

Sneak Peek

March 26

Hi everyone. We continue to hold all of you in our prayers.

Families will be receiving important information from the Board today and I ask that you take a look at it. It outlines the Province's plans for education at home as we move through Phase 1 – March 23-April 3. Phase 2 will begin April 6 and will include enhanced learning at home opportunities. We at SFX are looking forward to engaging in these with you at home.

On Wednesday our school team held a staff meeting on the TEAMS platform. The teachers came up with wonderful ideas to help everyone stay connected and supported during these challenging times.

1. Please email prayer intention requests to me at paul.mantha@cdsbeo.on.ca and I will include these in the following Sneak Peek so our entire community can pray for you and/or your family or friends.
2. Theme Days will be held each day of the week. Please submit your photos and videos either by tagging us on Instagram (stfrancisxavierbrockville); direct messaging me through Instagram or emailing me your content. Each day can become a celebration of all the things that make us great.
 - a. Movement Mondays – anything that has to do with getting up and getting moving. This could include exercises, yoga, dances, mini-stick hockey, be creative.
 - b. Techy/Tasty Tuesday – Share great learning websites and/or your favourite recipe; pics of the kids making muffins or pizza; let's get creative.
 - c. Wacky Wednesday – anything wacky goes! Fun games, art, crafts, activities that your family enjoyed and that we could try in our homes.
 - d. Thoughtful Thursday – Any prayers; inspirational messages from the online world or created by the children (kids love to write prayers for those they love); songs that the kids have created.

- e. Fresh Air Fridays – Let's get outside. It is time to rake the yard, pick up leaves and twigs, make bird feeders, share your chalk drawings, show off your hopscotch skills, pics of birds, insects and plants.

Here are a few suggestions to keep in mind as we get through this together:

- refer to the CDSBEO website for ongoing updates around COVID 19 and the Learning At Home initiatives.
- follow us on Instagram where you will find us at stfrancisxavierbrockville.
- Watch for Sneak Peeks in your email inbox. I will continue to forward information from the Ministry of Education and our Board to you each Monday and may also provide other information when it becomes available.

Should your email change or you have questions, please let me know through my email address, paul.mantha@cdsbeo.on.ca. If you are experiencing some form of extreme hardship and cannot find help, please reach out through my email address.

Below you will see that I have resent the Learning at Home Portal information again below, just in case you missed it on Monday.

The entire staff of SFX misses all of you terribly and looks forward to being with you again soon. Until then, please consider joining us on Instagram at stfrancisxavierbrockville.

Many blessings,
Your Principal
Paul

Learn from the Safety of Their Own Home

Province Launches First Phase of the Learn at Home Portal

On Friday, March 20, 2020, Premier Doug Ford joined Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education to launch the first phase of Learn at Home and Apprendre à la maison, a new online portal that will provide resources for families so students can continue their education while schools are closed due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

Learn at Home offers all students online, high-quality, made-in-Ontario math and literacy resources, created by Ontario-certified educators, in both English and French. Elementary resources are designed to help young students learn at home with interactive activities that encourage participation through entertaining and stimulating digital content. High school content was designed with a focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) courses and ensure core competencies and skills are reinforced. The government is also providing access to course content for students who take the initiative to refresh and extend their learning.

The *Learn at Home* educational resources will help mitigate 'learning loss' during this period of uncertainty and school closure. The at-home activities offered by *Learn at Home* provide quick and easy access to some of Ontario's best online kindergarten to grade 12 learning resources produced by Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Educators. As part of the government's commitment to planning for every scenario, the province is working closely with education stakeholders to develop a plan for scaling and building additional online learning programs.

The Ministry of Education has partnered with TVO and TFO to roll-out robust education programming on their broadcast channels:

- TVO's suite of digital learning products are designed to engage young minds in learning. TVO Kids offers educational programming throughout the day for school-aged children. The TVO Kids website contains games, apps, videos for student learning.
- TFO will be offering daily activities which will be accessible at all times through the Idello platform, online books through boukili.ca, and their TV channel. TFO will remain a proud partner of all families through a tailored program of fun, high-quality educational activities and content, all of which will be aligned with the curriculum of Ontario.

