

A close-up photograph of a young child with dark hair, looking down intently at a piece of paper. The child is using a blue marker to draw a circular pattern. The background is softly blurred, showing a grey shirt. The overall mood is focused and creative.

The Smile Within

REPORT TO THE
COMMUNITY 2007

WELCOME THE SMILE WITHIN



Smile and
the world
smiles
with you.



“The Readiness Centre has really helped me plant roots in this community.” – Meenu

A smile is much more than a facial expression; it’s a universal symbol of joy and welcome. That’s why we incorporated a smile into our logo—it reflects the way we want Peel students, staff and the entire school community to feel—joyful and happy. Read on and discover the smile within Peel for yourself.

Meenu Panchal

Parent, Hickory Wood Public School
Readiness Centre, Brampton

Two-year-old Sahil can’t wait for Wednesdays and Fridays. On those mornings, he and his mom Meenu go to school with his older brother Yash. After dropping Yash off at his kindergarten class, Sahil and his mom Meenu attend the school’s Readiness Centre.

Meenu is a familiar face at the centre. She’s been coming since it opened in March 2005—in fact, Yash was one of the centre’s founding members. “We haven’t missed a day,” Meenu says.

Meenu can see the impact the centre has had on both of her sons. “They’ve learned to share, they understand directions and can express their thoughts—kids learn best by doing and by watching their parents. I’ve learned how important parent involvement is—especially at this age.”

Through activities such as crafts, circle time, cooking and field trips, children and their parents—or caregivers—learn valuable skills together. Meenu credits much of Sahil’s development to the Readiness Centre, “He amazed me the other day—before eating his chocolate chip cookie, he said, ‘Look mom, dots.’ And then he counted the chocolate chips, ‘one dot, two dots, three dots,’ all the way to 10.”

Having moved to Canada from India just over five years ago, the Readiness Centre has been a great resource for Meenu and her husband. Now, Meenu helps other parents, “I translate for parents who don’t speak English. I’ve made new friends. The Readiness Centre has really helped me plant roots in this community.”

Hickory Wood is one of the Peel board’s four Early Years Hubs and 10 Readiness Centres. These free drop-in centres are funded by the Peel board and staffed by qualified kindergarten teachers. For more information, go to www.peelschools.org/early_years or call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2570.



Settlement workers in schools help ease transition for newcomer families

Thirty-one settlement workers in more than 55 schools help welcome newcomer families to Peel. They provide settlement services and information, and refer families to community agencies. For more information, call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2437.

Faith Forward celebrates faith and culture in Peel

Through the *Faith Forward* program, the Peel board provides resources to help broaden the awareness of various faiths and cultures, and their religious celebrations:

- an 18-month *Holy Days and Holidays* calendar
- a monthly backgrounder about religious and cultural celebrations
- *Reflections on World Religions*, a resource book for teachers and students
- a poster series to help schools celebrate holy days from major faiths
- consultation with faith communities in Peel to create stronger partnerships
- training programs

For more information, call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2573.



Everyone smiles in the same language.

Supporting success in students' first languages

The Peel board is committed to communicating, whenever possible, in a family's first language through:

- websites in 25 languages
- a "welcome to school" package in their language when families register their children at school
- translation and interpreter services
- multi-lingual workshops at the board's annual parent literacy conference



SHARE THE SMILE WITHIN

Bretton Nyman

Grade 8 Student, Cheyne Middle School, Brampton

Last year, when no one else was looking, Bretton Nyman decided to change.

When Bretton arrived at Cheyne Middle School in grade 6, he was headed for trouble. He was a regular visitor to the principal's office and his grades were slipping. Things got worse in grade 7.

"I knew this wasn't how I should be acting. My mom didn't like it. My teachers didn't like it, and I realized that if I wanted to succeed in life, I needed to change," Bretton explains.

Through the school's focus on character development, he received daily encouragement and support. But, ultimately, he had to make the decision to change. "I stopped hanging around the crowd I was with and started working to get my old friends back," says Bretton. "It wasn't easy, I had broken their trust—I deserted them. But, I realized who my real friends are and was willing to do whatever it took to have them back in my life."

At Cheyne, Bretton met people who believed in him. During his frequent visits to the office, he got to know his principal and vice-principal well. "I respect them. Some people in your life you're just lucky to meet," he says. "Being at Cheyne has changed my life—big time."



Smiles: Pass them forward

"Being at Cheyne has changed my life—big time." – Bretton

Character education helps students be the change

Cheyne—a school with character

From special guest speakers to a 20-minute character education period every day, Cheyne Middle School's emphasis on character has helped create a sense of community. New this year, grade 7 and 8 boys are working with former CFL player Orlando Bowen through his organization, Gameday.

