# School Health Matters

Loose Parts Outdoor Play at

Volume 14 - Issue 1 Spring 2018

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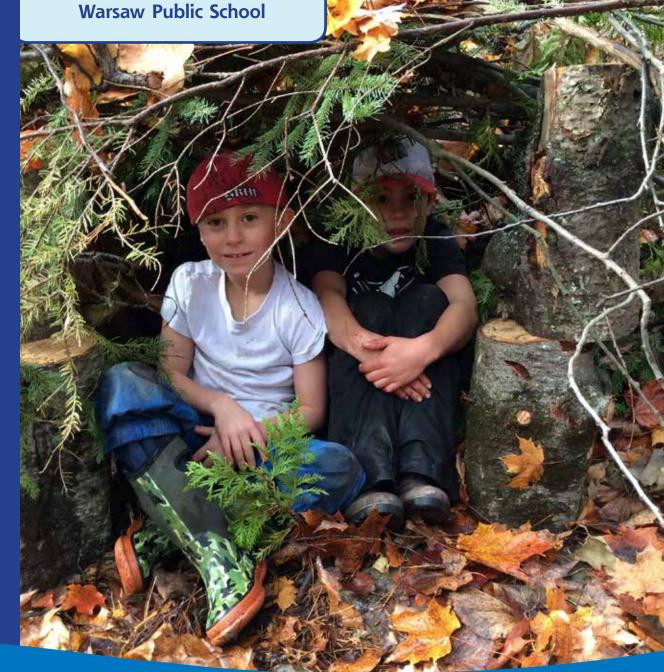
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Serving the residents of **Curve Lake** and **Hiawatha First Nations**, and the **County** and **City of Peterborough** 

Electronic version available at: www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca

# COVER STORY

# Low Tech Learning in a High Tech World

In 2012 Peterborough Public Health had the opportunity to work with Dr. David Walsh and his team from Mind Positive Parenting. That work led to conversations about youth and technology, and the impacts that technology and social media can have on students' developing brains.

Our takeaway from Dr. Walsh was that "technology is neither inherently good nor bad – but it's powerful."

Fast forward to 2018 and his message still rings true, which is why we are excited by Theme Four of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge – "Power Off and Play!"

Too often technology is used as a reward, and to fill in gaps of time when schedules are disrupted or during routine-free time, (think indoor recesses or lunchtime).

At Warsaw Public School (WPS) though, things are different. Technology is embraced as a tool and there are elements of 21st Century Learning embedded throughout the school. Just ask Mrs. Calberry-Quirk about the Learning Commons she and KPRDSB have created in the library. However, low tech opportunities are also an important part of the school, including:

- · loose parts play that is encouraged in the naturalized school yard;
- a walking school bus that was created by parent volunteers and supported by school staff; and
- snow days that are used as an opportunity to connect with students with the natural environment, such as a snowshoe excursion rather than watching a screen.

#### **Loose Parts & Outdoor Play**

A group of parents and staff from the school, inspired by the benefits that come from outdoor play, set out to add natural elements to the school yard. The results were amazing. "We knew it would be different," noted principal Janice McKenzie, "but the level of cooperation, imagination, problem solving, and inspired and original play was beyond what we were expecting." Adding loose parts and natural elements outside can be an affordable way to enhance a school yard, as play structures are often quite expensive, and only offer linear and repetitive play opportunities.

#### **Walking School Bus**

Recently, the Township of Douro-Dummer and the County of Peterborough installed a new sidewalk connecting the heart of Warsaw village to the school. Recognizing the benefits of physical activity, the school was quick to embrace Car Free Wednesdays to get their students moving. "Starting the day with a dose of physical activity, is a great way to increase self-regulation, increase academic performance, decrease conflict, and increase physical literacy," said Claire Townshend, the Healthy Kids Community Challenge Coordinator. "A walking school bus is also a great way to build relationships both with the students and the community."

"One of my favourite things about Warsaw Public School is how the older students support the younger kids without any hesitation," added Holly Florence, one of the parent volunteers supporting the Walking School Bus. "There was some hand-holding during the walk and lots of kind safety reminders from the older kids. We love our school community!"

#### **Snow Days**

This year saw the return of winter in a big way – and that meant the return of 'snow days'. "Snow days present challenges and opportunities for both staff and students," said Marcus Elia, the Music and Grade 7 & 8 teacher at WPS, "We take advantage of the weather and the opportunities it creates to try new things!" Being active and immersed in nature isn't limited to snow days at WPS.

