

2007 – 2022

CELEBRATING

15
YEARS

OAKWOOD ACADEMY



APRIL 2022

Oakwood Academy

Individualized Education JK-12



DATES TO REMEMBER

May 2
Parent
Workshop
(see poster)

May 3
Eid
(no school)

May 20
PD Day
(no school)

May 23
Victoria Day
(no school)

May 25
Casual Day

Autism Acceptance Day

By: Hope McSwain, Expert DIR/Floortime Practitioner

This month, Oakwood celebrated Autism Acceptance Day and wore #RedInstead to show support and solidarity for autistic individuals*. Autistic individuals are advocating for an inclusive world where all autistic people have equal rights, access and opportunities. Every autistic person experiences autism differently. They experience socializing, communicating and processing their senses differently than a neurotypical (NT) person.

**We use identify-first language, as many autistic adults have indicated a preference for identity-first vs. person-first language. This language describes autism as a part of who they are as people and not something that is separate.*

Ways you can support autistic individuals

- Learn about Autism from Autistic Individuals (or AA = Actually Autistic). As a neurotypical person, we cannot understand how an autistic person experiences the world. It's important to hear and understand experiences

from an autistic person. You can use the hashtag #actuallyautistic to learn more.

- Ask for permission when needing to support your child physically. It is important and respectful to ask their permission before touching them. This is also a really nice way to teach and model boundary setting and support your child in knowing that they have the right to say "no".
- Respect Communication. Autismacceptance.com said it beautifully, "Some autistic people talk, and others don't. Some autistic people talk differently than non-autistic people. Some of us use **AAC (using something other than talking to communicate)**. Some people use AAC all the time, while others go back and forth between AAC and talking. Some people repeat things they've heard before, or talk for a long time. Some people use words that don't seem to make sense, or show what they think by how they act. No matter how we communicate, we all have something to say. Being an ally means listening to us, and taking what we say seriously. It means making sure other people listen to us."
- Focus on strengths and everything that autistic individuals are great at. As parents, therapists and support staff, we can sometimes get stuck on the areas where we want to help our children to grow. However, they have amazing strengths, talents and interests. You can use these strengths to continue to support your child in their engagement, communication and social problem solving with others!

There are many great resources out there for you to learn more from autistic people including:

ASAN (Autistic Self Advocacy Group) - <https://autisticadvocacy.org>

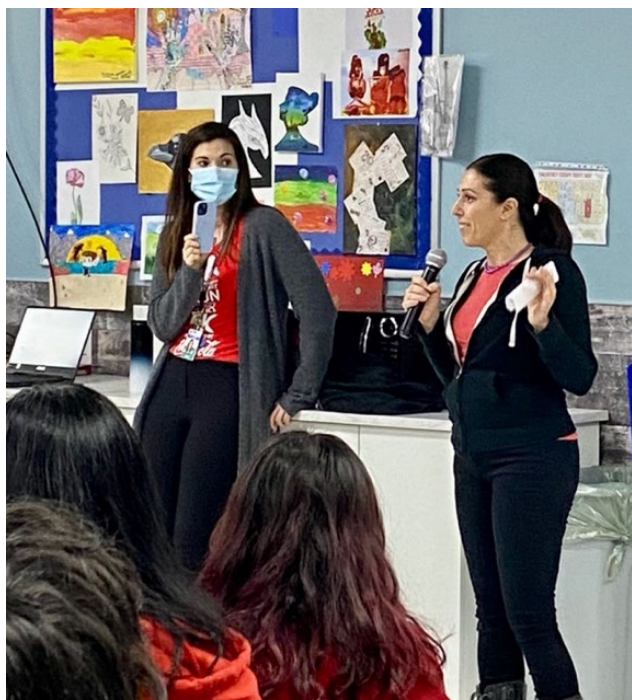
Learn From Autistics - www.learnfromautistics.com

Autistikids - <http://www.autistikids.com>

Autism Acceptance - <https://autismacceptance.com>

<https://autismacceptance.com/resources/>

<https://autisticadvocacy.org>



Thank you to Donna!

To kick off our Autism Acceptance month, Oakwood/SJA parent Donna Mazzaferro attended the St. Jude's Academy Lower and Upper School Assemblies to share her personal experience with autism and to build awareness for autism acceptance. We are grateful that Donna was able to share her experience and encourage SJA students to share her story with friends and family as a step toward building autism acceptance.

Sensory Friday



This month's Sensory Friday theme was, "Over the Rainbow". Students explored various rainbow-themed sensory activities such as rolling the rainbow, searching for coins, or making the rainbow!

