



TOGETHER *We* LEARN



Central Okanagan
Public Schools

Together We Learn

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CAPITAL news

Taking Care of One Another:

How Social Emotional Learning
Gets Us Ready to Learn

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Grade 3 learner Max Banner and his Grade 11 buddy Kaelen Berg during a Little Buddy visit. The program between OKM Secondary and Anne McClymont Elementary gives both buddies more confidence and an increased ability to connect with others.



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ARTIST FEATURE

Inspired by Daphne Odjig

Students in the Art 9 class at Mount Boucherie Secondary explored the work of Indigenous artist Daphne Odjig. After learning about her and her work, they created an acrylic painting inspired by Odjig. The way they did this was up to them - they all added a bit of their own style and used visual or thematic aspects of Odjig's work as inspiration for their painting.

Indigenous art and style have been a part of my life since I was very young so having the chance to paint in this style was very exciting to me. The fish is supposed to represent my Papa's (grandfather's) life when he was a kid. He was left to take care of his siblings at a young age. To feed his family he would fish. The background of the painting is a medicine wheel. The medicine wheel is a big part of First Nations culture therefore I felt it deserved to be there. It's reflecting on the water as the sky would.

Sienna Issac, Art 9



CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE



MOYRA BAXTER
Chairperson, Board of Education

This is Central Okanagan Public Schools year of Gratitude, and students and staff have embraced the concept that gratitude often means reaching out to others. At every grade level, our students embrace the foundation for knowledge that Social Emotional Learning provides. As they seek to understand both their own emotions and the emotions of their peers, we see amazing generosity and kindness from our students. Throughout the year, primary learners build their classroom communities with exercises like Gratitude Circles. And leading up to the holiday break, all of our schools celebrated the spirit of the season one way or another: providing peers with warm mittens to play outside, inviting families to join in winter festivals and concerts, and donating thousands of pounds of food to local food banks. Students also supported the community in other ways: Rose Valley Elementary's Tree of Socks promised lots of warm toes over the winter, while Springvalley Middle School's Christmas Tea for seniors brought generations together. I could

go on for ever, as there isn't a school in our district where students haven't shown thoughtfulness and kindness and where staff haven't supported and encouraged them to show our gratitude by reaching out to others.

Although these altruistic activities may seem a long way from the type of classroom activities that those of my age experienced, our students learn and experience so much more than I ever did. At Board meetings elementary students show remarkable insight as they explain their projects. They are confident about speaking in public; the more senior students recognize the support they receive as they plan for their futures.

In the pages ahead, you'll read how our Learning Technology Department leads the inquiry into more mindful and positive use of technology. You'll see how young children gain a deeper understanding of emotions so they can support themselves and others to stay mentally well. You'll read how student leaders embrace Truth and Reconciliation by focusing on building school cultures that make sure each and every child in our public schools knows they matter. All of these actions support the success of curricula, from deeper learning about traditional subjects to ensuring that Indigenous perspectives guide Equity in Action.

I am grateful for the work taking place in Central Okanagan Public Schools, and thank our students, staff, parents and community members for working together to make our schools better every year. Happy 2020!

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



KEVIN KAARDAL
Superintendent of Schools/CEO

Central Okanagan Public Schools continues to be one of the highest performing educational jurisdictions in Canada and the world. This is not by accident. These results are in part because the Board of Education and professionals in our district recognize the importance of setting conditions so that students are ready to learn. Students come to our schools hungry. Students arrive at school in elevated social emotional states due to a variety of factors in their lives, and some have experienced significant trauma. Students come to our schools speaking different languages. Students who experience these states of being are often less likely to be able participate in learning the curricula than those who are coming to school well fed, from stable environments that meet

their social emotional needs, and who are fluent in English.

As we strive to ensure all students are ready to learn and take advantage of our outstanding public education system and our kind, caring professional educational staff, the district engages with community partners to focus on early learning initiatives like Strong Start, pre-schools, and Indigenous pre-schools. The district tries to address the problem of food insecurity by feeding over 2000 students a day with support from organizations like Food for Thought and service clubs like the many Rotary Clubs in our region. Breakfast, lunch, and backpack programs allow families to take home food for the weekend. The district also provides student settlement services for families new to Canada including extra instruction in English Language Learning. The district provides training in trauma informed practice for our educators and we put a strong focus on teaching students social emotional learning practices so that they can self-regulate and be ready to learn.

The educational reformer John Dewey said, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." With the support of many community partners, we make sure that students are ready for a life of learning. It takes a village to educate a child, and we are grateful to live in a region where so many work together so students are ready to learn.

ARTIST FEATURE



This painting is of Velma Kelly, a character from the musical Chicago. To make it more like Daphne Odjig's work, I included the bigger, more simplistic shapes and her style of art. I used contrasting colours and outlined all the colours.

Samara Oltsher, Art 9

My favourite part of my painting is its simplicity.

Sascha Twombly, Art 9



Unconditional Love

I think most parents who have children with special needs have insurmountable fears when it comes to school. I was terrified that my children wouldn't have friends. I was terrified that my children wouldn't fit in. I was terrified that my children wouldn't learn skills quick enough. In addition to having challenges in the areas of social communication, my son Oliver (in kindergarten) also struggles with self-regulation, impulsivity, and focus. I was hesitant to register the boys at the school where I teach, because I always assumed a private education could meet more of their needs. I have never been more humbled.

My children are learning with their peers, they are making more friends than they know what to do with, and they are, above all, accepted purely and simply for the beautiful human beings that they are. I truly believe that the focus on Social Emotional Learning at South Rutland Elementary has allowed my children to be successful both socially and academically.

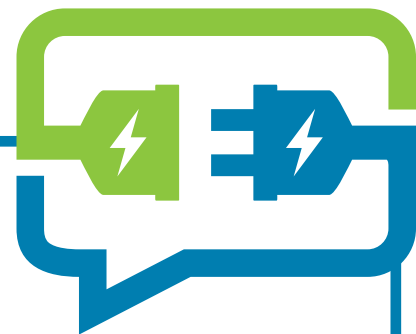
I snapped this photo after a recess out on supervision today, Oliver surrounded by his friends from his kindergarten class. At first, they were walking back to class side by side, but then all three agreed that an embrace was more appropriate and reflective of the affection they have for one another.

As both an educator and parent, this moment filled my heart with joy and gratitude for the unconditional love that children are capable of giving.

Allison Barton



I RECHARGE BY



When I need to recharge my body, I do some yoga and stretching, or just do something that makes me happy like gymnastics. Sometimes if I am really tired and I have no energy, I try to fit in a nap.

Dejah Bennett, Grade 6
Intermediate Learning Community
École Peter Greer Elementary

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What is SEL?