.../continued from page 2



Inquiring Minds at Work



**Field Work** 



Walking School Bus in Warsaw



Snow Day Snowshoeing

"When we are outside exploring and learning with the kids, we are able to create relationships with the students in ways we never would be able to in a classroom. The students are more focused and more grounded after our time outside," says Becky Hurst, the school's kindergarten teacher. "They are really ready to learn after we've had a dose of nature."

#### **Benefits of Play**

Emerging evidence in both public health and education circles notes that play and experiential learning are fundamentally important to healthy growth and development. "At WPS we're noticing that being outside and spending time in nature stimulates lots of inquiry based learning. That natural inquiry leads to much more meaningful learning because it is more salient to the students. For example, if the students are interested in floating and sinking because we've been throwing rocks and sticks in the water, they're more likely to understand and retain what we learn because this is meaningful for them compared to when I just set up a sink/float experiment randomly in the classroom," said Hurst. By making a conscious effort to 'power off and play', students will be provided with unique ways to connect with each other and their environments, yielding both academic and social benefits.

More information about the importance of play can be found at: <a href="http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/play">www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/play</a>

#### **Tech Tip**

Dr. Walsh's message about technology isn't about digital abstinence but of critical thinking and media literacy.

In your classroom:

- get your students to document and share their play experiences, using tablets or digital cameras;
- have your students create a blog about their experiences outside;
- use the Internet to identify a bird or flower they didn't recognize;
- let your students create a newsletter to send home;
- learn about the various forms of play from other cultures or countries.

#### How do you power off to play in your classroom?

Share your stories and tips with us on Twitter @PtboHealth (Yes, we get the irony of this – but remember – 'technology isn't inherently good, nor bad – but powerful').



Loose Parts Fort



**Students in Natural Structure** 



Students Orienteering in the Forest



Looking at Rocks



Winter Habitat Exploration



Sorting Natural Building Materials

#### We want to hear from you!

The School Health Matters newsletter is published twice a year by Peterborough Public Health. If you have questions, suggestions, or stories to share please contact our School Health Liaison at 705-743-1000, ext. 314.

Available online at **www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca** 

# Switch the Channel on Screentime

Children must be active during the day; they require a variety of forms of physical activity in order to maximize their physical literacy skills.

Instead of sitting students in front of a screen during indoor recess, get them active!

- Have students do <u>"Don't Walk in the</u> <u>Hallway</u>" patterns during indoor recess.
  Challenge them to make new patterns with the decals that are in the halls.
- Open the gym and equipment room and have older students run play/ activity stations for younger students.
- Use hallways and other passive space in the school for painter's tape hop scotch.

Make snow days and winter recess fun days that no one will want to miss by having active and engaging outdoor activities ready-to-go.

- Purchase snowshoes for outdoor winter fun! Use spray chalk or diluted water-based paint in squirt bottles to mark an outdoor snowshoe course; once students master the course, add some challenges, like a snow hill.
- Organize intramural tobogganing if your school has a hill; hill monitors can help manage safety. If you have a flat yard, organize "dog-sled" races with toboggans.



No more than 2 hours of recreational screen time a day

Recommended hours of screen time

Less than 1 hour a Day

Snow much fun at Warsaw Public School on a snow day! Students and staff take advantage of the snow and outdoor learning, building physical literacy and decreasing screen time for happy healthy students.



**Did you Know?** 

None

Age

**Under 2 Years** 

2-4 Years

5-17 Years

# Healthy Kids Community Challenge Theme 4: "Power Off and Play!"

POWER Off and Play! aims to reduce children's recreational and sedentary screen time.

Too much screen time can harm early brain and language development, taking time away from healthy activities such as play, movement, and reading.

From January – September 2018, watch for ideas to help children and families build a balanced day that:

- stays within recommended screen time limits;
- puts screens away during important times of day (e.g. bed time, during meals and snacks); and
- replaces some screen time with other activities (eg. physical activities, social interactions, and educational activities).

It's all about powering off devices and playing more!

# H&PE ELEMENTARY RESOURCES



## H&PE CURRICULUM: Specific Links to Reducing Recreational Screen Time

#### Grade 1:

C3.2 identify habits and behaviours (*e.g., excessive screen time or video game usage, smoking*) that can be detrimental to health, and explain how people can be encouraged to adopt healthier alternatives [PS]

#### Grade 2:

A1.3 identify reasons for participating in physical activity every day. The guidelines recommend that children gradually increase active time and decrease non-active time, including screen time.

