

Keeping cool

WELLNESS PROGRAMS HELP STUDENTS CONTROL STRESS LEVELS

DENISE DEVEAU

It's generally acknowledged that today's kids are under a tremendous amount of stress. Much of that is rooted in the demands and hectic pace of their lives relating to school and extra-curricular activities, says Todd Cunningham, assistant professor and clinical psychologist at OISE (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) in Toronto.

"There are lots of general stressors in their lives. But as kids go higher up in school, demands from parents, teachers and peers for high performance increases. There is a lot of pressure being put on teens to compete at such a high level to get 80s and 90s all the time. Then there is the peer effect. They will text each other to see who is staying up the latest on a project. It's a social status thing."

Private schools can increase the pressure because the benchmarks are that much higher, he adds. "Everyone is at a super high level. If you are at the lower end of distribution at a private school, in any other context you would be an A student. But now you're being compared to more A students so kids feel they have to do more and work harder. I hear that every day."

Ultimately, he says, this is not a healthy way of life. "Kids don't have a chance to decompress. They literally don't know what it feels like to be relaxed. They don't know what a calm state is any more."

Cunningham believes wellness programs in schools are vital. "It's not worth pushing to be at these levels if there are long-term health implications. You don't want them to get to Harvard and burn out the first year because they pushed so hard."

The York School in Toronto is one of many that has put student wellness front and centre. Its director of wellness, Elissa Kline-Beber, is playing a key role in helping students, teachers and parents recognize the need for support for their children's physical, mental and emo-



J.T. MCVEIGH / POSTMEDIA

From meditation to dance, private schools are offering more ways for children to relieve the stresses posed by a busy day of classes.

tional well-being in the earlier years.

"Universities are really struggling to cope with the number of students experiencing mental health challenges. We now recognize that we have an opportunity to have a positive impact on mental health at the junior, middle and high school levels."

That means creating a nurturing environment in which students can develop coping skills, Kline-Beber says. "Kids need to know themselves.

They need to understand who they are as people, what matters to them, and what are their strengths and weaknesses so they can become good self-advocates. They learn that asking for help can be a sign of strength. It's the way to assert what you need in this world and making sure you know how to get that."

Among a number of initiatives, York has a formalized adviser program to ensure that every student has a specific adult who is their go-to person throughout their

high school years. "Knowing someone is advocating for them, and they are accountable to that person, gives them opportunities to address a whole range of wellness initiatives," Kline-Beber says. "Through regular group meetings they learn that it's okay to slow down a bit, and that time spent talking with each other and not doing is also valuable."

Even in junior grades, there is a focus on equipping children with problem-solving skills and learning to be

aware of indicators around stress or frustration levels. "We do a lot of breathing exercises and start the day with a mindful meditation moment to prepare them for their day. Students learn at an early age that they need to find moments of quiet and calm in an increasingly busy world."

Susan Elliott, executive director of the learning forum, the support services department at TFS in Toronto, says another contributor to stress is the barrage of digital information kids have to process today. "Sometimes they have to sit and process that information to sort out what's real or not real."

She says health and wellness is a core pillar of the school's programs. "Kids learn about the brain, what stress is and how to process emotions before they act. It's complex for them. Some stress is good, like when you are getting ready for a basketball game. But you need to know what the optimum level of stress is, and how to manage stress overload."

Part of the wellness tool kit is teaching kids at all levels mindfulness and breathing exercises. Many activities are also built into the classroom so they can pace their day. On Fridays, younger kids end the week doing activities like origami or yoga. Senior school students get longer lunches so they can take part in clubs and activities. "By building these into the schedule, they don't have such a long day," Elliott says.

Another tool is a mentoring program in which a small group of students get together to talk about issues and work through them with a designated mentor. "This is all part of what they need to do when they leave here," Elliott says. "They have to learn that you can't solve problems in a minute."

David Hanna, director of university counselling at The York School, says coping with stress and anxiety is part of life. "We can't protect kids from reality. Kids need to learn, communicate and be flexible. If that starts in childhood, they can do anything they want."

