



November 2020

# Oakwood Academy

*Individualized Education JK-12*



## Director's Message

October has been a spirited month, reminding us all of the importance of inclusion and togetherness once again! As we raise awareness for mental and physical health organizations, we begin preparations for our own annual school fundraisers, including the introduction of virtual events. We are excited to continue our traditions and adapt events such as World Kindness Day with our community. We will readapt

and encourage everyone to participate in the upcoming events in unique and meaningful ways. We have numerous goals this year to support our students and fundraising will be an important element to keep both quality and spirits high. Each classroom has specific needs and this year we are looking to our community for additional support. I encourage families to join our planning and sponsorship, knowing every little bit will count! Oakwood has the most amazing and hard-working parents and I would like to thank you in advance for your participation!

Trillian Taylor, Director/ Co-Founder

### DATES TO REMEMBER

**October 28**  
Casual Day (optional)

**October 29-30**  
Picture Day

**October 30**  
Halloween Spirit Day  
& Monthly VIRTUAL  
Parent Coffee

**November 5**  
Outdoor Classroom  
Day

**November 10**  
Remembrance Day  
Assembly

**November 11**  
Remembrance Day  
(no school)

**November 13**  
World Kindness Day

**November 20**  
Science Fair

**November 25**  
Causal Day (optional)

**November 26**  
Picture Re-take Day

# Yearbook & Picture Day

Our 2019-2020 yearbook released this month was another reminder of how together we can persevere through challenging times. We would like to thank everyone involved in helping to create this yearbook and all the families who were able to submit pictures from home as well!

We are thankful to have another school Picture Day this fall. We hope to include this as we continue to capture, commemorate and celebrate each month all our achievements.

## Cold Weather

As the colder weather is upon us, and the scarfs and hats come out, we remind everyone to dress warmly as we will continue to encourage outdoor education and emphasize a healthy, safe and meaningful Autumn season.



# October Awareness

This month, Oakwood staff and students participated in various awareness and learning activities. Within these highlighted

days, staff and students were encouraged to make a donation and raised a total of \$250. Way to go, Oakwood!

**ADHD Awareness:** Students came together on October 1 to raise awareness and understanding for ADHD: "ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder that has been clinically observed for more than 200 years; ADHD conservatively occurs in 4% of adults and 5% of children worldwide" (CADDAC.ca). Staff and students donned orange shirts and ribbons to demonstrate their unity, and engaged in classroom learning which supported their understanding of ADHD.

**Cerebral Palsy Awareness:** On October 6, Oakwood joined countless communities across the world coming together to broaden their understanding of Cerebral Palsy by participating in various classroom activities. Additionally, students and staff showed their support by wearing green shirts and ribbons.

**Mental Health Awareness:** With mental health being such an important topic, Oakwood placed an important focus on why our students' mental health matters. Students participated in various activities such as feelings bingo, emotion charades and creating lists and visuals of things that make them feel happy, safe and secure. Oakwood is a strong believer in giving our students the opportunity to express and explore their emotions, offering a safe space to create strategies with therapists and teachers which support their emotional regulation and awareness.

**World Sight/Blind Day:** This year's global theme for *World Sight Day* is 'Hope in Sight'. Students were encouraged to wear orange and participate in sensory based activities which focused on them using their other senses to find items and explore spaces within their environment.

By Ms. Nicola



# What's Happening in Transition?



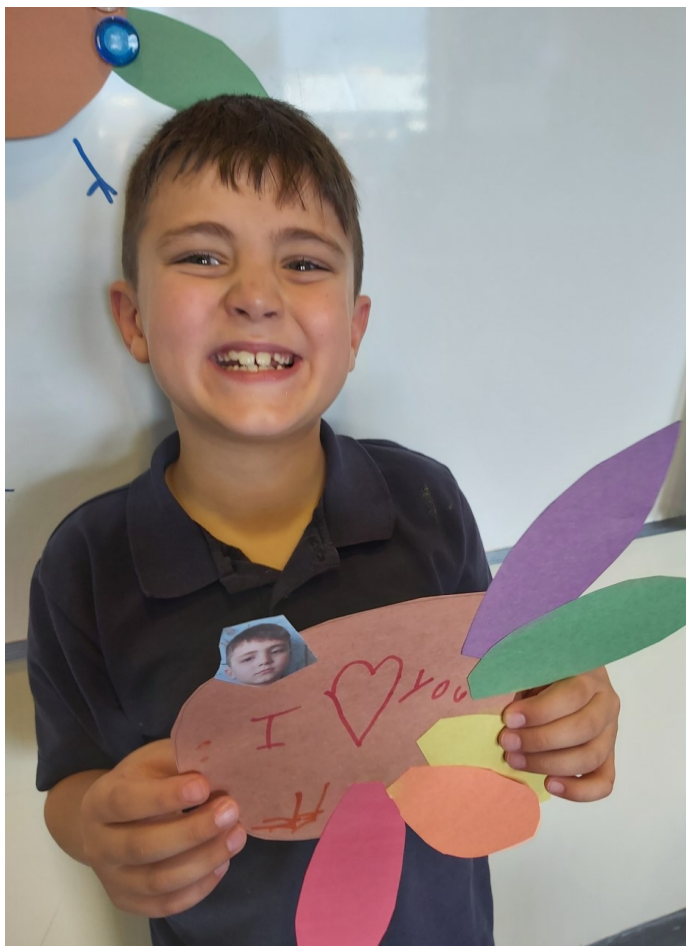
Circle time is moving along nicely as the month progresses. Each week, Transition students participate in themed crafts and activities which encourage the growth of social play skills and communication skills. Some themes include: Community Safety, Fire Safety, Construction and a World of Colour!