Stephen Lewis students act locally and globally

At Stephen Lewis Secondary School in Mississauga, students build social awareness and a sense of belonging through membership in one of four "villages" named for champions of social justice: June Callwood, Craig Kielburger, Agnes Macphail and David Suzuki.

Excellence is heard loud and clear at Credit View

At Credit View Public School in Caledon, themes like conflict resolution, teamwork or perseverance are explored through monthly assemblies and announcements. The school's *Shout out the Excellence* initiative recognizes students who are caught in the act of being excellent. Students who provide a helping hand, show great leadership or support peers are noticed by staff, and each day a student is recognized in the morning announcements.



Award-winning events build youth leadership

Each year, the Peel board hosts award-winning learning events that foster character development and leadership skills in students. The *Student Model United Nations*, *R U Aware? Spread the word... not HIV* and the *Student Leadership for Global Development* program encourage critical thinking, compassion and leadership development.

For more information, go to “Student Stuff” at www.peelschools.org, visit Student Leadership for Global Development at www.peelschools.org/slkd, or call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2098.

Greening our smile

James Bolton students get their hands dirty
The outdoor classroom at James Bolton Public School in Bolton allows students to observe plant life, examine soil, analyze animal habitats, monitor weather and experiment—without even leaving the school. Students, teachers and the community are responsible for caring for the garden.

Hillside students develop global citizenship through environmental ethics and action
Students and staff at Hillside Sr. Public School endeavour to reduce their own ecological footprints through local environmental projects. The school has focused on waste management, recycling and school ground naturalization. Last year, Hillside planted 10 mature locusts on the border of the school’s wood chipped naturalization area. Now, the Environmental Club is working on installing solar panels and has proposed a green roof.



Volunteers support student success

Whether organizing hot lunch days, attending field trips, reading with students, helping in the office or preparing classroom materials, the smiling face of a volunteer is a welcomed sight. It’s easy to volunteer—just talk to the principal of your local school. Volunteers are required by provincial law to complete a criminal record check.

Every Peel school has a school council—a volunteer group focused on helping students succeed. To find out how to become a school council member, talk to your child’s principal, or visit the “School Council” section of www.peelschools.org.

“I signed up to help someone else, but found myself getting back so much. Their smiles remind me that making a difference isn’t difficult.”
– Janine



Janine Lewis

Senior Board Reporter &
Freedom of Information Co-ordinator

As an in-school mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel, Janine Lewis has helped bring smiles to the faces of some of the most vulnerable children in Peel. For more than 12 years, she has helped them experience the magic of a true friendship.

Over the years, Janine has been matched up with four students with whom she’s maintained long-time friendships. During her weekly visits to their schools, the children are the centre of attention. She listens to them, cares about them and helps them realize their full potential. Whether it’s playing ball hockey, shooting hoops or baking Valentine’s Day cookies, Janine and the students have fun.

Janine is one of almost 100 mentors who meet with children in 58 Peel schools each week. For more information about the program, or to find out how to become a mentor, call 905-457-7288 or visit www.bbbspeel.com.

NURTURE THE SMILE WITHIN

Robbie Gossmann

Grade 11 Student, Gordon Graydon Memorial Secondary School, Mississauga

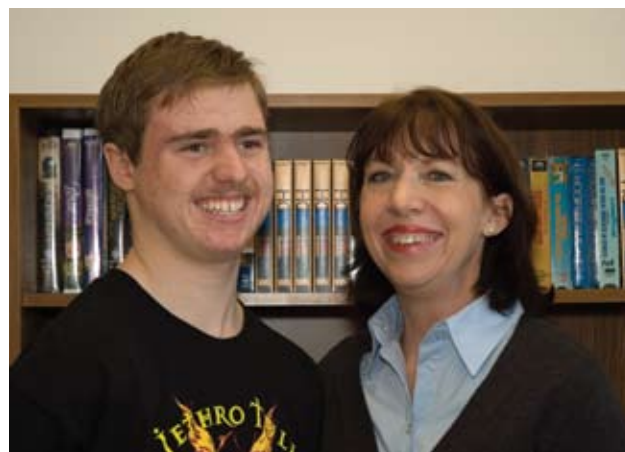
When you picture success, what do you see? A trophy or certificate? Andrea Gossmann, mom to 17-year-old Robbie, sees a smile—one bursting with confidence. When Robbie, who has autism, first arrived at Gordon Graydon Memorial Secondary School, teachers thought he couldn't speak. "Now, he never stops talking," Andrea says. "Every day, Robbie comes to school and receives his daily dose of confidence."

"Two years ago, Robbie decided that he wanted to become a teacher. He's been inspired by the people around him," says Andrea. "Robbie's learned how to read, participates in class and gets high marks."

