



April 2021

# Oakwood Academy

*Individualized Education JK-12*

## Director's Message



Oakwood was thrilled to **MARCH ON!** We kept active throughout the month of March with fun activities that were filled with enjoyment and adventure.

We now welcome the warmer weather and will continue to make the most out of spring as we roll into April's *Abilities Awareness* month! We have many inclusive activities and fundraising events planned for this important time and look forward to celebrating everyone's unique abilities, including our ability to learn and forward our activism together.

We are grateful to our school community that we have been able to continue our programming and march on through all the challenges and achievements. We look forward to working closely with families this month to raise funds for our school to purchase new educational materials and sensory equipment. Together with St. Jude's Academy, our fundraising and awareness-building activities will be

### DATES TO REMEMBER

April 1

Ability Awareness  
Fundraising Begins!  
Easter Spirit Day  
(wear Easter colours)

April 2

Good Friday  
No School

April 5

Easter Monday  
No School

April 6

Blue for 2!  
Wear Blue for  
Autism Awareness

April 22

Earth Day  
(wear blue & green)

April 28

Earth Day  
Casual Day  
(optional)

creative and ambitious! We look forward to bringing families from both schools together to further cement an environment of inclusivity, understanding and acceptance.

In other exciting news, **Summer Registration** is now open. In addition, all **2021-2022 Re-Enrolment Packages** will be sent home later this month. Please ensure to email [admissions@oakwoodacademy.ca](mailto:admissions@oakwoodacademy.ca) if you have any questions or would like to reserve your space.

Please enjoy this month's issue of the *Oakwood Newsletter* and be sure to participate in the activities planned for our 2021 *Abilities Awareness* month!

Trillian Taylor, Director of Oakwood Academy



# Open Office Hour<sub>with Dr. Tippy</sub>

Our first **Ask Dr. Tippy** column got a bit of a makeover to become an **Open Office Hour with Dr. Tippy** on April 1 - which also happens to be same day as the launch of our April *Ability Awareness* campaign and fundraiser! This live discussion, exclusive to Oakwood families, will provide parents and caregivers the opportunity to discuss some of their questions, concerns and wonderings with Dr. Tippy. Topics range from specific child's behaviour questions and play ideas, to more general inquiries on implementing *Floortime* at home. We thank Dr. Tippy for giving us his time and expertise!

Dr. Tippy, a Clinical Psychologist and Expert *DIR/Floortime* practitioner, is passionate about making *Floortime* moments accessible at home and truly cares about the Oakwood community. Additional resources from Dr. Tippy can be found on his website: <https://drgiltippy.com/>.

Dr. Tippy has made videos with tips and resources on how to insert *Floortime* moments into your home life, called *For on the Floor*. Here is a link to his first video, which is all about adding *Floortime* moments into your kitchen and cooking routine: [FOR ON THE FLOOR #1](#)

Lastly, here is a great podcast discussion Dr. Tippy had with *Affect Autism* on strategies vs. actual developmental work when supporting children's growth. You can listen and read all about it here:

<https://affectautism.com/2019/12/09/growth/>







So, why **Recipes for Development**? We know that food is a powerful vehicle for learning and development. Using food as a learning or play material helps students develop sensory awareness. "Research shows that sensory play builds nerve connections in the brain's pathways... supports language development, cognitive growth, fine and gross motor skills, problem solving skills, and social interaction." ([educationalplaycare.com](https://www.educationalplaycare.com)). Sensory exploration of food and ingredients also allows students to engage in process learning, which focuses on building complex problem-solving skills, increased opportunities for enhanced communication and intrinsic motivation towards exploring novel ideas in play and learning.

*Mom's Pantry*  
WWW.MOMSPANTRY.CA

During this fundraising initiative, we will be holding our annual **Blue for 2** on **April 6!** By donating two dollars, students and staff from both Oakwood and St. Jude's will wear blue to show their support for their peers, classmates and those all over the world who are on the Autism spectrum!

# Spice Painting

by Ms. Nicola

Getting in the kitchen can awaken our senses and engage us in process-driven, student-led learning. Here is an activity to get you started:

Did you know that you can use various spices to make your own homemade paint? This activity targets multiple sensory systems, such as the tactile, olfactory and visual systems. It also allows for exploration of colour and scent mixing to create paint pastes which can be used in place of traditional paints. All of the following spices can be purchased through **Mom's Pantry!**

**For this activity, you will need:**

- **Paprika**
- **Pepper**
- **Turmeric or Mustard Powder**
- **Water**
- **Small containers/bowls**
- **Measuring spoons**
- **Paintbrushes, sponges, etc.**

1. Measure 2 tablespoons of each spice into its own container or small bowl. This is a great way to learn about measuring and counting through the use of measuring spoons! Have your child read the measuring spoons to find the right measurement, or expand this by figuring out how many teaspoons are in a tablespoon and measure each spice that way.
2. Once measured, encourage your child to explore the spice: talk about what they feel, look, smell and, if they are curious, taste!
3. Then pour water into each spice container/bowl. This is where you can experiment! Try making one of your spice paints really watery while making another into a paste (using less water). You can then explore how different they are when being used to paint. Which one comes out darker? Which one looks more like 'paint'?
4. After you have mixed the spice and water to create your paint paste, it is time to start creating! Using a paintbrush, sponges, or finger painting, it is time to create art on paper! Try painting different shapes, animals, landscapes and more! Which paint did you prefer? What happens when you mix the paint colours together?





