



Harvest Hills Public School Newsletter

February 2024

IMPORTANT DATES

New! **SAFE ARRIVAL CALL**
1-888-885-8065

289-831-9652

289-831-9656

harvesthills@scdsb.on.ca

hhl.scdsb.on.ca

Harvest Hills Public School
400 Crossland Boulevard
Bradford, Ontario L3Z 0G8

Inclement Weather Zone: **SOUTH**

Tuck Everlasting Grades 4-8
Friday February 2nd

School Council Meeting
Monday February 5th - 6:00pm

Report Cards
Friday February 16th

Family Day
Monday February 19th

VanGo Grade 1
Wednesday February 21st &
Thursday February 22nd

Character Assemblies
Friday February 23rd
FDK-Grade 3 10:20-11:10am
Grades 4-8 12:00-1:00pm

Intermediate Boys Basketball Zones
Monday February 26th

Intermediate Girls Volley Ball Zones
Monday February 26th

Pink Shirt Day
Wednesday February 28th


**Upcoming Performance
Announcement**

We are excited to announce that the Grade 1, 2 and 3 students will once again be presenting a Winter Concert which families will be invited to attend.

Tuesday, March 5
Daytime concert

Wednesday, March 6
Evening concert

Thursday, March 7 - Snow date for evening concert



**DAILY SCHEDULE FOR
2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR**

Please ensure your student(s) are aware of the time that school begins so that they will be on time. **There will be no pick up of students after 3:20pm** as teachers are busy getting students ready for dismissal.


Yard Supervision	9:15-9:30am
Entry Bell	9:30am
Class Time	9:30-11:10am
Nutrition Break 11:10-11:30am	FDK, 7/8 Outside Gr 1-6 Eating
Nutrition Break 11:30-11:50am	FDK & 7/8 Eating Gr 1-6 Outside
Class Time	11:50am-1:30pm
Nutrition Break 1:30-1:50pm	FDK, 7/8 Outside Gr 1-6 Eating
Nutrition Break 1:50-2:10pm	FDK & 7/8 Eating Gr 1-6 Outside
Class Time	2:10-3:50pm
Dismissal	3:50pm

SAFE ARRIVAL

You can also email your student absences to the office at hhlattendance@scdsb.on.ca



**[SCDSB Days of Awareness
2023-2024](#)**

 **Administrative & Office Staff**

Principal: Jennifer Frans
Vice Principal: Nadene Fischer
Superintendent: Matthew Webbe
Trustee: Debbie Connors

Senior Office Support: Vicky Zanatta
Office Support: Angela Dayton
Head Custodian: Sokol Mulla

YARD GATES CLOSED AT 9:30AM - DO NOT OPEN!

We have had several incidents lately where parents/guardians are opening the EAST and WEST yard access gates after they are closed at 9:30am by our staff. When the gates are closed they **MUST NOT** be opened due to the **SAFE SCHOOLS ACT**. Yard supervision ends promptly when the bell rings at 9:30am. Opening the gates after this time not only sends your own student into an unsupervised area but you also risk other students exiting the property without supervision. If the gates are closed, you must take your students to the front doors, ring the bell and have them signed in by the office. Failure to follow this procedure will result in unattended and/or missing students for safe arrival. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our Harvest Hills students safe.



HOW EMAILING AHEAD HELPS WITH EARLY DISMISSALS

- The office cannot dismiss students who are out on a community walk with their class. By messaging in advance the teacher can plan to return to the school for pick up time or make alternate arrangements for the student to stay back with another class.
- Students spend time in many different areas of our school such as the gym, library, visits to other classrooms and the general purpose room for activities like music. By notifying the office of an early pick up the teacher can ensure your student will have all of their belongs with them and the office can locate the student easily once you arrive.
- Teachers can make sure that the student has enough time to clean up any projects they are working on before you arrive and where possible teachers can plan classroom activities with consideration to the student leaving early (i.e. tests and presentations).
- The office can notify supply teachers in the event your classroom teacher is absent.
- The office can notify you if your planned arrival time is during recess. Students are with duty teachers during the breaks and it can be difficult to locate them.

We Appreciate your help!