Andrea credits the school's ASD program. For three classes a day, students in the ASD program take classes with their peers. One period a day they spend in their own class. With a kitchen, couches, TV and video games, the space is a "home away from home"—a safe and welcoming "home base."

"Because of this program, Robbie is willing to embrace life—it isn't scary anymore, because he's confident enough to at least try," says Andrea. "I know that he's going to be an active participant in his life. And for that, and to this school, I am forever grateful."

*A smile
is nearly
always
inspired
by another
smile.*



**Inspiring
the joy of
learning**



Website helps students, parents learn about career/life planning

To help students make choices for their lives once they finish secondary school, the board launched a new virtual guidance centre—designed to help students and their parents with career/life planning. The website—www.makingmyway.ca—provides advice, resources and video diaries of Peel graduates. For more information, call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2551.

Five-year trend shows EQAO improvement

Each year, the provincial Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) conducts tests of students in grades 3, 6, 9 and 10. In 2007, EQAO scores in the Peel board slipped in elementary, after making significant increases last year, but the five-year trend still shows substantial improvement. For complete results, visit www.peelschools.org and click on "EQAO Test Results."

Creative Learning Choices nurture multiple intelligences

The Peel board's Creative Learning Choices program expands the variety of learning options within the public school system. They are designed to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. Choice programs, such as French immersion, Sci-Tech and International Baccalaureate, are open to all students in Peel. For a complete program list, visit www.peelschools.org/makingmyway/programs/choices.htm or call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2551.

DISCOVER THE SMILE WITHIN

Each year the Peel board welcomes about 3,000 new students. The board opened six new schools, adding 4,964 student places, for 2007-08. The board forecasts the need to build 18 schools over the next five years to keep pace with growth.

In 2006-07, the Peel board created 12,128 new pupil spaces through additions, and spent more than \$68 million to renovate and build these new spaces.

\$1.2 billion budget an investment in student success

The Peel board budget is an investment in the future, the future of students. The board approved a balanced budget of \$1.2 billion for 2007-08. For complete financial statements, go to "Get the Facts" at www.peelschools.org or call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2012.

Ready-made materials available for purchase

A number of the board's award-winning materials are available for purchase by other school boards without the Peel logo on them. For the catalogue, go to the Spotlight section on the home page of www.peelschools.org or call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2809.

"All the statistics in the world can't measure the warmth of a smile." — Chris Hart

Total number of schools: 232

Elementary: **196** Secondary: **36**

Total number of students: 150,000

Elementary: **106,000** Secondary: **44,000**

Total number of staff: 13,300

Academic: **9,600** Business & support: **3,700**

Students in French programs: 72,000

Core French: **64,100** French Immersion: **7,900**

Students served through special education: 15,500

Students travelling to school by bus: 37,000

Number of portables: 739

Permits for community use of school facilities: 5,500

**150,000
reasons to
smile...and
growing**

LEADING THE SMILE WITHIN



The board of trustees is responsible for determining policies and maintaining standards of excellence in education for Peel District School Board. Trustees are elected by public school taxpayers every four years during municipal elections and are directly accountable to the community.

Trustee responsibilities include the following:

- govern and set policy for the Peel board
- govern for provision of resources for the board
- advocate for the needs of their communities
- explain the policies and decisions of the board to their communities

Visit the Peel board website at www.peelschools.org and go to “Meet your trustee.”

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” – Leo F. Buscaglia

- A VALERIE ARNOLD-JUDGE Caledon, 905-838-2125
- B BERYL FORD Brampton Wards 7/8, 905-793-0800
- C DAVID GREEN Brampton Wards 1/3, 905-495-4579
- D STEVE KAVANAGH Brampton Wards 4/5/6, 905-457-3132
- E BRAD MACDONALD Mississauga Ward 8, 905-828-6929
- F JANET MCDUGALD, Chair Mississauga Wards 1/7, 905-278-1402
- G SUZANNE NURSE Brampton Wards 2/9/10, 905-495-3423
- H DON STEPHENS Mississauga Ward 2, 905-826-3358
- I RUTH THOMPSON, Vice-Chair Mississauga Wards 3/4, 905-625-1457
- J ALLISON VAN WAGNER Mississauga Wards 9/10, 905-785-9290
- K JEFF WHITE Mississauga Wards 6/11, 905-267-0764
- L RICK WILLIAMS Mississauga Ward 5, 905-814-6180
- M ISHWINDER BHOLA, Student Trustee Brampton Centennial Secondary School, 905-451-2860
- N SHAUVIK SHAH, Student Trustee Glenforest Secondary School, 905-625-7731

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

- Contact your child's school
- Visit www.peelschools.org
- Call 905-890-1010
(or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2809

Please recycle this report when you're finished—but don't forget to snap out your "smile book" from the centre.



www.peelschools.org