

## “BULLYING PREVENTION AND AWARENESS WEEK”

During the week of February 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> Blenheim Bus Lines once again teamed up with two of our local schools, St. Anne’s Catholic School and Harwich Raleigh Public School in a campaign to educate our elementary students about the harmful consequences of bullying.

The Canadian Institute of Health Research has documented some staggering and sobering statistics related to the effects of bullying on the psychological well-being of our children.

- Canada has the 9<sup>th</sup> highest rate of bullying in the 13-years-old category in a list of 35 industrialized countries
- At least 1 in 3 adolescent students in Canada have reported being bullied recently
- 47% of Canadian parents report having a child victim of bullying
- Any participation in bullying increases the risk of suicidal thoughts in youth
- A study conducted in Britain found that at least half of suicides among young people are related to bullying
- Girls are more likely to be victims of cyber-bullying than boys
- **When students witness bullying being carried out and have the courage to speak out against that behavior the act of bullying almost always stops immediately.**

**STAND UP, DON’T STAND BY!**

The dedicated school bus drivers at Blenheim Bus Lines recently completed an online video training module entitled “Bill 157 Keeping our Kids Safe at School” followed by an online quiz in preparation for this campaign.

All week long, our drivers and office staff wore a pink t-shirt over their outerwear with an anti-bullying message in support of the Ontario wide “PINK SHIRT DAY CAMPAIGN”. We encourage all who are interested to go to: <http://www.pinkshirtday.ca/about/> for further information about this great program.

Each day on all 14 of our Blenheim elementary school routes, when our school bus driver’s witnessed generous, thoughtful behavior exhibited by our students on the bus, they issued “Random Acts of Kindness” certificates. Random Acts of Kindness can include but are not limited to:

- Letting someone walk first
- Carrying another student’s bag
- Helping a younger student on/off the bus
- Standing up for another student
- stopping bullying in action
- showing respect to others on the bus
- exhibiting a positive attitude towards others

Students who were issued a certificate were able to redeem it at the office of their school for a choice of 1 of 3 prizes which included:

- A Home Run Restaurant Certificate for French fries
- A Slice and Pop from Wayne's Pizza
- A two person admittance pass to the Gable Rees Rotary Pool

There were a total of 130 prizes given out between the two schools throughout the course of the week. Students who received a certificate were also entered into our grand prize draws.

On Monday March 25<sup>th</sup>, Blenheim Bus Lines carried out the grand prize draws at Harwich Raleigh Public School and St. Anne's Catholic School to cap off "Bullying Prevention and Awareness week".

### **Grand Prize winner List for Harwich Raleigh:**

Harwich Raleigh winners drawn by Jarrod DeNure – Blenheim Bus Lines and Ward 2 Municipal Councilors Anthony Ceccacci & Trevor Thompson

Winners:

Kenny Robertson – 6 Month Chatham-Kent Pool Membership

Paige Fraser - \$50 Gift Certificate to Bayside Brewing Restaurant in Erieau

Natalee Burk - \$50 Gift Certificate to Molly and OJ's Restaurant in Erieau

Morgan Grandy – Junior Golf Membership to Willow Ridge Golf & Country Club

Adria Holden – Junior Golf Membership to Willow Ridge Golf & Country Club

Sadie Williams – Gift Certificate for 18 Holes at Deer Run Golf Course

Reece Turner – Gift Certificate for 18 Holes at Deer Run Golf Course

Abigail King – Family Pass for Greenview Aviaries

Haven Veenstra - \$150 certificate towards a bicycle at Canadian Tire

Clair Tinline - \$150 certificate towards a bicycle at Canadian Tire

## Grand Prize winner List for St. Anne's

St. Anne's Catholic School winners drawn by Jarrod DeNure – Blenheim Bus Lines and Ward 2 Municipal Councilors Trevor Thompson and Anthony Ceccacci.

Winners:

George Glenn – 6 Month Chatham-Kent Pool Membership

Lucas Bakalis - \$50 Gift Certificate to Bayside Brewing Restaurant in Erieau

Rachel Scott - \$50 Gift Certificate to Molly & OJ's Restaurant in Erieau

Allessandra Naclerio – Junior Golf Membership at Willow Ridge Golf & Country Club

Regan Bain – Junior Golf Membership at Willow Ridge Golf & Country Club

Danielle Vercooteren - Gift Certificate for 18 Holes at Deer Run Golf Course

Brett Stonehouse - Gift Certificate for 18 Holes at Deer Run Golf Course

Levi Butzer – Family Pass for Greenview Aviaries

Trinity Purdy - \$150 certificate towards a bicycle at Canadian Tire

Molly Deschryver - \$150 certificate towards a bicycle at Canadian Tire

The generosity of our sponsors for this campaign has been overwhelming to say the least. Without their support, this program would not have enjoyed the success it has. We would like to thank the following businesses for their generous contributions:

Blenheim Chevrolet Pontiac Buick , DPM Insurance Group, Sunlife Financial, Blenheim Business Improvement Association, Willow Ridge Golf & Country Club, Deer Run Golf Course, Home Run Restaurant, Wayne's Pizza, Greenview Aviaries, Molly and O.J.'s Restaurant, Bayside Brewing Company, The Gable Rees Rotary Pool and Canadian Tire Blenheim.

A special thanks goes out to the dedicated staff of Harwich Raleigh Public School and St. Anne's Catholic School for their continued efforts and support and for helping to make this campaign a success.