

2007 – 2022

CELEBRATING

15
YEARS

OAKWOOD ACADEMY



FEBRUARY 2022

Oakwood Academy

Individualized Education JK-12



Co-regulating with your child

By: Hope McSwain

Sometimes our children can have big feelings. Sometimes overly excited and sometimes overly mad! During these times, our children need us to co-regulate with them. Co-regulation is beautifully described in the *Affect Autism Blog* as, “we attune ourselves to our child in our interactions in order to maintain a regulated state between us.”

When children are dysregulated our automatic response is to say, “it’s okay,” “calm down” or “slow down.” However, in those moments our children need us to model and be attune to their emotions to support them in becoming regulated.

Here are some tips to support you in co-regulating with your child.

Tip 1: Use minimal language

In moments of dysregulation, our children are over-stimulated and we need to support them in becoming regulated again. Reducing language is a great way

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 1
Pancake Tuesday
PYJAMA DAY
wear pyjamas!

March 2
SPORTS DAY
wear your favourite jersey/sportswear!

March 3
SUPERHERO DAY
be your favourite superhero!

March 4
ST. PATRICK'S DAY
wear green!

March 7 – 18
March Break

March 14 – 18
March Break
Camp
(optional)

March 30
Casual Day

to support this. Instead of using lots of words, you can use your body and facial affect to mirror their emotions and offer support. For example, you might just nod your head, show them with your body that you are there and in the moment with them. Show them empathy by saying, "I know" or "it's tough," while taking some deep breaths in and out.

Tip 2: Provide sensory support if needed

Sensory support is a great way to support your child during moments of dysregulation. Our Occupational Therapist, Julia always says, "When in doubt use proprioceptive (prop)." Some ways to provide your child with proprioceptive input might be offering them a bear hug (if they are in a safe space to receive one), rolling a yoga ball on their limbs or having them snuggle up with a weighted blanket while you hold the space for them to regulate. Our Occupational Therapist, Julia says, "One of the best ways to support your child in distress is to hold their hand with deep pressure touch."

Tip 3: Meet them where they are at

When a child is dysregulated, this is not a teachable or a learning moment. It's a time to stop and go back to FEDC 1 to support their regulation. In these moments, just be present, offer an empathetic look. You need to meet them where they are at to facilitate co-regulation. You might want to get on the floor and hold the space for them to be upset and express their emotions. In this moment, don't worry about talking about what happened, finishing the activity, etc. Think about what you can do to get them regulated again (e.g. sensory support) and hold the space for them to feel safe in expressing themselves.

Parent support is always available to dive more in-depth with you about any of the DIR@Floortime concepts or support your journey in using the DIR Model with your child. Please feel free to reach out at anytime! Email: hmcswain@oakwoodacademy.ca



