



Alliston Union Public School



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Jennifer Carrick, Principal

Kate Copfer, Vice-Principal

December 2023 Newsletter

Dear AUPS families,

Thank you to all of the families that came to visit us during Student-Led Conferences last month. We're super proud to be able to show off all the awesome work our students have been doing this year!

Our Lost and Found is still full of items that need to be returned to a loving home! Please feel free to stop by and take a look. Any items that haven't been claimed by Friday, December 15, 2023 will be washed and donated, so be sure to check before the winter holidays.

From now until December 8, 2023 we are hosting a food and toy drive for the Lion's Club. While all donations are very much appreciated, this year the Lion's Club has asked us to prioritize bringing food due to an increased need in the local area. Thank you for helping us support our community!



The winter holiday is just around the corner. Please keep in mind that school will be closed from Monday, December 25, 2023 to Friday, January 5, 2024. We wish you all a very Happy Holidays from all of us here at Alliston Union! See you in the new year!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Carrick
Principal

Kate Copfer
Vice-Principal



Upcoming dates:

November 27 to December 8 - Lion's Club Food and Toy Drive

December 6 - Grade 7 FI Field Trip to St. Lawrence Market

December 6 - Candy Grams for Sale (More info to follow)

December 14 - Drop and Shop: Holiday Babysitting (See Pg. 9)

December 25 to January 5 - Winter Holidays (No School!)

Alliston Union - December 2023 Newsletter Continued

Inclement weather and bus cancellation information reminder

All information regarding cancelled buses in Simcoe County is posted on the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC)'s bus information website at

www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca. Our school is in the **South zone**. When buses are cancelled, schools remain open for student learning, unless otherwise noted. School staff are expected to plan for such emergencies in order to transition students who are unable to attend due to inclement weather, to their online platforms (Google Classroom and/or SCDSBhub [Brightspace by D2L]) and continue with academic programming. It is always a family decision whether or not it is safe for their child(ren) to leave for school under severe weather conditions.



The Consortium and bus operators try to make the decision to cancel school buses before 6 a.m. and make every effort to post announcements before 7 a.m. Inclement weather cancellations are effective for the whole day and buses cancelled in the morning will not run at the end of the day. You can follow the Consortium on Twitter [@SCSTC_SchoolBus](https://twitter.com/SCSTC_SchoolBus) for bus cancellations and other information. You can also subscribe to receive bus delay notifications here: <https://scstc.ca/Subscriptions/Login.aspx>.

High school information events for Grade 8 students

Is your child starting Grade 9 next year? High school information events will take place in person this winter! Student leaders and staff at the school will give an overview of what's new and what to expect. Learn about courses offered, as well as information about teams and clubs. Please visit the SCDSB website at www.scdsb.on.ca/secondary/planning_for_high_school to find details on your high school's info night, and contact the school directly for more information.

Grade 1 French Immersion information

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) offers French Immersion (FI) at select schools throughout Simcoe County beginning in Grade 1. The goal of the FI program is to enable students to communicate in French with a high level of proficiency, enabling them to function with ease in both French and English. Upon graduation from the program, students will communicate in French with confidence in a wide variety of real-life situations.

The SCDSB board-wide electronic applications for the Grade 1 FI program for all sites will open Friday, Dec. 1 at 9 a.m. and close at 4 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 15. Entry into the FI program is determined

through a digitally randomized lottery system. To learn more, visit the SCDSB website: <https://www.scdsb.on.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=210982&pageId=12587752>.



Alliston Union - December 2023 Newsletter Continued

Join us! A learning series for parents/guardians with Pine River Institute

Mental health and well-being continues to be a key strategic priority within the SCDSB. We are pleased to continue our partnership with the Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) to provide several curated learning sessions focused on student mental health and well-being to SCDSB families.

These webinars are specifically planned for parents/guardians and other caregivers during this school year.

Jan. 11, 2024	Sleep hygiene
Feb. 8, 2024	Self regulation for kids
Feb. 22, 2024	Self regulation for teens
March 28, 2024	Building parents' resiliency
April 18, 2024	Vaping, weed, and alcohol

We hope you save these dates in your calendar and join us for these learning opportunities. For more information and to register, please visit the SCDSB website: <https://bit.ly/3jGaC74>.

