

# ST. MARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

December 1, 2011

## **CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

*Joy is the true gift of Christmas, not the expensive gifts that call for time and money. We can communicate this joy simply: with a smile, a kind gesture, a little help, forgiveness. And the joy we give will certainly come back to us. Amen.*

### **ADVENT SEASON**

The Advent Season is upon us. Waiting for the birth of Jesus is an exciting time. Enjoy this special time of waiting by preparing together as a family. May God bless you and your family.

### **ANGEL TREE**

Our classes are supporting the Angel Tree program. All donations are welcome and should be at the school by December 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS**

An Inclement Weather Day reminder to parents that the schools remain open but buses do not run. **If parents choose to drive their children in, they must also pick them up at the end of the day.** Those students attending school will have regular classes. Any scheduled practices, games, tutoring programs, etc., will be cancelled for that day.

### **JACOB'S LADDER**

Now that the cold weather is here, for safety reasons, the Jacob's Ladder play structure will be off-limits to all students effective December 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **PEANUT-FREE SCHOOL**

We would like to remind you that St. Mary School is a peanut-free school. We kindly ask that you do not send products that contain peanuts. There are a few manufacturers who are aggressively marketing peanut-free products that look, taste and smell like real peanut butter (soy butter, sun butter, wow butter, etc.). These products cause confusion and difficulty in monitoring lunches on a daily basis and create an unsafe environment for our peanut anaphylactic student and staff population. Therefore, due to the obvious difficulty in identifying the difference between peanut butter and artificial peanut butter, **we do not allow any of these products in our school.**

### **ST. MARY SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS/BREAKFAST CLUB:**

Nutrition-wise, November was a busy month in our Breakfast Club program, which takes place in our school gym daily from 9:00 to 9:15 a.m. If you would like to make a financial contribution towards our nutrition programs, please send it in your child(s) agenda in an envelope marked Nutrition Programs Donation. We will send you back a receipt (please remember to include your name). Thank you to everyone for your continued support!

### **STUDENT SUPPORT WORKER UPDATE**

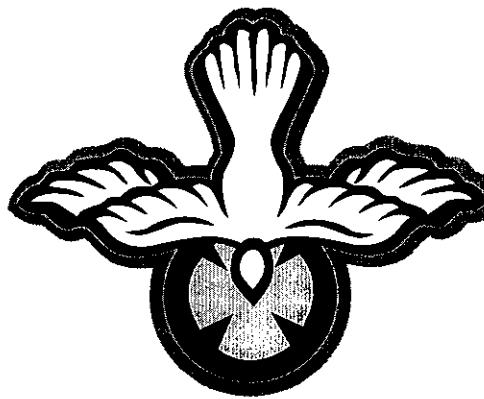
I would like to take this opportunity to fill you in on some of the programming being facilitated at St. Mary School. To date, the Grade 4 classes have completed their initial Anti-Bullying Program, while the Grade 5 students are presently receiving theirs. The Grade 6 classes will focus on Cyberbullying workshops, in conjunction with our local Community Police Officer. The breakdown of the program looks like this:

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>WEEK 1:</b> | Defining bullying and the various forms it comes in.   |
| <b>WEEK 2:</b> | Recognizing the key players in a bullying scenario and supplying strategies to take power away from a bully. |
| <b>WEEK 3:</b> | Discussing the impact of bullying, with a focus on feelings and empathy.                                     |
| <b>WEEK 4:</b> | Bullicide and personal safety.   |
| <b>WEEK 5:</b> | Internet safety and cyber-bullying.  |
| <b>WEEK 6:</b> | Consequences of bullying - guest appearance by our Community Police Officer.                                 |

Each of the above lessons includes a component on personal safety, problem-solving strategies, reporting techniques and the importance of keeping the communication lines open with parents and teaching staff. Please feel free to contact Mary Lynn Greene, Student Support Worker, at anytime with questions or concerns. To promote our Anti-Bullying Strategies we have also had the NED Show in to perform for all grade levels. Highlights of the NED Show include the messages "Never Give Up, Encourage Others and Do the Right Thing". St. Mary School also offers Rainbows, Roots of Empathy and Big Brothers/Big Sisters as supportive programs running throughout the school year in all grade levels.

