



130 Rykert St., St. Catharines, ON L2S 2B4

March 1, 2021

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Ala - Mar. 1-19
- International Women's Day - Mar. 8
- Harriet Tubman Day - Mar. 10
- Isra'a Wal Miraj - Mar. 11
- St. Patrick's Day - Mar. 17
- Persian New Year - Mar. 20
- International Day for the End of Racial Discrimination - Mar. 21
- World Down Syndrome Day - Mar. 21
- World Water Day - Mar. 22
- Student Census Survey Begins for Grades 7 and 8's - Mar. 22
- Holi - Mar. 28
- Passover Begins - Mar. 28
- Nisfu Sha'ban - Mar. 29
- Holla Mohalla - Mar. 29

March

NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE



It has been wonderful to be back to school in person. It is clear from both students and staff that there is no better place to be than with each other here at Westdale.

Our Gr. 4/5 and 5/6 classes recently visited Walker Living Campus and spent the day snowshoeing. This was the first school trip in over a year and it was so nice to see the students get off the bus with smiles under their masks. Our 6/7 and 7/8 classes will be visiting there later this month.

Recently, we asked if there were any Westdale families who could use some extra support during these tough times. Not surprisingly we had a number of requests. We are happy to report that through donations from DSBN Cares (raised by DSBN staff) and a very generous donation from a Westdale family, we were able to give \$50 in gift cards to 13 of our families. If we receive more gift card donations we will continue to support our families in need.

PARENTS ROLE IN KEEPING SCHOOLS SAFE

Everyone has a role to play in keeping families safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19. It is the responsibility of parents and caregivers to assess their children on a daily basis before sending them to school. We ask parents to use this link: [Ontario Ministry of Education Covid-19 School and Childcare Screening Tool](#) to screen their child(ren) daily. The screening tool will provide direction and information to determine if students should attend school, remain home, or seek medical advice. Additionally, parents must have a person available to pick up their child right away, should they become sick during school. We thank our parents for being diligent with following the screening guidelines and being available to

pick up your child when needed! **Please make sure you have read through the screening protocol memo issued by Niagara Region Public Health that was sent via email on Tuesday, February 23, 2021.**

ST. PATRICKS DAY



On Wednesday, March 17, we will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day! Break out your green and your shamrocks. Perhaps we may catch a leprechaun, find a four-leaf clover, or the pot-of-gold at the end of the rainbow? As with other special days this year, please do not send in special treats for the class.

MARCH BREAK DEFERRED

The Ontario Government has officially announced that this year's March Break is postponed until the week of April 12-16. Please check out [DSBN's revised Elementary School Year calendar](#).

SOCIAL WORKER SUPPORT

- Do you have questions about your child's mental health and well-being, such as anxiety, behaviour or self-harm?
- Do you need support in accessing supports in the community?
- Do you need advice for setting goals to help with regular school attendance?
- Do you have any questions or are looking for support regarding a certain aspect of parenting?

If these are some questions that you have, please speak with your child's teacher or Mr. Scott. Sylvie Leibbrandt is a DSBN Social Worker that works with families in St. Catharines schools, including Westdale, to provide an additional layer of support to help our students and families achieve success. She is an invaluable member of our Westdale team and is looking forward to connecting with families.

Contact us at:

Phone: 905-682-9284

Email: wes@dsbn.org





Niagara Region Public Health School Health Newsletter For Parents

COVID-19 – Understanding the local stats

Did you know Niagara Region updates Covid-19 case and vaccination statistics daily? Please visit <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/default.aspx> for up to date information regarding daily Covid-19 case counts, active cases by municipality, and new daily Covid-19 vaccinations delivered to Niagara Region residents.

COVID-19 – Safe storage of masks

Proper handling of a face covering is important to protect you from this virus. If the face covering is doing its job and blocking the virus from infecting you, or others around you, it may have the virus on it after use. To safely store your face covering, fold the outside of the face covering in on itself, so only the inside of the face covering is facing outwards. Store it in its own bag or container before placing it into your pocket, purse or vehicle. Discard the bag or clean and disinfect the container after use.

To read more about masking please visit <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/mask-bylaw.aspx>

Healthy Eating – quick and easy breakfast tips

Now that students are back to in-person learning, their food routine might look a little different

- If your child is not hungry when they wake up, have them take something to-go
- Having a source of protein can help maintain energy levels throughout the day
 - ◇ Hard-boiled eggs, hummus with fresh veggies, lower fat yogurt with fresh fruit

Choose foods with higher fibre – higher fibre products will have more whole grains listed near the top of ingredient list

- ◇ Apples, Bananas, whole wheat pasta, multigrain cereal, sunflower seeds, raisins

For quick and easy breakfast ideas visit, <https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Recipes/Breakfast.aspx>.

Niagara Parents Promo

Children come in different shapes, sizes and grow at different rates. A child's growth depends on genetics (how their parents grew).

Your child may be taller or shorter, bigger or smaller than other children. Height and weight changes generally follow a regular pattern that is right for your child.

