



InTouch

Project Smile - A Huge Success

What do today's children have to worry about?

Plenty, apparently. Recent research indicates that even young children have worries and feel stress to some degree. Stress is a function of the demands placed on us and the ability to meet them.

"These come from outside sources, such as family, friends, extracurricular activities or school. But, it can also come from within, often related to what we think we "should" do," explains St. Ignatius teacher, Sabrina Peterson.

She and her Grade 11 Introduction to Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology Class researched anxieties and pressures that may be experienced by Grades 4 to 6 students resulting from factors such as extracurricular activities, friends, social media, prejudices, and EQAO testing.

"Our goal was to develop a set of activities that would assist to alleviate these negative feelings and to teach the children coping strategies to last a lifetime," she told Trustees last Monday night.

St. Ignatius students set up eight distinct stations for the elementary students, ranging from physical activity and dance, to sessions on mindfulness, to healthy snacks.

"It was definitely a learning experience for both groups of students. My students told them about how normal it was to have different feelings, pressures and stressors in life, and even talked about their own experiences," she said.

"The elementary students were very comfortable in sharing their feelings and my students tried to help them. It was a beautiful thing to see," she added.



Students at St. Margaret School learned how to dance away some stress.

Minister of Education Visits Local High School

Liz Sandals, Minister of Education, visited Thunder Bay last week, as part of the Liberal Government's Northern Caucus meeting.

Her office asked to visit St. Ignatius High School during her tour of the north.

A former school board Trustee, it was not surprising that the Minister was extremely knowledgeable and engaged.

"The challenge now (in education) is how do we take innovation and find those things that are working best and spread them not just to lead schools, but all across the system and in every school and in every board. The challenge is to get the great innovations more generally in use; we need a sustainable transformation that's relevant and meets local needs.

We certainly know that we also need to learn from our stakeholders," said Minister Sandals.