Pine River Institute is a live-in treatment centre and outdoor leadership experience for youth aged 13 to 19 struggling with addictive behaviours and often other mental health issues. Combining therapy with a fully-accredited education program, PRI reinforces the healthy life skills required for a successful future. CFI@PRI extends PRI's knowledge, experience and evidence-informed treatment approach to families and care providers in the community to support youth mental wellness and prevent the need for more intensive interventions. Learn more about PRI by visiting their website at www.pineriverinstitute.com.



Subscribe to Community Connects!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is excited to launch Community Connects, a new bimonthly newsletter for the SCDSB community. Our shared goal with this new tool is to keep our community partners and stakeholders informed while nurturing relationships that are built on accountability, trust, and transparency.

To learn more and subscribe, visit the Community Connects page on the SCDSB website: https://www.scdsb.on.ca/community/community_connects.

School playground structures are closed for the winter

Every winter, school playground structures are closed. Students are made aware of this during school hours through announcements and staff reminders during breaks. This may not be well known throughout the community, despite signs indicating that playground structures are a winter hazard and are closed. The Canadian Standards Association regulations make recommendations for the depth of ground cover required to minimize injuries (e.g., sand, pea gravel or wood chips). These surfaces cannot be maintained when the ground freezes. Injuries from falling would be more significant on frozen ground. We strongly recommend that you do not allow your children to play on any structures while the ground is frozen.

Alliston Union - December 2023 Newsletter Continued

Parents' Guide to Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Learn to navigate the world of assessment, evaluation, and reporting with this new guide for parents/guardians. Created to support parents'/guardians' understanding of assessment, this guide was designed to effectively empower you to actively engage in your child's educational journey. The guide has been posted to the Simcoe County District School Board's website and can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/2urcm2tm>.

Subscribe to Kindergarten Connections!

Will your child be turning four in 2024? If so, the SCDSB invites you to Kindergarten Connections! This is a monthly newsletter informing families of everything they need to know about preparing their child for school, as well as registering them for Kindergarten in the SCDSB. To learn more and subscribe, visit the Kindergarten page on the SCDSB website:

www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/kindergarten.



EarlyON Child and Family Centres

The foundation for lifelong learning and health is built in the early years. EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Simcoe County offer programs for children prenatal to six years of age and their parents/guardians and caregivers. They offer access to play- and inquiry-based learning supported by *How Does Learning Happen?* Ontario's pedagogy for the early years, information on child development and developmental screening including Early Referral Identification Kits (ERIKs), parent/guardian education, referrals to community resources, nutrition information, and post-natal resources. Check with your local EarlyON provider: <https://linktr.ee/earlyonsimcoe>

How is your infant, toddler, or preschool child developing?

Is your child meeting their milestones? Age-appropriate speech and language skills are critical to your child's ability to read, write, and be successful in school as well as to their ability to engage with their peers. Free services are available to support you with your child's development. Preschool speech and language programs are located across the County of Simcoe. Call (705) 739-5696 or 1-800-675-1979 to complete a developmental screen. The earlier we work together the better!



Licensed Winter Break school-age child care programs

Child care programs for children in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are provided by independent, third-party child care operators in some SCDSB schools. To support your child care needs, some operators offer child care on PA days and holidays including over the Winter Break. Registration in advance is required.

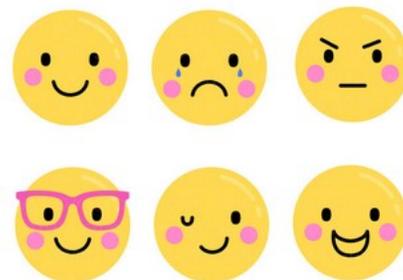
Please contact the child care operator directly to discuss fees and to register. More information and contact numbers can be found by visiting: www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/childcare_before_after.