For students, cellphone plan has a nice ring to it

KATHRYN BOOTHBY

As the debate over the use of cellphones in the classroom continues, some private schools have found a way to incorporate them into the learning environment while upping the engagement quotient of their students.

Take Robert Constanzo, an English teacher at Crescent School for boys in North York, Ont. Constanzo piloted a bring-your-own-technology (BYOT) project in class eight years ago. "The best way to nurture better writers and readers is to expose them to more," he says. "I needed quick access to a diverse range of literature without having to photocopy pages and pages of documents; for students to be able to edit their own writing and that of their classmates using a shared platform; and the ability to manipulate, annotate and synthesize the multiple pieces we were working on. Connectivity in the classroom and BYOT allowed all of those things. It made English and writing about the students and material, not about me."

Since that time, Constanzo and his peers have found more and more ways to incorporate BYOT into learning for the benefit of both teachers and students.

At Havergal College for girls, also in North York, technology is used to help enhance and deepen learning

in a host of ways, says Keith Townend, the school's director of IT. In math class, for example, quadratic equations are taught using collaborative tools and annotation software. "Students are invited to contribute steps in the problem-solving process using their own connected technology," he says. "The annotated pdf can then be saved, posted to the school's digital learning systems, and used as a future resource." Gamification, coding and hackathons also contribute to learning in fun and engaging ways, Townend adds. "Additionally, anonymous polling software used with BYOT devices helps teachers immediately gauge the level of understanding of a topic as lessons proceed."

However, as cellphones have become ubiquitous some teachers are, once again, becoming technology wary. In some instances this has meant a ban on classroom use.

"The current dichotomy is stark. Cellphones have polarized classroom management situations and in some cases have made difficult classes even more challenging. Cellphones can also make bullying and cheating easier for those inclined to do so," says Constanzo.

That said, he and others have looked for, and found, more ways to harness the power of the cellphone as a learning and engagement

tool, seeing it as a resource rather than a distraction.

"Cellphones have some fantastic applications in the classroom. We have the power to teach students how to use them properly to become disciplined technology consumers. The students of today are the professionals of tomorrow. They need to learn the life skills of resisting distraction, being productive and multi-tasking without the device taking over. This is the critical learning now," he says. "In my opinion, to ignore the technology for the sake of classroom management would be irresponsible. It is about exciting students and opening them to new opportunities that lie ahead. With discipline, balance and careful pedagogy they can have an environment in which to become deeply engaged in their work and reading."

It is not only inside the classroom environment in which students can benefit from the use of cellphones, however. "We are at a level of sophistication in digital technology that gives us a learning environment where teacher and students can synchronize and collaborate in real-time," adds Havergal's technology integrator Paul Shuebrook, citing a recent field trip involving students. The girls were looking at architecture and public spaces across the city. The teacher wanted each group to record their thoughts and ideas in a central way and comment on each other's ideas, he says. "Using the school's social media feeds, students were able to use their smart phones to an-



CRESCENT SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH

Crescent School is among those incorporating cellphones into daily class routines.

swer questions about socioeconomic differences and post photos and videos while studying various neighbourhoods. We use this as evidence of learning, understanding and engagement with key concepts."

When it comes to BYOD, "the power available in the learning environment, from an acquisition point of view, is formidable," adds Charlotte Youngson, parent of three Crescent School boys. "When our eldest, who is now 21 and at university, began at the school it was all about penmanship. As the younger children move through the approach has changed. Technology is an integral part of the learning experience. The challenge for any school now is what to bring on board and what not to."

It is important to note that it is not always the teachers

who bring new technology to the school, says Townend.

"It is a two-way street as to what technology lands in the classroom," he says. "If a student comes up with a valuable idea we act on it, because that is what motivates them to come forward with more."

How do teachers ensure students stay focused on classwork rather than checking social media accounts or playing with their devices? "The work has to be so compelling that they put them away on their own," says Constanzo. "It goes back to teaching discipline and accepting varied approaches. If a teacher brings technology into the classroom yet fails to change their teaching methods, it is a recipe for disaster. If you are going to embrace technology, you have to embrace it lock, stock and barrel."