# Morning Meeting Magic

by Ms. Ashleen



Across both Transition and Academic classes, Oakwood students have the exciting opportunity to participate in Morning Meetings, Circle Time, or Peer Groups, unique to every classroom. These morning meetings prepare each student for their day and set the groundwork for a full day of learning. For example, in Ms. Erica's classroom, her students start their day with their morning exercises, supporting student regulation and encouraging shared attention with peers. Similarly, in the Junior Transition morning circle time, the younger students work on gross motor skills such as core strength, balance, motor planning and body awareness through fun games such as scooter board races, music and rhythm dancing, and even vestibular games such as *Ring Around the Rosie*!

In one of the Academic classrooms, students complete a mindfulness activity every morning, focusing on deep breathing, using a ball for deep pressure squishes and various other activities that support regulation. Similar to the Academic classrooms, the Senior Transition students complete the classroom calendar for the day, working on turn-taking, two-way communication, and bridging ideas through group games and activities.

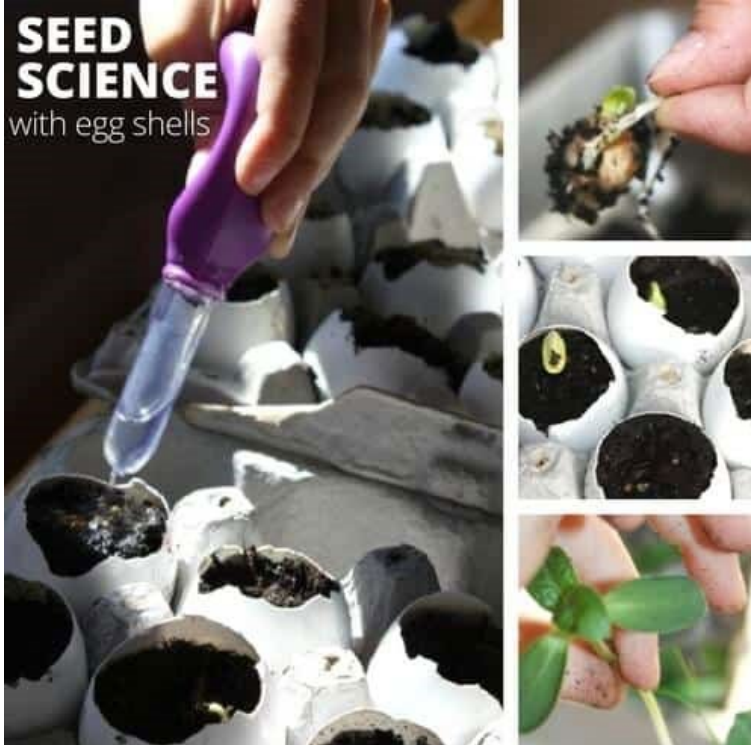
Junior Transition also completes a calendar, attending to language and music, following a *Days of the Week* song using rhythm and timing skills paired with actions such as clapping, stomping, or tapping their laps. Setting up daily expectations, having a familiar routine and providing opportunities for independent task completion are all great strategies we use for a successful morning routine within their familiar groups. Furthermore, both Senior and Junior Transition groups select a weekly theme to explore and guide their learning for the week! Past themes include Nutrition, Community Helpers, Solid-Liquid-Gas, Fire Safety and so much more. In the Academic classroom, students have fun and creative daily themes to facilitate their journal writing - *Missed You Monday*, *Think Outside the Box Tuesday*, *Wordy Wednesday*, *Three Things Thursday* and *Fun Friday*. Weekly learning themes are an exciting way to engage students in new ideas and concepts, as well as creating wonderment and anticipation for learning! Activities planned each week expand learning across all domains in a unique approach, providing the opportunity for all students to express their individuality and creativity!



# Spring Science

by Ms. Dorothy

## SEED SCIENCE with egg shells



Here comes spring! Plants begin to grow, gardens are starting to form, bugs and creepy crawlers are slowly coming out. Plus, the sunshine is hard to resist! Spring is the perfect time to get outside and observe science happening in your community with your children. Here are a few experiments and activities that you and your child can enjoy while observing and learning something new.

### Growing Seeds in Eggshells

The next time you are in the kitchen, save your eggshells after some baking, breakfast or dinner! Use soil to plant any flower seeds your child would like. Strengthen their fine motor skills by using a spoon to scoop soil into the eggshells before planting the seeds.

### Frozen Flowers

Explore real flowers with an ice melt activity, sorting and identifying the parts of a flower. This activity can also turn into a fun water sensory bin to explore!



**Preschool Flower**  
Science and Sensory Play Activity



### Walking Rainbow Water Experiment

For this experiment, you will need:

- 7 Clear small cups
- 6 Folded half sheets of paper towel
- Food colouring
- Water

This experiment is a great activity to learn about secondary colours and capillary action. The water moves upward through the paper towel, lifting the food dye molecules with it, similar to how trees get water from the ground to their roots.

1. After filling up 4 clear cups with water, add 1 drop of red food coloring to two cups, then 1 drop of blue to another cup, and 1 drop of yellow to another cup.
2. Line up the cups in this order: red, empty cup, yellow cup, empty cup, blue cup, empty cup, then red cup.
3. Fold the 6 pieces of paper towel in half and trim it just a little and then place a paper towel into each cup and connect with the empty cups.







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