



THE TREASURE CHEST



February, 2012

Port Weller Public School

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Principal's Message

February is known as Heart Health Month. This month I am going to share a personal message with you to remind us all that heart health should matter to us all. It is not just about adults but also about the the well being of your child(ren) and mine!

This past month I was at an asthma specialist appointment for my daughter Emily. Emily is 7 years old. She has had asthma since she was an infant. She has been on the 99th percentile for her weight and height since birth. Her pediatrician had never expressed concern for Emily's weight, even though at times I had felt a slight bit of worry. Emily has continued to grow at the same rate her entire life. Emily has always been a "healthy" eater. She will eat whatever is put in front of her. Although, I must admit that vegetables take a little more convincing to get down. I have played the usual tricks that all parents do in order for Emily to eat what she needs to be eating to obtain a balanced diet. Health was and is important to me. However, if I had to do it again I would not expose her to the unhealthy food choices that so many of us do because they taste good and they make us happy! Exercise has always been more difficult for Emily. We have tried it all! She puts forth some effort, but more often than not, she will lose interest in the more popular sports like soccer and gymnastics. Emily enjoys reading, music and art (a lot like her mom). I had convinced myself the reasons Emily was less interested in activities that demanded movement, were due to her struggles with asthma and I didn't push it. She likes to swim and I was satisfied with that. The problem is that in our climate, swimming is not exactly a 12 month of the year sport! Emily's weight has continued to increase slightly, but I still didn't come to terms with the fact that we had a health concern until the asthma specialist last week used the words "childhood obesity". Not my child? How could this be possible? I was educated and I thought I knew what healthy eating was all about, how could I have been responsible for this? Talk about guilt! At that moment I was convinced that I was the most irresponsible mother in the world. The doctor quickly reassured me that with some work we could turn this around for Emily. He told me that childhood obesity is a rising epidemic and that we are at a crisis level with it. A child 15 - 20% above where "they should be" in weight is considered obese. In Emily's case, you would not look at her and think "obese". It isn't so much about the weight (as all children grow at different rates), but the concerning health risks attached to low activity levels and the eating of too much sugar, carbohydrates and processed foods. Children who carry extra weight will have an extremely difficult time, if not an impossible time, riding themselves of it as adults. I do not want this challenge for Emily, it not fair to her if I don't do everything that I can to help her now. This was not Emily's



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fault, and she could not fix this herself, it was up to her father and I to do this for and with her. Asthma or no asthma, we needed to turn this around! I am sharing this story with you, not to embarrass Emily or myself, but to reassure you that if you are a parent who struggles in this area, you are not alone! Right away the doctor told us to completely cut out JUICE and to only drink water or skim milk. He suggested 6 small meals a day instead of 3 larger meals. He told us to offer protein first and then carbohydrates and NO dessert. The “no dessert” part sent Emily into complete meltdown mode, (I can’t blame her), so we chose one day a week for Treat Day. This part has been hard, I however, already notice a difference as Emily will ask for a fruit now instead of a cookie or sweet after dinner. The doctor also advised us that all children should be exposed to at least an hour of activity per day, minimum! He assured us that with some hard work, Emily would begin to feel better with her breathing and her energy levels. The weight change will follow. We obviously do not mention weight to Emily, it is all about being healthy. The doctor pleaded with me to share my message to my school community and to do my part to support healthy eating and activity habits in our school. The month of February will begin our kick-start into being Heart Healthy at Port Weller!

What do we do at Port Weller to support Heart Health?

- Balanced School day offers 2 long activity breaks per day
- Balanced day offers children the opportunity to eat more often

throughout the day (smaller meals but more often)

- Fresh fruit is available to all of our children and staff courtesy of the Chappell family.
- Breakfast Club is open to all students at 8:15 a.m. every morning to kick start the day in a nutritious and relaxed way.
- School Sports and intramural activities all year
- Karate Club
- Daily physical activity (walking)
- We follow the Ministry of Education’s new School Food and Beverage policy (e.g. whole wheat pizza crust)
- We are going to implement Fitness Fridays this month

Why are healthy lunches and snacks important at school?