Vandalism

Vandalism can happen in schools, and especially in washrooms. Not only does vandalism take money from our school's yearly budget and cause closures of certain facilities due to repairs, it also takes our wonderful custodians away from their daily tasks.

We encourage families to speak with their students about how damage costs the school money and to remind students to report any vandalism to a staff member.

Thank you for helping to keep our school safe!



HAWKS SPORTS TEAMS UPDATES

Thursday February 8th, Harvest Hills Public School 4pm
Intermediate Boys Basketball game vs Fieldcrest Elementary

ALL outdoor footwear must be removed before entering the gym.

Tuesday February 20th Harvest Hills Public School 4pm
Intermediate Boys basketball game vs. Fred C Cook

Spectators are not allowed at games without parental supervision.

Thursday February 22nd Harvest Hills Public School 4pm
Intermediate Girls Volleyball game vs. Fieldcrest

Thank you for your assistance!

Intermediate Boys Basketball Zones @ Harvest Hills & Chris Hadfield
Monday February 26th

Intermediate Girls Volley Ball Zones @ Earl Rowe & Fieldcrest
Monday February 26th

IMPORTANT

EXTENDED ABSENCES FOR TRIPS/VACATIONS -URGENT

**IMPORTANT
NOTICE**

We often have several families leave for extended vacations during the school year. It is **mandatory** to let the school know in advance via email at harvesthills@scdsb.on.ca of student absences due to extended travel/trips. Please do not send these notifications to the homeroom teachers, the office will advise them as necessary. This is part of the Safe Schools program in conjunction with the Safe Arrival Program.

If the email is sent to the teachers and they are not here, the student will be marked absent unknown, and safe arrival calls will go out to you and all the emergency contacts you provided until we know that the student is safe. If there is no reply from parents/guardians/emergency contacts because you are out of the country, the school may have to contact South Simcoe Police to perform a wellness check. This is a board procedure to ensure the safety of all our students.

For absences of 1-14 days, the office will update the student attendance as required. **Please note that if a student is absent for 15 or more consecutive days**, in accordance with the Simcoe County District School Board, we must take them off our enrollment roster and re-enroll them when they return. **This is per the Government of Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines.**

The Ministry will make exceptions if your student will be absent 15+ days due to medical procedures or serious illness if documentation is provided by the accredited Physician treating the student.

Provided the office receives notice before your student leaves for the extended absence, the office will coordinate the paperwork required here on site to demit and then re-admit your student without parents/guardians having to register their student online all over again. If you do not provide notice before leaving, you will be required to register your student upon your return via the board website as you did when your student first attended a Simcoe County school.

Where possible we will attempt to place your student in the same class when they return but we cannot guarantee this placement due to ongoing registrations and Ministry of Education class caps.

There is no asynchronous learning available during extended travel, this was an emergency measure for Covid 19 only.

NOTE: French Immersion students who are withdrawn for 15+ days absences will lose their placement in the French Immersion program. The student will then have to return to their home school in Bradford (based on your home address) to continue in the regular English stream if and until a space opens again. Parent/Guardians may apply to the French Immersion Program waitlist before they leave by contacting the school office in such cases.



Reminder: there are no dogs allowed on the property during school hours. This includes arrival and dismissal times. This applies to large and small dogs. Do not carry your dog onto the property to meet your students.

Thank you.

STUDENT LUNCHES

Please make sure to send your child's lunch and snacks to school with them in the morning.

No fast-food lunches are to be dropped off for students



REMINDER WE ARE SCENT FREE!!

If you are visiting the school please make sure to be **Scent Free**. We have several individuals in the building with allergies and asthma.



Harvest Hills is a Nut Aware, Shell Fish Aware & Scent Free school. Please refrain from bringing any products containing nuts and/or shell fish to the school and from wearing any scents. We have staff and students that are greatly affected and may have anaphylaxis reactions. Thank you.



SCHOOL ACCESS INFORMATION 2023-2024

Please send students with lunch and all items they need for the day in the morning when leaving home. There will be limited staff to answer the door for forgotten items between 9:30 am–3:50pm. School doors are locked as per the SCDSB Safe School Policy.