Social emotional learning (SEL) is the process of acquiring skills and knowledge to help us understand and manage our emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

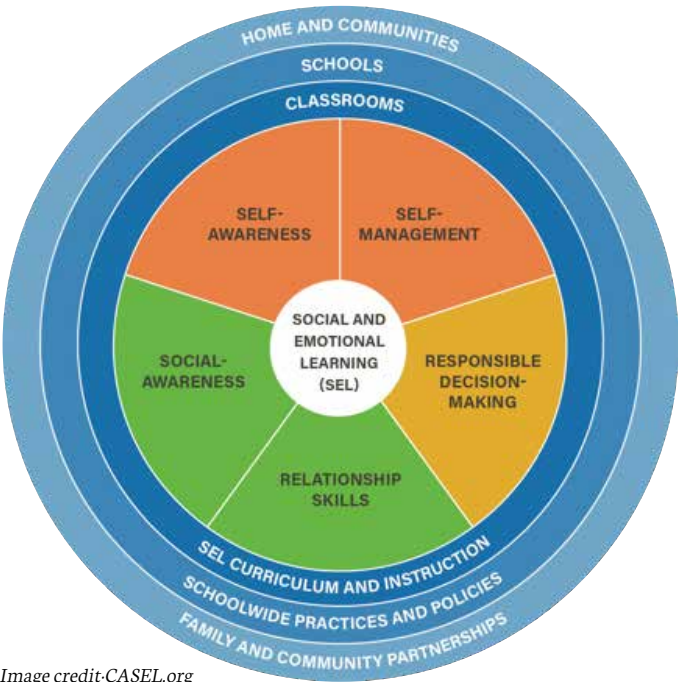


Image credit-CASEL.org

STUDENTS SHARE...

Why is Social Emotional Learning Important?



"We need to play with friends and learn about friends. We need to share our toys and share our feelings."
Talia Johnson, Kindergarten,
AS Matheson Elementary



"I like talking about emotions. I like knowing what others are feeling because then I know if they want to play with me or not."
James Wittner, Kindergarten,
École Belgo Elementary



"Big feelings can take some time to go away and it can help if we talk about them."
Daria Truitt, Kindergarten,
École Belgo Elementary



"It's good to know how your friends are feeling so you can help them."
Simon Garand, Kindergarten,
École Belgo Elementary



"Everyone is important and everyone has feelings."
Autumn McKane, Grade 1,
AS Matheson Elementary



"So we know what our bodies are telling us and we know what to give our bodies. If you're sad you need hugs."
Lorelei Foster, Grade 2,
AS Matheson Elementary



"It is important to know how you are feeling and what your emotion is so that you can feel good and help others feel good."
Kaela Image, Grade 3,
AS Matheson Elementary



"Knowing about your emotions can help you get calm so you can learn better."
Nathan Engen, Grade 3,
AS Matheson Elementary



"If you learn about your feelings you can control your reactions."
Sophia Rein, Grade 3,
AS Matheson Elementary



"To learn about how other people are thinking and what they need- if they're mad, sad, or they need space."
Jasmine St. Lewis, Grade 3,
AS Matheson Elementary



"If we can tell people how we're feeling, they can help us with our emotions. You can ask your friends how they're feeling and do something about it. You can learn better if you can control your emotions."
Addie Gilbert, Grade 3,
École Belgo Elementary



"Thinking about your emotions can calm you down. You can tell your friends how you're feeling and they can stop what they are doing if it's bothering you."
Jackson Van Grunbaum, Grade 3
École Belgo Elementary



"When you learn about your brain, you know what is happening inside. You can match your emotions to situations. Instead of flipping your lid, you can talk to someone and calm down."
Henry Waytowich, Grade 4,
École Belgo Elementary



"Because I want to be a doctor, I love learning about the brain and how it is connected to our emotions."
Brooklynn Haftner, Grade 5,
École Belgo Elementary



"We know how our brains work and how we can calm down. It can be easy like breathing in and breathing out. This helps me focus when I'm nervous. Like if I don't know how to spell a word, I can breathe and then do my best."
Tai Bentien, Grade 5,
École Belgo Elementary

GRATITUDE AT SPRINGVALLEY ELEMENTARY

By: Tim Van Brummelen
Vice Principal, Springvalley Elementary

Students and staff at Springvalley Elementary began our school year by focusing on the District theme of **Gratitude!**



Classes throughout the school find different ways to increase and share their gratitude. One way is through gratitude circles, where students each share one thing they are grateful for. Here is a transcript of thankful thoughts from a Grade 1 & 2 gratitude circle.

"A Gratitude Circle is when we say what we are super happy and grateful for. And what makes us so happy to be alive!"

"I'm grateful that I can ride a bike, a two-wheeler!"

"I'm grateful for sushi."

"I'm grateful that I get to see my brother."

"I'm grateful for my family."

"I'm grateful that we have school."

"I'm grateful for my baby cousin."

"I'm grateful for school and everything in the world!"

Other ways we express our thankfulness include creating gratitude cards, gratitude journals, and gratitude bulletin boards which can be seen lining the walls of Springvalley Elementary.

You simply can't help but have a smile on your face as messages of gratitude are everywhere! Reading stories about gratitude also helps us focus on what we are thankful for.

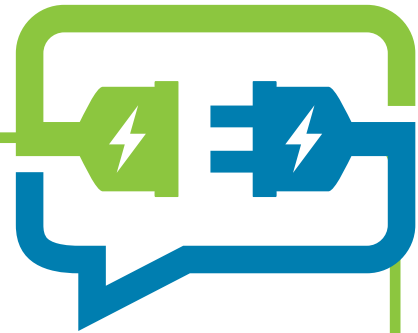
So why this focus on gratitude in schools? We know from scientific studies that being thankful on a regular basis makes us happier, healthier, better rested, more likely to exercise, and more resilient.

But what does a focus on thankfulness have to do with learning? In one study, researchers assigned one group of young adults to keep a daily journal of things they were grateful for (Emmons and McCullough, 2003). Another group journaled on what annoyed them. The grateful group showed greater increases in determination, attention, enthusiasm and energy. Their learning soared! When we shift our focus from the negative to the positive, we can rewire the pathways in our brains and have a quicker recovery from distressing life events.

We know that when children practice gratitude, they report being more connected to their communities, which in turn supports learning.

Over the holidays, it wasn't the serotonin in the turkey and bursts of dopamine from sweets that lifted our spirits at Springvalley. Here, we foster thankful thoughts all year long. As a result, we will be happier, healthier, and more successful in our learning. We invite you to start your own gratitude journal and reap the rewards of a grateful heart!

I RECHARGE BY



When I need to recharge, I like to read a good book and listen to classical music, preferably violin music. String music calms my body down and rebuilds my energy. I also find that cooking dinner helps me recharge after a busy day.

Warrick Portwood, Grade 6
Intermediate Learning Community
École Peter Greer Elementary

How we are spreading our message of gratitude...



