



The Durham Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (DCPIC) is a statutory committee of the Durham Catholic District School Board. Our goal is to make parental engagement a priority by providing ongoing support on a system-wide basis and promoting communication and dialogue between school councils, the Board and members of the community.

## Message from DCPIC Chair

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we near the end of another school year, I would like to thank everyone who supported and participated in DCPIC initiatives throughout the year.

This year's events and conversations reinforced how much families value opportunities that help them navigate the realities of parenting and raising children in today's rapidly changing world. Whether the focus was on financial literacy, wellness, future readiness, digital awareness, or faith formation, it was encouraging to see families engaged, asking questions, sharing experiences, and looking for ways to continue supporting their children while keeping Catholic values at the centre.



It has also been wonderful to see the growing interest in parent involvement and leadership across our school communities. As I near the end of my term as Chair, I am especially grateful for the opportunity to serve, collaborate, and connect with families, school councils, volunteers, staff, and community partners who care deeply about supporting students and strengthening Catholic education. It has truly been a privilege to help support initiatives that bring families together and strengthen parent engagement across our board community.

I wish all DCDSB families a safe, restful, and joy-filled summer filled with time to reconnect, recharge, and enjoy meaningful moments together.

Thank you again for your continued support throughout the year.

Yours in Faith,

Christine Santos

Chair, Durham Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

## Distinguished Catholic Volunteer Awards

On Tuesday, May 12, 2026, the Durham Catholic Parent Involvement Committee and the Durham Catholic District School Board came together to celebrate and thank our volunteers for their countless hours helping our schools, fundraising and/or participating in board-wide committees.

Congratulations to the 2025-2026 Distinguished Catholic Volunteer Award recipients. We love our volunteers! Thank you to the dedicated volunteers who contribute to the success of our schools and committees each and every day. We are honoured to present the 2025-2026 Distinguished Catholic Volunteer Award recipients below.



### **Distinguished Catholic Volunteers for Ajax Schools:**

- Sarto E Provenzano, Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School
- Judyanne Manuel, Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School
- Rachel Manto, St. André Bessette Catholic School
- Pauline Daley, St. Bernadette Catholic School
- Nixon Masih, St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School
- Victoria Stewart, St. Francis de Sales Catholic School
- Vicky Miceli, St. James Catholic School
- Jennifer Bilog, St. Josephine Bakhita Catholic School
- Katie Brown, St. Jude Catholic School
- Melissa Gracias, St. Patrick Catholic School
- Shanique Wynter-Linton, St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School

**Distinguished Catholic Volunteers for Northern Schools (Beaverton, Port Perry, Uxbridge):**

- Ashley Pacis, Good Shepherd Catholic School
- Kim Schiafone, Holy Family Catholic School
- Jessical Bowler, St. Joseph Catholic School (Uxbridge)

**Distinguished Catholic Volunteers for Oshawa Schools:**

- Carrie Bon, Monsignor John Pereyma Catholic Secondary School
- Regina Rocchetta, Monsignor Paul Dwyer Catholic High School
- Jocelyn Rowell, Monsignor Philip Coffey Catholic School
- Paula Polley, Sir Albert Love Catholic School
- Alicia Labow, St. Anne Catholic School
- Christina Stokes, St. Christopher Catholic School
- Tara Travers-Peddle, St. Hedwig Catholic School
- Lia Alfano, St. John XXIII Catholic School
- Marla Labriola, St. John Bosco Catholic School
- Jeniffer Hunt, St. Joseph Catholic School (Oshawa)
- Rebecca Zatylny, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic School
- Rebecka Pigeau, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School

**Distinguished Catholic Volunteers for Pickering Schools:**

- Ashley McAllen, St. Mary Catholic Secondary School
- Karoline Vanderputt, Father Fénélon Catholic School
- Rizelle de Ocampo, St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic School
- Sheila Yourth, St. Isaac Jogues Catholic School
- Peggy Bowie, St. Monica Catholic School
- Jeanette Lobban, St. Wilfrid Catholic School

**Distinguished Catholic Volunteers for Whitby Schools:**

- James Ortise, All Saints Catholic Secondary School
- Dina Ste. Marie and Stephanie Wood, Father Leo J. Austin Catholic Secondary School
- Zeina Saikali, St. Bernard Catholic School
- Alyssa Cappelli, St. Bridget Catholic School
- Sonya Mitchell, St. John Paul II Catholic School
- Anna Marek, St. John the Evangelist Catholic School
- Rika Arai, St. Leo Catholic School
- Lucy McManus, St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School
- Katia Georgiadis-Belliveau and Riggel Davalos, St. Marguerite d'Youville Catholic School
- Jaypee Trinidad, St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic School

- Yvette L. Soengas, St. Matthew the Evangelist Catholic School
- Lauren Walker, St. Paul Catholic School
- Nicole O'Leary, St. Theresa Catholic School

## Mental Health and Future Readiness

### Thank You for Attending "Future Ready. Emotionally Strong"



On Wednesday, April 29, families from across the DCDSB gathered for an evening focused on clarity, confidence, resilience and practical tools for everyday parenting, hosted by DCPIC.

The evening included a powerful clarity mapping experience with keynote speaker, Lucy Colangelo, growth mindset strategies with Jemmie Robles, and valued community partners including Durham Region Health Department, Ontario Shores, YMCA, YGAP and Development & Peace.

A special thank you to Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School for collaborating with DCPIC to make this initiative possible. Your partnership and hospitality were instrumental in the success of the evening.