“IT WAS THE MOST AMAZING EXPERIENCE OF MY LIFE AND I WOULD DO IT AGAIN IN A HEARTBEAT. THERE IS SOMETHING TO BE SAID ABOUT LEARNING ABOUT DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD AND TRAVELLING ABROAD WHEN YOU ARE YOUNG. —ALEXANDRIA DECARLO

OUTWARD BOUND

KATHRYN BOOTHBY

From tropical journeys of discovery to high-seas adventures on a tall ship, educational travel has brought a whole new level of experiential learning — and extra credit — to high school students.

When Alexandria DeCarlo was looking for a way to accelerate her studies to make room for competitive swim training, she looked to a variety of summer school programs. What she embarked upon was a life-changing experience studying biology in Fiji.

Biology in Fiji is a grade 11 credit program offered by Ontario-based Edu Travel Inc. The three-week travel itinerary includes a snorkel tour of a coral reef and participation in a replanting project, conservation activities such as turtle tagging, and cultural and scientific excursions of discovery, all from an off-the-grid eco-friendly base on Leleuvia Island.

DeCarlo, now 22, traveled to Fiji in the summer of 2013. “It was the most amazing experience of my life and I would do it again in a heartbeat,” she says. “There is something to be said about learning about different parts of the world and travelling abroad when you are young. You gain independence, see real-world



EDU TRAVEL INC. PHOTOGRAPH
Students visiting Fiji get up close with a banded iguana during a biology credit program.

applications and learn of their importance. There are some things you simply cannot conceptualize in the classroom. Being in the field brings a huge benefit.”

For students who have constraints on their time, reaching for credit in the summer has become common, says Ari Sargon, Edu Travel’s owner and director. “Sacrificing the summer to broaden horizons and see other parts of the world is

very appealing. The learning model is so different from the traditional classroom, and that is a huge part of the draw,” he says.

Edu Travel does not limit its credit programs to biology in Fiji (and more recently Sri Lanka), however.

The organization’s most popular offering is civics and careers — a compulsory course for every high school student in Ontario. “This is the most failed course in sec-

ondary school, not because it is especially challenging but because it can be dry,” says Sargon. “We bring the course to life during a week-long, three-city tour with stops in Ottawa, Montreal and New York.”

The Spirit of America grade 11/12 English program takes students along America’s east coast with visits to the Smithsonian, Brooklyn, Harlem and Greenwich Village while they read *The Crucible*, *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *Catcher in the Rye*. “We adapt each course so the study of literature is relevant to place,” notes Sargon.

For those with a hankering for seafaring, Lunenburg, N.S.’s Class Afloat gives senior students (grades 11 and 12 plus first-year university) a year of high-seas study and adventure aboard a tall ship. Each year-long excursion includes stops at over 20 ports of call along the route including Netherlands, Portugal, U.K., Senegal, Brazil, South Africa and Bermuda, to name just a few.

Formal study takes place every day during sailing on a deck divided into four classrooms with white boards, lab equipment and projectors, says David Jones, Class Afloat’s president. “We often work in conjunction with the ship so it is not uncommon for a physics class to be held on the bridge where we may study vectors in a real-life situation, such as using wind direction and forward propulsion as we travel through the Strait of Gibraltar, where currents are against us.”

At each port there is a four-day layover where programs are integrated into the curriculum. That can mean catching tuna off the coast of Africa, visiting the telescope complex in the Canary Islands or spending time with a family in Dakar, Senegal working in the hospital garden and learning about the local community. “For most students this is their first exposure to a severely lesser-developed country. They will discuss the experience both before and after the port call. They might also spend a day eating only the diet of the local people, such as rice with beans, and try to better understand how people live in many other areas of the world.”

Curriculum study is not the only on-board education that is happening, however. “Students are learning to sail a pretty complicated ship. That takes a great deal of teamwork and discipline, and students begin to understand the importance of making a full contribution,” notes Jones. “Yes, we are visiting exotic places and sailing the seas but it’s about more than that. It’s about the small things, especially community — the close quarters in which we are living and our role in the places we visit. How to be respectful to both shipmates and the people we connect with.”