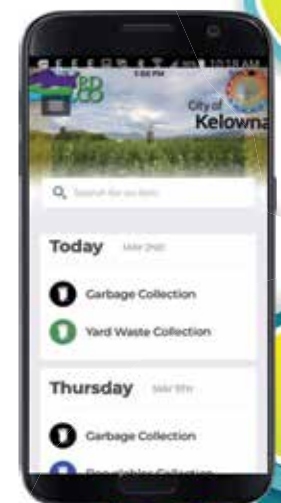
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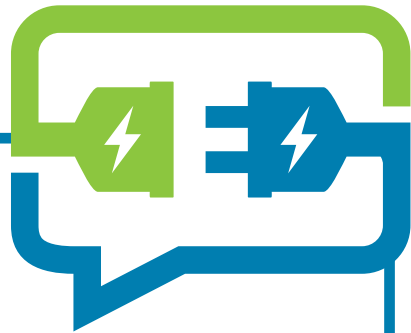


Visit: rdco.com/recyclecoach



Personal Garbage, Recycling, and Yard Waste Collection Guide at Your Fingertips

I RECHARGE BY



I recharge by sleeping and working on our truck with my Dad. I also like to watch mountain biking videos and try what I see while biking at Smith Creek.

**Trent, Grade 7,
Constable Neil Bruce
Middle School**

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**Central Okanagan
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International Education



Connecting with Canadians AT LAKE O'HARA

*By Kamiel Van Dyck,
International Student from Belgium*



The Lake O'Hara trip was one of the most wonderful trips of my life. We left early in the morning from school in a yellow school bus, ready to go to Yoho National Park. We went off the bus at the Takakkaw Falls, from there it was only a few minutes walking to our camping place. We pitched our tents when we arrived and went for a walk to see the Takakkaw Falls. The next day, we hiked to a hut. It was also the first real hike and it was immediately fantastic! The big mountains. The wonderful rivers. I drank for the first time in my life from water from a river without cleaning it.

After two more nights, we went to Lake O'Hara. The lake was by far the most beautiful one I ever saw. The mountains around the lake are also fantastic, they are really high. There was also a waterfall that came down at the lake. The second day we did a hike to a glacier and another small lake. The last day we hiked to another lake and we saw some mountain goats. When we arrived at the camping ground it was time for our last dinner together around the

campfire. It was one of the best weeks of my life with by far the most beautiful nature from the whole world!

I made a lot of new friends on the trip. I slept in a tent with two other people whom I had never talked to before, but they were always really nice. The hikes were perfect to talk with everyone and learn about new people. When we were back from the hike at the campground, we cooked together, ate together, and talked the whole evening around the campfire. I also realized really fast that the Canadian people like their fantastic country. They were happy to show their country to me. I really appreciate that the Canadian people shared a lot of their treats with the rest of the group, and always helped if there was a problem with something. Also, on the bus were a lot of nice people who liked to share their adventures with other people. Many people who I met while the trip are now good friends to me. It was a fantastic trip with fantastic people!



REVOLUTIONIZING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR YOUTH

By Abby Kielbauch, Grade 12,
Foundry Kelowna Youth Advisory and Action Council Member

Foundry Kelowna has been instrumental in changing the way students access and receive mental health services. It is an all-encompassing space that helps any youth who walks in its doors. From housing support to medical testing, Foundry Kelowna can provide help in all aspects of a youth's life. Before Foundry Kelowna was available, getting mental health support was complicated and challenging. In my experience, I had to first go to my family doctor for a referral, then wait four months to get an appointment at another service provider, and finally, show up to my appointment, only to be greeted by paint peeling off the walls and mismatched, rugged chairs. I went to my first appointment and never went back. Foundry Kelowna has been game-changing because you need no referral, its hours and location are very accessible, the space is beautiful and welcoming, and you wait for mere hours, instead of months. Being able to walk into a building and receive the help you need that very same day is indescribably important and potentially lifesaving. Youth in crisis may not be around in four months when someone is finally available to help.

Foundry Kelowna is also unique because of the importance they place on the youth perspective. I am a member of the Youth Advisory and Action Council for Foundry Kelowna and it has been one of the most amazing experiences of my life. Youth voice is often cast aside because of the assumption that age is correlated with valid opinions. At Foundry Kelowna, I see how my voice directly impacts all aspects of how Foundry Kelowna functions, including the intake process, forms, design, youth groups, and new hires. At Foundry Kelowna, the youth voice is not only heard, but acted upon. Foundry Kelowna has revolutionized the mental health system and I am thankful every day for what they have done for me, and what they continue to do for our youth.

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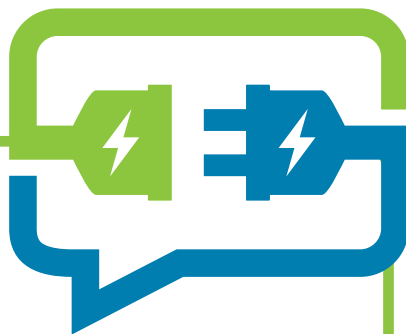
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RECHARGE BY



What I do to recharge my body and mind is take my dog for a walk. Huskies have a lot of energy and the walk gives me the energy I need. Sometimes I will also run on the treadmill because getting active is always good. I also eat fruit and vegetables and get lots of sleep!

Bodhi Deagon, Grade 4
South Kelowna Elementary

4 CLASSES WITH ONE GOAL

by Julia Wall and Waylon Hartung, Grade 6, Raymer Elementary



The authors stand with the buddy bench - a designated place for people to sit when they need someone to play with or talk to.



Raymer
Graffiti wall



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>> **SKILL SHARING WORKSHOPS**



For more information or to apply, visit kelowna.ca/neighbourhoods

Through 2016-2017, when we were in Grade 4, four Grade 4-6 classes and their teachers, came together to design a project to make a difference for Raymer Elementary. Our goal was to answer, "How might we redesign the outdoor space to be inclusive for all students at Raymer?"

Through several meetings sharing ideas using the design thinking model, students narrowed a list to include a graffiti wall, spinny chairs, soccer netting, buddy bench and a wheelchair

swing. Prototypes were designed in teams with a lot of students working together. In the end we were successful, even though it took a year to get our projects completed. At Raymer, you can now see one of our benches designated as a buddy bench by our big playground, a new chalkboard that runs the length of one wall of our primary playground, and each area of the school has a set of six gigantic whiteboards to use for group. It was hard work at the beginning, but in the end, it was nice to see we made a difference.



LIVING WELL IN A DIGITAL WORLD

In the next two pages, you'll find our Digital Wellness Guide for Students, Schools, and Families.

Why did we create this guide and what drove our learning?

OUR INITIAL, OVERARCHING INQUIRY QUESTION:

In the context of digital technologies including smartphones and social media, what's going on for our learners?

OUR BELIEF STATEMENT:

In a world where technology is inextricably woven into the fabric of daily life, we recognize the growing need to support each learner to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, as well as the shared responsibility of schools and families to effectively develop them.



