

WE NEED TO TALK:



On behalf of the Chair of the Board, Barbara Holland and the Director of Education, Paul Picard, please see the attached letter that was sent to all parents in the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board on Monday, March 31, 2014.

The letter highlights the need for parents to talk to their children about digital technology and the Internet and how the inappropriate use of technology has the potential to have a life altering impact on their children/our students.

The letter outlines the formation of a **"We Need to Talk" Parent Series** that will entail parents receiving a newsletter on each Monday during the month of April that will highlight specific areas of internet safety with key information that parents can use on a daily basis to assist us in doing all we can to make internet use a safe and useful tool for learning. Following that, during Education Week, we will reinforce the message by implementing the **"We Need to Talk" Student Series** which will focus on Cyber Bullying, Sexting and Profile Protection, with students in Grades 4-12 taking part in a system wide, three-part series on internet safety.

For further information please contact:
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**WINDSOR-ESSEX CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

1325 California Avenue
Windsor, ON N9B 3Y6
CHAIRPERSON: Barbara Holland
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION: Paul A. Picard
Telephone: (519) 253-2481 FAX: (519) 253-4819

March 31, 2014

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We write to you today, not as Director and Chairperson, but as a father of two daughters and a grandfather; and as a mother of four sons and a grandmother...***we need to talk.***

Keeping our children safe is no longer limited to the neighbourhood, the playground and the classroom. Today, the biggest potential threat to the safety and well being of our children is digital technology and the Internet. The inappropriate use of technology has the potential to have a life-altering impact on those entrusted to our care.

Like you, we know that the first priority of all parents is to keep our sons and daughters safe. We, at the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board, share that belief and we embrace that responsibility. Every child has the right to a safe and caring learning environment where they can interact with their peers, teachers and other significant adults in a healthy, supportive and Christ-centered environment.

Our concerns have led to the formation of a ***"We Need to Talk" Parent Series.*** Each Monday during the month of April, you will receive a newsletter highlighting specific areas of internet safety. The intent of the newsletter is to provide you, as parents and guardians, with key information that you can use on a daily basis to assist us in doing all we can to make internet use a safe and useful tool for learning.

During Education Week, May 5-9, 2014, we will reinforce the message by implementing the ***"We Need to Talk" Student Series*** which will focus on Cyber Bullying, Sexting and Profile Protection. Students in Grades 4-8 will take part in a system wide, three-part series on internet safety. The material covered in the Student Series will also be made available to you for sharing via your school website, your parish and through the Board's website at ***catholicboard.ca.***

This letter is just a beginning; an effort to begin a conversation and articulate a plan. We are offering you the tools to sit down with your children and say, ***"We Need To Talk"***. Let us engage them with love and respect. In so doing, we will promote self-confidence and self-respect. These are the two critical components to the well being of our children. We trust that you will agree and that you will join us in this most important venture.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Picard
Director of Education

Barbara Holland
Chairperson of the Board