

Gray Elementary

SEL Update May 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We made it to May! There are so many reasons to feel a sense of quiet pride and accomplishment when we state this fact. Yet, as hard as we may try, we simply cannot mask the fact that “pandemic fatigue” is real. Very real. Our emotions have been running on high alert for many months now, as we function under this elevated level of awareness without any break. Our brains are always in a form of fight-or-flight mode, resulting in this sense of emotional exhaustion or fatigue.

At the school, as much as we continue to celebrate our milestones and accomplishments, we know some are feeling fatigued or frustrated. The signs for this take several forms. For kids, it often looks like lower levels of self-motivation, more feelings of hopelessness, higher levels of anxiety, not sleeping well (or sleeping too much). For parents, it usually manifests itself in being more irritable or on edge with children or spouses/adults and not sleeping well. At the same time, our students are longing for the ‘normal’ end of the year events they typically enjoy at this time of the school year. After all, this is the time of year when we enjoy Track & Field season, outdoor field trips, the PAC Carnival, swimming lessons and Gr. 7 transition visits to the high school.

We need to keep remembering as we near the 15-month mark of this surreal pandemic, to continue to be kind to both ourselves and to each other. We need to keep doing our best every single day by frequently reminding ourselves (and each other) that “we’ve got this”. It can feel hard to prioritize what’s important and learn to roll with what may come next. So - let’s remember what one simple priority could be: acting as part of a community with patience, compassion and kindness. When we do this, our entire community, kids and all, will benefit.

The ZONES of Regulation®

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

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The LILY JO PROJECT:

Gray Elementary is piloting an online resource that focuses on the mental health of our youth. As part of this program, teachers and parents have free access to the resources on their website. There are various videos and information geared to parents who want more information on how to support their children who may be experiencing sadness, anxiety, anger, depression and other big feelings.

Please find the information here:

<https://www.thelilyjoproject.com/kids-mental-health/>

Table Talk / Car Conversations

- What does it mean to “THINK” before we speak?
- What is the difference between facts and assumptions?
- Why is it important to get all the facts in a situation before reacting?

Parent Resources / Sessions

Here is a list of free education sessions/videos shared by the district’s Prevention & School Wellness Manager, Kirsten Hermanson, presented by various community partners:

- [Gang Prevention Session May 13](#) See attached flyer.
- *Generation Health is a **FREE and VIRTUAL 10-week healthy lifestyle program** for children and their families, delivered through the YMCA of Greater Vancouver and in partnership with the Childhood Obesity Foundation. Program participants will meet online once a week to learn about healthy eating, physical activity, goal setting, body image, self-esteem and more! There will be 4 programs days to choose from: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Fridays from 6:30-8:30pm. This program requires prior registration and screening through these details: phone 1-888-650-3141 or send an e-mail to info@generationhealth.ca. (Please see flyer attached)*

Additionally, given the challenging times we are experiencing, here are some helpful links for parents/caregivers:

[BC Children’s Hospital: Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre](#)

[Parent Support Services for Lower Mainland/Fraser Valley](#)

[Mental Health Resource for Kids](#)

Gr. 3/4s created their own class emoji poster showcasing many different emotions we can feel.



As always, please reach out if you have any questions or other resources worth sharing with our parent community.

Sincerely,

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