

October 2021

Re-entry Precautions to ensure student and staff safety.....

- All students are sanitizing or washing their hands before eating and when entering and exiting different rooms/school.
- Students enter and exit the school in individual classes to promote cohorting.
- All students and staff are masked in common areas such as the hallway.
- Students in grade 4 and 5 are also asked to mask when working in groups or with a staff member.
- Staff and students are staying at home when they feel unwell.



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Halloween 2021

As Halloween grows near, we have had several questions from both students and parents regarding what Halloween will look like this year.

- *This year in order to follow the provincial guidelines, we are allowing students to come to school dressed in their costumes. This will allow parents to help get their "scary on" before coming to school.
- *Students will participate in Halloween activities in the morning.
- *Student recognition will occur throughout the morning activities.
- *If students want a special snack, they are able to bring one for themselves, remembering not to share with others.
- *Halloween activities will conclude at lunch time and the afternoon will be normally scheduled classes.
- *Students may want to have a change of clothes to change into to preserve their costume for Halloween night.
- *Unfortunately we are not able to have parents in the school so we will ensure that we are taking lots of pictures and sharing them out with families.

Thank you

Thank you to all of our parents who are supporting the school in our endeavor to keep our students and staff safe. We appreciate the calls to the office notifying us of illness or of children being tested for COVID-19. We also appreciate calling for item pick up or drop off as well as those who are waiting for their children in the designated pick up areas. All of these actions assist us in keeping everyone safe.

School Council

- **Thank you to everyone who joined us for our School Council Meeting. We wish it could have been in person but it was still great to see everyone's smiling faces. We are happy to announce our School Council and EPIC Executive for the 2021-2022 school year.
- **School Council**
- Chairperson - Catherine MacDonald
- Vice Chairperson - Charise Munday
- Secretary - Crystal Shields
- Treasurer - Carla Hanas
- **EPIC**
- Chairperson - Rand Richards
- Vice Chairperson - Charise Munday
- Secretary - Crystal Shields
- Treasurer - Carla Hanas



September Eagles

- 3L - Jai K
- 3PR - Emmie M
- 3C - Gabriella S
- 3M - Isaac M
- 3S - Hadley T

- 4CH - Ella Y
- 4W - Chelsea L
- 4J - Lyla B
- 4D - Liam M
- 4C - Adalee M

- 5S - Alyssa K
- 5B - Cameron T
- 5L - Chanel A
- 5CL - Dax C
- 5U - Cleo B



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Tech Fees
Tech fees of \$31.50 are now due. Please contact the office for payment arrangements.

Website:

<http://whitecourt.ca>

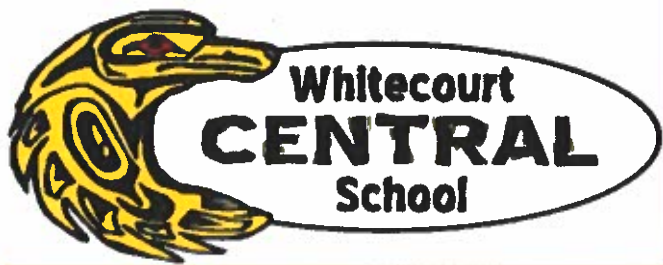
Twitter: @ngpswcs

Facebook:

<www.facebook.com/WhitecourtCentral>

Parking

- **We are currently working with the Town of Whitecourt to create a loading/unloading zone along 53rd ave where the curb is yellow.
- **Parents are asked to use this as a loading/unloading zone therefore not parking for more than 5-10 minutes to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to pull in and pick up their children.
- **Students are encouraged to wait at their grade level pick up area to reduce congestion.



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School Safety Procedures

NGPS schools work with Hour Zero to use established protocols for student and staff safety procedures. In the upcoming newsletters, we will outline and describe the different protocols that we practice.

**Evacuation

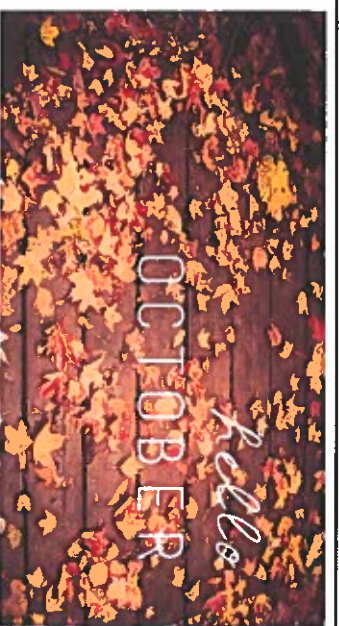
- Students will be evacuated from the building if safety concerns are identified in the school.
- Fire drills are practiced - 3 in the fall and 3 in the spring
- All classes evacuate the school and meet in the designated area.
- Attendance is reported to Administration to ensure all students and staff are safe.
- Designated staff are asked to check areas in the school such as washrooms, gym storage etc, to ensure all students are accounted for.