SOME IMPORTANT ITEMS TO NOTE ABOUT THIS CONCEPT AND THE GUIDE:

- We live in a tech-rich world...developing relative knowledge, skills and dispositions is essential for the world today and especially in the future
- Students, schools and families share the responsibility to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions...this is best done in collaboration
- This is not just about kids...this is a global topic and applicable to all generations
- "Screen time" used as a measure in isolation is not particularly helpful... context, content and type of use matters more

QUOTE FROM GRADE 9 STUDENT: "Stop telling us what not to do with technology. Help us to learn what to do instead."

WHAT IS DIGITAL WELLNESS?

(From Mr. Thomas Longman's Grade 7 class at Springvalley Middle)

It's a way of life, while using technology, that promotes health.

Sam

It's a way of spreading happiness online but also keeping yourself and other people safe.

Sophie

Digital Wellness is being mindful and respectful of others on the internet or social media or any digital device. Not only should you be mindful, but you should go that extra mile to brighten people's days and yours in positive ways.

Airalea

The way people are feeling online, not fully emotionally, but like what happens online and how people feel about it. I'm still not fully sure but its about happiness, carefulness, and respect.

Dillon

Digital Wellness is being kind and spreading positivity over the internet and knowing how to watch what you say because it could offend anyone and knowing when to take a break from technology.

Sierra

It's realizing when electronics are taking over and taking control of that. Maybe limiting your time in strategic and mindful ways. Also, it can be a good thing if you use it wisely and respectfully. Using technology, you can do many good things to improve people's lives. For example, a girl made an app called "Sit with Me" so no one is lonely during lunch. Digital Wellness is important to everyone, even if they don't know it yet.

Ella

DIGITAL WELLNESS CONSIDERATIONS



Technology continues to evolve rapidly and it has become intricately woven into the fabric of daily life for all of us. Of course, that comes with a balance of positive and negative implications for our well-being, some of which we don't yet fully understand. As such, we recognize the growing need and shared responsibilities we all hold to support each learner to develop the *knowledge, skills and dispositions* required to lead healthy, happy and productive lives in an increasingly digital world.

The following considerations are suggested practices that support digital health and wellness for students, staff and our extended community. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather, this information reflects a wide array of current readings and research as well as the lived experiences and voices of our students, staff and families.



Practice Mindfulness

How do we balance our digital habits and self-regulate our own behaviours?



- Balance time online with time to connect in other ways
- Think about what you're actually doing online as much as you think about how long you're doing it - quality of content matters as much as quantity of time
- Be sure to make time for physical activity
- Safeguard your sleep - turn off notifications, charge devices in other rooms and avoid screen-time before going to bed
- Be present with others - make eye contact, listen actively, avoid digital distractions and engage in conversations
- Adjust notification settings on your devices and practice self-control
- Be aware of the physical needs of your body - adjust your posture, turn on lights or be outside, turn down headphones, take activity breaks, rest your eyes and make healthy food choices
- Mind your manners and be respectful with others online



Explore Learning

How do we use technologies to explore our learning and pursue our passions?

- Inquire about things that interest you - read more, watch videos, listen to podcasts, collaborate with others
- Join communities to extend your learning - follow hashtags, join groups, and sign up for online learning opportunities
- Showcase your learning and creativity - share your learning with a wide audience and seek feedback about your next steps
- Develop digital literacy skills that include effective internet searching strategies and smart uses for digital tools
- Find websites, programs and apps that help you practice skills that you are working on
- Be curious about our global community and explore the world around us



Think Critically

How do we think critically about what we see, hear and contribute to online?

- Spot the fake-news! Fact-check information to determine its credibility
- THINK before you post. Is it...True? Helpful? Inspiring? Necessary? Kind?
- Create a positive digital presence - think about what your posts say to the world about who you are
- Consider the perspectives of others and be open to different viewpoints
- Consume, create and share content that is appropriate for you and others
- Reflect on how your interactions online may contribute positively or negatively to a given situation
- Consider how your communication might be perceived by others - tone and sarcasm is sometimes difficult to express digitally
- Be aware of a cry for help - sometimes people say or do things that reflect their own need for support
- Know that help is available if you come across something that is worrisome and you're not sure how to deal with it



Spread Positivity

How can digital tools help us to spread positivity, promote kindness and demonstrate care for others?

- Be a positive leader - set an example for others that reflects optimism, positivity and caring
- Think beyond the "like" button - express gratitude and celebrate the good around us by sharing examples of accomplishments of self and others
- Show compassion for others, especially those people who might be marginalized or victimized
- Steer clear of the drama - foster healthy relationships with peers and manage conflict peacefully and with maturity
- Celebrate diversity in our local and global communities
- Leave a positive mark on the world - create a digital footprint that represents your best foot forward



Be Safe

What can we do to keep ourselves and others safe and secure in digital environments?

- Protect your personal information - think carefully about what you might be posting, sharing or agreeing to online
- Use secure passwords that have a mix of characters and symbols - be sure to keep this private
- Store information and physical devices in secure locations - be sure to backup important information
- Regularly review and adjust privacy settings on social media platforms
- Use antivirus software on all laptops and desktop computers
- Respect the privacy of others and only post images or videos of others with their permission
- Recognize dangerous or inappropriate situations and be supportive of those in need
- Report abuse, harassment and other worrisome behaviour
- Stop > Block > Talk - block any users that cause you to feel uncomfortable or make threats to your well-being and report to someone who can help
- Make use of digital reporting tools and support structures - online help services and anonymous reporting tools
- Report and flag offensive content and materials to online providers
- Don't get hooked by phishing scams - think critically about suspicious emails or requests that are seeking your personal information, or trying to get you to do something in exchange for goods or money

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WEST KELOWNA



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CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE DEDICATED ATHLETES ON THEIR MANY ACHIEVEMENTS.

This year they all received the Premier's Award for Indigenous Youth Excellence in Sport.

Here are their journeys in their own words.



Jade Wynne, Grade 8, École KLO Middle



I am an Indigenous youth, my traditional territory is Nte?kepmcx. I go to École KLO Middle School in Grade 8 French Immersion. I was born with energy for days. I love being active and playing all sports. My favorite sport is karate. I have been training in karate since I was 5 years old in Grade 1. I train 5-7 times a week. When I am not training, I am playing school sports such as cross country running, basketball, and track and field. I am a first degree black belt in my sport stream Kumite class. I put all of my focus in my training and I train hard each class. When I turned twelve, I started competing in elite competition at the Richmond Olympic Oval. I went to provincials and

I didn't win but I learned. I went home, I dedicated myself to training, and at team selection I got gold! I made Team BC and went to Nationals in Edmonton. In Edmonton, I placed 3rd for a

bronze medal. I made a lot of friends and had a great time. A month later I found out I made it on Team Canada, and I was going to the Pan American Championships in Guayaquil, Ecuador. My family, friends & community worked really hard to fundraise so that I could go to Guayaquil, Ecuador. In Ecuador, I learned so much about myself. I learned what I wanted to do in my life and who I wanted to spend my time with. For the first time, I felt like I belonged. I connected with all the kids on Team Canada and realized my drive in life. I want to train hard, I want to see my karate family again, and I want to go to Worlds. I want to go to the Olympics. I like all the positive attention karate gives me, especially the Premier Award for Excellence in Indigenous Youth in Sports. The Premier Award was really special to me in many ways. They treated me and my family like we are really important. They paid for us to all be together in a hotel. The whole night was focused on my achievements. They drummed and sang for me. I was connected to my family living on the reserve. I got to meet our new Chief. The Chief invited me to talk about my karate at our next meeting. My family wants to teach me how to properly introduce myself in our language. I feel really lucky because karate brings me good things in life.