Transition students participated in an array of activities geared towards mental health awareness. The students had the opportunity to get in tune with their emotions by participating in activities such as feelings bingo, making stress balls and emotion charades.

This October the students had a nice 'treat' with fun October-themed activities. The Transition students participated in a variety of Halloween activities, such as pumpkin carving, painting and socially-distanced trick-or-treating. This was a great way to work on important skills such as creativity, tactile awareness and social interactions.

**By Ms. Shanique**

# What's Happening in Academics?

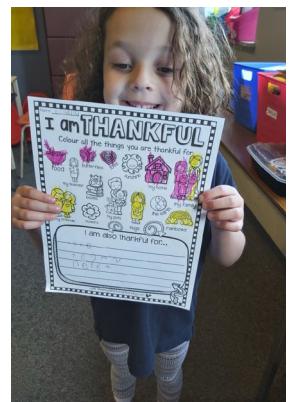


Our students are hard at work learning about various themes within their classroom units. Some are becoming "animal dads", some are going on fantastic transportation adventures and some are exploring fossils in preparation for their own museum!

Our students celebrated togetherness and cultural awareness on International Day! Students were encouraged to choose a different country to represent and worked really hard to research different aspects that make each country unique (food, language spoken, etc.)

Our students celebrated *Mental Health Awareness Day* by learning about the importance of sharing our thoughts and feelings with each other, as well as creating lists and visuals of what makes them happy. Our students also did a wonderful job talking about what they were thankful for this year! Students participated in crafts and activities focusing on the message of thankfulness, friendship and family.

**By Ms. Nancy**



# One Activity, 6 FEDCs

## Halloween Jack-o-Lanterns:

As Halloween is approaching, here is an activity you and your child can explore together while expanding and enriching their developmental growth at each FEDC capacity! For this spooky activity, you will need the following materials:

- ✓ orange food coloring
- ✓ black permanent marker
- ✓ rice
- ✓ construction paper
- ✓ different sized bottles or containers,
- ✓ scissors
- ✓ a large bin to hold all the fun!

Dye the rice orange with orange food coloring (*directions included below*), use a black marker or permanent marker to create Jack-o-Lantern faces (*you can draw these on the bottles, or use construction paper cut-outs to create smiles, eyes, noses, etc.*). Here are a few suggestions on how to support your child at each FEDC capacity:

### FEDC 1 (Regulation and Shared Attention) & FEDC 2 (Engagement and Relating):

While introducing the activity, ensure you do so in a place where your child feels comfortable and calm. Model the activity by pouring rice into the empty Jack-o-Lanterns and narrate the action as you do so. Engage your child in the activity by creating a tactile experience through exploring the rice together pouring it onto their hands, burying their fingers or pouring the rice into and out of the Jack-o-Lanterns together! Follow your child's lead as they explore the bin in order to create a mutual, pleasurable experience together! Utilize high facial affect, gestures and anticipation to encourage shared attention and engagement. Don't forget to wait, watch and wonder!

### FEDC 3 (Opening and Closing Circles of Communication/Two-way Intentional Communication):

Follow your child's lead as they communicate their excitement and enjoyment of the activity through gestures, verbal communication and their emotions or facial expressions! Encourage opening and closing circles of communication by building on your child's interests in the activity in that moment. For example, if your child fills up a Jack-o-lantern, comment on the colour of the pumpkin, the shape of the pumpkin or how spooky it looks! Mirror their actions and utilize facial and vocal affect as your child opens and closes circles of communication in order to expand on them and encourage them to open and close new circles of communication.

## EDC 4 (Purposeful Problem-Solving Communication):

Expand and encourage a continuous flow of circles of communication by including other materials such as shovels or cups to expand on the ways your child can fill up and create their Jack-o-Lantern. Create opportunities to search for specific items that would be useful and of interest for your child to include, therefore allowing them to open and close circles of communication to socially problem-solve through verbal or gestural communication to find the item. You can also have one Jack-o-Lantern with an unexpected wound, which causes the rice to spill out each time! Uh, oh! How can we help this hurt pumpkin?