Additional Resources can be found at:

- Mathify provides real-time homework help led by Ontario College of Teachers educators for students between grades 6-10, six days a week, including weekdays from 9AM ET – 9PM ET.
- Eurêka! is another online learning support program that helps students in French language schools from grades 1 to 12 with their schoolwork and their learning.

To access these resources please visit: <https://www.cdsbeo.on.ca/novel-coronavirus/distance-learning/>

Link to Learn at Home

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Growing in Faith Growing in Christ

Here are the Student-Home Website logins, for easy sharing.

www.pearsoncanada.ca/growinginfaith/student-home

username: GIFGIC_student99

password: Student99

Social stories about the Coronavirus (see links below) that may be helpful for some children

<https://howtoaba.com/resources-for-children-with-autism-during-covid-19/>

https://www.flipsnack.com/KeshetChicago/coronavirus-social-story/full-view.html?fbclid=IwAR2spJ0sBUaboJC3UqxqoHCZjOI2Smg1JSn_CqnzL6V2CQfQf_JG0ohw24

Questions & Answers about the Local Love Global Crisis Relief Fund

What is this initiative?

- Today, United Way Leeds & Grenville is asking the community to help support the most vulnerable, as we continue to coordinate social service supports in response to the Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) across our region.

Why are you launching this initiative?

- We know that, in our region, many people cannot afford to prepare, and do not have a support system around them if they contract COVID-19, or need to preventatively self-isolate.
- Though needs will continue to evolve, we know that those who live in poverty, homeless youth and seniors are at-risk. Mental health struggles are affecting us all.

What will donations support?

The needs will continue to evolve but in the near-term, we are looking to donors for their support in providing:

- Basic needs – ensuring people have access to life’s essentials, such as food
- Help for seniors – while our most vulnerable are isolated, they must not feel alone
- Capacity for community services – so community partners can deliver vital local work
- Mental health support – Enabling crisis lines and system navigation services that benefit us all
- Support for volunteers – There are amazing people rallying to support others – they need our help too.

What kinds of things are you hearing from social service agencies about those most vulnerable?

While it is too soon to share exact numbers, what I can tell you from our coordination with agencies from across the community that provide vital supports such as food, mental health supports and support to isolated seniors, is that given to COVID-19

response requirements, we will need community support to continue to help the most vulnerable - who are disproportionately affected by this crisis.

These agencies are responding as necessary and adjusting their options for services in real time, but their capacity will be stretched in the coming days, weeks and months.

- **Seniors** - Are the most vulnerable in terms of exposure and whose main source of interaction is group programs and public spaces (libraries, stores). Fear is also emerging, driving seniors into further isolation.
 - (1) Many volunteers in our communities are seniors, which also poses a risk to the capacity at which agencies are able to operate.
- **Poverty & homelessness** - Vulnerable people and families cannot afford to stock up on supplies, and are more likely to be severely impacted by closed schools and reduced work. Food banks and shelter services will be critical to supporting these individuals.
 - (1) Unsheltered youth are already experiencing challenges due to restrictions on public spaces (libraries, community services, YMCA) and fewer opportunities to attend group sessions, where both food and socialization are normally available.
- **Mental Health** - Psycho-social supports are always critical in a crisis. Access to immediate counselling supports goes hand in hand with a drastic shift in our normal routines, especially something as unprecedented as extended self-isolation. Isolation can trigger anxieties, as well as force people into uncomfortable or unsafe environments.

The needs continue to change and we are working closely with public health authorities, community agencies, community groups and others to assist with social services as this health crisis escalates.

How quickly can you support agencies and these vulnerable groups?

The needs continue to change and we are working closely with public health authorities, community agencies, community groups and others to assist with social services as this health crisis escalates.