Hanna Sault-Hartwick, Grade 11, OKM Secondary

I started Brazilian Jiu Jitsu at the age of eight as a shy, little flower. The sport has strengthened my mind, body, and warrior spirit. This strength is the same strength that existed in the fibers and bones of my ancestors. The Premier's Award celebrated this through song, joy, and recognition. This made me proud of who I am, and where I have come from. I also have great pride for the other recipients.

It was amazing to be surrounded by so many accomplished Indigenous youth. We are not just athletes, but scholars as well. This award recognizes how important it is to excel in both aspects. Sport allows us all to continue growing, in both our strength, and our hearts. For me, both Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, and the Canadian Sports School have been some of the greatest positive impacts on my life.

I am no longer a shy flower. I am a warrior.

Kanani Coon, Grade 9, OKM Secondary

I started playing basketball pretty late, only in Grade 6, but I have been surrounded by it my whole life because both my parents played. They both had a lot of passion for it, and then when I started playing, I just fell in love with the game. My family says I am always moving, so running around and letting my energy out with basketball is a perfect fit.

I am very excited about travelling to the Youth Olympics in Hungary in the summer of 2020 to compete in the 3x3 event. My parents found out about this opportunity, and it sounded amazing. I love to travel, especially when I also get to do something I care so much about. So last summer I worked really hard to get selected, and I was!

Being from both the Enoch Cree Nation and the Kwakwaka'wakw territory is important to me, and as I've gotten older I have wanted to learn more about my Indigenous background, so that I can understand who I am, and then share that with the people that I meet. I was really proud to receive the Premier's Award because I felt like I was representing my ancestors, and where I come from.



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13

WHAT IS ANXIETY?



Why is it important to learn about anxiety?

Most people do not recognize their anxiety for what it is, and instead think there is something “wrong” with them. Some people are preoccupied with the physical symptoms of anxiety (e.g., stomach aches, increased heart rate, shortness of breath, etc.). Others think they are weird, weak, or even going crazy! Unfortunately, these thoughts only make people feel even more anxious and self-conscious.

Therefore, the first step to successfully managing anxiety is to learn to understand and recognize it. Self-awareness is essential.



Information condensed from Anxiety Canada.
For full information visit anxietycanada.com

Learning the facts about anxiety

1. Anxiety is normal. Everyone experiences anxiety at times. For example, it is normal to feel anxious when on a rollercoaster, or before a job interview.

2. Anxiety is adaptive. It is a system in our body that helps us to deal with real danger (for example, anxiety allows us to jump out of the way of a speeding car) or to perform at our best (for example, it motivates us to prepare for a big presentation). When you experience anxiety, your body’s “fight-flight-freeze” response (also called the “adrenaline response”) is triggered. This response prepares your body to defend itself.

We experience anxiety when we PERCEIVE or THINK that we are in danger. This response is great when there is an actual danger (such as encountering a bear), but becomes a problem when the “perceived danger” is not actually dangerous (giving a talk, seeing a dog).

3. Anxiety is not dangerous. Although anxiety may feel uncomfortable, it is not dangerous or harmful to you. Remember, all the sensations you feel when you are anxious are there to protect you from danger, not hurt you.

4. Anxiety does not last forever. When you are anxious, you may feel like the anxiety is going to last forever. But anxiety is temporary and will eventually decrease.

5. Anxiety is mostly anonymous. Most people (except those close to you) cannot tell when you are anxious.

When does anxiety become a problem?

1. Anxiety is a problem when your body reacts as if there is danger when there is no real danger. It’s like having an overly sensitive smoke alarm system in your body!

2. Anxiety problems are common. One in four adults will have an anxiety disorder in their lifetime.

Anxiety is like a smoke alarm system:

Like a smoke alarm, anxiety is helpful and adaptive when it works right. But, if it goes off when there is no real danger, it is not only scary, it is also very exhausting.

However, we DO NOT want to get rid of the alarm (or eliminate anxiety) because it protects us from danger. We want to fix it (i.e., bring the anxiety down to a more manageable level) so it works properly for us.

RECOGNIZING ANXIETY

Recognizing the physical symptoms of anxiety

You can learn to identify the physical signs of anxiety by asking yourself: “What happens when I’m anxious? Where do I feel the anxiety in my body?” For example, when you feel anxious, you may get butterflies in your stomach, sweat a lot, breathe heavily, and feel dizzy or lightheaded.

REMEMBER. If you often experience many uncomfortable physical symptoms, but doctors cannot find anything wrong with you physically, you may have problems with anxiety. You are definitely not “going crazy”. Although these symptoms may be uncomfortable, they are not harmful.

Recognizing anxious thoughts

Anxiety also affects how we think. Anxious thoughts typically involve a fear of something bad happening in the future – the future can be the next 5 seconds, 5 minutes or 5 years.

Recognizing anxious behaviours

Anxiety can make us feel very uncomfortable, and it can make us believe that we are in danger, so it is no wonder that you may feel a strong urge to escape or avoid situations/activities/people that make you anxious. For example, if you are scared of dogs, you would probably avoid going to places where you may encounter a dog (e.g., a dog park).

Once you are able to understand and recognize anxiety, you will be better prepared to move on to the next stage – learning how to manage anxiety!

STUDENT LIFE WITH GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

By a Grade 12 Student

Anxiety isn’t easy. It’s like a hamster on a squeaky wheel, constantly running in your brain. You long for quiet, but the wheel never stops. Anxiety is with me when I wake up, and it is with me through every part of my day.

Every homework assignment begins the night before it’s due. Not because that’s when I feel like starting it; that is when the fear of missing the deadline overtakes the fear of writing the assignment. My body builds in twitching and shaking as I work, soon unable to properly type or grasp a pencil. Soon, however, the task is done, but the worst is yet to come. The reviewing phase drives up the stress levels even more. Sometimes it’s best to ignore it and just move on, but that only drives up fear of a mistake later. Once the assignment is checked and handed in, the final phase begins dying in anticipation for the mark. The perception is that my entire future is based upon this one mark. Forever a failure if you mess it up. The feeling makes me sick to the stomach. Those are the days I’d rather lie in bed than head in to school. I love learning, but the environment of assignments and tests builds anxiety to extreme levels within me.