We're grateful to every family who attended and engaged!

## Faith Formation

### Drawing God Event

DCPIC was pleased to support the DCDSB Faith Department's recent Drawing God family event featuring author Karen Kiefer. Through storytelling, creativity, and faith-filled conversation, families were invited to deepen their understanding of God's presence in everyday life while strengthening the connection between faith, family, and Catholic education. [Please click here to read more about the event.](#)



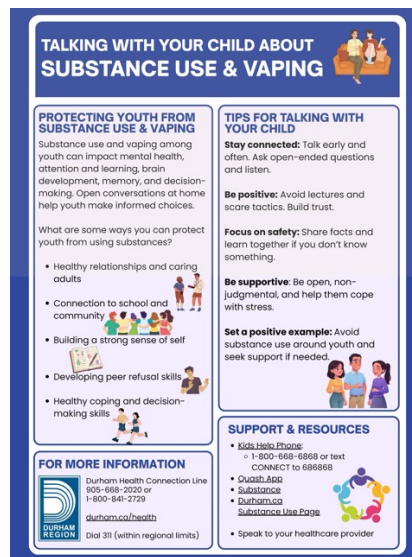
## Resources for Families

### Small Conversations, Big Impact

As we head into summer, Durham Region Health reminds us that small, everyday actions can make a big difference in a child's well-being.

- Stay connected by checking in with your child regularly and listening without judgment.
- Support healthy routines through sleep, physical activity, family meals, and consistent schedules.
- Talk openly about technology, online safety, gaming, and healthy digital habits.
- Start conversations early about vaping, substance use, peer pressure, and decision-making.

- Small, consistent conversations can make a lasting difference in a child's mental health and overall well-being.



## Supports in the Community

### You Play a Powerful Role in Your Child's Mental Health

As a parent or caregiver, you are one of the most important protective factors in your child's life. The routines, conversations, and boundaries you create at home can strongly support your child's mental health and well-being.

**Stay Connected**

Your relationship matters. Make time each day to check in with your child.

You can help by:

- Asking open-ended questions like "What was the best part of your day?"
- Listening more than fixing. Sometimes your child just wants to be heard.
- Letting them know it's okay to talk about hard feelings.

By Your Side parent hub: [By Your Side Parent Hub](#)

**Create Healthy Routines**

Small, everyday habits can make a big difference for your child's mental well-being.

- **Sleep:** Help your child get enough sleep with consistent bedtimes and calming routines (aim for 9-11 hours for children, 8-10 hours for teens).
- **Physical activity:** Encourage movement every day. Children and youth should have about 60 minutes of active play or exercise a day.
- **Healthy eating:** Support regular meals and snacks, eat together when possible, and choose water most often.

Predictable routines help children feel safe, calm, and ready to learn.

Durham Region parent tip sheet: [Healthy Routines for You and Your Family](#)

**Help Your Child Manage Digital Technology**

Technology can support learning and connection but too much can impact sleep, mood, and focus. The Canadian Screen Time Guideline for children and teens recommends limiting screen time to less than two hours a day.

You can help by:

- Setting clear, age-appropriate limits on recreational screen time.
- Keeping screens out of bedrooms at night.
- Modeling healthy digital habits yourself.
- Talking openly about online safety and balance.

Parent guide: [Limiting Your Child's Screen Time](#)

**Know when and where to get help**

If you notice ongoing changes in mood, sleep, behavior, or school engagement, reaching out early helps.

Trusted supports:

- Talk with your child's school and ask about available supports.
- Explore community programs and mental health services.

Helpful resources: [Durham's Mental Health Services for Your Child](#), [Mental Health & Well-Being | Durham Catholic District School Board](#)

**You are not alone**

You don't have to do this perfectly or alone. Small, consistent steps and caring connections make a big difference. Reach out when you need support, and trust that your presence truly matters.

[Durham.ca/mentalhealth](https://durham.ca/mentalhealth)

Durham Health Connection Line | 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729  
[durham.ca/health](https://durham.ca/health)  
Dial 311 (within regional limits)

Families looking for additional supports may wish to explore some of the community resources featured at our Future Ready: Emotionally Strong event:

Durham Region Mobile Benefits Hub  
Free assistance accessing government benefits, tax filing supports, and financial assistance programs that many families may not realize they qualify for. [Please click here to learn more.](#)

Ontario Shores Youth Mental Health Supports  
Resources and services for youth and families, including supports for adolescents experiencing mental health challenges and school-related concerns. [Please click here to learn more.](#)

[more.](#)

### Youth Gambling Awareness Program (YGAP)

Resources and information to help families better understand gaming, gambling, sports betting, and healthy decision-making in today's digital environment. [Please click here to learn more.](#)

### YMCA Youth Leadership Programs

Leadership, mentorship, and volunteer opportunities that help youth build confidence, leadership skills, and community involvement. [Please click here to learn more.](#)

The Durham Catholic District School Board also has compiled resources for families and students. Please visit [dcdsb.ca/MentalHealth](https://dcdsb.ca/MentalHealth) for more information.

**Join DCPIC!**

## Interested in joining DCPIC?

The DCPIC hosts elections for available positions on the committee at the beginning of each school year. In order to be eligible for a position on DCPIC, you must self-nominate for a position.

Nominations for the 2026-2027 school year will open in September 2026 and will be communicated to all families. For information on the DCPIC, including how our committee works and who is eligible to sit on the committee, [please visit DCPIC.ca](https://dcpic.ca).



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