

March 2022, Vol. 7

THE GROVE

Cedar Grove Elementary School's Monthly Newsletter



A couple of weeks ago I sent an email home to families asking for your support with guiding children towards appropriate play and words. At Cedar Grove we continue to remind students to use 'kind words' to acknowledge, own, and express their feelings and frustrations. We do our best to guide a restorative and learning process with our students, we ask that you also please have a discussion and review with your child at home around what is acceptable in terms of communication and right actions. Some of the things that are concerning us: physical aggression; pretend fights; destruction of equipment; put downs, name calling, and/or threats; online bullying/name-calling; and disrespectful exchanges with staff and with peers. Students need to feel safe in their classes and in our school yard. Please work with us to ensure that we guide and help our students use kind and acceptable language and actions. We truly thank you for your attention and support around this!

Before Spring Break families will have the opportunity to meet with teachers and discuss learning goals for the remainder of the school year. While we are happy to see an ease in our protocols, please note that teachers will be offering a variety of ways to meet with you (calls, zoom, in person). To have these important interactions we will be dismissing learners early on March 9th and 10th at 1:30pm.

In lieu of a book fair for this round of family/teacher conferences we will be having a book swap! Held in the library on March 9th and 10th. Families may bring in their gently used books to the library starting on Tuesday, March 1. Students will get a ticket for each book they bring in. On the days of the swap they can come in at recess, lunch, and after school to trade for fresh books.

As always If you have any questions, concerns or feedback know that you can always reach out.

**AIR HUGS,
OLWEN COWAN, PRINCIPAL**

PAC CORNER

PAC Meeting: Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday March 2nd at 7pm. The zoom meeting invite link will be emailed out the day before.

Cookie Dough Fundraiser: We are selling cookie dough and muffin batter through Mom's Pantry over the next few weeks. Go to <https://momspantry.ca/collections/cookie-dough-muffin-batter> to get your orders in before March 12th. Make sure to search up our school when it is time to checkout. The cookie dough and muffin batter comes in scoop & bake 3 lbs tubs. They can be stored for up to 6 months in the freezer or 2 weeks in the fridge. Orders will be ready for pick up in the last week of March.

Yearbooks: If you haven't ordered your CGE yearbook yet, it's not too late. Yearbooks are available online for \$25. Go to www.jostens.com and search up our school. Order deadline is March 15th. We are also looking for more photos of your students at school, on the playground or on field trips. If you have any you'd like to share, go to our website at www.cedargrovepac.com and click on the Links & Resources Tab.

Purdys: Our Purdys Easter Fundraiser is on now. Order at <https://fundraising.purdys.com/join.aspx/1370771-93079> and use campaign number 23464. Order by March 22 and items will be ready on March 29th.

UPCOMING KEY DATES

Tuesday, 1st - Jessy Wollen visits start
Wednesday, 2nd - PAC Meeting
Friday, 4th - Div. 5 to Skookumchuck
Friday, 4th - Report Cards Home
Wednesday, 9th - Early Dismissals (Teacher/Family Conferences)
Thursday, 10th - Early Dismissals (Teacher/Family Conferences)
Friday, 11th - Last day before Spring Break
Monday, 28th - School reopens

BELL SCHEDULE

8:20 - Doors open
 8:20 - First bell
 8:30 - Instruction begins
 10:15 - 10:35 - Recess
 11:50 - 12:29 - Outside playtime
 12:29 - Class begins for afternoon
 2:30 - Dismissal



PLEASE SEND YOUR CHILD WITH A MASK!



WEST COAST RECESS!



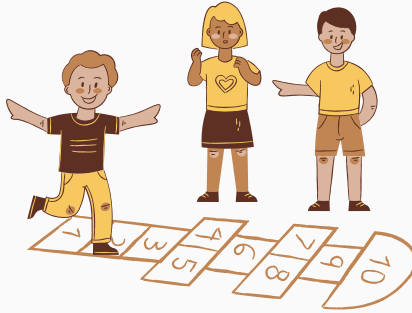
Please send your children to school with appropriate outdoor clothing. Many kids (you know who they are) benefit from keeping a change of clothes at school.



NAVIGATOR'S NOOK

by Karys Foley, Family Support Navigator

A B C PLAY



Last month Sarah talked about coping capacity. She outlined many of the reasons for us to be stressed and overwhelmed right now. She was speaking for and to adults. This week I would like to speak for children and youth.

When adults are stressed and distracted and overwhelmed kids can feel it. Even if you are an expert at masking your emotional state with your kids there are so many other places that kids can pick up on the stress (school; peer interactions; a trip to the grocery store). Living through a pandemic erodes our sense of psychological safety (if we were fortunate enough to have it in the first place). I think one would have to live on the moon to not feel what is going on in our world right now. Kids are hardwired to orient to adults for psychological safety - when adults don't have that to give them they become anxious; agitated and overwhelmed.

In the last year, I have had the joy and privilege of leading playgroups with children and youth. Let me share what I learned and observed by leading these groups.

1. Kids want to play. They need to play. They aren't getting enough play
2. Kids want to play with adults - they love it!
3. Everyone benefits from play - adults and kids alike
4. Many kids went from being uncooperative; competitive; mean and disrespectful to cooperative; curious; caring and engaged. It is remarkable to witness this transformation!
5. Everyone leaves the play more relaxed and focussed - the potential for emotional and physical reset is huge!

Here is another thing: for all kinds of reasons, kids are getting more screen time. The problem with screen time is that it doesn't adequately meet our emotional and relationship-based needs. Any device carrier will tell you that they have a hard time not looking at the screen many times a day. Some of us open up social media apps looking for connection and many of us seek to escape the stressors of our lives by tuning out online. Much of the research will tell you that screens do not provide connection, nor do they reduce stress. Aside from the effects of the blue light from screens on a good night's sleep (40% of Canadian kids don't get enough sleep) screen time further frustrates kids. They go to the screen to get an emotional or psychological need met that the device can't provide. So how can we meet the need for connection and stress reduction - the answer is play.

Here are some of the benefits of play (google it):

- Play is the way that children express their hopes, fears, ideas and feelings
- Play assists in physical, emotional, mental and social development - play sets kids up to learn.
- Play is the fastest way to connect 2 hearts - it builds relationship and provides an avenue for relationship repair

Perhaps it has been a while since you played. You are not alone! Here are some ideas:

- Games - physical, toy-based, imaginative, "pretend" (hide and seek; I spy; Simon says)
- Card games; board games; puzzles
- Music - playing, singing, dancing
- Art - creating something together
- Make-believe - building forts and playing lego; playdough
- Get outside for some nature-based play

What matters:

- Remember what is important - connection and stress reduction - just show up and stay engaged. If you can't think of a game to play I bet your child/student has ideas.
- In order to be true play, it must be free of expectation or agenda - so you have to put down your director's hat and have fun for a bit
- That you participate with your child/students - so much modeling of social expectations and healthy ways to express feelings can come of this. But leave room for kids to be as big or small or as messy as they need to be with their play.

Play is perhaps our best device for resetting our children and youth. It is not a waste of time or something reserved for children - adults benefit from playing too!