#### Grade 3:

C2.3 apply decision-making strategies to make healthy choices about behaviours and the use of various substances in ways that could lead to dependencies, identifying factors that should be considered (e.g., ...moderated television watching or computer use can provide healthy entertainment or new learning or be necessary to complete school work, but too much screen time can reinforce sedentary habits and inactivity, which can lead to social isolation and increased vulnerability to physical ailments...)

#### Grade 6:

A2.2 explain how participation in physical activities affects personal health-related fitness (...*That means they should restrict their recreational screen time* to no more than 2 hours per day...)

\*Note: Addressing excessive recreational screen time is important for all grade levels.

For more information on the Healthy Kids Community Challenge, contact Claire Townshend at <u>ctownshend@peterboroughpublichealth.ca</u> or 705-743-1000, ext. 355 and visit <u>www.healthykidsptbo.ca</u> for more curriculum resources.

#### What can educators do to help minimize recreational screen time for students?

- Teach students about screen time limits.
- Take it outside! Provide daily opportunities for outdoor play. Encourage screen free recesses.
- Create a clothing bank with extra mitts and hats for students who come unprepared for the weather to fully participate in outdoor play.
- Implement a screen free policy during nutrition breaks to encourage students to eat their meals and socialize with their peers.
- Encourage school staff and parent volunteers to model healthy screen time behaviour. Put devices away!
- Use screens for educational purposes when it is the best medium for the learning objectives.

More ways to stay informed! Protect yourself with the right health information. Follow PPH on Twitter and Facebook @PTBOhealth



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# 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth: The Whole Day Matters!

#### When it comes to movement the whole day matters! The

<u>Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth</u> (ages 5-17 years) are the first guidelines that detail how children can get a healthy balance of physical activity, sleep, and sedentary behaviours in their daily lives.

Recommendations include:



# Sweat: A minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity every day

- Activities should cause harder breathing and sweating, examples are skipping, tag, and climbing on playground equipment.
- Encourage students to join an intramural program or sport team.



Step: Several hours each day of light activities

- Light activity can include walking to school.
- Challenge your class to track their steps.

#### Sleep: Active kids sleep better

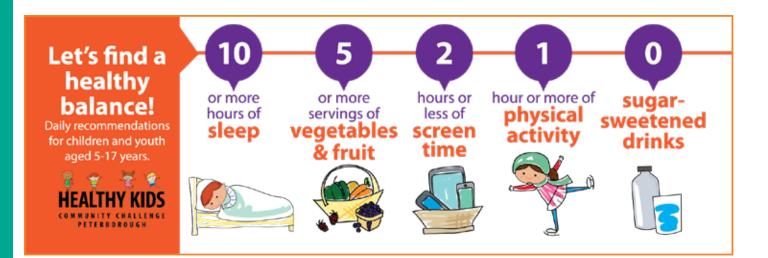
- Ages 5 to 13 years old need 9-11 hours per night.
- Ages 14 to 17 year olds need 8-10 hours per night.

#### Sit: Sit less, move more

- Limit recreational screen time to no more than 2 hours.
- Limit sitting for extended periods.

To learn more, see:

- Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines visit the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology at <u>www.csep.ca</u>
- ParticipACTION. (2016) Are Canadian kids too tired to move? The 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth at <u>www.participaction.com</u>





# Active and Safe Routes to School Peterborough

Since 1999, Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) Peterborough has been offering transportation-focused programming at local schools. Our mission is to realize a measurable increase in walking, biking, and busing for the trip to and from school, for the health and well-being of our students, communities, and environment.

#### **Active and Safe Student Travel**

We all want our students to be more active and safe as they travel to school.

Which ASRTS programs can motivate and prepare your students to get active?

#### Car Free Wednesdays

Encourage families to leave the car at home! Walk, roll, or bus to and from school instead. By switching to sustainable transportation, you reduce congestion and emissions around the school, making for a healthier, safer environment. It also gives students a chance to meet up with friends and get a little exercise before school begins.

#### Pedal Power

Give students the confidence and skills to bike to school. GreenUP and B!KE have teamed up to offer Grade 5 students a cycling education unit (five, 75-100 minute lessons) focusing on road safety and bicycle handling skills. Registration is open now, book your class today.