For students looking to broaden their horizons and academic standing, DeCarlo advises, “don’t limit yourself. See what’s out there and travel abroad. You will learn new concepts, grow as a person, make lifelong friends along the way and gain an experience like none other.”

Edu Travel programs range in cost from \$1,700 to \$5,900 depending on duration and locale. Class Afloat fees for Canadian students are \$52,000 for a full year or \$36,000 for a single semester aboard ship. Prerequisites and/or academic qualification apply to all programs.

Vital first step: Know the cost of private education

DENISE DEVEAU

Many parents new to the private school scene understand the importance of making the right choice from the start. There are the obvious questions that come to mind: co-ed or all-boy/all-girl, location, curriculum, extra-curricular programs and course tuition fees.

But there are other things to consider that may not be top of mind, especially when it comes to costs. For some parents, additional fees for transportation, activities or other sundries may not be a stretch. For others, the tuition fee alone may represent the maximum amount they can manage. So it’s especially important to consider all the costs and financing options available before applying.

“There are plenty of things parents simply don’t think to ask,” says Elaine Danson, of Elaine Danson & Associates, an educational consultant in Toronto. “But fees are not a neat package. You have to figure out what that package is and how much you can support it. Families have to be cognizant of what exactly tuition covers and what it doesn’t.”

Often, when going through costs, the first thing parents see is the tuition, says Teo Salgado, principal and owner of VerveSmith educational counselling in Toronto. “But they don’t realize that on top of tuition there are added costs for uniforms, computers or software. Some of those

firm what is expected of the parents in terms of involvement and time.”

BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL CARE/EXTRA HELP

Fees and services can vary from school to school. Some will include both before- and after-school care in tuition; others will include only before-school care; still others will charge for both. That also goes for lunch programs. “Some are not covered, so you need to confirm,” Danson notes.

While many private schools will offer some support for students interested in special projects or who need extra help to keep pace, parents may have to foot the bill for tutoring costs.

Parents of children with behavioural or learning challenges should also inquire about what support is available on campus, and if they allow experts into the classroom for observation should the need arise.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM FEES

Extra- and co-curricular activities such as clubs and sports is another area to consider. Again, some of these may have activity fees. “Sometimes a school will bring in a four-week session on robotics, but that may not be covered. It’s important to dig deep into what clubs and athletics activities are covered and which are not,” Danson says.

She notes that while some co-curricular activities are run by teachers, others require bringing someone in from the outside. “If that’s the case, the school has to pay. If you really want to have a robotics lab or theatre club, they don’t always have the teaching staff to do it.”

Technology may also be an added expense. In some cases, schools will charge a surplus for computers or other technology needs.

PAYMENT AND EXIT TERMS

Payment terms are also an important consideration, Salgado says. “Sometimes, a substantial deposit might be required at the outset.”

On rare occasions, things simply don’t work out. Perhaps the student is unhappy in his/her environment, or the family has to move out of the area. Parents are often afraid to discuss exit clauses in the early stages, thinking it may harm their child’s chances of being accepted. But as Danson says, these are questions that admissions people expect to answer.

BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

One way to mitigate additional fees is with bursaries and scholarships offered through the school or other sources. Many have a robust bursary and/or scholarship program but that may not be the case for smaller schools, Danson cautions. “Different schools offer different levels of support. Look carefully at the website for potential scholarships and bursaries, because that is something that many parents miss. Also be clear on what a scholarship covers — it could be uniforms, or a school trip, for example.”

Ultimately, parents should never be afraid to ask the hard questions in the early stages, Salgado says. “Generally, staff understand how important the decision is for parents and that they are trying to make the right decisions for the children.”

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—ANJULI AHOOJA, APPLEBY COLLEGE PHYSICS TEACHER

Getting with the program

DENISE DEVEAU

For decades, the three Rs have been acknowledged as the fundamentals of learning. But we may soon see a C added to that equation, as the need for coding skills is in increasingly high demand at all levels of education.