Socially, the situation is the same. Every interaction I have with someone plays in my mind 1000 times afterwards. If I meet a new person, I’m always wondering what they thought about me; I evaluate everything I said, wondering how I came off. Sometimes, it is easier to be silent, rather than engage with people. Even days later, my mind is still turning the same social interactions over and over.

All in all, I’m a successful student. From the outside, I probably look like everyone else. Because of this, I hate talking about my anxiety. So many people think that talking about your feelings, that opening up, is a sign of weakness. No matter what I say, I’m always worried that people will judge me for it, or worse yet, try to help me. Even attaching my name to this worries me, because I never want someone to try to help, by taking away opportunities, or chances to do something.

I can live with anxiety. But I wish I didn’t have to.

HOW ANXIETY FEELS

By a Grade 11 Student

Anxiety can be managed but might never fully go away; it is something you might have to live with for your whole life. From the minute you wake up to the minute you go to sleep you feel stressed, like the world is against you and you are better to stay alone. When you make plans with people, you want to do things but your anxiety makes you think everything is worse than it actually is. When you make plans, and it comes to the time you are supposed to leave, you start feeling so stressed that you’re about to have an anxiety attack.

In my personal experience, you might look good on the outside, but inside you are so close to breaking and the smallest thing can set it off. Something that has always bothered me is when people don’t take anxiety seriously, because it’s not something you can really see. Waking up in the morning and the first thing I think about is I don’t want get up, I’m not going to school, how can I stay home or anything to not have to leave my bed. Even if I have something I’ve been looking forward to I still get so anxious and stressed that I don’t even want to go. It’s a feeling that makes you scared to do anything.

At some points you feel so numb, you don’t even know how to act - like crying and explaining how you feel won’t do anything. After everything anxiety does to a person, it feels like the worst thing to live with.

TALKING WITH YOUR TEEN ABOUT VAPING

BEFORE THE TALK: GET THE FACTS

Vaping is not harmless

- Vaping can increase your exposure to harmful chemicals.
- Vaping can lead to nicotine addiction.
- The long-term consequences of vaping are unknown.
- It's rare, but defective batteries in vaping products have caused fires and explosions.

Vaping nicotine can alter teen brain development.

START THE CONVERSATION

Find the right moment

Take advantage of situations where you can talk about vaping. It doesn't have to be formal. For example, when passing a group of teenagers who are vaping, take the opportunity to have a conversation with your teen about it. Discuss the facts and correct any misconceptions.

Be patient and ready to listen

Avoid criticism and encourage an open dialogue. Remember, your goal is to have a meaningful conversation, not to give a lecture.

Get support

Not sure where to begin? Ask your healthcare provider to talk to your teen about the risks of vaping. You might also suggest that your teen talk with other trusted adults, such as relatives, teachers, faith leaders, coaches, or counsellors whom you know are aware of the risks of vaping. These supportive adults can help reinforce your message as a parent.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Don't expect to have just one conversation with your child. Odds are you will probably need to talk about the subject many times and in many different places. Whenever you have some time together, you can strike up the conversation again. You will also find that as your child grows, your conversations about vaping will change and reflect their growing maturity, intellectual abilities and the pressures they face. Keep in mind that talking about it can also set the stage for important discussions about tobacco, alcohol, drugs and other risky behaviours.

These messages are condensed from Health Canada information.

For the full tip sheet and more info on vaping, please visit: Canada.ca/Vaping

VAPING IS NOT HARMLESS, YET CANADIAN TEENS ARE TRYING VAPING PRODUCTS.
Data from a recent Health Canada survey showed that 23% of students in grades 7-12 have tried an electronic cigarette.

VAPING! By Jaydyn Petersen, Grade 9, École KLO Middle

Recently, there has been a lot in the media about vaping. As a Grade 9 student, I'm seeing a lot more people my age experimenting with it. This worries me, and here are some of my concerns.

Vaping is a very serious health crisis. From 2017 to 2019, the amount of high school-aged teens who vape in North America has doubled. Since March, 34 people have died in the US and 1600 people have been hospitalized due to vaping related incidents according to the Center for Disease Control. In Canada, six people have died from vaping due to a lung disease, and hundreds more have become ill.

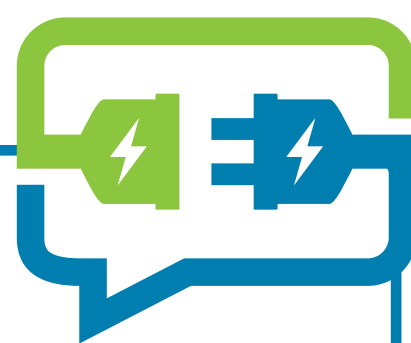
The producers making the flavors for vapes are targeting the youth with flavorings that appeal to us, such as cotton candy, exploding blue raspberry, and strawberry cheesecake. These ingredients are banned from any tobacco products, yet vaping does not have any regulations.

Vaping is more accessible to youth and easier to use, therefore more middle and high school aged teens are using it. They think that it is "trendy" and they want to fit in. There are others who feel peer pressured into it and want to rebel, and then they get addicted.

Originally, people started vaping to quit smoking. Vaping is really just as addictive. We were once told that vaping is a safer alternative when it is actually just as deadly and has the same amount of risks. The long-term effects are unknown and could be way worse than smoking. Doctors and scientists proved smoking was unhealthy and bad for you, but everyone still did it because they were addicted and it was too late to fix it. Let's make a change before we repeat the same cycle.

I hope in the future more people my age will understand the dangers and risks, and know that it can affect them.

I RECHARGE BY



To recharge myself I try to get more sleep than I usually do and try not to stay up too late. I also play with my pet Ferret. It is fun and it gets me lots of exercise because she is very fast. To recharge in the winter, I love to snowboard.

**Lexi Degeorgio, Grade 5,
South Kelowna Elementary**

Youth Curling

*Make friends!
Have fun!*

Youth Learn & Curl

Starts Saturday, January 11th
Little Rocks and Juniors hit the ice Saturdays combining skill training with game play
Ages 7-19
Saturdays 9:30 am-11 am