**ST. MARY SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED  
FOR CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS FROM  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2011 TO  
FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2012 INCLUSIVE.**

**STUDENTS RETURN TO CLASS  
ON MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2012.**



**WITS ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAM**

Further to our notice at the end of the last school year, we are continuing to participate in the WITS Anti-Bullying Program. If you are in agreement with your child being involved in the evaluation process of this Carleton University anti-bullying program (see attached pamphlets), please complete and return the consent form below.

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I GIVE CONSENT FOR MY CHILD \_\_\_\_\_ (PRINT NAME)  
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EVALUATION OF THE WITS PROGRAM FOR THE 2011/2012 SCHOOL  
YEAR.

MY CHILD IS IN GRADE \_\_\_\_\_ AT ST. MARY SCHOOL, CARLETON PLACE AND MY CHILD'S  
TEACHER IS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

NO, I DO NOT GIVE CONSENT FOR MY CHILD \_\_\_\_\_ TO  
PARTICIPATE.

## How Can You Use The Program At Home?

1. **Read WITS books with your children.** Borrow a *WITS* book from your child's school library or your local public library! You can find a list of books in Section 8 of the *WITS* Manual online at [www.youth.society.uvic.ca](http://www.youth.society.uvic.ca)

2. Watch television programs with your children and their friends and **talk about the characters' actions and choices in resolving conflicts.**

3. When reading books or watching television, **ask questions** to get your child talking about the messages they send, like:

- ✓ What problem do you think the main character has?
- ✓ Was the problem something the main characters could resolve themselves, or did they need help?
- ✓ How do you know when to ask for help and when to work it out on your own?
- ✓ Have you ever had a similar problem, or do you know someone who has? How did they resolve it? What worked? What didn't? How would you use your *WITS* to solve a similar problem in the future?
- ✓ How did the other characters act? How did their actions make the main character feel? Could they have chosen to act differently? Which of their *WITS* could they have used?

4. **Adopt the *WITS* language at home!** Remind your children to **W**alk Away, **I**gnore, **T**alk it Out, and **S**eek Help when they compete for toys, television, who gets to go first, or for more serious problems such as hitting, pushing, teasing, and threatening.

5. **Use *WITS* Time-Outs.** Taking a time-out provides a great chance for children to **W**alk away and **I**gnore a conflict to think of a good solution to the problem. After a time-out period (one minute per year in age is a good guideline), take a moment to discuss the conflict with your child alone, then together with the sibling or friend. Ask them to talk about how things got out of hand, how they could have used their *WITS* to avoid the conflict, and how they would do things differently should another conflict arise.

## WITS-Related Resources

**Ask for these titles, available at your school or local library:**

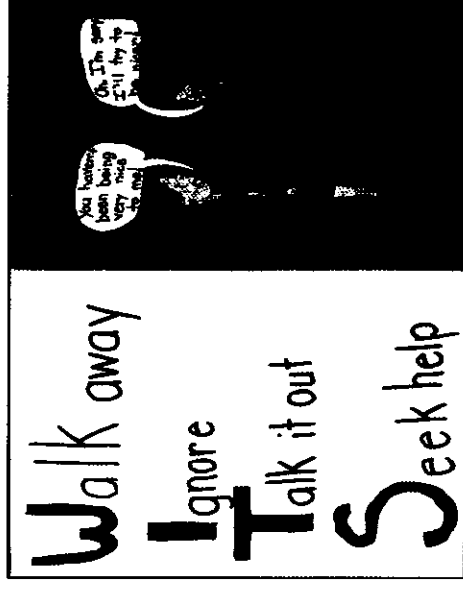
*The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander.* By Barbara Coloroso. Published by Harper Collins (2002).

*Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats.* By Nancy E. Willard. Published by Research Press (2007).

*Easing the Teasing.* By Judy S. Freedman. Published by McGraw-Hill (2002).

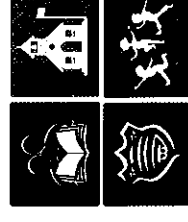
# Using Your **WITS** At Home

## Resources for Parents



2007 *WITS* Poster Contest Winner  
Frank Hobbs Elementary

**The *WITS* Programs aim to reduce peer victimization and bullying in elementary school children**



[www.witsprogram.ca](http://www.witsprogram.ca)

The **WITS** acronym stands for "Walk away", "Ignore", "Talk it out", and "Seek help." It is a simple way of teaching elementary school children the skills that they need to handle conflicts with others. But, the prevention of victimization and bullying requires more than cute acronyms. It requires a *community* of dedicated adults who work together to create neighbourhoods, schools, and communities that are safe and quick to respond to young children's reports of bullying and victimization.

The **WITS** Program reaches out beyond schools and classrooms to unite emergency service professionals (police, fire-fighters, and paramedics), teachers, parents, and older children to prevent victimization and bullying, and to provide us all with resources to learn how to respond effectively when children ask for help.

*This pamphlet is directed at parents but all of the **WITS** Program's resources can be downloaded from:*

**[www.witsprogram.ca](http://www.witsprogram.ca)**

*These resources were developed in an ongoing collaboration among the Rock Solid Foundation, Teachers from Greater Victoria School District 61, and Researchers from the University of Victoria's Centre for Youth and Society.*



## Tips To Share With Your Children

- ✓ If it's hard for you to stand up for yourself, ignore the bullying and walk away, then tell someone who can help
- ✓ Get funny! Humour shows you're not bothered
- ✓ Be assertive, not aggressive
- ✓ Fighting back makes the bullying worse
- ✓ Remember that telling is not tattling
- ✓ If you walk away and get help, you are part of the solution. If you stay and watch, you are part of the problem
- ✓ Put yourself in the other kid's shoes. Would you want to be picked on, put down, or left out?
- ✓ Apologize to the kids you have bullied
- ✓ Be a real leader. Real leaders treat others with respect
- ✓ Remember that **NO ONE** deserves to be bullied!

For more tips, visit  
[www.prevnet.ca](http://www.prevnet.ca)

## Why Should Parents Be Involved?

When parents help their children deal with conflicts, chances increase that a conflict will be resolved peacefully.

When parents step in during a conflict, they:

- ✓ Give support to their child
- ✓ Show that they are available to help solve problems
- ✓ Teach their child the skills they need to solve future problems

## Steps Parents Can Take To Solve Sibling or Peer Conflicts:

1. Ask what the conflict is about.
2. Ask the children which of their **WITS** they could use to solve the conflict. They may need to try all the **WITS** strategies to resolve the conflict!
3. Ask what they think might happen if they used their **WITS**.
4. Talk about why using their **WITS** is a better choice than fighting.
5. Praise them when they use their **WITS**!
6. Use **WITS** to solve your own conflicts

- ✓ Discuss the importance of treating others with kindness and respect when sending electronic messages, not just in person

- ✓ Encourage your child to come to you if someone says or does something on-line to make them feel uncomfortable

## What to do if your Child is a Victim of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can have negative consequences, such as low self-esteem and school avoidance.