Your child’s school lunches and snacks are a major source of the essential vitamins and minerals they need to grow and develop over the years.

The foods you pack for your child will give them the energy and nutrients they need to learn and play at school. Without enough energy from food, they may feel



tired and find it difficult to concentrate in class. Just like adults, if tasty healthy foods are not available when your child is hungry, the chances that he or she will reach for unhealthy junk food is greater.

What should I do for meals and snacks?

As you plan snacks, think of them as a “mini meal” that includes two of the four food groups. Our students eat a “mini meal” twice a day at school. Try these simple nutritious snack ideas:

- Whole grain crackers with a cheese stick
- Fresh cut fruit with a yogurt dip
- Rice cakes
- Nut-free trail mix. Combine dried cranberries,



raisins, dried apricots, and apple rings
with sunflower and pumpkin seeds

- favourite cold cereal.
- Yogurt tube and small oatmeal muffin

Send us your ideas!

Please take a minute to share your own ideas for healthy lunches and snacks. These will be compiled and shared during the month of February. **To submit ideas please visit www.portweller.dsbnschools.org and send us an email or send your information directly to your child's teacher.** Together we can ensure that our children are at their healthiest every day and ready to learn at their best! For more information, visit eatrightontario.ca.

Kinder-Countdown!

Children who will be four years of age or older by December 31, 2012 are eligible to enroll in Kindergarten starting September 2012.

Going to school for the first time is a big step for children and their parents. At the DSBN, families start that journey together at the



'Kindergarten Countdown' open houses. Families can visit our school, meet the kindergarten teacher, and receive a gift bag filled with fun learning resources and information that will help children develop school readiness skills.

Mark your calendar for Thursday, February 2, 2012 from 4-6 p.m. for our Kindergarten Countdown open house. Visit www.dsbnschools.org and click on "Kindergarten" for all the details!

Can't make the open house? No problem! Call the school at 905-934-3322 and we would be happy to set up an appointment to register your child.

Parent Council



The Port Weller Parent Council would like to introduce a new and exciting opportunity. This year we are assembling a cookbook

uniquely designed by the families of Port Weller School! Each family is able to submit up to 4 of their favourite recipes, preferably from different categories. A note will be going home with the students soon with more detailed information

Student Council News

Help us name our new mascot!

Have you heard or maybe you've seen our new Pirate Mascot cheering us on during sport games and making appearances during our assemblies? WE NEED YOUR HELP NAMING HIM! Ballots will be distributed to students in early February. Think of a great name – write it down on the ballot and put it in the box labeled "PIRATE NAMING CONTEST" in the front foyer. Student Council members will tally names at the end of February and give us the top three picks. The whole school will then vote for the only one they like best.

Be creative!



Create a new school cheer!

We want to have a special Port Weller cheer. Get together with friends and create a catchy, short, enthusiastic and spirited school cheer.



The cheers will be presented during the last Monday assembly on Feb. 27. Students will vote on the one they like best.

LET'S HAVE FUN!

Speeches

Students interested in writing speeches will be presenting on February 15 in the gym. The top student from the Juniors and the top student from the Intermediates will be moving on to represent Port Weller at the Grantham Optimist Club Competition which takes place on February 22

LEGO Robotics



It is just about time for Port Weller school to participate in the annual DSBN LEGO Robotics fair. Teams of junior and intermediate students from DSBN schools will have an opportunity to compete with one another in a friendly environment to demonstrate their critical and creative problem-solving skills. The theme for this year's Robotics Fair is "1812: Bicentennial for Canada". It will consist of designing, constructing, and programming an autonomous LEGO robot to accomplish specific tasks designed to match the theme of 1812. The challenges will remain hidden until we arrive to the School Support Services building the day of the competition, Friday, Feb. 10. With more than 140 teams from across DSBN competing this year, the event will be bigger than ever. Good luck Pirates!