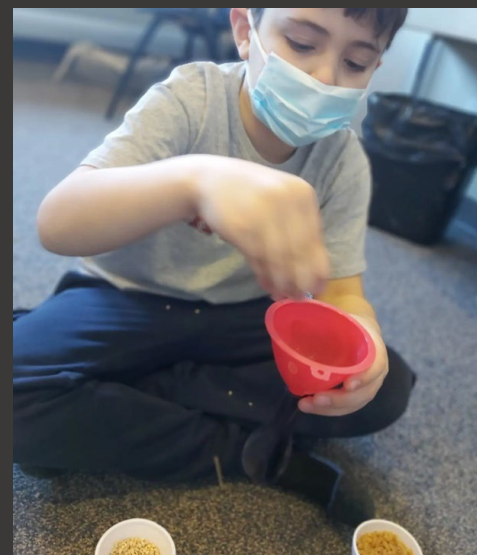
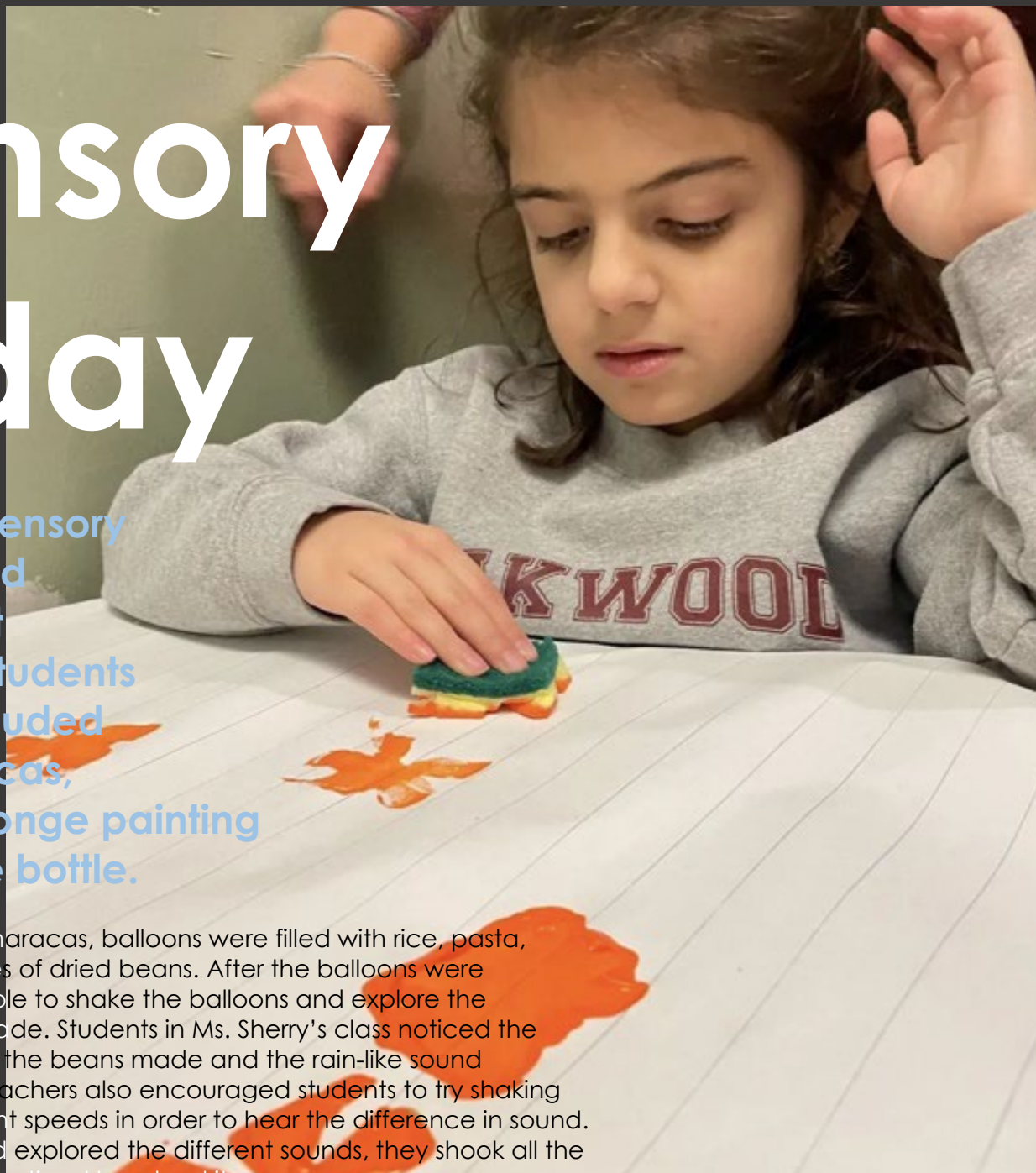
Sensory Friday

This month's Sensory Friday featured three different activities for students to try. This included Balloon maracas, a Firework sponge painting and a Sparkle bottle.

To make the Balloon maracas, balloons were filled with rice, pasta, air and/or various types of dried beans. After the balloons were filled, students were able to shake the balloons and explore the various sounds they made. Students in Ms. Sherry's class noticed the thundering sound that the beans made and the rain-like sound that the rice made. Teachers also encouraged students to try shaking the balloons at different speeds in order to hear the difference in sound. Once the students had explored the different sounds, they shook all the balloons at once and noticed how loud it was.

Students were also given the option to do a Firework sponge painting. For this activity, students were given cut-up sponges, paint and paper to create their own masterpieces. They dipped the sponges and their hands in paint, then pressed them onto the paper to create their picture. Students in Ms. Britney's class were encouraged to make their pictures their own by using various colours and sides of the sponge. In doing this visual activity, students developed their perception skills.