If your child tells you that he or she is being bullied on-line:

- ✓ Listen and provide support
- ✓ **Save the evidence:** phone and internet records can be traced
- ✓ Tell the bully to stop, if their identity is known
- ✓ Report the incident(s) to school administrators
- ✓ Notify the police

## Cyberbullying Resources

The information contained in this pamphlet was adapted from the resources below. Ask for the books at your school or local library, and visit the websites for more information on cyberbullying and what you can do about it:

- ✓ *Cyberbullying and cyberthreats.* By Nancy E. Willard. Published by Research Press (2007).
- ✓ *Cyberbullying: Bullying in the digital age.* By R. Kowalski, S. Limber, and P. Agatston. Published by Wiley-Blackwell Press (2007).

- ✓ [www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org)
- ✓ [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)
- ✓ [www.cyberbullying.us](http://www.cyberbullying.us)

The WITS Programs resources are developed in an ongoing collaboration among the Rock Solid Foundation, Teachers from Greater Victoria School District 61, and Researchers from the University of Victoria's Centre for Youth and Society.

Centre for  
*Youth & Society*  
OF VICTORIA



# Cyberbullying

## A Resource for Parents

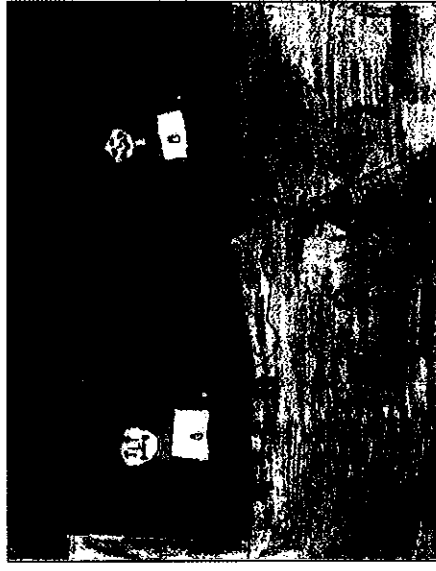


Photo: Drew Jackson

This pamphlet was prepared by the WITS Programs to reduce bullying and peer victimization in elementary school children. See [www.witsprogram.ca](http://www.witsprogram.ca) for more information



**W**alk Away  
**I**gnore  
**T**alk it Out  
**S**eek Help

**Cyberbullying** is a type of bullying that takes place electronically, using the Internet or cell phones. It is important for children, parents, and school staff to be aware of cyberbullying as more and more children become immersed in the digital world.

This resource gives parents an understanding of what cyberbullying is, how to be proactive in preventing it, and how to help if your child is involved in cyberbullying – as a victim or as a user.

## What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is an *illegal* activity. Children are not always aware of the consequences of their actions. Knowing what cyberbullying is and talking about the seriousness of it may prevent children from engaging in cyberbullying or from being victims or silent bystanders to cyberbullying.

**Cyberbullying** includes the following negative or hurtful behaviours:

- ✓ Sending nasty or insulting electronic messages over the Internet or on cell phones

- ✓ Sending or posting gossip, secrets or rumours about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships

- ✓ Pretending to be someone else and sending negative messages or posting material to get others in trouble or to hurt their reputation or friendships

- ✓ Purposely excluding someone from an Internet group, chat room, or friend list

- ✓ Posting real or digitally-altered photographs of someone on-line without their permission

- ✓ Using websites to rate peers' popularity or appearance

## How is it Different from Other Forms of Bullying?

- ✓ Cyberbullying often looks anonymous. It does not occur face-to-face, so cyberbullies think their online identity is unknown – but phone numbers and internet addresses can be traced

- ✓ It is often more harsh. Cyberbullies say things online that they wouldn't say in person

- ✓ It is far-reaching.

Electronic messages can be easily sent to a school, community, or posted on a web-site for the whole world to see forever

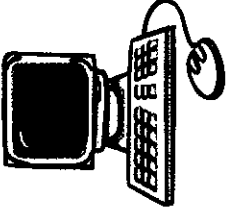
## What Can Parents do to Get Involved?