If in doubt, you only need to speak to coding (computer programming) experts like Simon Guo, who says learning to code has been a part of his life since he was building Lego robots in grade three in Shanghai. Now a grade 11 student at UCC, he is actively involved in learning advanced coding as well as teaching coding skills to younger students.

In 2016, his coding skills jumped to an entirely new level when he went to his first hackathon. “A friend of mine from UCC took me to an event where we spent 36 hours developing a ‘smart’ t-shirt that could measure and adjust push-up and sit-up positions,” he explains. Since then he has participated in or organized 17 coding competitions around the world.

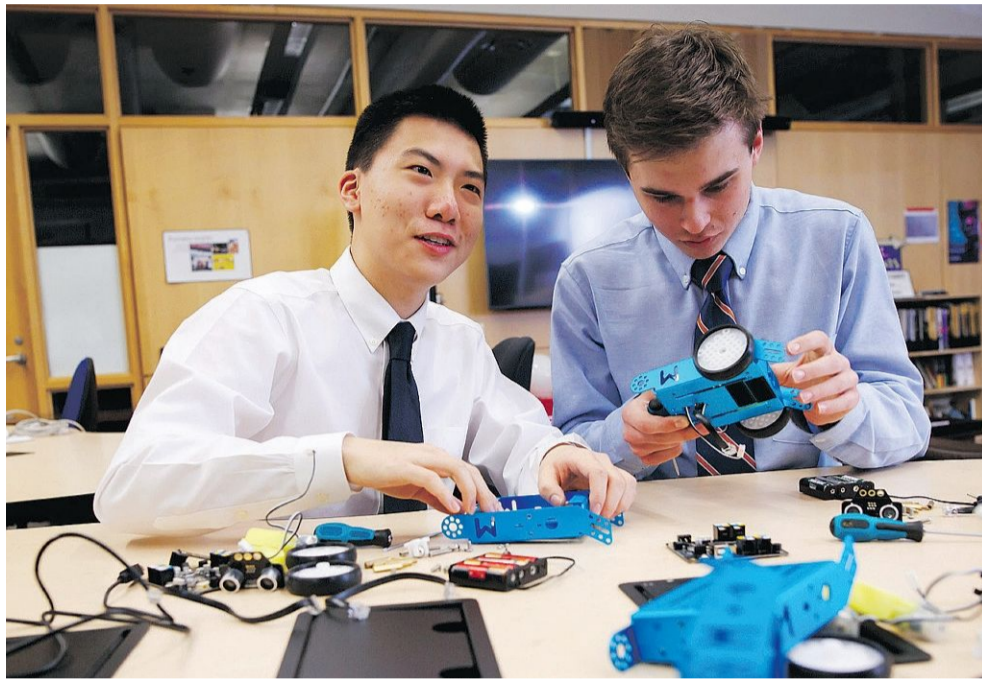
Guo believes coding has value for everyone, and is quick to encourage students to join in the school’s various computer science activities. He also participates in the school’s Horizons program, where he helps teach coding and robotics to grades five

and six students from public schools who visit UCC once a week. In working with those students, he says he has been pleasantly surprised by the skill levels of the girls. “A lot of girls are really, really smart. Younger ones in the program are much better than the boys, to be honest, because they concentrate more and get things really quickly.”

Guo’s is one of many coding-related stories happening in schools across the country. Cameron Smith, senior product manager and spokesperson, Microsoft Education for Canada, notes that IT companies as well as different organizations such as Code.org have been working with schools to ignite a passion and curiosity for coding.

“Hackathons are also growing across the board at all types and levels of schools. They’re a great way for students to showcase their skill sets. In these events, a core group of individuals is tasked with creating a solution to a problem using coding,” he explains, adding that kids as young as grade three can participate in coding events.