## FEDC 5 (Creating and Elaborating Ideas):

You can utilize the Jack-o-Lanterns as an opportunity to explore emotions and facial expressions. Before beginning the activity, discuss what feelings or emotions each Jack-o-Lantern should demonstrate and discuss with your child what that emotion or feeling would look like. You can further expand the conversation to open and close those circles of communication about how others may express this feeling in certain situations and how we could support them or what supports your child during those moments. This is also a great way for the child to express their own ideas of emotions personally and reflect on a wide range of themes and feelings.

## FEDC 6 (Building Bridges Between Ideas):

Utilize this pretend play and sensory activity opportunity to build upon emotional ideas, Halloween-themed words and symbolic play. Engage the child in further exploring the Jack-o-Lanterns through "I wonder..." statements in regards to the capacity in each pumpkin, what else could be used to fill up each one and the pumpkin life cycle! Compare and contrast ideas by following your child's lead and connect through their symbolic play as they explore the Jack-o-Lanterns.

*How to Dye Rice*

*1 cup of rice*

*1/2 tsp vinegar*

*Wilton icing gel (you could also use several drops of liquid food colouring)*

*Pour a cup of rice into a container. Then, with a toothpick, swirl a generous dollop of icing colour-gel or a few drops of food colouring through the rice.*

*Drizzle 1/2 tsp of vinegar over the rice.*

*Pop the lid on your container and shake vigorously. Remove the lid and be amazed!*

**By Ms. Dorthy**

# Parent Support

Oakwood is committed to providing encompassing and meaningful support year round - not only to our students, but to our parents and families as well. We take pride in our close-knit community, and desire to keep this bond strong as we navigate this novel school year.

**Our FIRST virtual Parent Coffee** will be held on **Friday October 30th** from **9:30 to 10:30 AM**. Please respond to **Ms. Nicola** [nholland@oakwoodacademy.ca](mailto:nholland@oakwoodacademy.ca) by **Tuesday October 26** if you will be attending! A Zoom link will be sent out the morning of. With these virtual gatherings, we hope to build a further sense of community, even at a distance!

In addition to Oakwood's commitment to parents and families, we also encourage you to explore options being offered through ICDL and Affect Autism. These resources offer invaluable content and support which follow the *DIR Floortime* model.

ICDL: At [icdl.com/parents](http://icdl.com/parents) you can find incredible resources such as FREE mini-webinars; For on the Floor (by Dr. Gil Tippy); and discounted DIR 101 courses for Parents. ICDL is also currently offering free 45-minute virtual (live online) Floortime consultations for parents.

Affect Autism: Affect Autism gives you access to amazing podcasts and blog posts, as well as virtual FREE Parent Support Groups (Meetings are held every Monday from 1-2 pm). Check out [affectautism.com/events](http://affectautism.com/events) to register!

**By: Ms. Nicola**

## Health and Safety Reminders

- Please send your *Screening Questionnaire* electronically to [hs@oakwoodacademy.ca](mailto:hs@oakwoodacademy.ca) by 8 am. This must be completed prior to entry into the school. Updated screening forms including new provincial guidelines were sent out to families in early October.
- Temperature checks are required upon entry to the school. For those doing in-home therapy and education, temperature checks will also be done upon arrival at the student's home and sent to the school before services can begin.
- Please be mindful that each child has a designated drop-off and pick-up time which must be adhered to. Any unexpected 'lates' must be communicated to the teacher/therapist and supervisor.

# Uniform Reminders

With colder weather approaching, and sensory exploration & messy play abounding, we encourage parents to send in additional uniform items for their children to wear or change into should they need some extra layers or a new outfit entirely!

## Regular Uniform Consists of:

Navy Polo Short Sleeve and/or Navy Polo Long Sleeve  
Grey Pants and/or Grey Shorts  
Grey Skirt and/or Grey Tunic  
Navy Sweater (optional)  
Navy Socks  
Navy Tights and/or Navy Knee Socks

## Sport Uniform Consists of:

Gym T-Shirt and/or Gym Sweater  
Gym Shorts and/or Gym Pants  
House Hoodie (optional)  
House T-Shirt (optional)

The Uniform can only be purchased in-house and is supplied by **Multiform Canada**. Please contact Alpa at [alpa@multiformcanada.com](mailto:alpa@multiformcanada.com) with regards to purchasing the uniform or if you are in need of some new items for your child's wardrobe.



## OAKWOOD ACADEMY

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**SENIOR EDITOR:** Ann Harvey

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*The Oakwood Academy News* is a monthly communication created and distributed electronically to members of the Oakwood Academy community during the academic year.

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