- ✓ Keep computers in a shared family space in your home – not in a child's bedroom

- ✓ Learn everything you can about what your children do on-line: Be familiar with any profiles (e.g., Facebook), web pages or electronic journals (blogs) they use

- ✓ Know your child's passwords

- ✓ Teach your children to never post on-line or send in a text message anything that they wouldn't want the entire world to see or read



# ST. MARY SCHOOL CALENDAR

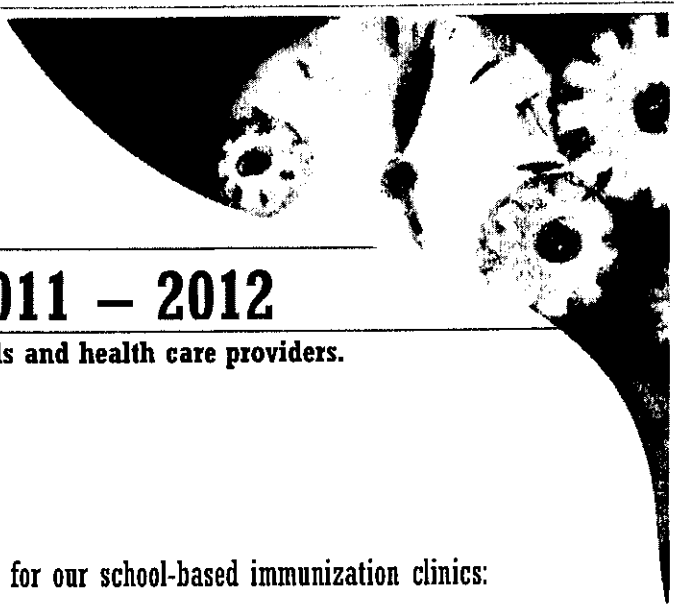
# DECEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



				1 All Day Girls Volleyball Tournament - St. Mary School	2 All Day Boys Volleyball Tournament - Perth  Pizza Day	3
					10:00 am Mass - CP Manor  Pizza Day	
			9:30 am-3:00 pm Rosary Apostolate	9:30 am-11:50 am Student Confessions - St. Mary's Church	9:30 am Christmas Mass - St. Mary's Church  Pizza Day	
				2:00 pm Christmas Concert	Pizza Day	

# CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS



## Health Unit Events 2011 – 2012

An information newsletter for our partner schools and health care providers.

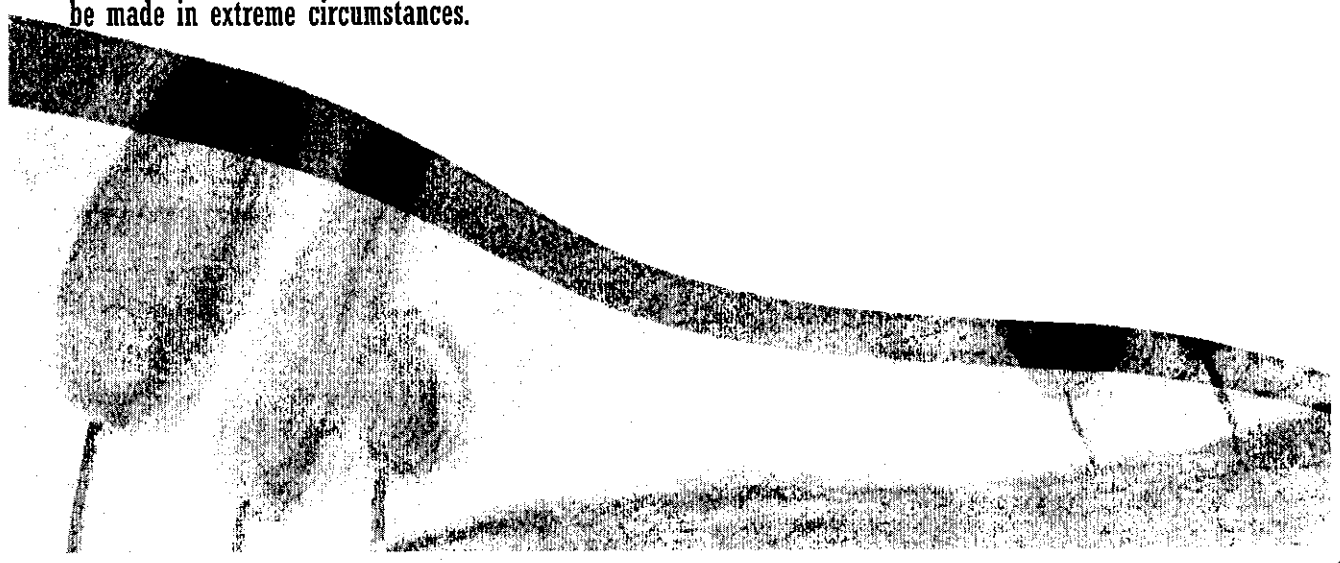
### School Immunization Program:

