

# Safe, Caring, Healthy and Inclusive School Community

## Safe Welcome Program

In order to ensure that schools in Dufferin-Peel are safe learning environments, the Safe Welcome Program has been introduced. This initiative helps school staff manage access of school visitors and limit points of access into schools. The program also includes:

- the implementation of visitor sign-in and name tag procedures;
- the development of lockdown procedures;
- the development of SPEAR (School, Police, Emergency Action Response) by Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and Peel Police;
- the implementation of Criminal Reference Checks;
- and the introduction of the PED (Personal Electronic Device) policy.

## Shaping Safer Schools: A Bullying Prevention Program

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board schools have been involved in Bullying Prevention Programs in cooperation with Peel Health and Peel Police for many years. As part of the Shaping Safer Schools initiative:

- all elementary and secondary schools have received bullying prevention resources for staff, students and parents;
- The Virtues Program, which is described in the next column, has been implemented to address the issue of bullying and teach bullying prevention within the curriculum;
- a Bullying Prevention Policy has been developed for Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board;
- and bullying prevention training is being provided for staff.

## Progressive Discipline

The Safe Schools Act (2000) has been reviewed and The Education Amendment Act (2007) was enacted. As a result, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board has amended their policies and procedures to reflect the requirements of this act which includes:

- programs for students on suspension or expulsion;
- suspension for bullying; and
- the implementation of Progressive Discipline procedures.

## Virtues Program

The notion of virtue is deeply rooted in Catholic Christian Tradition. Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board has developed a “Virtues Education” program that will help us all to make choices and encourage behaviours that will show respect for all persons and will allow each member of our community to feel a sense of belonging. Virtuous actions always build up relationships, thereby modelling the words and teachings of Jesus. We are able to walk the talk and truly live as God asks us to live. In a school community, virtue formation contributes to a healthy positive learning environment by fostering a climate in which all members feel safe, confident, and hope-filled about themselves, their relationships, and their futures. It is in a community of caring, committed partners that we find the space and time to become our best selves.

The “month-at-a-time” virtue plan provides schools with a common theme to celebrate throughout the school year. Assigning a virtue to each month facilitates school-wide prayer and celebrations. Virtues are discussed and developed across various curriculum.