Alliston Union - December 2023 Newsletter Continued

Mental health strategy of the month - Emotion Charades

Well-being is a Strategic Priority in the Simcoe County District School Board, and our mental health and well-being department provides monthly strategies to support student and family well-being.

This month's strategy is *Emotion Charades*. This practice helps students practice expressing emotions with their whole body and recognize body language and facial expressions in others. To practice *Emotion Charades* at home, on slips of paper, write or draw different feelings depending on the age of your child. For instance, happy, sad, angry, scared, worried, sleepy, frustrated, etc. Place the papers in a bowl/container.



Then:

- Decide who will go first. Have that person pick a piece of paper from the bowl.
- Have them read the feeling to themselves, or, if needed, help your child read the feeling.
- Now they will act out the feeling without words while the other players try to guess what it is.

Once someone gets the right answer, it's the next person's turn to pick a piece of paper and act out the feeling.

This is a fun activity that everyone in the family can play!

Emotion Charades link to School Mental Health Ontario parent sheet: <https://smho-smso.ca/online-resources/easy-and-fun-mental-health-activities-for-home/>

Find more information to support your child's mental health here: <https://smho-smso.ca/parents-and-caregivers/>

Emotion Charades:

Elementary - <https://smho-smso.ca/emhc/identification-and-management-of-emotions/recognizing-emotion-charades/>

Secondary - <https://smho-smso.ca/emhcsecondary/identification-and-management-of-emotions/recognizing/emotional-awareness/>

Follow the Mental Health and Well-being social media accounts (@SCDSB_MHWP) to see how well-being is being supported in our schools.

Programs available through the SCDSB's Adult and Continuing Education Learning Centres

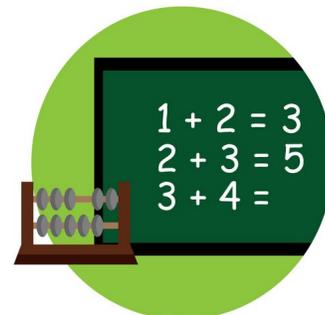
The Simcoe County District School Board's Adult and Continuing Education department offers a variety of programming including day school, night school, summer school, correspondence, and co-op. Courses may be online, hybrid, or in-person and are based on sufficient enrollment. For current high school students, we offer travel for credit, summer school, and night school programs. For adults, we offer credit courses towards completion of an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) including credits granted for prior learning and experiences (PLAR). In support of many of the adult learners in our communities, we also offer non-credit classes in English as a second language (ESL) and literacy and essential skills (LES) both of which can support learners towards paths of employment, continued education, and citizenship. Please visit us at www.thelearningcentres.com to learn more.

Math Resources for Families

Exploring the new SCDSB family math resources

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents and caregivers. Join members of the SCDSB math team for a guided exploration of the new SCDSB family math resources. Participants will have the opportunity to explore the resources that are available to support their child's math learning at home. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length. During the final 15 minutes, the math team will be available to answer questions about the resources available.



Tips for engaging in math conversations with your child @Home

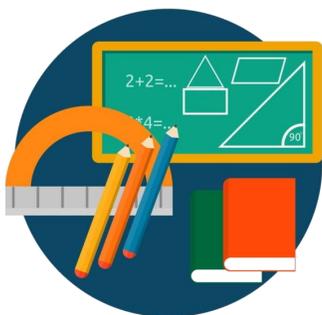
Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents and caregivers and will explore opportunities to discuss math with their child(ren) at home. Participants will learn about how events such as shopping, preparing food, engaging in a building project, or going for a walk can be used as a starting point for math conversations, and will receive prompts to get the discussion rolling. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length. During the final 15 minutes, the math team will be available to answer questions about the session.

Games to support your child's math learning @Home

Thursday, April 4, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents, caregivers, and their children. Playing games at home is a great way to support child(ren)'s math development. In this session, several games will be explored, and participants will have the opportunity to try the games with their children during the session. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length followed by 15 additional minutes for further game play or to ask questions of our math facilitators. Bring your child(ren) and your math kit to this session!



Participants must pre-register for the sessions they wish to attend. Registered participants will receive a kit of hands-on resources that will be sent to the school indicated on the registration form. Use this link to register: <https://bit.ly/24MathAtHome>.

