



SEPTEMBER 2021

# Oakwood Academy

*Individualized Education JK-12*

## Director's Message



It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2021 – 2022 school year! I hope that you and your family are doing well, staying healthy and have had a meaningful and fun summer break! We are excited to have our community join together this year, bringing opportunities for new relationships and connections to develop once again. This year, we continue to implement health and safety protocols to keep our students and staff safe. Though we have learned a great deal during the course of this pandemic, we will continue to be prepared and adapt as a community as circumstances change.

All of our staff are thrilled to welcome our students back to school with options for both in-person and virtual learning. The DIR® Model has always reminded us that our connections with each other, through smiles, affirmations, compassion and teamwork, should never be taken for granted. With careful planning and considerations over the summer, our Leadership team has worked tirelessly to create placements and cohorting

### DATES TO REMEMBER

September 29  
Orange Shirt Day  
(Every Child Matters)

September 30  
National Day for Truth  
& Reconciliation  
(No school)

October 11  
Thanksgiving  
(No School)

October 21  
International Day

October 27  
Casual Day  
(optional)

October 28  
Picture Day

October 29  
Halloween Spirit Day

October 25  
Bi-monthly VIRTUAL  
Parent Coffee



schedules that will safely allow for an enriched experience for each of our students. Throughout the summer months, staff were instructing, finalizing schedules, organizing classrooms, preparing materials and supplies, all to ensure for a smooth transition for each child this fall. We couldn't be more ready to bring back many of our traditional programs as well as add some new programming, such as our new music program, with Ashling Byrne.

It is an honour to work with a team that is truly dedicated to the progress and success of each child. Helping to create the foundation for your child's social, emotional and academic success is something we strongly believe in and are looking forward to being a part of. A large part of each child's success is attributed to parent involvement as well. By working closely with our parents, both with home practice and school support, together everyone will grow. This year, we are pleased for the return of our Parent Support Coordinator, Hope McSwain, working with Dorota Leja and Amy Cooke, Transition Director, whom are all eager to be providing new opportunities for families to be in close connection with the school and each other. Jessica Difonzo will be working with Stefani Baird, supporting our school in our new Fundraising Committee. We are asking families to consider participating and/or contributing to the Oakwood Fundraising committee so that we can continue to fund stimulating and enrich programs, equipment and supplies that will support teaching and learning this year.

I look forward to continuing our collaboration to provide your children with an effective and engaging educational experience. We will look to our families to be positive partners in each year's journey. We understand the daily complexities and challenges our community continues to face and will continue to be here to support you and our students throughout the year. We hold our hands out to you in partnership, friendship, and goodwill. I wish you all a smooth start to this school year! Stay healthy, stay positive, and stay connected.

As always, my door is open and I welcome your input. Please feel free to contact me via email at the address below, or call the school to make an appointment to speak with me via phone call or Zoom to discuss any ideas you feel will make this the best year yet!