**Important information for parents

- If you are picking up your child, please let the teacher know and they will have the students wait at the office during the drill.
- If you arrive at the school to pick up your child and they are in a fire drill practice, please come directly to the office and Mrs. Pierce will contact administration to gather your child.
- We ask that you do not remove your child from the fire drill area without speaking to the office so we can ensure attendance and safety of all students.



October 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 PD Day - No School for Students	9
10	11 Thanksgiving - No School	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 Picture Retake Day	28	29 Student Recognition Halloween Dress Up	30
31						

SUPPORTING YOUR ANXIOUS CHILD

In conversations with schools throughout Northern Gateway Public Schools, a theme I have noticed more than ever before is significant apprehension by many students of all ages. Despite the obvious factors why this is the case, the issue of anxiousness is front and centre for many children and their families.

This article is not meant to initiate more controversy, it is simply to give strategies for parents on how to help their children overcome fears. We all know that when fear takes root, it can evolve into anxiety and depression.

If you are feeling lost in how to support your child, here are some guidelines on what to say and do and when to reach out for help.

1. Ask Open-Ended, Non Threatening Questions

Let your child tell you the problem when they are ready, not when they are hungry, tired or frustrated. Questions about positive parts of their day will encourage them to look for the good.

- Is there anything you wished were different today?
- Tell me about the hardest part of your day
- What made you laugh?
- What are you thankful for?
- What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

2. Listen Attentively

Let your child know you understand, love and accept them no matter what. Knowing they are loved by you helps build inner strength.

- Give eye contact
- Be genuine in your responses
- Normalize their feelings, don't dismiss them.
- Do not be too hasty with advice

3. Resist the Urge to Rescue Your Child

No parent wants to see their child struggle or be uncomfortable. It is a natural instinct to jump in to make their life easier. The best way to help your child overcome anxiety is to teach them to deal with it as it comes up.

- Being exposed to new things helps children learn, gain skills and confidence
- Invite them to brainstorm their own solutions
- Encouraging your child to face their fears will build confidence

4. Model Healthy Ways to Handle Anxiety

All parents get anxious from time to time. Some may even have a diagnosed Anxiety Disorder. This is okay! Managing your own stress is the best way to keep your child from picking up on your anxiety. You have likely identified what makes you anxious, how to set up boundaries and when you need professional help. These are all invaluable tools that you can teach your child.

- Do not focus on your specific fears or worries, rather share what you do that helps
- Be aware of your facial expressions, your tone or the words you choose to ensure you convey a neutral demeanor
- Avoid exposure to alarming media and news stories for yourself and your child

5. Practice Mindfulness For Yourself and With Your Child - Dr. Jamie Howard, Director of the Stress and Resilience Program of the [Child Mind Institute](#) shares two common techniques to try:

- **Squeezing Muscles:** starting with your toes, pick one muscle and squeeze it tight. Count to five. Release and notice how your body changes. Repeat exercise moving up your body.
- **Belly Breathing:** Put one hand on your stomach and one on your chest. Slowly breathe in from your stomach (expand like a balloon) and slowly breathe out (deflate). Repeat until you feel your heart rate return to normal.

6. Stick To a Consistent Routine - Children thrive on structure and consistency. They feel safe when they know what to expect and have a schedule for meals, screen time and bedtime.

7. Know When to Seek Professional Help - Be cautious to not self-diagnose your child. An Anxiety Disorder can only be diagnosed by a trained professional such as a psychologist, pediatrician, or psychiatrist. Begin with an appointment to your family doctor.

Parenting is not always a walk in the park. As a mother of 4 children, I am all too familiar with the burden of supporting a child who is feeling anxious. I wish I could tell you that there is a quick fix, a magic pill, or an easy answer, but I can't. What I know is this: no one loves your child more than you, you are your child's most important teacher and role model, it is a sign of strength to seek help.

This article was written by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. She is a support for schools, students, parents and caregivers. Tammy has been a registered social worker for over 20 years and is a mother to 3 teenagers and 1 young adult.