

Self-Regulation at Evergreen PS

Over the past nine months, the staff at Evergreen School have been learning about self-regulation. Self-regulation refers to how efficiently and effectively a child deals with a stressor and then recovers (Porges, 2011; Lillas & Turnbull, 2009; McEwen, 2002). A School Improvement Plan goal was created that aimed to help students have an awareness of the different states of arousal, and learn to either up-regulate or down-regulate in order to sustain or shift attention and ignore distractions so that students are better able to learn.

With the guidance of our TLLP project team: Shelley Penner, Jennifer Schott, D'Arcy Jutila, Sarah Ferguson, Lori Rasmussen and Nicole Burton, the Evergreen staff engaged in a professional learning community to learn how to better support the needs of the students in their classes. After taking the Self-Regulation Foundations (Part 1) course online through The MEHRIT Centre (an organization founded by Dr. Stuart Shanker), three of our staff shared their learning about relationships, stress, the brain and reframing behaviours with the rest of our professional learning community.

Throughout the course of the year, we have started looking at our students from the five domains of self-regulation (biological, emotional, cognitive, social and prosocial), and have begun looking for ways to alter learning environments where possible, recognize the stressors that students are encountering and help our students be in a calm and alert state in order to be prepared for learning.

In January of this year, Evergreen PS was one of three schools in the board which underwent an Environmental Consultation Assessment, completed by Dr. Shanker and The MEHRIT Centre. Since receiving that report, we have been working hard as a staff to implement the recommendations from the report. Some of the changes that have been made in the school include efforts to declutter, adjust the lighting, allow for scheduled movement breaks, increase our professional knowledge base, create micro-environments, decrease sound intrusions in our hallways and classrooms as well as increase strategies for adult self-regulation as the staff of the school. We are pleased with the progress that has been made this year and look forward to seeing continued success as we continue this work next year.

Respectfully submitted by,

Shannon Bailey, Principal

Evergreen PS