**Best regards,**  
**Trillian Taylor,**  
**Director/Co-Founder**  
**Oakwood Academy**



# Join Them!

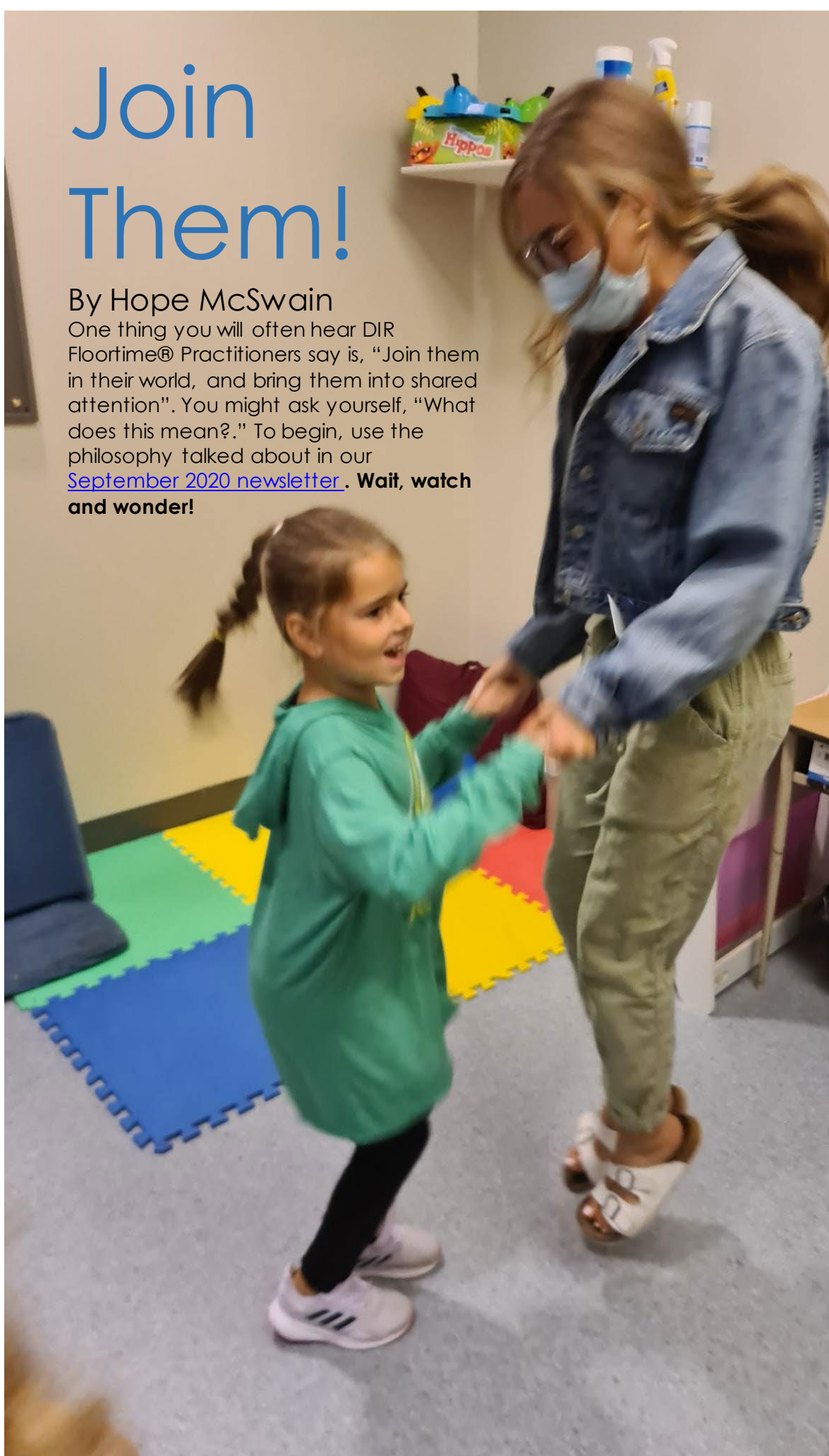
By Hope McSwain

One thing you will often hear DIR Floortime® Practitioners say is, "Join them in their world, and bring them into shared attention". You might ask yourself, "What does this mean?." To begin, use the philosophy talked about in our [September 2020 newsletter](#). **Wait, watch and wonder!**

**Wait and Watch** how they are interacting with the world around them before joining your child in play. **Wonder** about what they are doing. What is bringing them joy? What about doing this is bringing them pleasure? Is it the visual input? Does it remind them of something they love? Think about how you can join this interaction with them.

Now that you have waited, watched and wondered.- join them! Join them in this interaction that is meaningful to them. Joining them will look different for each child. This might look like joining them running around or listening to them talk about their favourite movie/toy/game. Be curious about what they are doing. You might use facial and body affect (e.g., big gasps, widening the eyes, pointing to what they are looking at). You can use wonderment such as, "I am wondering about...". Don't feel pressured to be doing more. Allow yourself to just join them in what is meaningful for them.

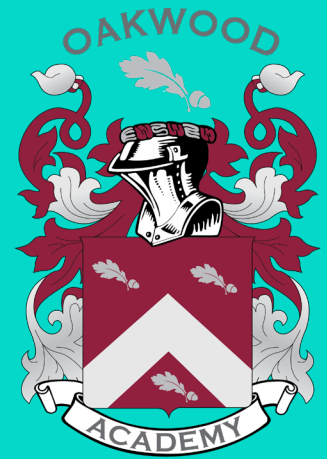
We hope you join us, the Parent Support Team, this year too as we continue to embrace the DIR Floortime® model during bi-monthly parent support groups, workshops, monthly contests and so much more!





# A Safe and Healthy Return to School!

By Madeleine Mar



We are so excited to welcome new and returning students back to another safe and exciting school year! Here are a few health and safety reminders for Oakwood Families:

- Screening forms must be sent to [HS@oakwoodacademy.ca](mailto:HS@oakwoodacademy.ca) by 8am each morning.
- If your child does not pass screening, a Back to School Form must be filled out and submitted to [HS@oakwoodacademy.ca](mailto:HS@oakwoodacademy.ca) before your child returns to school.
- Our screening form, Back to School Form, and Health and Safety Policies and Procedures Manual can be found on our website: [www.oakwoodacademy.ca/covid19-policy-forms/](http://www.oakwoodacademy.ca/covid19-policy-forms/)
- Please arrive during your child's scheduled cohort time and maintain 6ft distance from other families. We ask that students who are able to, and parents/guardians wear masks during drop off and pick up times in order to maintain safety.

