

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING



FOUR WEEKS OF EASY ACTIVITIES FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS TO
PRACTICE WELL-BEING SKILLS WITHIN THEIR CLASSROOMS.

hnhss.ca • 519-426-6170
905-318-6623 • 519-582-3579

Adapted with permissions from Middlesex-London
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**Health and
Social Services**
Halldimand and Norfolk

Introduction

Awareness and understanding of diversity, inclusion, and creating a belonging environment can support the achievement and well-being of all students. Students who do not see themselves reflected in what they are learning, in their classrooms, and in their schools become disengaged. Students who feel welcomed and accepted in their school, and see themselves reflected in the curriculum, are more likely to experience a greater sense of well-being and a higher level of academic achievement.

Discriminatory biases and systemic barriers such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination may prevent some students from reaching their full potential. Ensuring equity in schools stems from the primary principle that every student should have the opportunity to succeed personally and academically, regardless of background, identity, or personal circumstances ([Understanding Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan: Parent Fact Sheet](#)).

KEY POINTS

- All foods fit and can be enjoyed fully. There are no good or bad foods. Having a positive relationship with food means being comfortable eating a variety of foods that support both nutrition and enjoyment.
- Food helps us to connect and learn about other cultures.
- Using our five senses when eating can make the experience more enjoyable and help keep us present.
- Growing, cooking, and enjoying food with others is important and helps maintain our mental health.

Weekly Announcements (Wellness Wednesday)

Week One Announcement:

Empathy, we hear this word all the time. But what does it mean? Empathy means we can share and understand the feelings of other people. It means we can try to put ourselves in someone else's position to imagine what they may be thinking or feeling.

This week practice empathy by trying to understand the feelings of others.

Week Two Announcement:

This week, explore ways in which we can learn about, understand and celebrate each other's differences. Take some time to learn about the different cultures of your classmates. What food do they enjoy? What celebrations do they participate in?

Week Three Announcement:

Everyone in our school is unique. What makes our school great is that it's a place where everyone belongs and matters. This week, play with someone new at recess, add a new member to your classroom group or talk to someone you don't usually talk to. How can you help someone feel included today?

Week Four Announcement:

Create an announcement surrounding inclusivity and diversity that is unique to your school community. Involve students in this process, make it fun and engaging!

Activities

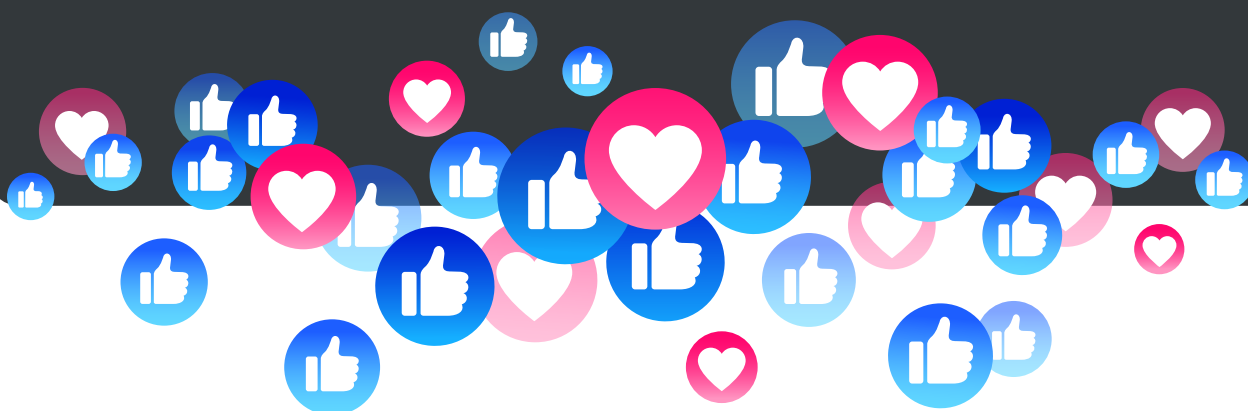
- [Walking in Your Shoes](#): Help students become more understanding and compassionate towards others [grades K-8]
- [That's Me](#): Explore ways in which students can learn about and understand each other's similarities and differences, unique likes, interests, families, and cultures by doing this fun activity [grades 6-8]
- [Adjectives About Me](#): Do this activity to help students learn about themselves and that they matter by describing their positive traits with help from their peers [grades K-8]
- [The "I" In Image](#): Provide students with an opportunity to express and explain a personal choice and perspective, to hear and learn about others' views by completing this [grades K-8]
- [Red: A Crayon's Story](#): From welcomingschools.org, will initiate a discussion with your class about stereotypes based on appearance (gender, race, ability). Student will explore their inner identities by creating a "Self-Crayon" [grades K-2]
- [Gender Snowperson](#): Help students understand the differences between gender expression, gender identity, who you love, and sex assigned at birth by completing this activity. [grades 3-5]
- Add cultural and pride flags within the school, in the hall or in the gym
- Create an inclusion, diversity board in the hall to celebrate unique things about everyone

Book and/or Video Recommendations

- [The Great Big Book of Families](#) by Mary Hoffman and Ros Asquith [Grades K-5]
- [Families](#) by Shelley Rotner and Sheila Kelly [Grades K-2]
- [Except When They Don't](#) by Laura Gehl [Grades K-2]
- [George](#) by Alex Gino [Grades 6-8]
- [Books on Diversity](#): [Grades K-8]

For Educators Who Use Social Media

- Tweet photos of your school community participating in activities
- Tweet at other classes or schools to challenge them to take part
- Tag your local health unit's School Team on Twitter @HNSchoolHealth and be sure to use #HNHHealthySchools so we can share what you are doing!



References

- [Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusive Education, Government of Ontario](#)
- [Understanding Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan: Parent Fact Sheet](#)



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