



Goulbourn Middle School

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Dear Parents or Guardians,

In a follow up to the information provided earlier this week to parents and guardians of students in grades 7-12 regarding a growing concern about drug overdoses, I am providing all parents with some further information.

I know that you may have more questions about drug use and the current opioid use in the city. The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) has been working with Rideauwood Addictions and Family Counselling, Ottawa Public Health, and Ottawa Police Services to organize parent evenings at several of our school locations. We know that the more information you have, the better equipped you are to parent.

The sessions will be held on:

Wednesday, March 8 - Earl of March Secondary School 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 9 - Glebe Collegiate Institute 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 22 - Longfields Davidson Heights SS 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 23 - Gloucester High School 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

These presentations will focus on opioids and opioid overdose, followed by a marketplace of community resources. Parents will also have an opportunity to speak directly to Public Health nurses, Rideauwood counsellors and Ottawa Police.

Information on the Health and Physical Education Curriculum

Below you will find an outline of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum which directly pertains to education around this issue by grade. I thought you may find it useful in your discussions with your children about drug use and abuse. In addition to the work we are doing to support understanding through our curricula, we are engaging our student senate to promote peer-to-peer projects in our schools as we know student voice is a compelling one in influencing youth behaviour.

Education is one critical strategy that can help prevent substance abuse. Parents, guardians, educators, and society in general all have key roles to play in educating students about substance use, misuse, and abuse.

Alcohol and tobacco are the drugs most readily available to Ontario students, and smoking is the primary cause of preventable illnesses, disabilities, and premature deaths in Canada. The learning expectations related to substance use and abuse respond to these facts by focusing on an understanding of the effects of drugs – prescription drugs, non-prescription drugs, illicit drugs, tobacco, and alcohol – and the consequences of their use. This knowledge is integrated with the development of a variety of living skills that help students make and maintain healthy choices.

This strand of the curriculum also addresses addictions and related behaviours that can lead to addictions or compulsive behaviour, such as online gambling or excessive screen time. It includes discussion of the relationship between substance use and abuse and mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and eating disorders. Students are made aware of support systems that can help them find healthy, substance-free alternatives for coping with stressful situations.

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours Overview - Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum – 2015

Grade	Understanding Health Concepts	Making Healthy Choices	Making Connections for Healthy Living
1			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unhealthy habits, healthy alternatives
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prescription/ non-prescription medicines 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medication, healthy alternatives
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of legal/ illegal substances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision making - substance use behaviours 	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tobacco 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions about smoking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short- and long-term effects of smoking
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short- and long-term effects of alcohol use 	Refusal skills – alcohol use and other behaviours	Decision to drink alcohol, influences
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effects of cannabis, illicit drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies, safe choices, influences, 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports – substance use, addictive behaviours 	tobacco, alcohol, cannabis	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health, substances, support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body image, substance use 	Implications of substance use and addictions
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning signs, consequences 	Mental health, stress management	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience – protective and risk factors 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social influences; decision-making, communication skills
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on health and well-being 	Responding to challenges involving substance use or addictions – use of living skills	Addiction- related issues – local, national, and global
11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections between substance use, addictive behaviour, and physical and mental health; making safer choices 	Risk factors and supports
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequences of substance misuse – short-term, long-term, legal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing resilience, making healthy choices 	Local and international trends and issues

Robyn Darragh
Principal