Dear Centennial families,

Our website now contains a **Safe, Caring and Inclusive School (SCIS)** page <https://cnw.wrdsb.ca/safe-caring-and-inclusive-schools/>. The SCIS page is where you will find information about our SCIS team as well as information to help you support your children should issues arise at school that affect their well-being or feelings of safety.

We are very pleased that the majority of our students at Centennial feel welcome, included and engaged with our school community. However, no matter how your children are feeling about school right now, we encourage you to review the material on the SCIS page - you’ll be prepared to provide support should issues arise. Taking that one step further, if you initiate conversations now with your children about topics like bullying or mental health you will be demonstrating that you are ready and willing to discuss these difficult matters at any time.

The transition from grade 6 to grade 7 and then from Grade 8 to grade 9 can be stressful, and it’s particularly important for parents to have pro-active conversations about mental health and well-being at these critical times. Please keep in mind that if your children have concerns about treatment by a peer and want to raise them with a staff person at school, they are welcome to come to any adult with whom they feel comfortable.

Here are a few tips for you if your children reach out to you about treatment by a peer:

* Stay calm, listen and hear the whole story before you provide your comments.
* Reassure them that their problem will be taken seriously. Remind your children to keep asking adults for help until they feel safe again.
* Let them know it is important to come forward on behalf of themselves or someone else.
* Help children consider options and develop a plan of how best to deal with the situation. If you take steps that make them uncomfortable they may not come to you the next time.

Our SCIS team encourages you to fill out the safe schools survey in the spring to continue to give us accurate feedback on how we can ensure that everyone feels safe and included at Centennial.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Adams and Mr. Weigel

Links to add to the SCIS page of the website:

Ministry of Education material for parents and caregivers:

* Bullying: We Can All Help Stop It. **Available in 24 languages.** <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/learn.html>
* Information about the Accepting Schools Act <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/SafeAccepSchools.pdf>
* Making Ontario Schools Safe and Accepting <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/pdfs/saferSchools.pdf>
* Ontario’s Code of Conduct <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/CodeOfConductEN.pdf>
* Progressive Discipline <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/Discipline.pdf>
* Suspension and Expulsion <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/SuspensionExpulsion.pdf>
* Requirements for school staff to respond to and report incidents <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/keepkidsafeschool.pdf>

Council of Ontario Directors of Education:

* Healthy Relationships toolkit <http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/pe_1_Relationships.html>

Other bullying resources for parents:

* <http://www.prevnet.ca/bullying/parents>
* <http://stopbullyingnow.com/advice-for-parents-and-guardians/>
* <http://copahabitat.ca/en/bullying>
* <http://www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/violence--bullying-and-abuse-prevention/parents>

Supporting your child with problem-solving:

<http://www.copahabitat.ca/sites/default/files/problemsolving_en.pdf>

Mental health resources for parents:

<https://www.wrdsb.ca/our-schools/health-and-wellness/mental-health-well-being/resource-list-for-parentsguardians-on-mental-health-well-being/#.WI5NkoWcE6Y>