#### **Public Transit**

Public transit allows youth to independently access their community. Active and Safe Routes to School Peterborough would like to help students increase familiarity and confidence with Peterborough Transit.

Which ASRTS programs can get your students on the bus? Offered to schools within the city of Peterborough only.

#### On the Bus

Take a city tour on transit! Sign up for this fun and interactive introduction to Peterborough Transit provided to Grade 3 classes in the City of Peterborough. We pick you up at your school and travel around Peterborough with a stop at Peterborough Transit Bus Barn.

#### Grade 8 Transit Quest

Build long-lasting life skills! Educate and encourage Grade 8 students in the City of Peterborough, to use Peterborough Transit by providing them with a FREE transit pass for March Break. Grade 8 Transit Quest passes were delivered to schools February 26 to March 2. During this time class visits were arranged to answer any questions about the program and share information about how to use the bus system.

Contact Jaime at 705-745-3238, ext. 210 or jaime.akiyama@greenup.on.ca.

#### School Trip by Transit

Get your class from A to B by Transit! We are offering this pilot program, to schools within the City of Peterborough, through the rest of the school year. Think of Peterborough Transit when planning travel for school trips within the city limits. Travelling by public transit is an easy, sustainable way to travel, and an important experience for youth.

Want an ASRTS program at your school, or more information? Contact Jaime Akiyama, Coordinator, Active and Safe Routes to School at 705-745-3238, ext. 210 or jaime.akiyama@greenup.on.ca. www.peterboroughmoves.com









# **Rethink Classroom Rewards!**

Treats are commonly used to reward students at school. Why not? They're popular, easy, and inexpensive. However, using treats as rewards can be harmful.

Consider how giving out treats for good behaviour...

- connects food to mood by teaching children to eat even when they are not hungry;
- · confuses children by contradicting the classroom lessons about healthy eating;
- discourages positive attitudes towards food and lifelong healthy eating habits;
- encourages eating outside of meal or snack times, which interferes with natural internal hunger and satiety cues;
- harms children's dental health since frequent sugary treats can lead to cavities;
- promotes a preference for sweets, teaching children to prefer them over more nutritious foods that don't taste sweet (e.g., vegetables, plain milk, unsweetened cereal);
- puts individuals who struggle with food and eating (e.g. eating disorders) at risk; and
- puts children with food allergies or other dietary constraints at risk, or else excludes them.

Try these non-food rewards and incentives!

- Social praise attention, verbal praise, thanks, high five.
- Recognition trophy plaque, ribbon, certificate or sticker with affirming message, name on morning announcements.
- Sit by friends.
- Read to a younger class.
- Going first.
- Make deliveries to the office.
- Extra art, music, or reading.
- Walk with a teacher during lunch.
- Extra gym time or outside play.
- Taking care of the class animal for a day.
- Design a class or hall bulletin board.
- Recognition cards or earn points or play money.
- Brainteaser puzzles, group activities or games.
- Reduced homework or 'no homework' pass.
- Treasure box of items stickers, erasers, highlighters, fancy paperclips, etc.

For more ideas, and to complete the "It's an Honour" badge with your class, visit BrightBites.ca

# School Garden Day 2018

School gardens provide an exciting opportunity for students to explore the natural world and learn everything from math to literacy in a living laboratory. Children are far more likely to eat what they grow, try new foods with peers and share their learning at home with their family. Cooking with your school garden harvest gives students critical food literacy skills that will last a lifetime.

If you have a pollinator garden, why not add some herbs? If you have school flower beds, consider planting some lettuce and radishes this spring. If you already have a school garden, think about selecting plants with food literacy in mind.

Whether you are a school garden veteran or a novice, we can help you sprout your garden. *Send us your school garden story or dreams of a garden by April 13, and we will provide you with seeds to start growing.* 





BrightBites.ca has something for everyone interested in improving school nutrition! From insightful blog and Facebook posts, inspiring tweets and helpful Pinterest boards, to easy-to-follow project ideas (badges), you can involve students and make healthy eating fun and easier.

Created by Registered Dietitians, this innovative program celebrates small steps to improve the culture of good food at school. It can have a big impact on the physical health and mental well-being of students, staff, and their families.

Available in English and French, Bright Bites is designed to work on all types of devices including smartphones, tablets, and smartboards.

Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and Pinterest, and email us at <u>brightbitesca@gmail.com</u> if you have any questions.



For more information, email Anne Gallant at agallant@peterboroughpublichealth.ca.



