

Copperhaven School

Newsletter



COPPERHAVEN
COBRAS

February 1, 2024

Principal's Message

It's February, heart month, the month to live with your heart first, a time to practice small acts of kindness. Be sure to thank someone today, smile at a stranger, let someone go first, offer help or anything else where you see an opportunity to make the world a better place, one small act at a time. Have a wonderful February.

Linda Simmonds

Dates to Remember

February 8 & 9	Teachers Convention-School Closed
February 15	Kindergarten Open House 6:00-7:00 p.m. Spruce Grove Comp High School Open House 6:00-8:00 p.m.
February 16	PD Day-No School for Students
February 19	Family Day-School Closed
February 20	School Council Meeting 6:30-8:00 p.m.
February 28	Pink Shirt Day

Vehicle Traffic

If you have been to our school at the end of the day you know that our parking lot and drop off area is very congested. If you expect to freely drive in and out of our pick up zone quickly you will be very disappointed. If you have been at our school in previous years you will know that with patience and following the traffic flow rules, you will be on our way within 5-10 minutes of our bell at 3:45.

Please remember that there are many children trying to walk home, cross the street, and get to their parents' car. Follow normal traffic rules:

- Stay in your vehicle unless you are in a designated parking spot,
- Watch for children crossing and attend to safety first,
- Vehicles are not permitted in the bus transfer area or staff parking.

And last, you are modeling for your children and all children, how we behave in sometimes stressful situations, how to wait your turn and how to behave as a positive member of our school community.

Term 1 Report Cards

Our first report cards of the year have been completed for term one and are available for viewing in the parent portal of PowerSchool. Parents will need to log onto their parent portal in order to view the report cards. Please remember that the app on smart phones does not work well for viewing report cards.

If you need assistance please view the following video or call the school office for assistance.

[PowerSchool Tutorial](#)

Regular access to your child's ongoing assessment information in PowerSchool is available again now after being disabled during report card preparation time.

Winter Carnaval

Mrs. Jessie Krefting, our dedicated French as a Second Language teacher has, again this year, organized our annual Winter Carnaval (not a spelling error but rather the French spelling used for the Quebec Winter Carnaval) on Friday, February 2nd. A day of outdoor activities for grades K-5A in the morning and 5-9 in the afternoon. There will be canoe relays, potato sack races, spoon races, broomball, indigenous games and maple taffy making. Be sure your children dress for being outside for long periods of time so they can enjoy the fun.

Grade 9 Transition to Spruce Grove Composite High School News

Grade 9 report cards, issued on January 30 contained recommendations for high school registration at this time based on achievement, work habits and assignment completion.

Teacher recommendations play an important role in the registration process. Upcoming events for our grade 9 students are:

- SGCHS staff visit to grade 9 classes to share important information about course work, registration process and the high school environment on Feb. 7, 2024 @ 12:50 p.m.
- Open House at SGCHS Feb. 15, 2024 @ 6:00-8:00 p.m. with a session for Knowledge and Employability (K&E) at 5:30 p.m.

Additional student meetings, registration forms and parent information events will be announced as dates are set. Stay tuned!

School Calendar for 2024-2025

Parkland School Division's school calendar is [online now, at psd.ca](https://psd.ca)

Update from your Parent Council

Please watch our social media for exciting updates on upcoming events - including a Family Dance on March 21, 2024. Our next meeting is February 20, 2024 @6:30pm in the library - the agenda will be shared prior to the meeting as well. All parents and guardians are welcome and we hope to see you there!

Please watch our social media for exciting updates on upcoming events - including a Family Dance on March 21, 2024. Staff appreciation can continue to be shared here: <https://bit.ly/copperhavenstaff>. Our next meeting is February 20, 2024 @6:30pm in the library - the agenda will be shared prior to the meeting as well. All parents and guardians are welcome and we hope to see you there!