Math @Home parent and caregiver series

It's back! The SCDSB math team is pleased to offer three virtual sessions for parents and caregivers of SCDSB students. These sessions will focus on practical and fun ways to support children with their mathematics learning and engagement at home. The first 200 registrants will receive a Math @Home kit of resources to use at home. Participants must pre-register for each of the sessions.

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Head lice treatment and prevention

Anyone can get head lice. Having head lice does not mean a person is unclean or lives in a dirty home. While they are a nuisance, head lice do not spread disease or cause illness. Head lice spreads easily, especially where people are in close contact and are very common among school-aged children or children in childcare.

Head lice spreads through direct hair-to-hair contact or indirectly by sharing hats, combs, hairbrushes, and headphones. To help prevent the spread of head lice, it's important to educate students about avoiding head-to-head contact and discourage sharing combs, hairbrushes, tuques, hats, or hair accessories.

Parents/guardians, caregivers, and families can visit <https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/PP2B/RaisingChildren/YourGrowingChild/HeadLice> for more information about head lice treatment and prevention. Or call Health Connection at 1-877-721-7520 to speak to a public health nurse.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Did you know it's illegal to vape or smoke *anywhere* on school property, inside the school or outside within 20m of school property, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year?

The law applies to everyone on school property, students, staff, and visitors. It also means it is illegal to vape or smoke on school athletic fields during afterhours activities or vape or smoke in school washrooms. There is a fine of \$305 for vaping or smoking on school property.

But why do youth vape at school? Vapes contain nicotine, which is a highly addictive drug. Nicotine addiction is extremely powerful, develops quickly, and youth may not realize they are addicted. Once addicted, they need nicotine regularly or they will experience withdrawal, making it hard to get through the school day. Help them take back control – there are supports to help youth quit! Talk to your child about vaping, they listen more than you think. Learn more at [NotAnExperiment.ca/parents](https://www.notanexperiment.ca/parents).

Is bedtime stressing you out?

Kids need 10-12 hours of sleep every night but sometimes getting them to bed can be challenging. You can help create a regular sleep schedule for your child by setting a clear bedtime and sticking to the same time every night. Start getting ready an hour before bed; turn off the TV, computers, and phones. Spend quality time talking or reading stories to help them unwind. Agree on how many you'll read before you start! Keep their room dark, cool, and quiet - a nightlight is fine. Remember, making sure your child gets enough rest will help improve their mood, behaviour, and ability to learn.

For more bedtime tips, contact Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 to speak with a public health nurse. Visit www.simcoemuskokahealth.org for more information.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit



Alliston Union - December 2023 Newsletter Continued

Winter Well-Being Guide

There is a lot of joy and happiness associated with the festive season, but for some it may not always be a positive time. The shorter days, colder temperatures and the pressures associated with this time of year can impact many people, adults and young people alike. Check out the resources below to promote positive mental health throughout the winter break.

- Focus on what gives you joy and meaning
- Use your imagination, get lost in a book, try a new game, or make the most of the winter weather and get outside
- Show gratitude to ourselves and others - giving and receiving thanks helps everyone feel better
- Sleep well, hydrate often and move your body

Social-emotional learning supports mental health through life

Snowstorm in a bag



Get ready

1. Collect items from around your home.
2. Gather straws, baggies (or a see-through container with a lid that you can make a hole in for a straw), light materials that will float such as Styrofoam, feathers, glitter, and tissue paper.
3. Put some of the materials inside the container/baggie, close it and place the straw in the hole.

Go

- Have your child take a big breath.
- Blow slowly into the straw.
- Watch how the materials float around the container. Does it look like a snowstorm or something else?
- Repeat.
- Ask your child how it feels when they do this.