- We will be ramping up negotiations and investment as soon as funds are available for the areas that we've identified.
- Once funds are available, investments can be out within days for areas with high urgency.
- As this is likely to have a long window, we will also be working with our partners to scale appropriately so that we have resources as they are needed.
- As the service delivery requirements of our agency partners evolves, we will be nimble as well, adjusting our strategy accordingly to meet the changing demands of this crisis.

United Way Leeds & Grenville will first and foremost play an important role in convening the social services sector as a whole. We continue to coordinate with local public health authorities, to ensure that together we are applying our resources to address the greatest need, while having the greatest impact for those in need.

But how much can you do in the near-term to help those most in need?

- Our capacity to support will depend on the generosity of the community, and our partners during this difficult time. We've already seen incredible moments of generosity over the weekend across the globe: people donating their time, talents and funds because they know that the most vulnerable need our help during this difficult time.
- By supporting United Way you can provide:
 - (1) Basic needs – ensuring people have access to life's essentials, such as food
 - (2) Help for seniors – while our most vulnerable are isolated, they must not feel alone
 - (3) Capacity for community services – so community partners can deliver vital local work

- (4) Mental health support – Enabling crisis lines and system navigation services that benefit us all
- (5) Support for volunteers – There are amazing people rallying to support others – they need our help too.

How will you meet to coordinate efforts?

- This is a constantly evolving issue. We will look at conference calls and leveraging technology to limit in-person meetings.

What exactly is United Way’s role in a disaster like this?

- United Way is here 365 days a year to improve lives, break down barriers and create opportunities for people across our communities.
- We’re here to ensure people have the support they need through social services and if they require support long after the immediate needs are met.
- We are committed to standing with those most affected with the community: today, next month -- and beyond.

How much are you hoping to raise?

Our capacity to support in this time of need will depend on the generosity of our donors and partners, and the ability of the community to be generous during this difficult time.

At United Way Leeds & Grenville, we know that when we stand up for one another, we can make a difference.

Our hope is that just as we have in the past, that this community will rally in this time of crisis to support the most vulnerable.

I have things that can help (TP, hand sanitizer, health aids, mobility devices, etc.) - where should I bring them?

- Given the risk of spreading this illness, many organizations are not currently accepting gifts of donated items.

- You can try to call your local community health and resource centre but the situation is changing all the time and agencies are updating their guidelines daily.
- The Food Banks across Leeds & Grenville are accepting donations to make sure people don't have an interruption in the food they're able to access.

I want to volunteer. Who should I reach out to?

- At the moment, we are advising anyone interested in volunteering to register as an individual with The Volunteer Centre of Rideau St Lawrence.
- From an informal perspective, take care of those closest to you. Check in on your neighbours and offer support if you are able, while heeding the advice of public health authorities related to social distancing. Organize support groups in your neighbourhoods/communities to make sure seniors or people with health issues have what they need. Now is the time to, safely, strengthen bonds with those in need.
- We will provide more information about formal volunteer opportunities as we receive it.

I personally need help to support my family. Where do I go for assistance?

- If the situation is a medical emergency, you should call 9-1-1.
- If you are experiencing symptoms, please refer to the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit website at <https://healthunit.org/>
- You can also find the latest updates on prevention and information on that site.
- For information on community programs and services that can help you, please try the community information line 2-1-1.
- If you are experiencing distress and need to talk to someone you can call the Mental Health Crisis line at 1 (866) 281-2911 or the Distress Centre at 1 (800) 465-4442

Will United Way be making grants to people like me?

- United Way provides funding directly to agencies in the community supporting the most vulnerable i.e. organizations helping seniors and people in crisis. United Way does not provide funding to individuals.

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- The provincial and federal government continue to introduce measures to support people who are precariously employed and to help our economy as a whole.
 - With limited resources, United Way will continue to watch our levels of government to align our work where there may be gaps.
 - If you need immediate assistance for food and other supports, we recommend you call 2-1-1 for a list of resources that can help you.