Reading Clubs

Port Weller is excited to offer three reading clubs again this year. Students will have the opportunity to read and discuss their favourite nominated Canadian books. Sign



up will happen in mid February. Stay tuned and get ready to read!

Silver Birch Express - Gr. 3 - Mrs. Shaughnessy

Silver Birch - Gr. 4-6 - Ms. K. Troup

Red Maple - Gr. 7-8 - Ms. Abbey

Chess Clubs

Do you enjoy playing games? Give chess a try.

Chess Clubs for Grades 2-8

are running for the month of

February during the second nutrition breaks.

Listen to the morning announcements for more details regarding days and rooms. Are you thinking ahead? What's your next move?



Jr. Girls' Gymnastics

Gymnastics tryouts for Gr.4 - Gr.6 students will begin in mid February. Ms. K. Troup will be



coaching again, in cooperation with intermediate assistant coaches. Listen to the announcements for more information. The gymnastics competition has been scheduled for April 20th

Free Throw Competition

Congratulations to the following students for winning the Port Weller Free Throw competition for their grade level.

Grade 4 - Emma H., Owen F.

Grade 5 - Jessica R., Carter H., Luke E.

Grade 6 - Katie M., Alex P.

Grade 7 - Rebecca B., Jordan M.

Grade 8 - Chelsea M., Caleb M.

The following students represented Port Weller at the next meet which took place on January 21st at Holy Cross Secondary School. Great job Pirates!

Owen F., Jessica R., Luke E., Alex P., Jocelyn L., Rebecca B., Jordan M., Chelsea M., and Caleb M.



Jordan M. and Caleb M. have advanced and will compete at the next competition at Holy Cross. Congratulations to both students

Boys Basketball



Congratulations to the following members for making the Intermediate Boys Basketball Team.

Caleb M., Eric V., Eric G., Jordan M., Zach A., Ned., Evan W., Brett N., Billy K., Jordan S., John L.

Skating Dates

As part of our "Heart Healthy" Physical Ed. Program, the students are being given the opportunity to go skating on two dates. The second date is Friday, Feb. 24 when the entire school will go to the Seymour-Hannah Centre. Permission forms have been sent home. Junior and Senior kindergarten classes must be accompanied by their parents. Afternoon JK/SK class may join the skating in the morning if parents are willing to drive them. Bussing is not provided for JK/SK classes.

Early Release Day

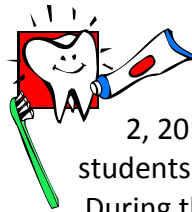
Friday, February 17, 2012 is an Early Release Day. All students will be dismissed at 11:55 a.m. **All buses providing service to the District School Board of Niagara will arrive at their respective school three (3) hours earlier than the regularly scheduled bus departure time.** If your child is a bus student, please note that the bus pick up time will be between 12:15- 12:30 p.m. Crossing guards will be on duty for the student's morning trip to school and dismissal time at the noon hour. **Junior and**

Senior Kindergarten class will not attend school that afternoon.

Morning Kindergarten students may ride their scheduled buses to school, but parents will be required to pick them up at the end of their morning class.

This is also a reminder that Monday, February 20 is Heritage Day and there is no school.

Free Dental Screening



A Public Health registered dental hygienist is scheduled to visit our school on Thursday February 2, 2012 to provide dental screening to students in grades JK, SK, 2, 4, 6 and 8.

During this time the registered dental hygienist will perform a visual inspection of each child to determine his/her dental needs. Parents will be contacted if their child requires immediate dental care. Public Health dental programs may financially assist children who do not have access to required dental care.

Please contact the Public Health dental program for any of the following:

If you do NOT wish your child to participate in the dental screening.

If your child is not in one of the targeted grades and you would like him/her to participate.

Call the Dental Health Information Line at 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074 ext. 7399 or email dental@niagararegion.ca

Breakfast Club

Please take note that if the busses are cancelled due to bad weather, there will be no breakfast club.