# NOURISH





## Rooting for Healthy Kids: KEY Resources from the Growing for Learning Workshop

School gardens and curriculum that involve hands on activities with food are great ways to improve students' knowledge and attitudes around healthy eating. School gardens can help to grow more than just food! School gardens:

- support student inquiry, and connection to the natural world;
- provide hands-on experiential learning opportunities;
- encourage outdoor physical recreation;
- encourage children to eat the food they grow;
- increase self-understanding, interpersonal and cooperative skills; and
- provide opportunities for differentiated instruction and authentic learning.

An Educator Workshop in November 2017 brought together local, passionate educators who are incorporating strong food literacy through gardening and cooking in our schools. Consider these ideas on how you can integrate veggies and fruit into all aspects of your curriculum. Millbrook South/Cavan PS Kindergarten student is "investigating" tomatoes that students grew in the classroom. Educator Wilma Armstrong engages kindergarten students with a "seed inquiry."

Educators Julia Taylor and Mike Halloran from Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School have a unique community garden partnership. They harvested 645 kg of food with an estimated market value of \$3550 in 2017! This photo shows Holy Cross students hard at work in the garden.







at St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School.

Medicine Wheel Garden

Educators from St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School take learning outside, using the outdoor classroom, growing window box veggies, and learning about the environment.



## Did you Know Your Pet's Health can Affect Your Health?

Rabies is a viral disease that is carried primarily by warm-blooded animals, and spread via infected animal to humans and other animals. It can be fatal when left untreated, so it is critical that we understand how the virus is spread, and the steps that can be taken to prevent transmission.

#### How do people get rabies?

Humans can contract the rabies virus through bites, saliva from the infected animal being introduced to an open wound, or saliva entering the mucous membranes such as the eyes, nose, and mouth.

The rabies virus is transmitted to humans by warm blooded animals. This can be:

- domestic animals
- stray animals
- wild animals such as skunks, raccoons, and foxes
- bats

In Peterborough County and City, the most common source of rabies is found in bats. Although, domestic animals are less likely to have the rabies virus, they may come in to contact with a wild animal that has rabies while outdoors. This is why it is important to make sure your domestic animal is up to date with their rabies vaccine, as you can contract the virus from the animal.

#### How can I tell if an animal has rabies?

You cannot always tell if an animal has rabies just by observing it, however, a rabid animal may demonstrate strange and unusual behaviour. This may include abnormally violent behaviour such as biting and scratching or reduced behaviour resulting in a less active and seemingly depressed animal. The animal may also show signs of body paralysis.

These symptoms can take days, weeks, or even months to surface, which may lead you to believe that the animal is healthy. It is important to report an animal bite immediately for your safety.

#### What should I do after an animal bite or scratch?

- 1. Clean the wound immediately. Use soap and water to clean the bite or scratch wound and flush with water. This will help to remove any particles that are deep within the wound.
- 2. Contact your family doctor or go to the hospital to be treated immediately.
- 3. Report the animal bite or scratch to your local public health unit. If the public health unit confirms that rabies exposure is likely, a post-exposure prophylaxis treatment (PEP) should be administered as soon as possible, to stop the virus from developing.

#### How is rabies treated?

In the event that exposure to rabies is likely, the PEP vaccine will be given. Once the virus starts to show symptoms in the person or animal, it is 99.9% fatal. This is why it is extremely important to report immediately so that treatment can be administered, if necessary.

#### How can I prevent exposure to rabies?

- Make sure all pets are up-to-date with rabies vaccines. It is the law that all cats and dogs ages three months and older must be immunized against rabies. This is for your pet's safety, your safety, and the community's safety.
- Keep pets indoors at night to prevent contact with wild or stray animals that may have rabies.
- Avoid animals that look sick or are behaving strangely.
- Stay away from stray animals and wild animals (raccoons, foxes, skunks, and bats).



# Resource Corner

# Body Image Teacher Resource



Poor body image in youth leads to individuals not voicing an opinion and avoiding academic, social and economic opportunities. Building resilience in youth is key to helping them achieve a more positive body image and strong self-enteem.

25% of boys & 30% of girls between 10 & 14 years old diet despite being a healthy weight?

Revised for 2016! Now with five lessons per grade, Beyond Images has been updated to provide tools for educators to help students understand the messages they may encounter on social media.



# Sip Smart!™ Ontario

Sip Smart!<sup>™</sup>Ontario is a FREE licensed classroom educational program that teaches children in grades 3 to 7 about sugary drinks, and making healthy drink choices.