It is encouraging for industry to see the “really, really large increases” in coding as part of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning, he adds. “Some feel it’s more important to know coding than a second language because it is becoming an essential



COLE BURSTON / POSTMEDIA

Simon Guo, left, and Douglas Byers are part of the new wave of youth devoted to the increasingly integral skills of coding.

foundation in learning. Computer science is transforming the entire industry and our world, and we need people with the right skill sets to fit those jobs and understand that language. It is estimated that 65 per cent of jobs will require computational thinking ability.”

Smith says he is especially impressed by what schools are doing to ignite students’ interest in coding and computer science. “Many are now looking to the future and how coding in the curriculum will

integrate into the classroom moving forward.”

Anjali Ahoja, a physics teacher at Appleby College in Oakville, also believes that coding and computer science in general are now integral to any students’ education —and their day-to-day life for that matter. “Computational thinking should be a life skill as the world moves towards digital literacy, whether you are a user or a programmer.”

Coding in particular helps students think logically, and

coding-based projects can be used for many areas, including STEM learning, design projects or robotics, she adds. “The ability to write code in the future is seen to be as much a part of literacy as grammar. We have already come to that level and have a programmer dedicated to it at our school.”

Lucy Ho, managing director and co-founder of Hackergal in Toronto, has worked with both private and public school boards to promote coding activities, noting that

private schools have been particularly progressive in launching pilot projects. “If you introduce coding to girls at an early stage, around grade five or six, they are still open-minded and curious and will want to explore it further,” Ho says.

Not only do hackathons provide an interesting and unique learning experience, they allow participants to explore different careers and how technology applies to their everyday lives, she stresses. “In the future, every single industry will be using technology to solve real problems.”

Havergal was one of the first to pilot a program, she reports. “Other private schools have jumped on board with one-day hackathons, including Bishop Strachan, Branksome Hall, The Country Day School and UTS [University of Toronto Schools]. Private schools tend to have a lot of resources that bring those ideas into the classroom with extra-curricular activities like coding clubs and building drones.”

While coding and computer science are considered electives for the most part, some provinces are already moving to making it mandatory, although Ontario is not one of them yet, she says. “They are building skills so they can change the way of industry in the future.”

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Students at Holy Name of Mary do not have to choose between academics and passions

LINDA WHITE

Postmedia Content Works

When Hanna Henderson broke the record for most medals won by an athlete at a single Canada Games with 11, her school was among those cheering her on. In turn, the swimmer credits Holy Name of Mary College School (HNMCS) with giving her the support needed to be successful both in the water and in the classroom.

Hanna's intense training and competitions proved a challenge when she attended public school, where she struggled under the weight of uncompromising deadlines. She transferred to HNMCS, where she is thriving in an innovative Elite Athlete/Artist Programme. "We want to support students as they strive for excellence in their athletic and artistic passions outside of school, while allowing them to achieve strong academic grades and personal balance," says Marilena Tesoro, Head of School.

Under a personalized academic system, advisors work with students' coaches, families and teachers to schedule tests and assignments around training, rehearsals and competitions, alleviating the pressure of expectations and deadlines. "We're very adaptable in helping them meet all of the expectations they need to achieve at a high level of rigour - project-based and personalized learning is tailored to their individual needs to optimize their full potential," Tesoro says.

Emily Roman dances 25 to 30 hours a week and appreciates her weekly meetings with her advisor. She chose to



Hanna Henderson (inset) won two gold medals at the Pan Am Pool in Winnipeg in August to break the record for most medals won by an athlete at a single Canada Games with 11. She represents one of HNMCS's many elite athletes, much like Emily Roman, HNMCS elite artist (main). SUPPLIED

begin high school at HNMCS. "We wanted to make sure I was going to a school that understands how busy I am," she says.

Her mom, Lori Ann, agrees. "Having one point

person is the biggest benefit so far, outside the flexibility of needing to move a test or an assignment," she says. "It gets down to minutes when Emily's schedule gets busy and it can also be day by

day. For her to contact eight different teachers would be challenging. Her teachers are very supportive."