Thank you,
Sheila, Amy, Chantelle and Pam

Counsellor's Corner: Youth and Suicide

Young people today face significant internal and external stressors, including social, physiological, and neurological change. Being an adolescent can involve many challenges. When facing them, some may feel trapped and need support to help them see hope for the future. Thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts are key warning signs. If young people show

these signs, it is crucial to offer support and connect them to help as soon as possible (Bennett et al., 2015).

Why are youth at risk?

Certain factors can place some people at a higher risk for suicide than others, and when multiple factors outweigh the factors that build resiliency, there is an increased likelihood that a person may be thinking about suicide (Sharam et al., 2021)

A few factors put youth at risk of suicide:

- Internal stressors such as overwhelming emotional pain, feelings of hopelessness, mental illness, trauma, impulsivity, or struggles with gender identification or sexual orientation.
- External stressors such as bullying, exposure to suicide, homelessness, or a recent stressful event (especially actual or perceived losses).
- A tendency for “tunnel vision” that prevents them from being able to see past the difficulties of today and into the future.
- A vulnerability to “suicide contagion” (or imitation) that may put them at risk in reaction to the suicide of a loved one, celebrity, or fictional character they strongly identify with (Zenere, 2009).

In 2019, among those in the 15-19 age group **129 males** (11.9 per 100 000) and **71 females** (6.9 per 100 000) **died by suicide** (Statistics Canada, 2019).

Youth are admitted to hospital for suicide attempts more than any other age group (as many as one in four admissions) (Kutcher & Szumilas, 2008).

Suicide accounts for **25%** of all deaths among 15-24 year olds (Statistics Canada, 2019).

Historically, adolescent females attempted suicide far more often than males. While males died more often, that gap is narrowing as females increasingly use more lethal means of suicide (Skinner & McFaul, 2012).

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-19-year-olds, second only to all unintentional injuries (accidents) combined, including unintentional drug overdoses (Statistics Canada, 2019).

Warning Signs

Any significant change in behaviour or mood is a warning sign that someone may be thinking about suicide. In the following examples among young people, some characteristic behaviours may be symptoms of an emerging mental health concern, including thoughts of suicide:

- **Significant mood changes:**
 - Being really sad when usually they're happy, or being really happy when they're usually down
 - Getting angry, annoyed, or easily frustrated
- **Risk taking, spontaneous behaviour that is out of the ordinary:**

- Drinking more alcohol or taking more drugs than usual
- Wanting to run away from home
- **Conversation or statements that indicate hopelessness, psychological pain, feelings of worthlessness, or being a burden:**
 - *“What’s the point of even trying?”*
 - *“Nobody cares about me.”*
- **Talking about or making plans for suicide.**
- **Marked changes in behaviour or worrisome behaviour:**
 - Withdrawal (from activities they normally enjoy, social media)
 - Changes in sleep patterns
 - Anger or hostility
 - Recent increases in agitation or irritability

(Suicide Awareness Voices of Education et al., 2015)

- **Reaching a point where self-harm (non-suicidal self-injury) is no longer an effective coping mechanism (Whitlock & Knox, 2007)**

What can reduce risk?

Suicide risk to youth can be reduced in four basic ways: reducing psychological pain, increasing hope, enhancing connection, and reducing the capability for suicide (Klonsky, personal communication, 2020).

Other factors that may reduce risk:

- A strong family connection
- A positive school environment
- Strong supportive relationships (with friends, trusted adults)
- Good self-esteem
- Hope for the future
- Recognition that emotions are not static, that one’s emotional state constantly changes
- Involvement in positive activities outside regular school hours (e.g., volunteering, participating in cultural activities, sports)

(Armstrong & Manion, 2015)

What can we all do to help reduce suicide among youth?

If a young person you know is exhibiting warning signs, talk with them. You can start the conversation by mentioning your concerns and using direct and open-ended questions: “I noticed you are getting more frustrated about your school work lately. How are you doing?” Take time to listen, and let them express themselves without lecturing them. Be patient if what they are saying is not immediately apparent or reasonable to you. Remember their perspective and validate their feelings. Be aware that the young person may also express themselves using body language.