Middle/High School League

Starts Tuesday, January 7th
Tuesdays 4:00 pm-5:30 pm
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Visit our website to find our costs:
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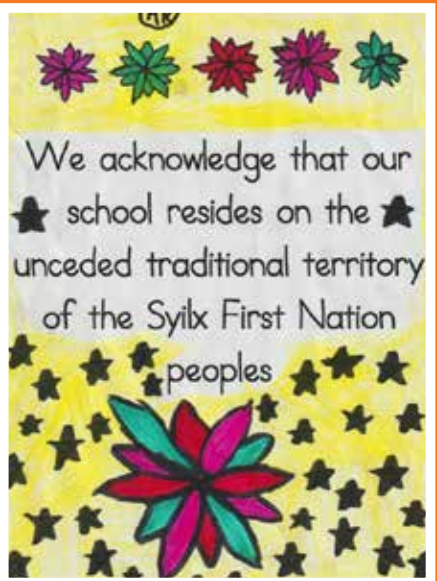
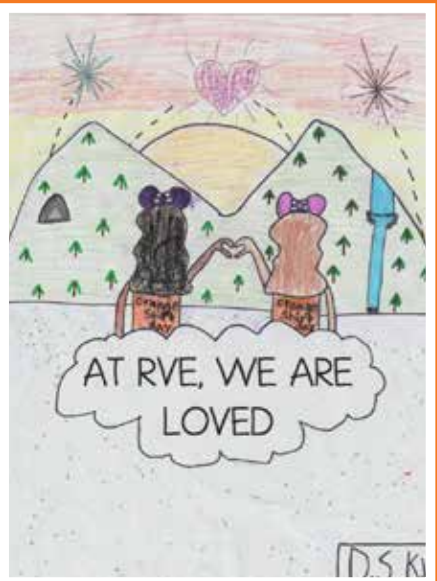
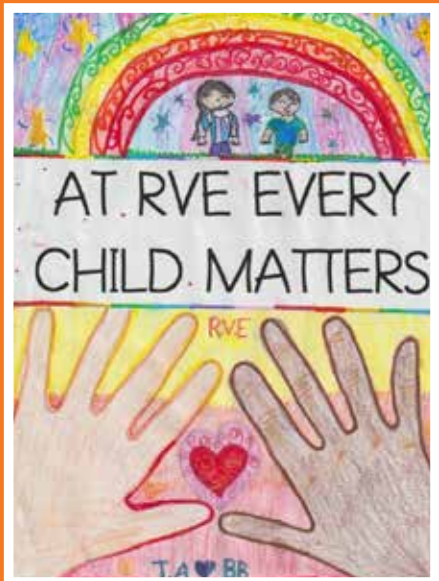


EVERY CHILD MATTERS

ORANGE SHIRT DAY AT RVE



At Rose Valley Elementary, students observed the day in a number of ways and connected the values of Orange Shirt Day to their own school culture. Students put together a book to outline their shared values of inclusion and respect. Here are a few selections from their beautiful book.



ORANGE SHIRT DAY AT MBSS

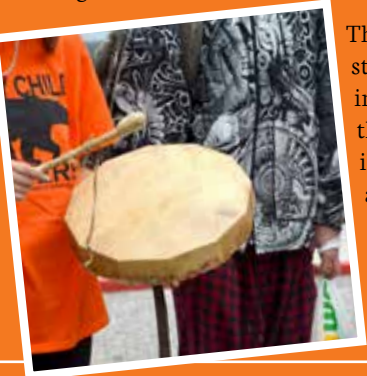
*Tori Barrowclough,
Indigenous Yearbook Student, Grade 10*



On September 30, Orange Shirt Day took place across Canada. It isn't quite a celebration, but more a ceremony, respecting Indigenous people who have been affected by the country's residential schools.

September is dubbed the Month of Mourning, because it was when Indigenous children across Canada would be taken away to residential schools.

In the days before the children were taken, Phyllis Webstad had been given a new orange shirt by her grandmother, and she insisted on wearing it on the first day. When she got to the school, one of the first things they did was take her clothes, including the new orange shirt, and she never got them back.



This year, in Mount Boucherie Senior Secondary, staff and students were invited to view the annual ceremony. This included some traditional drumming, and a few words for the Indigenous families affected. Afterwards, everyone was invited to view the school's Heart Garden, which was created and designed to honour residential school survivors.

In the future, students are looking forward to having Orange Shirt day become a more normalized ceremony, and they hope to see more friends and family wearing orange shirts to honour the day.

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REFLECTIONS ON MENTAL HEALTH AND STIGMA

from Anne McClymont Elementary



In December, we had Peer Mentors from CMHA come in and speak to our community. It took a lot of courage for the speakers since they were stepping out of their comfort zones to share their journey and story with us. One important message I learned was that we all need to embrace who we are. Everyone is unique and we shouldn't try to change our personality to fit in and be accepted by others. This reminds me of a quote by G. Avetis, "Be who you want to be, not what others want you to be." Thank you CMHA Mentors for sharing your stories. Our generation will help the world by getting rid of stigma and replacing it with empathy and kindness.

Gabe Cescon, Grade 5



Words can be very powerful! They can build a person up and make them feel strong or they can be hurtful and pull a person down. If you are ever feeling sad or anxious, it's important to talk to someone you trust. We also need to remember that it's ok not to always be ok. That's just part of being human. If you are having a tough day, we need to take time to tap into our toolbox of special activities to help us relax and remain strong.

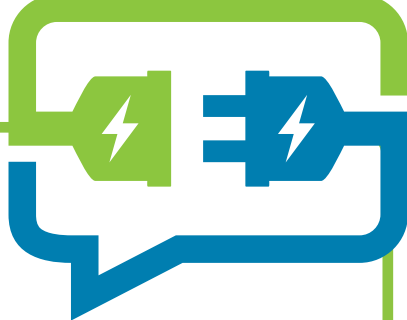
Ella Hristoski, Grade 5



We really need to stop the stigma surrounding mental health so people will be able to support them and assist them to make sure they get the help they need. First off, the simplest thing you can do is just listen to the person wanting to talk to you about their mental health. Even if you don't know how to support them, listening to them can make them feel better. Make sure to have an open mindset and heart so you will not be quick to judge. Finally, just be kind to everyone and treat people free of judgment.

Sophie Marrs, Grade 5

I RECHARGE BY



To recharge my body, I get lots of sleep. Sleep helps keep me calm and allows me to stay active. Sleep also helps keep me happy and allows me to do more stuff. I also recharge by getting fresh air and by walking my dog. Sometimes all I need to recharge is to just relax on the couch and read a book.

Drayden Ward, Grade 4, South Kelowna Elementary



Why do people who have mental, or any invisible illness get treated differently from people who have a broken bone? Well, there is a terrible thing called stigma. Stigma often means that people with a disability are treated differently than people we refer to as 'normal'. Everybody, no matter who they are, or what they look like, has some good qualities that can make this world a better place. Also, the next time somebody tells you they feel like they are invisible or they feel like they are always anxious or sad, please don't say stuff like, 'it's not that bad' or 'deal with it' because to these people it's real, and unless they have help, they are going to live a life in misery. Everyone is unique and everybody has something to offer.

Katherine Pearce, Grade 5



HOLIDAY HEALTH

EACH YEAR, STUDENTS AT ANNE MCCLYMONT ELEMENTARY ALSO VISIT THE CMHA KELOWNA CHRISTMAS PARTY. HERE'S THE EFFECT OF THEIR VISIT IN THE WORDS OF ONE CMHA PARTICIPANT.