## Here's what Oakwood is doing to help keep our community safe

- Staff and faculty members must also submit a screening form to [HS@oakwoodacademy.ca](mailto:HS@oakwoodacademy.ca) each morning by 7am.
- Oakwood Academy has implemented an Immunization Disclosure Policy and Mandatory Testing Policy for staff and faculty, as per guidelines from the Ministry of Education. Staff and Faculty members must disclose their vaccination status, and there is frequent, mandatory testing for partially vaccinated and unvaccinated staff and faculty members
- Staff and faculty members always have access to appropriate PPE while working with students (i.e., medical masks, eye protection). Gloves and gowns are available and recommended for specific situations such as assisting with toileting and feeding.
- Temperature checks will be conducted and recorded for staff, faculty members, and students upon arrival, and again during mid-day. Classroom contact tracing sheets are also filled out daily in order to track movement through the building.
- Sanitizers and cleaning supplies are readily available to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.
- We are regularly reviewing health and safety information released from Peel Public Health and the government of Ontario, and will provide updates to staff and families when necessary.


## Here's what else you can do to help keep our community safe

- Although our Immunization Disclosure Policy only applies to staff and faculty members, families are welcome to disclose their child's vaccination status. This information is completely **optional**, and will only be used for the purpose of assisting Peel Public Health.
- Students who are 12 years old and over are eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine. Clinical studies have shown that the vaccine is safe and effective. For more information, please visit [www.peelregion.ca/coronavirus/vaccine/book-appointment/](http://www.peelregion.ca/coronavirus/vaccine/book-appointment/)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding health and safety, please do not hesitate to reach out via email [hs@oakwoodacademy.ca](mailto:hs@oakwoodacademy.ca).

# Terry Fox Walk

**By Kayla Astolfo**

A photograph of a young man with curly brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt and grey shorts, running on a paved road. He has a prosthetic right leg. The t-shirt has the text "MARATHON OF HOPE" and a graphic of three red maple leaves. The background shows a rocky cliff and a blue car.

Terry Fox day is celebrated in schools all across Canada. The students at Oakwood Academy participated in various activities to commemorate Terry Fox and his journey. The students participated in gross motor and fine motor activities, such as colouring a shoe to show their support, completing exercises and a walk around the Sport Court. Overall, the students enjoyed each activity they chose and learned a little more about Terry Fox along the way.

# School Fundraising and Awareness Committee

By Jessica Difonzo

Every year, Oakwood Academy strives to provide a sensory enriched environment and extracurricular activities for our students. We are able to do this through generous donations and fundraising efforts.

Oakwood Academy is excited to announce our first two fundraising events of the year. The first fundraiser will be supporting our local community through "Colours for a Cause". With this, each family and staff member will be able to purchase their "Colours for a Cause" t-shirts through Oakwood Academy. This year, our school started with "Orange Shirt Day" to recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. A percentage of these donations will go towards The Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund (DWF). More information to follow each month!

Additionally, Oakwood Academy is also excited to announce our first 50/50 draw. Parents will be able to purchase tickets in increments of one or three. We will start the 50/50 draw in October.

Oakwood Academy would like to send out a great big thank you to all individuals who participated in Oakwood Academy's fundraising efforts last year. With great pleasure and excitement, Oakwood Academy has purchased and added a variety of toys and resources to our everyday learning experiences, such as board games and books! The sensory gym also has a great new addition: a wooden triangular ladder to further support and challenge our students' gross motor development.







## OAKWOOD ACADEMY

HEAD OF SCHOOL: Trillian Taylor

PRESIDENT: Aaron Sawatsky

SENIOR EDITOR: Ann Harvey

Send Your Comments, Questions & Address Updates to <mailto:aharvey@stjudesacademy.com>

### EDITORIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE:

Ann Harvey, Melissa Fillion, Dorota Leja, Melanie Mendes, Trillian Taylor

### CONTRIBUTORS/CONTENT REVIEW:

Dorota Leja (Mrs Dorothy), Trillian Taylor, Hope McSwain (Ms Hope),  
Jessica Difonzo (Mrs. Jessica), Kayla Astolfo (Ms Kayla), Melanie Mendes, Madeleine Mar, Amy Cooke

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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