#### School-Based Clinics:

The following provides an overview of the schedule for our school-based immunization clinics:

Date	School-based Clinic
Sept – Oct*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1<sup>st</sup> dose of hepatitis B vaccine for grade 7 students</li><li>• 1<sup>st</sup> dose of HPV vaccine for grade 8 girls</li></ul>
Nov – Jan*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meningococcal ACY W-135 vaccine for grade 7 students</li><li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of HPV vaccine for grade 8 girls</li></ul>
Mar – Apr*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of hepatitis B vaccine for grade 7 students</li><li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose of HPV vaccine for grade 8 girls</li></ul>

\*Please note that you may receive an increase in calls from parents with questions regarding these clinics and vaccines. As school based programs, to be eligible the student must receive the immunizations at school. Accommodations for a student to receive the vaccine elsewhere will only be made in extreme circumstances.



## Updating of Immunizations:

The Health Unit will be reviewing the records of school students between January and June 2012 and advising parents when immunizations are missing from our records. Two notices are sent to parents requesting the missing immunization information. If we do not receive a response or an up-to-date immunization record, then suspension orders will be issued for those students that failed to provide us information.

Registration for kindergarten starts in our area in January and typically continues through to August. We ask parents to provide immunization records and review the records to ensure children are up-to-date for their age. In a process similar to our Grade 2 and high school surveillance, notices are sent to parents of children whose immunizations are not up-to-date.

During these immunization record review times, you may receive an increased number of calls from parents regarding their children's immunizations.

Date	Surveillance Activity
Jan – Jun Sept - Dec	Grade 2 immunization record review – checking for 2 <sup>nd</sup> MMR & 4-6 yr booster and complete records for those students for whom we have no information
Jan - Jun	Grades 9 – 12 immunization record review – checking for 2 <sup>nd</sup> MMR, 14-16 yr booster and complete records for those students for whom we have no information
Jan - Aug	Kindergarten Registration – collection of immunization records begins at kindergarten – parents will be asked to provide this information when they register their child for school

## Parents reporting immunizations to the Health Unit:

**Health Care Providers:** In order to ensure that parents do not receive unnecessary letters from the Health Unit regarding their child's immunization status, please advise parents to contact the Health Unit whenever their child receives an immunization. The information about the vaccines their child received should be written on a yellow immunization card. Parents can provide immunization information to us as follows:

By calling 613-345-5685 or 1-800-660-5853 By Faxing 613-345-7038 By email [immunization@healthunit.org](mailto:immunization@healthunit.org)

**Schools:** In order to ensure that parents do not receive unnecessary letters from the Health Unit regarding their child's immunization status, please ensure that a Student Registration Form and a copy of the child's immunization record is forwarded to the Health Unit every time a student registers to attend at your school.

For more information regarding the school immunization program, please contact the Vaccine Preventable Diseases Program at 613-345-5685 or 1 800 660-5853.

