

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am currently finishing up my last course for my Master of Education in Sustainability, Creativity and Innovation. I have taken this program through Cape Breton University and I am eager to begin my final research project. My research requires support in gaining information from students and families to better act as a guide. My project will begin by assessing our current perceptions and attitudes towards active transportation as a school and community. We will then evaluate those results and develop a program to educate students and families on the benefits of active transportation and explore ways that this practice can be further encouraged and fostered. The program will include students voluntarily travelling to school using active transportation once the weather permits them to do so. Ideally, students will begin using active transportation by as soon as April, and the program will conclude by mid-June. At the end of the program, we will assess, through the use of another survey, whether attitudes and perceptions have changed based on education provided, what specific factors contributed, and discuss any other key elements related to both the surveys used for parents and students, as well as the specific use of active transportation.

Education does not begin and end in the classroom. Our schools and communities have the power to make change outside of the school day and educating students and promoting active transportation is one way to do so. At West St. Paul School, students are regularly driven to school by either bus or family members and moving away from this creates a great opportunity to develop student's independence as well as enhance healthy and active life-styles. Although many students must travel from far distances, we are going to also examine safe and efficient ways for them to make the choice to bike, walk or roll to school more regularly. Participation in this activity is completely voluntary, families can choose to participate or not and to a level that works best for them.

This project proposes to, with a focus on educating and promoting active transportation concepts, examine current trends at our school and explore further ways to increase student use of active transportation. Further, student and family attitudes will be examined through the completion of a five-minute survey (attached), and we will use this data to develop strategies to encourage active transportation in a way that promotes safety and comfort for all participants. If you decide to complete the survey, you are asked to return them to your child's classroom teacher. The teacher will place the anonymous completed surveys in an envelope and return them to me. The findings will be used to inform practice and share with colleagues in preparation for school/community wide planning.

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts related to this research. More information will be provided related to the Active Transportation Project should you decide to participate in the study. You will have the right to terminate your participation and your child's by having any contributions excluded. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study as well. For the purpose of this project, the data collection and participation in active transportation are two separate endeavors. Your child is still welcome to participate in the Active Transportation aspect of this project regardless of the decision to take part in the surveys and formal study. Your participation will benefit school and community planning and better meeting the needs of the active student. All data collected will be stored in a secure location. Access to the data will only be granted to the researcher. All information collected is confidential and will only be used as part of research work being carried out by researcher at Cape Breton University.

Thank-You for considering to be part of this study,

Sincerely,

Ryan Smithson, West St Paul School

Researcher

If you require information about this study, please contact Ryan Smithson at 204-996-7292 or by email at ryan.smithson@7oaks.org

Supervisor

If you have any other questions regarding your participation in this research, you may also contact Patrick Howard at Cape Breton University at 902-563-1300 or by email at Patrick_howard@cbu.ca.

Informed Consent

I _____ (Student's Name) have been informed of the purpose of this research and agree to participate in this anonymous study.

I would be willing to complete a questionnaire to offer a student perspective.

I _____ (Parent's Name) have been informed of the purpose of this research and agree for my child _____ to participate in this anonymous study.

I would be willing to complete a questionnaire to offer a parental perspective.

If you have any questions that have not been answered satisfactorily by the researcher(s) or supervisor(s) named above, please contact:

CBU Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS), Dr. Dana Mount at (902) 563-1338, email: ethics@cbu.ca

Chair of the Research Ethics Board at CBU, Dr. Kathy Snow, at (902)563-1170, email: kathy_snow@cbu.ca

Co-chair of the Research Ethics Board at CBU, Dr. John Hudec at (902) 563-1982, email: john_hudec@cbu.ca.

Note: Participants are to be informed of the researcher(s)' "Duty to disclose" suspected abuse or neglect of a child or an adult in need of protection. Under section 23(1), Nova Scotia Children and their Family, The Protection of Children and Adoption (1990) states that "Every person who has information, whether it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is in need of protective services shall forthwith report that information to an agency." Agency is defined as "an agency continued by or established and incorporated pursuant to the act..." that is, Nova Scotia Department of Community Service Child Welfare