

Trinity Review

Monthly Newsletter

Issue 6, February 2011



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Trinity Begins New *Focus on Success* Programming

We have begun to create programming for Student Success teachers and Child and Youth Workers in the Focus on Success programs. The Programming is meant to support their efforts to implement the Why Try? program. The Why Try? program delivers images, ideas and music that are meant to aid the student's personal development and work on their sense of disengagement from school. As such, it uses external references to hopefully influence the student's internal decision making faculties – in essence working from the outside in.

In support of the program and teacher's efforts with disengaged students, we are creating a social/emotional development program that works from the inside out – developing the student's self awareness, their sensitivity to others, and their ability to reflect on their own actions and express themselves with others.

We have begun using drawing and drama exercise that challenge the students to collaborate while identifying their sense of place, what's important to them in their present environment and the sense they have of themselves as creative and productive people.

We will continue to experiment with narrative drama techniques in our pursuit of enabling the students to take full advantage of the Why Try? Program.

Schools Trinity Visited This Month

Runnymede P.S & C.I

York Humber HS

North Albion CI

Lester B. Pearson CI

George S. Henry Academy

Sir Oliver Mowat CI

West Hill CI

St. Stephens – Attendance & Support

Central Commerce Collegiate

Norseman Jr. P.S.

York Humber HS

Hardington – Long Term Support Program

Earl Haig SS

What are Schools For? An Ongoing Discussion

Continued from Trinity Review – January 2011

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Social interaction is key to a young person's development – and it is through social/emotional interaction that their brains continue to grow especially in terms of abstract thinking. It also underlies their passionate interest in creating meaning, finding relevance and the construction of identity.

Why could some of the social interaction not take place with educators in the classroom? Is there any special training really necessary to partner with another to discuss issues of meaning and identity, and the relevance of what we are doing together.

Treating a young person and their dramatically growing brain as a "storage bin for facts" and second hand knowledge while blunting their social/emotional development in the name of academics is one of the causes of students' disengagement from school – and creates, even in those who dutifully attend and meet classroom challenges, the sense that they have to suspend their real lives while in school, and work for marks and not the learning.

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Necessity is a difficult word when applied outside the realm of our creature needs for food, shelter, etc. In fact outside those needs it is more an ideological statement than anything else. To say for instance it is necessary for youth to appreciate art to progress in life or develop their literacy beyond the level of understanding a cook book is a statement of viewpoint and little

relevance to the necessities felt by students.

To put it somewhat tongue in cheek, the only necessity we actually encounter during our high school years is that we have to acquire as much knowledge as we can while gathering as much inner strength from friends and mentors as we are fortunate enough to have. We then are hopeful both will be of some use in the inevitable and often fearful leave-taking from school when we will be thrown on everyday life to find a niche and comfort level among the necessities of survival as soon as possible.

Now if this is even remotely true wouldn't it be a better idea to stop talking about the necessity of this or that in young people's lives and help them develop a love for learning? A passion for making meaning out of the everyday? A curiosity for new ideas? And a social/emotional competency for meeting challenges?

Any of these mentioned would take education into developing lifelong learning abilities since they are grounded in social/emotional development and personal transformation. And who knows? They might yield new ideas in our academic debates about the necessity of art and literacy.



Phase Two of Creating Communities We Want

The second phase of Peer Leaders mentoring workshops with Grade 9 students has begun.

The aim of this phase is the development of resilience in the younger students through strengthening their ability to participate and reflect on their actions, and increase their collaborative skills. In particular the Grade 9 students will be identifying the effectiveness of their present conflict styles, and developing their assertiveness in the first workshops of this phase.





Upcoming Events & Program Updates

Bendale BTI Workshop

Next month on March 9th & 10th, Trinity will be at Bendale BTI doing a workshop with the gr.9 & gr.10 students on self-development and student success. The workshop will be assisted by Bendale Peer Leaders. We are looking forward working with the students in this new project!

Grey Bruce County

At the beginning of next month, Trinity will be traveling to Sacred Heart High school in Walkerton and St. Mary's in Owen Sound to train teachers to use the *Creating Communities We Want* manual. We look forward to returning to the Grey Bruce County.

Moving Forward

The first draft of Trinity's *Moving Forward* program, a social/emotional development program for long term support students, was completed this month for educators.

Next month this manual will be available online to educators through our Trinity Studio website. Contact us for more details on how this manual can be available to you.

Trinity Website

Trinity is in the works of updating our website! Keep an eye out for new website updates & changes in the next few months. We are excited to have a tweaked and improved look to Trinity's website!



Inspiring Quotes

Imagination is more important than knowledge.

- Albert Einstein

Such as are thy habitual thoughts, such also will be the character of thy mind; for the character of thy mind; for the soul is dyed by the thoughts.

- Marcus Aurelius



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