To roll the rainbow, each student was given a dice template to colour in. They could use six colours to fill in the dice faces, with each color corresponding to a movement. There was also one free space, which could be used as an activity/movement. Once the students had coloured in the dice, they cut and glued the dice shape together. The students then rolled the dice and completed whatever movement corresponded with the colour facing up. These movements included dances, jumping, spinning and exercises. The students enjoyed colouring the template and completing the various movements! This activity helped students improve bilateral coordination.



Students also searched for gold coins on Sensory Friday. For this activity, students were given a bowl full of shaving cream and food colouring (if parents approved). Once the students put their hands in the shaving cream, they could feel around for the gold coins and dig them out. This activity allowed students to explore with their hands and engage their tactile sense. Students enjoyed this activity, as they were able to dip their hands and get messy with shaving cream!

Another activity for Sensory Friday included making a rainbow. For this craft, students were given cotton balls, paper and paint. Students cut out a circle on a piece of paper and drew seven rings like a bullseye. Once the students had drawn on the paper, they used cotton balls to dip into paint and colour the rainbow. After the paint dried, students cut the circle in half and created two of their very own rainbows! The students had fun participating in the rainbow-themed activities for Sensory Friday!

Spring Concert

Mark your calendars! Our Spring Concert will be held on the evening of June 9. Oakwood Academy staff and students are working hard to craft their performances, which are based on the movie "**SING**"!





Gymnastics Program



This month we began our yearly Gymnastics Program at Futures Gymnastics. The students will participate in a variety of different activities including, the balance beam, trampoline, tumbling and obstacle courses. Participating in gymnastics weekly is a great way to support our students' gross motor skills, motor planning, bilateral coordination, auditory processing and core strength!

Seed Balls



Prepare for spring with this nature-based sensory craft! By combining scrap paper and wildflower seeds you can create seed balls to throw around your neighborhood.

Disclaimer: Please do not throw seed balls in local parks or on private property, as the plants in these areas are managed. Try to throw seed balls in local areas like vacant lots or plain-looking playgrounds.

Materials:

- Old paper (such as worksheets or old newspaper)
- Wildflower seeds
- Large plastic bin
- Large bowl
- Blender
- Strainer
- Water
- Baking tray

Steps:

1. Gather all materials listed.
2. Tear up old paper into pieces and place in a large plastic bin. Pieces should be small (e.g. 1-2 inches) but do not need to be the same size. Try using construction paper for different coloured seed balls!
3. Pour enough water in the bin to cover the paper. Let the mixture soak overnight to ensure the paper has absorbed the water.
4. Once the paper has soaked overnight, take heaps of paper and place in a blender. Do not fill the blender more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way to ensure the paper will blend. To preserve the blender, try to use an old blender as paper can deteriorate the blades.
5. Blend paper mixture until it is an oatmeal-like consistency.
6. Remove paper mixture from the blender and place it in a strainer to remove extra water.
7. Once you have removed some of the water, place the mixture back into the bowl and add in your wildflower seeds. Knead the seeds into the mixture until combined.
8. After the seeds are incorporated, use your hands to scoop one inch balls of the mixture onto a baking tray.
9. Place the seed balls onto a tray to dry for up to 3 days out in the open. Once the seed balls are dry, walk around your neighborhood and toss them around!