Please ensure your students have plenty of lunch, snacks, water and extra clothing in their backpacks for washroom accidents and come prepared with proper clothing for the weather (ie. mittens, hats, ect). Thank you for your assistance as we strive to keep our students and staff safe and healthy.

If your student needs to be signed out, **we request you send an email to the office at least 24 hours in advance (please email these to harvesthills@scdsb.on.ca). PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL or MESSAGE** the teachers directly because the office will not receive your messages if they are not at school that day, the office will advise the teacher. Once you arrive at the school, please ring the front doorbell and we will call your student down and a staff member will then escort the student to the front doors for the parent/guardian. Photo identification, as always, will be required to pickup a student from Harvest Hills.

SIGN UP WITH SCHOOLCASH ONLINE

School Cash Online is now the board system for all permission forms, school forms with no fees and purchases. Whether it's lunch days, field trips or school wear, we have it online for you!

Follow these three steps to get started:

1. Go to simcoecounty.schoolcashonline.com or visit our school website and click on 'Pay Fees'
2. Register and add your student to the newly created account
3. View and purchase items through bank transfer or credit card

It's safe, fast and convenient!

Contact the office with any questions at harvesthills@scdsb.on.ca



PARKING LOT

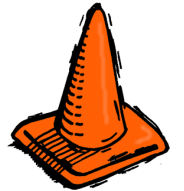


Our parking lots are very busy especially at arrival and dismissal time. For everyone's safety, we encourage parents to have students in the bus areas to please take the bus to and from school daily. Walking students walk to and from school daily.

THERE IS NO PARKING AT ALL IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL ON CROSSLAND BOULEVARD AS PER THE TOWN OF BRADFORD WEST GWILLIMBURY. SOUTH SIMCOE POLICE SERVICES & BYLAW OFFICERS WILL BE MONITORING AND TICKETING IN THIS AREA.

The WEST parking lot is for school buses and staff only. No visitors are allowed in this area at all. Only school vehicles (school buses and vans) or emergency vehicles (ambulances/Police cars) are allowed in the school bus loading zone that is in the WEST parking lot.

The EAST parking has the **designated student pick-up and drop-off**. The lot may have some parking spaces open when you arrive for pickup and drop off other than the dedicated accessible parking spots (which can only be used by those with legal permits). If you arrive before 9:15am to drop off your students, please park in open parking spaces, not the pickup and drop off lane. If you arrive early at dismissal, please follow the same process of parking where spaces are open and not in the lane. **Please keep the pick-up and drop-off lane moving.**



Thank you for keeping our students and school community safe!

SAFE ARRIVAL



If your student will be absent/late, please call the school's safe arrival line at **1-888-885-8065**. Leave a message with your student's name (spelling the last name), teacher/grade, and date of absence and the reason for the absence. This is a

24-hour service where a message must be left if your student will be absent or late.

OR email absences to hhlattendance@scdsb.on.ca. If your student is absent for 3 or more consecutive days, please send a note to the office. **PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL or MESSAGE the teachers directly** because the office will not receive your messages if they are not at school that day.

News From Simcoe County District School Board

Inclement Weather and Bus Cancellation Information Reminder

All information regarding cancelled buses in Simcoe County is posted on the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC)'s bus information website at www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca. Our school is in the **South Zone**. When buses are cancelled, schools remain open for student learning, unless otherwise noted. School staff are expected to plan for such emergencies in order to transition students who are unable to attend due to inclement weather, to their online platforms (Google Classroom and/or SCDSBhub [Brightspace by D2L]) and continue with academic programming. It is always a family decision whether or not it is safe for their child(ren) to leave for school under severe weather conditions.



The Consortium and bus operators try to make the decision to cancel school buses before 6 a.m. and make every effort to post announcements before 7 a.m. Inclement weather cancellations are effective for the whole day and buses cancelled in the morning will not run at the end of the day. You can follow the Consortium on Twitter [@SCSTC_SchoolBus](https://twitter.com/SCSTC_SchoolBus) for bus cancellations and other information. You can also subscribe to receive bus delay notifications here: <https://scstc.ca/Subscriptions/Login.aspx>.