The last sensory activity was a calming Sparkle bottle for students. For this activity, students were given a water bottle filled with glitter, water and oil. Once the bottle was tightly sealed, students were given the bottle to shake, spin and flip. These movements would agitate the glitter in the bottle to create a visual experience, soothe and calm students and spark curiosity about the movement of the glitter. Overall, students engaged in many exciting sensory activities this month!



Indigo

Indigo Fundraiser

Our **Indigo Fundraiser** is still going!!! We are encouraging our community to purchase items or make a direct donation through **indigo.ca** to help us reach our fundraising goal!

A big **thank you** to those families who have already contributed by purchasing goods online: Daria B, Emma E, Joyce K, Donna M, Jacquelin B and Mara.

Thank you Donna M, Luisa G and Anna M. for making a cash donation!

Click here to shop OR donate! Please share the link with your family and friends to help us with our fundraising mission! We appreciate the support!



An extra special **THANK YOU** to the Cordeiro family for supporting our literacy program with their donation of levelled readers!



Indoor Snowman

Bring the winter fun indoors with this sensory-based craft! Children are able to feel the cool snow and work on their fine motor skills by building a miniature snowman. Follow these steps to make your very own snow creation:

Materials:

- 1 Large bowl
- 1 Mixing spoon
- 2 ½ Cups baking soda
- ½ Cup white hair conditioner
- 7 Peppercorns or buttons
- 1 Baby carrot
- 2 Toothpicks

Steps:

- Gather all of the materials.
- Combine 2 ½ cups of baking soda and ½ cup white hair conditioner in a large bowl. Once added, mix with a spoon to combine.
- Use your hands to make 3 different sized snow balls (small, medium and large).
- Put the snowballs in order from big to small and stack them to create your snowman.
- Add the snowman's eyes, nose, mouth and arms using the peppercorns or buttons, baby carrot and toothpicks!



THE SOUND OF OAKWOOD

GROUP SESSIONS



LEARN



PLAY



ENGAGE

Sing, dance, and play instruments in highly interactive group music sessions. This program follows the DIR model and includes activities that are designed to help your child explore and enhance their social, motor and communication skills.

\$40

10 group music sessions
running from
February - June
2022

+ 2 complimentary
sessions

Ashling Byrne

Music Program Coordinator
Developmental Therapist
Oakwood Academy

abyrne@oakwoodacademy.ca

Oakwood Academy March Break Camp

The Great Outdoors

March 14 - March 18 2022



Oakwood Academy offers a unique social skills March Break Camp. Using the DIR/Floortime Model framework, our highly-trained multidisciplinary team of instructors and therapists work with each family to focus on priority goals for the week. By incorporating joyful activities that are exciting and meaningful to each camper learning social skills has never been more fun!

Available Programs:

1:1 Transition Skills Program:

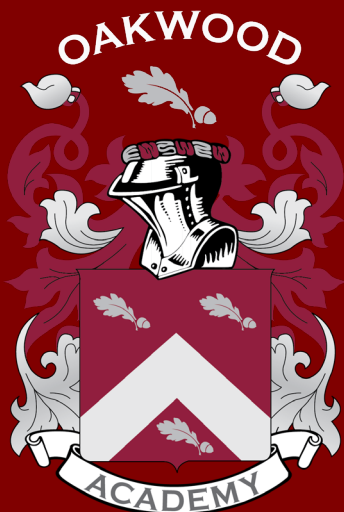
The 1:1 Transition Program is designed for campers 3-16 years of age who benefit from one-on-one support. Using the DIR/Floortime Model, therapists develop an individual program plan to meet each camper's unique learning and sensory profile, and build on the camper's Functional Emotional Developmental Capacities (FEDCs). Campers in this program will also participate in group activities with therapist support in order to build social/classroom skills with their peers.

6:2 Group Skills Program:

The Group Social Skills Program is offered in both junior and senior divisions for campers 5-18 years of age. This program is designed for campers who can participate in a group of 6 campers. Using the DIR/Floortime Model, our group instructors will create a unique individualized program focusing on increasing each camper's Functional Emotional Developmental Capacities (FEDCs) which will support their ability to think, relate, and communicate. Campers will participate in activities with their group in order to build social skills. Campers who may benefit from additional support will be enrolled with Level 2 support.

For More Information:

Families who are interested in pricing information and/or registering their child for the OA March Break Camp, please contact Melissa Filion, Admissions at: admissions@oakwoodacademy.ca.



**OAKWOOD
ACADEMY**

OAKWOOD ACADEMY

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