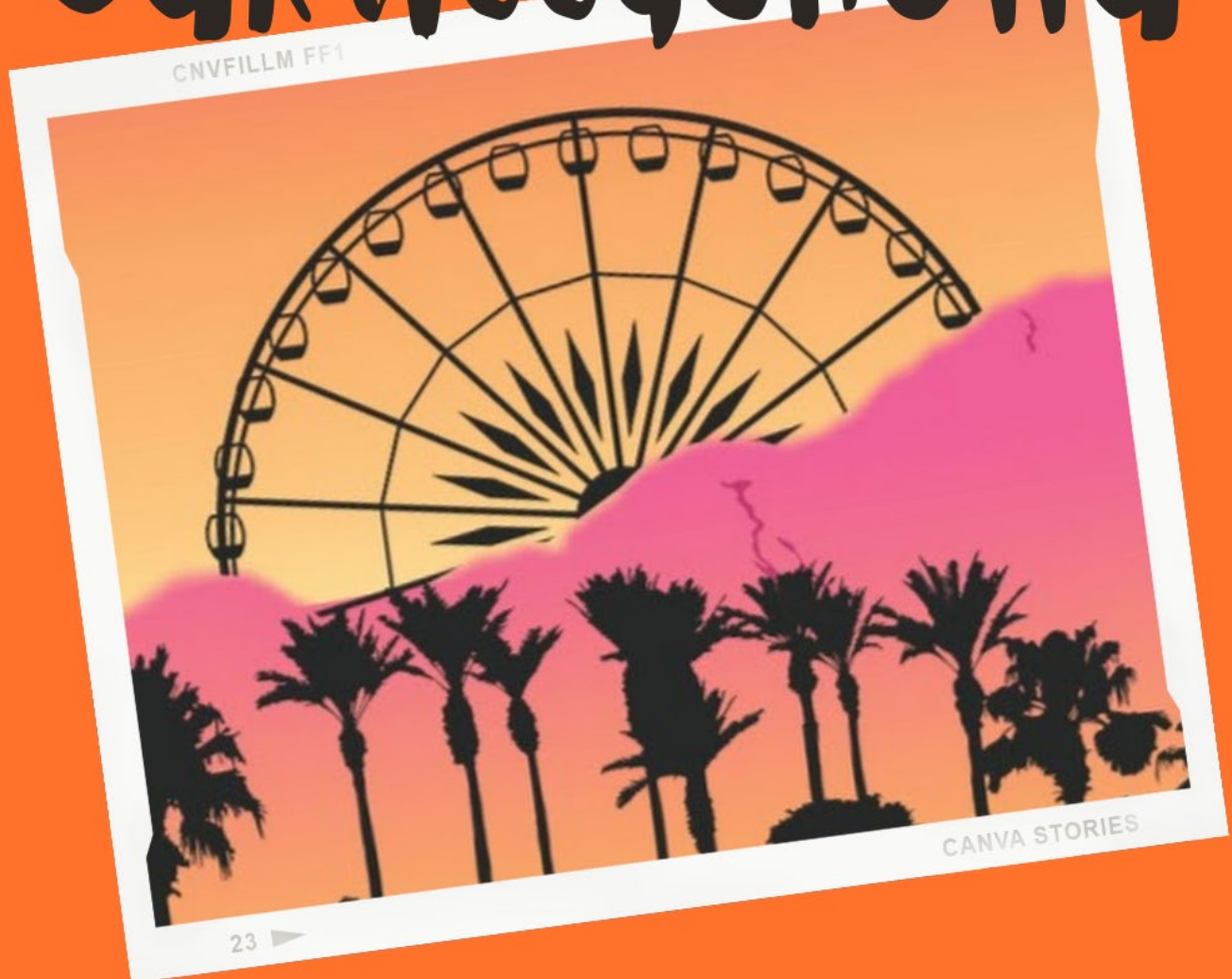
Summer Camp 2022

Oakwood is excited to announce registration for summer camp is now open! For more information or to register, please contact admissions@oakwoodacademy.ca. Spaces are limited! This year's themes will be:

Block 1: "Oakwoodchella" (July 4 – July 15, 2022)

Throughout this camp, students will engage in a variety of activities that increase regulation, engagement and communication. They will use their imagination and creativity to explore different genres of music, music around the world, as well as explore various mediums of art and creative expression. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in co-operative team games and sports outdoors. Using all the skills they have developed during their time at camp, the students invite their families to our outdoor Oakwoodchella event on Friday, July 15, 2022. During this event, students and therapists/teachers can display their talents during our mini music fest!

Oakwoodchella



July 4 – July 15, 2022

Summer Camp 2022

Block 2: "Oakwood Presents: Days at the Museum" (July 18 – July 29, 2022)

Throughout this camp, students will use their imagination, creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills to gain first-hand knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Each day your child will have a chance to explore developmentally appropriate topics in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), as well as History and Art themed activities. Students will be able to explore forming opinions and develop decision-making skills. Using all the skills they have developed during their time at camp, the students invite their families to the Oakwood Museum Exhibit on Friday, July 29, 2022. During this event, families can complete a walkthrough of what the students created during the block. Students and families will also be able to contribute to the "Oakwood Time Capsule."



Summer Camp 2022

Block 3: "Oakwood Amazing Race" (August 2 – August 12, 2022)

Throughout this camp, students will use their imagination, creativity, problem-solving, critical and abstract thinking skills to explore various adventures with their peers. Each day, the students will participate in a variety of activities, through sensory, art, pretend play, active games and outdoor exploration. The students will also learn about different cultures throughout the weeks. On Friday, August 12, 2022, students will have the opportunity to explore their community by participating in Oakwood's Amazing Race! During this event, students will go around in the community with their therapists/teachers in order to collect clues to race to the finish!