School Bus Transportation Information Available From the SCSTC

In order to receive delay and cancellation notifications, families can check the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC) website at www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca or download the 'BusPlanner Delays' app from the Apple or Android app stores to receive delay notifications to their devices. Users would need to select Simcoe County STC as the transportation authority. The app will need to be forced closed, but you will be able to select your student(s) routes or school to receive delays. The app will send a general notice for any cancellation in Simcoe County. You only need to know which 'zone' you're in, so you would know which one to look out for in the app. You can find your student's zone by visiting the School Bus Status page at www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca and clicking the dropdown for the area you live in.



Black History Month

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) recognizes and celebrates Black History Month every February. The SCDSB is committed to improving equity of access, positive identity affirming experiences and opportunities for Black students, staff, and parents/guardians, and to creating a safe and caring learning environment that promotes the human rights of students, staff, and parent/guardians. The initiatives undertaken by the SCDSB have been embedded in teaching and learning at all school levels, and centrally, for Black History Month and throughout the year. Follow the SCDSB on social media to see how schools are recognizing Black History Month and celebrating Black excellence.

Parents' Guide to Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Learn to navigate the world of assessment, evaluation, and reporting with this new guide for parents/guardians. Created to support parents'/guardians' understanding of assessment, this guide was designed to effectively empower you to actively engage in your child's educational journey. The guide has been posted to the Simcoe County District School Board's website and can be accessed at https://cdnsm5-ss14.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_210898/File/Secondary/Parents-Guide-to-Assessment.pdf

Subscribe to Community Connects!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is excited to launch Community Connects, a new bimonthly newsletter for the SCDSB community. Our shared goal with this new tool is to keep our community partners and stakeholders informed while nurturing relationships that are built on accountability, trust, and transparency.

To learn more and subscribe, visit the Community Connects page on the SCDSB website: https://www.scdsb.on.ca/community/community_connects.

Kindergarten registration for September 2024 is open!

Kindergarten is the beginning of a wonderful journey of learning, and we want your child to begin their journey in a SCDSB school! Do you have a child who is turning four in 2024? If so, we invite you to register your child for Kindergarten. To register online or for more information visit: www.scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten.

Subscribe to Kindergarten Connections!

Will your child be turning four in 2024? If so, the SCDSB invites you to Kindergarten Connections! This is a monthly enewsletter informing families of everything they need to know about preparing their child for school, as well as registering them for Kindergarten in the SCDSB. To learn more and subscribe, visit the Kindergarten page on the SCDSB website: www.scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

The foundation for lifelong learning and health is built in the early years. EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Simcoe County offer programs for children prenatal to six years of age and their parents/guardians and caregivers. They offer access to play- and inquiry-based learning supported by *How Does Learning Happen?* Ontario's pedagogy for the early years, information on child development and developmental screening including Early Referral Identification Kits (ERIK), parent/guardian education, referrals to community resources, nutrition information, and post-natal resources. Check with your local EarlyON provider: <https://linktr.ee/earlyonsimcoe>.

How is your infant, toddler, or preschool child developing?

Is your child meeting their milestones? Age-appropriate speech and language skills are critical to your child's ability to read, write, and be successful in school as well as to their ability to engage with their peers. Free services are available to support you with your child's development. Preschool speech and language programs are located across the County of Simcoe. Call 705-739-5696 or 1-800-675-1979 to complete a developmental screen. The earlier we work together the better!

Child care programs available on PA days, holidays, and March Break

Child care programs for children in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are provided by independent, third-party child care operators in some SCDSB schools. To support your child care needs, some operators offer child care on PA days and holidays, including over the March Break (March 11 to 15). Registration in advance is required.

Please contact the child care operator directly to discuss fees and to register. For more information and contact numbers, please visit: https://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/childcare_before_after.

Registration now open for summer eLearning!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is offering summer school courses in July 2024 (eLearning) and travel for credit courses in both July and August for current high school students or adult learners who are interested in earning a new credit or upgrading a previous mark. Students can advance online learning skills, earn missed credits or fast-track preparation for graduation or post-secondary in just four weeks.

eLearning is fully supported by certified teachers who are available electronically daily.