If you are still worried about them, ask, “Are you still thinking about suicide?” If they say “yes” don’t react with shock or anger or try to solve their problems. Ask if they have a plan for how they would die by suicide. If they say “yes” get help immediately and do not leave them home alone. Take them to the emergency department or call a crisis line for advice. Otherwise, enlist the help of others, such as a family member, friend, or crisis centre.

At home and at school

Ways to help prevent suicide in a young person you know:

- Help them build connections with family, other adults and youth, and create a network of support
- Guide them in identifying their strengths
- Develop or strengthen your relationship with them
- Provide support, communicate positive expectations, and invite their participation
- Demonstrate attitudes and messages of optimism, strength, and overcoming difficulties
- Pinpoint and treat underlying disorders that may be contributing to their mental health challenges
- Identify and resolve ongoing or historical trauma

What can youth do to stay mentally healthy?

- 1. Build and maintain strong, positive relationships**
- 2. Do activities you enjoy and are passionate about**
- 3. Seek help when it's needed by talking to a trusted adult or friend**
- 4. If you're having thoughts of suicide, reach out to an adult**

Helpful Websites:

Canadian Association for Suicide

www.suicideprevention.ca

Centre for Suicide Prevention

www.suicideinfo.ca

Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide

www.sptsusa.org

National Association of School Psychologists

www.nasponline.org

Urgent Supports (Edmonton and area)

Distress Line 24/7 Suicide Prevention Hotline

780-482-4357

Call, text or online chat

Bully Line for Teens

1-888-456-2323

Crisis Mobile Response (8am-11:30pm)

780-407-1000

Kid's Help Phone 24/7

1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868

References

Armstrong L. L., & Manion, I. G. (2015). Meaningful youth engagement as a protective factor for youth suicidal ideation. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 25(1), 20-27. bit.ly/3qIU5J4

Bennett, K., Rhodes, A. E., Duda, S., Cheung, A. H., Manassis, K., Links, P., Mushquash, C., Braunberger, P., Newton, A. S., Kutcher, S., Bridge, J. A., Santos, R. G., Manion, I. G., McLennan, J. D., Bagnell, A., Lipman, E., Rice, M., & Szatmari. (2015). A youth suicide prevention plan for Canada: A systematic review of reviews. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 60(6), 245-257. bit.ly/3towgLL

Kutcher, S. P., & Szumilas, M. (2008). Youth suicide prevention. *CMAJ*, 178(3), 282-285. bit.ly/3Aa6frX

Sharam, S., Smith, M., Kemp, T., Shelly, B. & Feddersen, M. (2021). Promoting “Zest for Life”: A systematic literature review of resiliency factors to prevent youth suicide. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 31(1), 4-24.

Skinner, R., & McFaull, S. (2012). Suicide among children and adolescents in Canada: Trends and sex differences, 1980-2008. *CMAJ*, 184(9), 1029-1034. [bit.ly/3rimn6l](https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj)

Statistics Canada. (2019). Deaths and age-specific mortality rates, by selected grouped causes (Table 13-10-0392-01 [formerly CANSIM 102- 0551]). [bit.ly/3K9rAGd](https://doi.org/10.25318/1310039201)

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, American Association of Suicidology, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, & National Center for the Prevention of Youth Suicide. (2015). Youth warning signs. [bit.ly/33wDlpF](https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986215574444)

Whitlock, J., & Knox, K. L. (2007). The relationship between selfinjurious behavior and suicide in a young adult population. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 161(7), 634-640. [bit.ly/33x1V9C](https://doi.org/10.1001/archpedi.161.7.634)

Zenere, F. J. (2009). Suicide clusters and contagion. *Principal Leadership*, 10(2), 12-16. [bit.ly/33bRRTY](https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986209344444)