OAKWOOD'S AMAZING RACE

AUGUST 2 - AUGUST 12, 2022

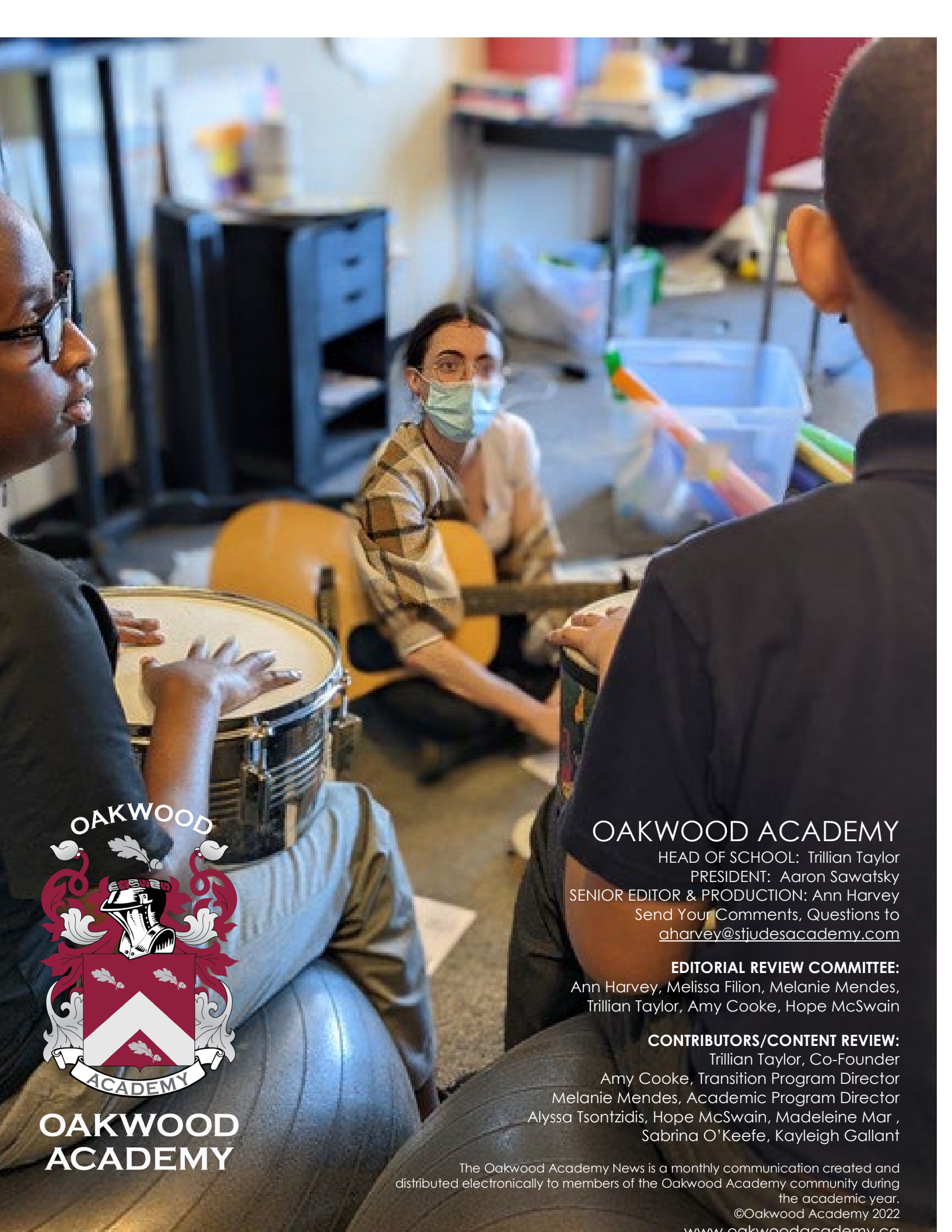


An Oakwood Academy
Presentation on:
**Supporting Your
Child After
a Meltdown**

This workshop will discuss techniques and strategies on how to support your child's regulation, engagement and opening and closing circles of communication after a meltdown

When: May 2, 2022
Time: 7:30pm - 8:15pm

This workshop will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams
Please RSVP by: April 27, 2022 to
hmcswain@oakwoodacademy.ca
Current registered families: Free
Non-Oakwood families/Professionals: \$20



**OAKWOOD
ACADEMY**

OAKWOOD ACADEMY

HEAD OF SCHOOL: Trillian Taylor

PRESIDENT: Aaron Sawatsky

SENIOR EDITOR & PRODUCTION: Ann Harvey

Send Your Comments, Questions to
aharvey@stjudesacademy.com

EDITORIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE:

Ann Harvey, Melissa Filion, Melanie Mendes,
Trillian Taylor, Amy Cooke, Hope McSwain

CONTRIBUTORS/CONTENT REVIEW:

Trillian Taylor, Co-Founder
Amy Cooke, Transition Program Director
Melanie Mendes, Academic Program Director
Alyssa Tsontzidis, Hope McSwain, Madeleine Mar ,
Sabrina O'Keefe, Kayleigh Gallant

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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