Summer school program details can be found on the Learning Centres website at https://www.thelearningcentres.com/programs/summer_school.

EDUTravel programs are offered in a variety of destinations including Canada, USA, and Europe. For more information including costs, destinations, credits, and dates of commitment, please visit:

www.edutravelforcredit.com.

Summer eLearning opportunities for students entering Grade 9!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is offering summer school eLearning courses in July 2024. Current Grade 8 students wishing to reach ahead and earn a credit before high school can now register through their elementary school principal. eLearning is fully supported by certified teachers who are available electronically daily. Available courses include:

CGC1D – Grade 9 Geography

PAF1O – Grade 9 Personal Fitness

CHV2O & GLC2O – Grade 10 Civics and Careers

CHC2P – Grade 10 Applied History

CHC2D – Grade 10 Academic History

Summer school program details can be found on the Learning Centres website at

www.thelearningcentres.com/programs/summer_school.

Reminder: Safe Arrival system for SCDSB schools – call 1-888-885-8065 to report an absence

This school year, the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) launched a new Safe Arrival system at elementary schools. This system supports us in continuing to improve our home-to-school communication process and streamlines absence reporting. **To report a student absence, call 1-888-885-8065.** Callers will be prompted to identify the school before leaving a message. Parents/guardians should include the student's name, teachers' name, dates, and reason for the absence. When schools do not hear from a parent/guardian, and a student is absent, the school will call home to find out the reason for the absence. If you have questions about the system, please contact the school office.

School playground structures are closed for the winter

Every winter, school playground structures are closed. Students are made aware of this during school hours through announcements and staff reminders during breaks. This may not be well known throughout the community, despite signs indicating that playground structures are a winter hazard and are closed. The Canadian Standards Association regulations make recommendations for the depth of ground cover required to minimize injuries (e.g., sand, pea gravel, or wood chips). These surfaces cannot be maintained when the ground freezes. Injuries from falling would be more significant on frozen ground. We strongly recommend that you do not allow your children to play on any structures while the ground is frozen.

New Math at Home online resource for families

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) Math team is excited to launch Math at Home, an online resource for parents/caregivers of SCDSB students from ages 0-16. Math at Home provides the following information and resources to support math learning:

- Math games to play at home
- Links to digital math games
- Practice opportunities
- Real world math connections
- Math mindset

Math at Home will be updated monthly to include new math games, problems, and number talks. Visit www.scdsb.on.ca/MathAtHome to begin supporting your child's math learning at home!



Math @Home parent and caregiver series

It's back! The SCDSB math team is pleased to offer three virtual sessions for parents and caregivers of SCDSB students. These sessions will focus on practical and fun ways to support children with their mathematics learning and engagement at home. The first 200 registrants will receive a Math @Home kit of resources to use at home. Participants must pre-register for each of the sessions.

Exploring the new SCDSB family math resources

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents and caregivers. Join members of the SCDSB math team for a guided exploration of the new SCDSB family math resources. Participants will have the opportunity to explore the resources that are available to support their child's math learning at home. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length. During the final 15 minutes, the math team will be available to answer questions about the resources available.

Tips for engaging in math conversations with your child @Home

Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents and caregivers and will explore opportunities to discuss math with their child (ren) at home. Participants will learn about how events such as shopping, preparing food, engaging in a building project, or going for a walk can be used as a starting point for math conversations, and will receive prompts to get the discussion rolling. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length. During the final 15 minutes, the math team will be available to answer questions about the session.

Games to support your child's math learning @Home

Thursday, April 4, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents, caregivers, and their children. Playing games at home is a great way to support child(ren)'s math development. In this session, several games will be explored, and participants will have the opportunity to try the games with their children during the session. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length followed by 15 additional minutes for further game play or to ask questions of our math facilitators. Bring your child(ren) and your math kit to this session!

Participants must pre-register for the sessions they wish to attend. Registered participants will receive a kit of hands-on resources that will be sent to the school indicated on the registration form. Use this link to register:

<https://bit.ly/24MathAtHome>.

Foster families needed in your community!