School Mental Health Ontario | Santé mentale en milieu scolaire Ontario | www.smho-smso.ca

PERSONAL GRATITUDE

One of my strengths that I am grateful for is

One thing I can do to express gratitude is

One person I am grateful for is

One memory I am grateful for is

One challenge I am grateful for is

One beautiful thing in my life I am grateful for is



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Support for youth

 Call 1-800-668-6868

 Text TALK to 686868

Support for adults

 Text WELLNESS to 741741



To connect with a clinician, visit [OneStopTalk.ca](https://onestoptalk.ca) or call 1.855.416.8255



HAND-TRACING EXERCISE

Starting at your wrist, trace the **left side** of your hand up to your **middle finger** while taking a **deep breath** for **four seconds**

Pause at the tip of your middle finger and **hold** in your breath for **4 seconds**

Breathe out while tracing down the **right side** of your hand for **four seconds**

Repeat **4 times**



School Mental Health Ontario | Santé mentale en milieu scolaire Ontario | jack.org covid

Drop and Shop: Holiday Babysitting Night



Are you trying to find the time to get some holiday shopping done? Or have you been wanting to go out for dinner with no children? Maybe you just want a night to yourself? Look no further!

Alliston Union P.S. is hosting a holiday babysitting night to fundraise for Grade 8 activities. Our Grade 8 students and their supervising teachers will take care of your children for a night while you get a few priceless hours to yourself! Children will be able to participate in fun activities including crafts and games. We will also be providing snacks and water.



Date: December 14, 2023

Time: 5:00pm to 8:00pm

Price: \$25 per student, plus \$20 for each additional sibling

Each child will receive **one slice of pizza, a bag of popcorn and a water bottle.**

The deadline to sign up is **December 10, 2023**. We have a space limit of 100 children and expect spots to fill quickly, so please apply soon if you are interested – it is first-come, first-serve!

Please fill out the sign up form on **SchoolCash Online**.

SCDSB Days of Awareness

Dec. 1	World AIDS Day
Dec. 2	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
Dec. 3	First Day of Advent (Christianity) International Day of Persons with Disabilities
Dec. 6	National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women
Dec. 7-15	Saint Nicholas Day (Christianity) Chanukah/Hanukkah (Judaism)
Dec. 8	Awakening Day (Buddhism)
Dec. 9	International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime
Dec. 10	Human Rights Day
Dec. 13	Birthday of Imam Aga Khan (Islam)
Dec. 21	Yule/Winter Solstice (Wicca)
Dec. 22	Maun Ekadashi (Jainism)
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve (Christianity)
Dec. 25	Christmas (Christianity)
Dec. 26	Boxing Day Sanghamitta Day/Unduvap Poya (Buddhism) Zarathosht-no-diso (Zoroastrianism - Fasli Calendar)
Dec. 26 – Jan. 1	Kwanzaa



Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions is seeking compassionate and skilled professionals with specialized experience to apply to become foster care providers

The goal of this program is to meet the needs of youth through a therapeutically supported parenting approach within a structured environment, where they are supported and guided by a multi-disciplinary treatment team. The youth will remain, or become connected to, their family/kin/community whenever possible. Treatment services will be individualized based on the needs of the youth, and the knowledge of those who know the youth best in collaboration with community partners. This will allow youth to reside in a family-based setting and remain in their home community of Simcoe Muskoka, staying connected to important relationships and supports that may already be in place.

The homes approved under this strategy are designed to create clinically informed care plans that will support the youth directly, in addition to the continued support of their care providers. Youth will be supported by a multi-disciplinary team and will be available to implement and design parenting and support to address the needs of the youth.

Compensation packages will be offered to experienced foster care providers, as well as clinical support to both care providers and youth.

If you or someone you know is looking for more information or would like to apply, contact Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions by email at bruna.figliuzzi@familyconnexions.ca or call [705-716.4664](tel:705-716-4664).

Information provided by Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Gr. 7 FI Trip, Candy Grams	7	8 Last Day for the Lion's Club Food/Toy Drive	9
10	11	12	13	14 Drop and Shop: Holiday Babysitting	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Winter Holidays - No School!					

School Schedule

Supervision Begins: 9:10
 First Bell: 9:25
 First Nutrition Break: 11:05-11:45
 Second Nutrition Break: 1:25-2:50
 Dismissal: 3:45



*Merci
Thank You!*