The private Catholic girls' school for students in Grades 5 to 12 doesn't believe its stu-

dents should have to choose between academics and athletic or artistic passions. Often, those passions give them direction while helping them develop valuable life skills, such as stamina, time

We want to support students as they strive for excellence in their athletic and artistic passions.

management and confidence that will help them successfully transition to university and beyond.

"We want students to be able to achieve their personal best," says Tesoro. "As a university preparatory school, we know that gives them more opportunities to meet the criteria of prestigious programs at revered universities and on scholarships."

Thanks to that innovative philosophy, HNMCS attracts students who excel in everything from dance and other performing arts to hockey, basketball, rowing and soccer. Maddy O'Brien, for example, was able to play on one of Canada's U14 teams at the World Select Invitational, held in Finland last spring. In addition to playing with girls from across Canada, she experienced Nordic culture and cuisine. "It was so great to get to play with people from all over the world," Maddy says. "To be around girls who love hockey as much as I do was a highlight of my hockey career so far."

THIS STORY WAS CREATED BY CONTENT WORKS, POSTMEDIA'S COMMERCIAL CONTENT DIVISION, ON BEHALF OF HOLY NAME OF MARY COLLEGE SCHOOL.



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Academic excellence, enrichment opportunities help ensure 'Millies' are well equipped to succeed

LINDA WHITE

Postmedia Content Works

As Amanda Adam prepares to graduate St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School (SMLS), she feels nostalgic about leaving its "close-knit family environment." But thanks to experiences that include leading an award-winning robotics program and completing a biomedical engineering internship, she's excited and confident about her future.

"My robotics experience helped me discover my passion for STEM (science, technology, engineering and math)," says the Grade 12 student. In addition to learning how to code using JavaScript, design robotic parts using computer-aided design software and build a robot, Amanda learned how to manage a team, write an award-winning business plan and make successful sponsorship pitches.

A global studies trip to China helped Amanda discover a unique culture while developing valuable skills in self-reliance and independence. Other SMLS students have travelled to Bhutan (which measures National Gross Happiness instead of National Gross Product), India, Singapore and Australia, among other countries.

With her school's support and encouragement, Amanda achieved gold in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, a program designed to empower, challenge and recognize young people through service, skill and physical recreation.

"Through these experiences and others, I've been



With her school's support and encouragement, Amanda Adam achieved gold in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, a program designed to empower, challenge and recognize young people through service, skill and physical recreation. SUPPLIED

able to know myself well enough to figure out what I want to do with my life," says Amanda, who plans to complete an undergraduate degree in engineering before pursuing law.

SMLS, an independent school in Oakville for girls in preschool to Grade 12, recognizes the importance of helping students navigate the 'age of innovation.' "As educators, we must

equip our students with the tools they need to thrive in this new era," says Nancy Richards, Head of School. "Schools need to be vigilant about the changing education landscape and the ideas that are shaping it, while maintaining valued traditional approaches."

The unique combination of academic excellence and academic enrichment opportunities helps ensure

'Millies' are well equipped to succeed in the real world and global community. Educational initiatives are guided by the underlying values of personalization, the inquiry approach and the 21st-century learning competencies of resilience, critical thinking, creativity, communication and problem solving, Richards explains.

Signature SMLS programs

include robotics and STEM. Through the school's award-winning FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science & Technology) Robotics program, girls from Grades 1 to 12 compete in STEM challenges. Its senior robotics team holds the distinction of being the first Canadian all-girls team and only Canadian team to date to win the prestigious Regional Chairman's Award in

As educators, we must equip our students with the tools they need to thrive in this [age of innovation].

the FIRST competition.

Through the school's Global Studies program, each student has the opportunity to explore and connect with local and global communities through experiential learning trips, community service, cultural exchanges and international leadership opportunities. As part of its Professional Internship program, every Grade 11 student participates in a month-long workplace experience customized to her personal career interests.

Outdoor education, physical fitness, creative expression and spiritual reflection underscore the school's focus on the 'whole girl.' Students also enjoy a wide range of experiences in the arts, including dramatic and theatre arts, instrumental and vocal music, visual art and communication technology, which helps develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, innovative thinking and self-discovery.

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