Children in our community need you! We have an urgent need for foster homes in Simcoe Muskoka. We are looking for diverse foster care providers who understand children's needs. Our needs are diverse and range from babies to teens. Open your home to a child/youth and receive training, support, and between \$85 and \$155 per child and per day. Do you know anyone who may be interested? Visit <https://familyconnexions.ca/fosterconnexions/> to inquire, apply, and for more information. You may also call 705-726-6587 ext. 4.

Information provided by Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions.

News From Simcoe County District School Board

Join us! A learning series for parents/guardians with Pine River Institute

Mental health and well-being continues to be a key strategic priority within the SCDSB. We are pleased to continue our partnership with the Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) to provide several curated learning sessions focused on student mental health and well-being to SCDSB families.

There are eight webinars specifically planned for parents/guardians and other caregivers during this school year. The remaining webinars are:

Feb. 8, 2024	Self regulation for kids
Feb. 22, 2024	Self regulation for teens
March 28, 2024	Building parents' resiliency
April 18, 2024	Vaping, weed, and alcohol

We hope you save these dates in your calendar and join us for these learning opportunities. For more information and to register, please visit the SCDSB website: <https://bit.ly/3jGaC74>.

Pine River Institute is a live-in treatment centre and outdoor leadership experience for youth aged 13 to 19 struggling with addictive behaviours and often other mental health issues. Combining therapy with a fully-accredited education program, PRI reinforces the healthy life skills required for a successful future. CFI@PRI extends PRI's knowledge, experience and evidence-informed treatment approach to families and care providers in the community to support youth mental wellness and prevent the need for more intensive interventions. Learn more about PRI by visiting their website at www.pineriverinstitute.com.

Interested in learning more about the ways that the SCDSB supports students with special education needs and their families? Join us for a virtual special education information series

During the 2023-24 school year, the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is hosting virtual special education outreach sessions to assist parents/guardians in learning more about programs, supports, and ways that we work together to support students with special education needs.

Transition planning

Feb. 13

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Reading strategies

March 19

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

April 16

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Every day mental health strategies

May 14

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Participants are asked to register in advance. Information to access the sessions will be shared via email with individuals who have pre-registered. Learn more about each session and how to register on the SCDSB website: www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/special_education/special_education_outreach_sessions.

Developing fluency through repeated reading

Fluency, the ability to read smoothly, accurately, and with expression, is a fundamental skill that significantly impacts a child's overall reading proficiency. When children read fluently, they can focus more on comprehension, understanding the meaning behind the words, rather than struggling with decoding.

Repeated reading is a highly effective strategy that involves a child reading the same text multiple times. This method aims to enhance fluency, comprehension, and overall reading proficiency. By revisiting a text, readers become more familiar with the words and structure, leading to increased speed and accuracy. Additionally, repeated reading allows children to focus on expression and intonation, promoting a more natural and engaging reading style. This approach is particularly beneficial for struggling readers, as it builds confidence and reinforces word recognition. As parents/guardians, incorporating repeated reading into your child's routine not only reinforces the joy of reading but also cultivates a strong foundation for improved fluency and comprehension skills over time.

Mental health strategy of the month - *Just Breathe*

Well-being is a Strategic Priority in the Simcoe County District School Board, and our mental health and well-being department provides monthly strategies to support student and family well-being.

This month's strategy is *Just Breathe*. The purpose of this strategy is to help students develop a mind/body connection, self-regulation, awareness of emotions, and resiliency by practising deep breathing.

To practice *Just Breathe* at home, follow these steps:

Place your hands flat on your stomach or pay attention to your stomach.

As you breathe deeply in through your nose, send this breath all the way to your stomach.

Feel your stomach expand and your hands move out.

Breathe out. Feel your stomach contract and your hands move in.

Repeat 5-6 times.

Practice deep belly breathing any time you feel stressed or upset. Find more information to support your child's mental health here: <https://smho-smso.ca/parents-and-caregivers/>.

Follow the Mental Health and Well-being social media accounts (@SCDSB_MHWP) to see how well-being is being supported in our schools.

Creating safe and healthy schools

A healthy school supports children to reach their full health and learning potential. There are many ways for you to get involved in creating a safe and healthy school for your child. Here are some ideas:

Talk with your child about what they are learning at school and find ways to role model or reinforce the health messages at home.