Find five lesson plans, Health and Physical Education Curriculum connections, blackline masters, and extension ideas by searching "resource guide" at <u>http://brightbites.ca</u>

# **School Garden Resources**

**Curriculum Linked Lesson Plans and Educator Resources** Food Share:

http://foodshare.net/program/educator BrightBites: http://brightbites.ca Six by Sixteen: http://sixbysixteen.me Farm to School: www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca Foodland Ontario: www.ontario.ca/foodland/foodland-ontario Sustain Ontario: http://sustainontario.com/work/edible-education AgScape: https://agscape.ca Healthy Kids Community Challenge Peterborough: www.healthykidsptbo.ca

For more information on the Healthy Kids Community Challenge, contact Claire Townshend at <u>ctownshend@peterboroughpublichealth.ca</u> or 705-743-1000, ext. 355.

# Local Food Literacy in Schools Webinars (FREE): <u>http://sustainontario.com</u>

- 1. Teaching Local Food Literacy
- 2. Eating for Local Food Literacy
- 3. Cooking Up Local Food Literacy
- 4. Growing Local Food Literacy
- 5. Embracing Local Food Literacy: Shifting your School Food Culture

# GET INVOLVED! Great Big Crunch

March 1, 2018 at 2:30 p.m.

Join Food for Kids, and over 200,000 Canadians in celebrating healthy snacking and locally grown produce.

Register at: http://foodshare.net



# Looking for a fresh take on fundraising?

Fresh from the Farm sells Ontario-grown fresh fruits and vegetables—healthy fundraising alternatives for schools! Schools keep 40% of sales.

Enroll May 2 - October 2 for November delivery.

It's a great opportunity for your school to raise money while promoting healthy students and healthy schools.

in motion **FITbreak** Looking for an easy way to add DPA to your day?

Visit <u>http://www.</u> <u>saskatchewaninmotion.ca/</u> to receive fresh ideas every week that are sure to get your students moving!



**Resilience:** the Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope Special Screening and Discussion with Dr. K. Keefer FREE - Everyone is welcome to attend

#### Thursday, April 26, 2018 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Peterborough Public Library Friends of the Library Community Room, Lower Level 345 Aylmer St. N., Peterborough

A presentation of the film *Resilience: the Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope*. The movie reveals the newly discovered biological syndrome caused by abuse and neglect during childhood. The movie also chronicles the dawn of a movement by paediatric, education, and social welfare organizations to use new cutting-edge science and therapy to protect children from the long-term effects of toxic stress. The movie will be followed by the official launch of the **Inviting Resilience** website and a discussion with Dr. Kateryna Keefer, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Trent University. Dr. Keefer's research is focused on the development and application of socio-emotional competencies in the promotion of wellness and resilience across the lifespan.

This event has been made possible thanks to proceeds from Victims and Survivors of Crime Week.

For more information visit <u>www.resiliencemovie.com</u> or contact Peterborough Healthy Families committee member, Leisa Baker, <u>Ibaker@peterboroughpublichealth.ca</u>



#### **EVENT PARTNERS**

#### **Peterborough Healthy Families:**

Asphodel Norwood Public Library, Kinark Child and Family Services, Peterborough Family Resource Centre, Peterborough Public Health, Peterborough Public Library

#### Community Agency Organizers of Victims and Survivors of Crime Week:

John Howard Society of Peterborough, Kawartha Haliburton Victim Services, Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, Niijkiwendidaa Anishnabekwag Services Circle, Peterborough Police Service, Victim Justice Network, Victim Services of Peterborough & Northumberland

#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

'Resilience' is only available for viewing at special screenings such as this one, and is not available for purchase.



# Fight the Bite!

As part of the Vector-Borne Disease Prevention program, Peterborough Public Health offers interactive educational sessions on Lyme disease and West Nile virus (WNV) to schools within the County and City.

Education is key in preventing the spread of Lyme disease and WNV. These sessions help to create awareness and provide students with the information they need to protect themselves during the summer months. These presentations:

- Are primarily classroom-based
- · Focus on prevention and personal protection
- Last 30 minutes
- Use an interactive board
- Suit Kindergarten to Grade 6/7

If you are interested in having Peterborough Public Health staff speak at your school, please contact us as soon as possible at 705-743-1000, ext. 240 to book presentations from May 28 - June 22.