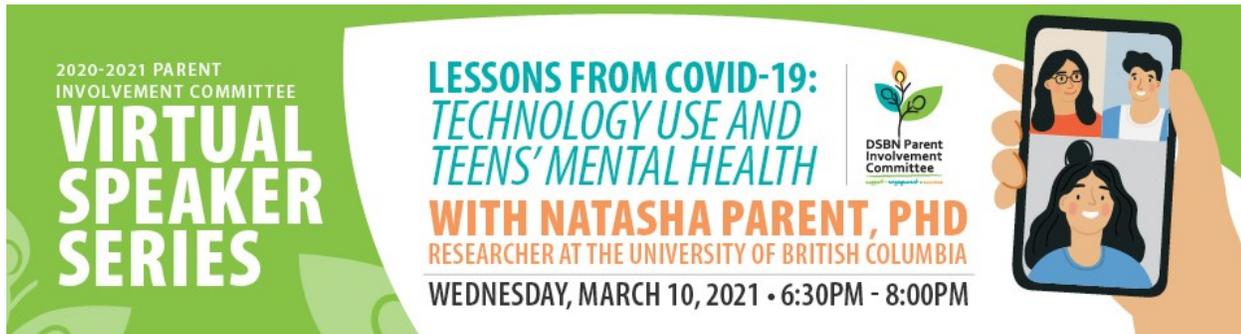
Do you have questions about your child's growth and development?

Connect with Niagara Parents to speak with a public health nurse: [niagararegion.ca/parents](https://www.niagararegion.ca/parents)

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) is excited for March. The committee has a packed month, with 3 different presentations to look forward to in the PIC Virtual Speaker Series.

PIC kicks off March with Natasha Parent, a doctorate researcher from University of British Columbia, on Wednesday, March 10th at 6:30p.m. Natasha will explore how COVID-19 has impacted teens mental health, while highlighting the role of technology use and screen time in fostering their feelings of connection to others. Applying a developmental framework, we will discuss how using technology can help teens meet their social goals and contribute to their overall wellbeing, while also touching on how to identify those who may be at risk. In addition, this webinar will feature some useful tips on how to help teens navigate their screen time and discuss some of the cutting-edge work that's currently being done in the field.



Please go to <https://www.dsbns.org/pic/speakerseries.html> to register for this informative webinar.

Stay tuned for upcoming presentations later in March!

LITTLE BIG CRUNCH - NIAGARA NUTRITION PARTNERS

March 8th - March 11th, Niagara Nutrition Partners will be holding their second annual virtual Little Big Crunch, in celebration of FoodShare's Great Big Crunch, in support of Student Nutrition and the universal access to quality foods in schools that every child deserves. With the help of Niagara Catholic District School Board, DSNB, Niagara Public Health, United Way and MANY others, NNP and their community partners will be sharing **little big crunches** all week long on their social platforms - Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Families can join in the fun by taking a quick video or photo of their own little big crunches and sharing them on their social media, tagging NNP @niagaranutritionpartners as well as @NiagaraCatholicDSB and /or @dsbniagara, using the hashtag #littlebigcrunch.



Thank you in advance for your support of Niagara Nutrition Partners as we continue to find additional ways to contribute to student nutrition in the Niagara Region.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR



Hi! I'm Barkley. Your child's Kindergarten sidekick.

I'm here to tell you that it's time to register for Kindergarten!

Normally I'd invite you inside one of our Kindergarten classrooms so you and your child could look around with me, but to keep each other safe, we have to wait to do that another time. What I can do is help you find all the information you need to register your child for Kindergarten at the DSBN! I put it on <https://www.dsbns.org/earlylearners/kickstart/home> for you. It has important information like:

- How to register your child online
- A video about a typical day in Kindergarten
- A Kindergarten classroom 360° virtual tour
- An e-book about how I overcame my first day fears



Register today at [dsbns.org/kindergarten](https://www.dsbns.org/kindergarten). I can't wait to meet you and your child at school!

FREE DENTAL PROGRAM - HEALTHY SMILES ONTARIO

Kids should grow up smiling! Healthy Smiles Ontario is a government-funded program that offers free regular dental visits and emergency services for eligible children and youth 17 years and under.

To learn more, please call Niagara Region Public Health, Dental Health Line at 905-688-8248 or 1-888-5056074 ext. 7399.

Apply today by visiting: https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/dental/treatment-options-forchildren.aspx

INCLEMENT WEATHER MESSAGE FOR FAMILIES

There are times in Niagara when weather conditions are so poor that we must cancel student transportation, and/or close schools to preserve the safety of students and staff.

The decision to cancel transportation and/or close schools is not taken lightly; a variety of factors are considered when making this choice. To learn more about how these decisions are made, please go to <https://www.dsbm.org/inclementweather>.

Transportation Cancellations:

Information about transportation delays and cancellations are posted to <https://portal.nsts.ca/Cancellations.aspx>. When transportation is cancelled, information is shared before 6:00 am on the day of the cancellation. There are times when transportation is cancelled, but schools remain open. If, on those days you feel it is best for your child to stay home, please report your child's absence <https://dsbn.org/safearrival/> so we can make sure they are safe at home.

School Closures:

When the decision to close schools is made, it refers to all schools: both in-person and virtual schools. School closure information is shared before 6:00 am on the day of the school closure. You will find it on dsbn.org, all school websites, DSBM social media, and local media share the news widely as well.

Student Work on School Closure and Transportation Cancellation Days:

For elementary students - On days where transportation is cancelled and/or schools are closed, please visit your child's school website and click on the "Learn From Home" button. There you will find optional asynchronous learning resources.

For secondary students – Students will be able to access online materials for their courses. If it is a culminating activity day, special arrangements will be made and communicated to students centrally.

**ATTENDANCE**

Just a reminder that if your child is going to be away from school it is important for you to let us know. Please call Safe Arrival school messenger system at 1-866-606-5567 to report your child's absence.

LATES

We are still having issues with students arriving to school late each day. More often than not it is within a few short minutes of the entry bell. With the impact of Covid this raises concerns for everyone's safety as students who normally do not come into contact are now doing so in the office area. We would ask that you please do your best to have your child(ren) arrive to Westdale on time each morning. We have staff out on the yard to greet students every day starting at 8:25 a.m. Thank you for your consideration.