Stay informed about your child's school through the school website and social media platforms.

Get to know your child's friends, other parents, and staff from the school and communicate often.

Volunteer to participate on a committee that helps organize healthy activities for the school community.

Contact your child's school or your local public health unit to get started.

Looking for more parenting support? Speak with a public health nurse by calling 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 or visit www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

Online luring and grooming

As part of our shared commitment to educating our students about digital citizenship and cyber awareness, this month we are highlighting online luring and grooming. The following info sheet has been created by the Educational Collaborative Network of Ontario (ECNO) to overview:

What online luring and grooming is
Commonly used tactics that online predators use
Helpful tips to stay safe
How to report if necessary

Info sheet: https://ecno.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/ECNO-CAM-Calendar-23-Aug3023_GroomingLuring.pdf

For additional activities and information, please refer to the digital citizenship resources for parents/guardians that are available on the Safe Schools page on the SCDSB website (www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/safe_schools). The Ministry of Education has also provided information and resources in PPM 166 Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols: www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-166.

Register your child for the YMCA's Escape in the Landscape program

Register your child for an outdoor education experience like no other. The YMCA of Simcoe Muskoka's Escape in the Landscape program offers nature immersion activities led by qualified staff for children ages 4-12. Through experimentation, peer-to-peer learning, and storytelling, your child will be encouraged to discover new experiences and skills, all while making lasting friendships and developing a love of the great outdoors.

During this memorable program, your child will:

- Learn about the land and how to be environmental caretakers.
 - Connect with nature and build self-confidence.
 - Improve their mental and physical health.

Be curious, resilient, and motivated to make a difference.

The program runs for eight weeks from March to April 2024 and is offered in Alliston, Innisfil, Midland, Wasaga Beach, and Barrie.

Cost:

Ages 4-6: \$125.00

Ages 7-12: \$175.00

For more information and to register, visit <https://ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca/escape-in-the-landscape/>.

Information provided by the YMCA of Simcoe Muskoka.

News From Simcoe County District School Board

Stay healthy this school year

COVID and other respiratory infections can spread easily from person to person. These germs can spread quickly when someone coughs or sneezes directly on another person, or when germs land on hard surfaces like doorknobs, desks, and keyboards and then are touched by someone else. These germs can then enter the body through the eyes, nose, or mouth.

The most important thing you can do to keep from getting sick and stop the spread of germs is wash your hands. Wash with soap and warm running water for at least 15 seconds (or try singing Happy Birthday twice). If your hands are not visibly dirty you can use alcohol-based hand sanitizer for 15 seconds.

Also, make sure you are up to date with your immunizations, cover coughs and sneezes, and stay home if you are sick. Teach your kids to do the same!

For more tips to keep you and your family healthy this school year, contact Health Connection at 1-877-721-7520 or visit www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

www.scdsb.on.ca/about/equity_and_inclusion

February 2024

Date(s)	Observance
Feb. 1-29	Black History Month
Feb. 1	World Hijab Day
Feb. 1-2	Imbolc (Wicca)
Feb. 2	Groundhog Day
	World Wetlands Day
Feb. 4	World Cancer Day
Feb. 6	Isra'a and Mi'raj (Islam)
Feb. 10	Losar/Tibetan New Year (Buddhism)
	Lunar New Year/Maitreya Bodhisattva's Birthday (Buddhism)
Feb. 11	International Day of Women and Girls in Science
Feb. 14	Ash Wednesday (Christianity)
	Valentines Day
	Vasant Panchami (Hinduism)
Feb. 15	National Flag of Canada Day
	Nirvana Day (Buddhism, Jainism)
Feb. 17	Random Acts of Kindness Day
Feb. 19	Family Day
Feb. 20	World Day of Social Justice
Feb. 22	Pink Shirt Day (Anti-Bullying Day)
Feb. 24	Magha/Sangha Day (Buddhism)
Feb. 24-25	Mid-Sha'ban (Islam)
Feb. 26 – March 1	Ayyám-i-Há/Intercalary Days (Bahá'í)
Feb. 29	Rare Diseases Day