I have been to all the Christmas parties since the students from Anne McClymont Elementary started visiting. When I got my first Christmas card years ago, that was my Christmas present. I literally started crying because it meant so much to me. Each year they come and sing and give those cards. A lot of people don't have a Christmas celebration, and it just melts our hearts. The things the kids write in the cards are so heartwarming that I've kept every card I got and bring them out each year. This year, I cannot be with my parents for Christmas so I'm looking forward to seeing the kids again. I always look forward to celebrating with them.

- Rhonda





City Park
Hannah
Verdugo Santillan,
Grade 11,
Intro to Digital
Photography,
DSLR Camera



Simplicity
Clayton Cooper,
Grade 12,
Intro to Digital
Photography,
DSLR Camera



Untitled
Hannah McKenzie
Grade 11,
Intro to Digital
Photography
DSLR Camera

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

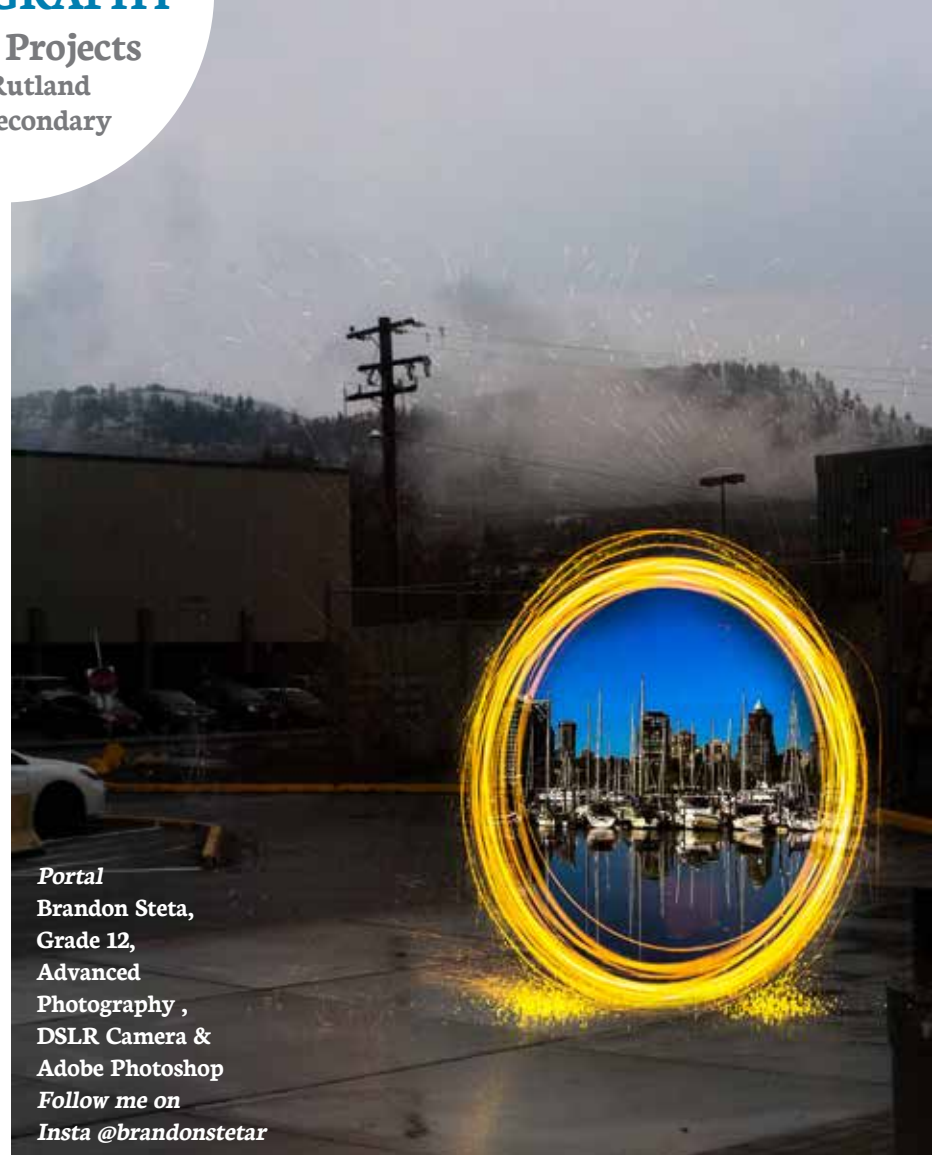
Student Projects
from Rutland
Senior Secondary



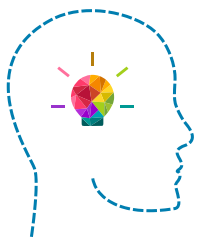
Welcome to the Jungle
Jonas Reich, Grade 11 , Intro to Digital Photography - Adobe Photoshop



Untitled
Max Meier,
Grade 11,
Advanced
Photography,
DSLR Camera &
Adobe Photoshop
Follow Me on
Insta @_max.johnn



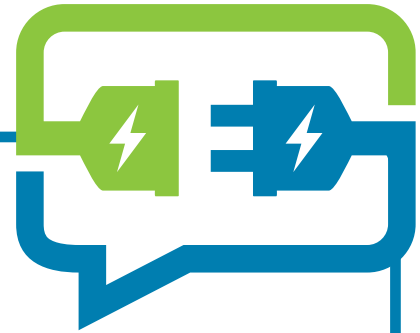
Portal
Brandon Steta,
Grade 12,
Advanced
Photography ,
DSLR Camera &
Adobe Photoshop
Follow me on
Insta @brandonstetar



LOGIC PUZZLE



RECHARGE BY



At home, I do different things than at school. At home, I like to read because books have so many details and so much action that you can imagine what is going on in your head. At school, I try to avoid negative people because being negative makes you less positive.

**Audrey Reddeman, Grade 3,
Rutland Elementary**

House	1	2	3
Colour			
Thankful for			
Pet			
Sport			

1. The person thankful for family does not live in house two.
2. The person with the dogs swims at the Rutland YMCA.
3. There is one person thankful for living in the Okanagan.
4. There is one house between the house of the person who does yoga at home and the red house.
5. The red house is on the right.
6. The person with the fishes lives directly to the left of the person with the cats.
7. The person with the dogs lives directly to the right of the green house.
8. The person thankful for their health lives in house three.
9. The person with a dog does not live in the orange house.

Which house has a pet cat and an owner who likes running on the rail trail? _____

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- Family Day (schools closed).....Monday, February 17, 2020**
- Teacher Professional Day (Support Staff In-service Day)Friday, February 21, 2020**
- Schools close for Spring vacationFriday, March 13, 2020**
- Schools reopen after Spring vacationMonday, March 30, 2020**
- Good Friday (schools closed).....Friday, April 10, 2020**
- Easter Monday (schools closed)Monday, April 13, 2020**
- Victoria Day (schools closed)Monday, May 18, 2020**
- Last day of school for students.....Thursday, June 25, 2020**
- Administrative Day (students do not attend)Friday, June 26, 2020**

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