

Trinity Review

Monthly Newsletter

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Fall at Trinity

It has been a busy fall at Trinity! Peer Mentoring for grade nines began in eleven high schools with workshops concerning respect in the classroom. As well, relational aggression workshops began in three public schools with Peer leaders both at the grade eight level and grade five level addressing issues like bullying, etc., with grades one through four.

Transformational Mediation - a conflict dispute resolution program developed specifically for high school – began training at Marc Garneau and Lester B Pearson and is about to begin in late November at Bendale.

A special assignment this Fall was the creating of a workshop to address rudeness and toxic statements in classrooms and hallways for leadership students to hold with peers.

It has been a delight to start working again with our diverse and multi-talented Peer Leaders in all the schools – their dedication to the cause of balancing social/emotional development with learning and academic achievement is an inspiration to all. Another exciting school year has begun!

Schools we visited in October

- Maplewood HS
- Sir Oliver Mowat CI
- Victoria Park CI
- Victoria Village PS
- Lester B Pearson CI
- George S. Henry CI
- Norseman JMS
- Earl Haig SS
- North Albion CI
- Runnymede CI
- Marc Garneau CI
- Bendale BTI
- Central Commerce CI
- Runnymede PS

Peer Mentoring as Storytelling

A major part of peer mentoring has to do with organizing the social/emotional aspects of one's character in the creating of narratives from personal experience and interpretations of events. These narratives are then available at appropriate moments in the exchange with another person. Put briefly, mentoring involves the making and sharing of stories.

As such self-awareness and sensitivity to others are key dynamics in the development of mentoring skills.



At Earl Haig SS this Fall we are training former Focus on Success students to mentor new FOS students. It is quite productive when the adult trainers and student mentors in training share their stories in interpretative life mapping exercises. The students learn reflection skills easily when they are modeled by an adult sharing their own stories and develop a sense for the feeling of mutual exchange and its benefits for mentoring.

Social/Emotional Development Practices for Educators

What is the role, work and presence of the educator when playing a productive part in the social/emotional development of youth. This is important to discuss because the links between the feeling/emotional sides of our nature and our learning capacity are

becoming more apparent thanks to neuroscience.

And important too for all of us – educator, parent and student – to develop more literacy around the role public education plays in a young person's social/emotional development and our society's vision of itself.

What in fact does it say about our society that we want our youth to be educated together with others in a diverse public education system?

The educator is in many ways the most significant adult a young person meets after the adults in their immediate and extended families. Are we assuming that the majority of the social/emotional development work is being done in the contexts of the birth family? What if primary mindsets are being established there for instance but it is with the friends, peers and adults of the education system that the ongoing social/emotional development work is actually being done?



As well, we all know that a person takes in far more than they consciously learn from the influential friends, peers and adults of their community. There is more learning taking place in our classrooms than academic curriculum.

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Social/Emotional Development Practices for Educators Continued

And so while parents are involved in the drama of supporting and nurturing the child from dependence to independence, is there another more arm's length role for other adults to play in a youth's social/emotional development? What if the educator's role, alongside academics, was to act as a mentor, guide, inspiration, friend and role model to youth on their path to becoming a productive member of society?

It is becoming increasingly apparent that our communities need educators who can teach youth how to design useful balances between the often impetuous social/emotional aspects of one's developing personality with the committed work/achievement aspects of conscious living.

In the coming newsletter we will be looking at the following social/emotional development practices educators can use to strengthen their teaching and rapport with students and create more learning opportunities in the classroom and hallways/offices:

1. Becoming a Peer Leader in learning
2. Align Education goals with personal needs
3. Think like a river
4. Sweat the small stuff!
5. Make it personal
6. "Story" the classroom
7. Strive for irrelevance
8. Manage the class with *Talking Circles*
9. Make pathway connections



Answering this need means that as well as paying attention to a student's academic performance educators become involved in their social/emotional growth in a non-academic way.





Upcoming Events & Program Updates

Peer Leader Reunion

On December 9th Trinity is having a reunion with our Peer Leaders from the Building Bridges project this summer. We will be discussing the next steps of the project. We look forward to seeing you all!

Youth Council

Trinity is in the midst of organizing a Youth Council which will consist of Peer Leaders from our participating high schools. The purpose of this council is to ensure a youth perspective is provided on a range of school-related issues, issues relating directly to youth, providing networking opportunities as well as brainstorming social development projects around their schools.

New partnership with AGO

Trinity has embarked on a new partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario Youth Programs. They will provide an in-kind donation of space for the youth council meetings. We are pleased to be working with them!

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