prevention and awareness-raising strategies for students and staff are reinforced through curriculum-linked programs.



Caring and Safe Schools Professional Learning Opportunities

Principals and Vice Principals are required to participate in the training exercise ***Understanding Bill 13, “The Accepting Schools Act” and Bullying Prevention and Intervention*** which can be accessed through KEY to Learn.

We are pleased to inform you that, in conjunction with TPS and TCDSB, we have been given ten spaces per session for Principals or Vice-Principals to attend Threat Assessment Awareness Training. The dates for these sessions are December 11, 2014, March 9, 2015, April 13, 2015 and April 23, 2015. There is no coverage available. If you are interested in attending, please email Donna Day at donna.day@tdsb.on.ca to reserve your spot. Spaces will be allocated on a first come first serve basis. All of the sessions are being offered at the TCDSB A.P.P.L.E. Program site at 55 Salisbury Ave., Toronto.

Contact Us

Ted Libera, Central Co-ordinating Principal at ted.libera@tdsb.on.ca

Courtney Lewis, Administrator: Area A at courtney.lewis@tdsb.on.ca

Bill Byrd, Administrator: Area B at william.byrd@tdsb.on.ca

Ruth Bell, Administrator: FOS 15 – 20 at ruth.bell@tdsb.on.ca

Gary Crossdale, Administrator: FOS 11 – 14 at gary.crossdale@tdsb.on.ca

Brent Swan, Lead Principal, Attendance, Alternative and SAL Programs at brent.swan@tdsb.on.ca

Michael Hawes, Vice-Principal, Attendance, Alternative and SAL Programs at michael.hawes@tdsb.on.ca