

Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild@HWDSB: Building a Community of Care

Dear Families,

A positive, inclusive, equitable, and non-discriminatory school experience is important to the personal, social, and academic development of all students as they work to achieve their full potential. At HWDSB, we recognize our responsibility to respect diversity, promote inclusive education, and work towards identifying and eliminating barriers to equal treatment in education that limit the ability of students to learn, grow, and contribute to society.

HWDSB remains committed to Ministry of Education and Board plans and policies on human rights, equity and inclusion, as we strive to help all students and staff feel safe, supported and accepted. We want to share with your family information about Learn.Disrupt.Rebuild@HWDSB: Building a Community of Care, which is a Board-wide focus that is being implemented in all schools.

What is Learn.Disrupt. Rebuild@HWDSB: Building a Community of Care?

Learn.Disrupt.Rebuild@HWDSB is a Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum resource aligns with both the [Board Annual Plan](#) and [Equity Action Plan](#). The lessons are designed to support students and staff as they address issues related to human rights, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, anti-oppression, mental health, and well-being within the context of the global pandemic.

How does this resource align with the Ontario Curriculum?

It is important that all students feel connected to the curriculum, that they see themselves in what is taught, how it is taught, and how it applies to the world at large. All lessons in Learn.Disrupt.Rebuild@HWDSB align with overall expectations in the [Ontario Curriculum](#) in varying subject areas. As well, these lessons align with the [Considerations for Program Planning](#) applicable to all curriculum documents, grades 1 to 12, as well as the Kindergarten program. These considerations include areas such as [Student Well-being and Mental Health](#); [Healthy Relationships](#); and [Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusive Education](#).

Why is this learning important?

As we navigate the challenges of the global pandemic, we need to acknowledge our individual and collective experiences and move forward with care and compassion amidst uncertainty. The changing circumstances of the pandemic have intensified systemic inequities in our community such as income disparity, limited supports for Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ youth and anti-Black racism. HWDSB has a responsibility to support the mental health and well-being of all students by addressing these issues through teaching and learning in our schools and classrooms.

What topics will my child be learning in these lessons?

The lessons in Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild@HWDSB: Building a Community of Care address issues related to human rights, equity, mental health and well-being, using developmentally and age-appropriate teaching and learning strategies.

The lessons in the resource are organized by division (primary, junior, intermediate, secondary) and grouped into four modules:

- The lessons in **Module 1 - Physical Safety, Mental Health and Wellness** (September to December 2020) began this fall and covered topics most relevant to school re-opening such as listening, empathy, physical distancing, wearing a mask, handwashing, noticing and naming emotions, and self-care.
- The lessons in **Module 2 – Understanding Identity and Intersectionality** (January to March 2021) were released this week for implementation during the eight weeks leading up to March Break. These lessons have been updated to support remote learning (learning at home) and address topics such as ongoing self-care, building caring classroom communities, identity, race, power, privilege and intersectionality.
- The lessons in **Module 3 – Exploring Human Rights, Equity and Anti-racism** provide students with an introduction to concepts such as human rights, equity, oppression, discrimination, racism, gender stereotypes and pronouns.
- The lessons in **Module 4 – Empowering Action and Allyship** encourage students to explore allyship and activism by taking action on issues in their school and community. Topics covered include anti-racist allyship, LGBTQIA+ allyship and the Black Lives Matter movement.

How can I support my child in this learning?

Recognizing that some of these topics are complex and can generate a range of emotions and questions, it is important that you communicate with your child about their learning on a regular basis. Here are some questions you can ask to start a conversation:

- What did you learn about today?
- What did you think about what you learned today?
- How did you feel at the end of the lesson?
- Do you have any questions about this topic/idea?
- How can I support you right now? What do you need from me?

How can I learn more?

A more detailed description of Learn.Disrupt.Rebuild@HWDSB: Building a Community of Care, including goals and sample lessons for elementary and secondary, will be provided at upcoming School Council meetings. Check the school website or contact your school administrator to find out the date and time for the next School Council meeting.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

As always, families are invited to reach out to their child's classroom teacher or the school principal and/or vice-principal, if they have questions or concerns as outlined in HWDSB's [Addressing Concerns Process](#).

Thank you for helping us ensure that all students and staff across HWDSB feel safe, supported and accepted.

Sincerely,

Helen Detwiler Staff