

Trinity Review

Monthly Newsletter

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Schools participating in Trinity programs this year:

Lester B. Pearson CI

Sir Oliver Mowat CI

Runnymede CI

Runnymede PS

Norseman JMS

Bendale BTI

West Hill CI

George S. Henry Academy

Victoria Park CI

Central Commerce CI

York Humber HS

Marc Garneau CI

Winston Churchill CI

North Albion CI

Earl Haig SS

We are also working in Long Term Support Programs Midland, Pharmacy and Hardington.

What We Do

Trinity is committed to making a significant contribution to how we educate our youth, namely how to give them a sense of balance in their lives between their social, emotional and ethical development and their needs for academic achievement. We believe by addressing this crucial balancing students will improve their capabilities, teachers will be able to create more learning opportunities in the classroom, and the school community will be able to address more effectively its own needs for safety, non-violence, and inclusiveness. Trinity's social development programs aim to give students, teachers, and administrators the tools to develop safer, more productive school learning communities by empowering individuals to take on leadership roles in the social/emotional development of their particular peer groups and relate this development to academic and skills achievement.

Creating Communities We Want: Programs

Snapshot of Programs

- **A Transition** program in which Peer Leaders are trained to mentor transition students in their first crucial year of high school.
- **A Mediation** program customized to the realities of high school to mediate disputes and practice conflict resolution.
- Programs for **Suspended & Expelled** students that address social/emotional development and anger management challenges.
- **Peer Mentoring** program that supports alternative to suspension initiatives in schools, in particular Focus on Success programming.
- **A Middle School** program in which Peer Leaders are trained to address bullying and relational aggression issues with younger students in their school.
- **A Leadership for Life** coaching program meant to develop an infrastructure of Peer Leaders engaged in addressing the social development of their schools – achieved through personal and online training and support.

Ultimately, all the programs whether targeted at transition issues, personal conflict or the development of personal leadership come down to the development of an individual's resilience and their capacity to handle conflict, collaborate with others, become self aware, practice compassion towards others – and the fostering of a social development awareness in the school community as a whole.

The Benefits

Specific and measurable outcomes include:

- The school gains a strong resource of Peer Leaders, mentors, mediators and facilitators.
- An increase in communication between senior and junior students, adults and students.
- Easing of anxiety and tension in transition from middle to secondary school.
- Students as well as administrators and staff gain a greater knowledge of issues facing their school and their community.
- Earlier identification of students who experience exclusion, harassment, relational aggression, or bullying.
- There is a reduction of anti-social behavior, suspension, expulsions, and incidents of skipping school.
- Students become more involved and engaged in leadership roles and co-curricular activities in the



Trinity Travels

Training began in St Mary's (Owen Sound) and Sacred Heart (Walkerton) with the Grey Bruce District Catholic School Board.

It is exciting to see so many new faces ready to help their fellow students with their transition to high school.





What are Schools for? An Ongoing Discussion

What are we doing when we gather youth and adults together in an intentional community like a school?

What are we setting in motion when we mix youth of different ages, especially at a time in life when age differences are considered of crucial significance? What happens when relations between youth and adults are often undermined by a lack of rapport?

Why do we often assume that the individuals in this intentional community - adults and youth alike - can suspend their social/emotional development and attend solely to “work” and academic pursuits? And what particular tensions arise in our school communities as a result of being part of a larger society that influences our schools in ways beyond the school’s control?

Why have we decided as a society to gather our youth together in such an intentional community, but then not use the dynamics of community to support their learning and transformation to young adulthood? What are schools for?

(i)

Education is the way a community renews itself. A school is where this renewal begins.

Community is simultaneously a physical phenomenon and an idea. For all of us the first community we respond to is the immediate caregivers of our birth family. We immediately internalize that external group in our infant brain and through this contact develop the first group responses of our social/emotional lives.

When we begin attending school most of us meet for the first time a larger community. Our social/emotional processes make a quantum leap. We begin to create even more complex internal representations of community based on our interactions.

Looking at physical communities they are places where people come together to meet their needs, share interests, and learn how to settle their differences. These basic functions do not change even when a community is gathered around directed intentions such as learning.

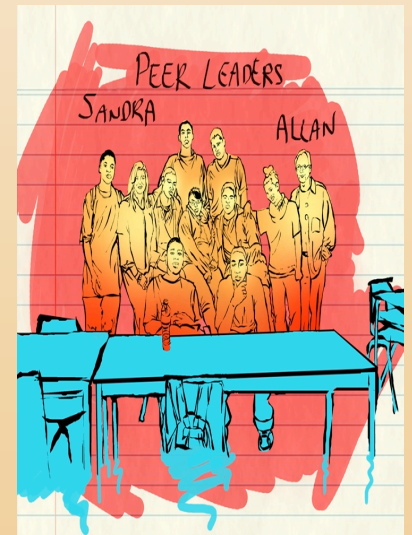
What’s New This Month?

Mediation Training

This month Trinity will be visiting Marc Garneau CI & Bendale BTI to facilitate the mediation training program. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Peer Leadership in Middle Schools

This month Norseman JMS and Runnymede Jr & Sr PS have come on board to participate in Trinity’s Peer Leadership program. Welcome & we look forward to working with you this school year!



What are schools for continued...

In our brains, that emulates and responds to the social contexts around us.

As such any community is not merely a gathering in place and time, but also fields of connected ideas, practices, relationships, and risk taking etc. Each member of the community can carry his or her own slightly or radically different version.

All learning takes place on these simultaneous levels of community.

(ii)

Healthy babies are not born smart or stupid – nor is it predetermined that one brain will grow faster or slower than another.

Instead science has shown that the child's social/emotional environment has everything to do with their learning. It is indeed the platform and the context that makes learning possible.

Social/emotional development and brain development are one and the same in children. Consequently, as we grow, social interaction and connectedness play a large part in facilitating our learning. Indeed, the presence of emotion in the form of motivation is a prerequisite for all learning

(iii)

Every person needs recognition, inspiration, and learning.

This recognition is more than simply knowing another person's name and a few details about their life. This is recognition in the sense that it happens in theatre art. During a performance, audience members witness actions onstage that lead them to a moment where they recognize an idea in the actions before them simultaneously as present deep within themselves.

Recognition in our social/emotional lives means extending to another person our sense of them as a person. Even if we don't agree with them intellectually we still extend to them our validating presence.

Inspiration is more than motivation. By attentive listening and extending our presence to signal inclusion we validate the other person and address innate and usually unconscious insecurities, fears etc.

Learning and wanting to learn are innate in a human being. A few moments with any



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