



## A Reset on Student Leadership

The last three years has impacted the entire education system across our country as administrators, staff and students are all navigating a “new normal” in schools throughout Canada. In talking to advisors, there is one common thread: Things are DIFFERENT. Some teachers are seeing the much-discussed learning gaps, some are dealing with increased reliance and lack of self-regulation with devices, and we are all certainly experiencing the rising rates of anxiety and need for Mental Health Supports. This raises a question which I am asked often these days: How have the last three years impacted Student Leadership? Through my discussions with others, I’ve settled on two areas I feel that we might think about as we move forward.

Students want to do things, but they don’t know HOW. We lost two or three years of activities in schools due to COVID, which hindered many of our leadership and activities programs. We’re needing to teach all our students HOW to do things again, and that’s OK. We’ll get there, but we need to be patient with our leaders and truly start with the basics.

We must meet our student leaders “where they are”. Of course, we want to see our schools be the vibrant, buzzing places they were in 2019/2020, but our student leaders are different. They are dealing with not only Social Emotional gaps, but their capacities are also vastly different. There are struggles with resilience, time management and self-regulation, and as Advisors, we need to be cognisant of this. One strategy might be to run smaller events this year. Try individual grade events instead of the whole school pep rally. The reality is that our current students are not where our students of 2020 were, and we need to work with their limits and abilities. We need to meet them where they are.

We are just emerging from a pandemic, and we are having to reset expectations of our students and ourselves. I believe what will help all of us as we navigate the coming months and years will be what we have always relied on: each other. Leadership advisors are simply the best because we’re like family. Through sharing what’s happening in our schools – our successes and our struggles – we make each other better. Let’s do what we’ve always done, and we’ll get there. I hope you all have a fantastic second half of the school year! Please reach out to CSLA if we can help you in any way!

*Marc England*

### RELAY FOR LIFE

The Canadian Cancer Society’s Relay for Life is an event like no other. At Relay for Life, students can step up, build school spirit and make a real impact – while learning valuable lessons about teamwork and giving back. Relay is your school’s chance to join our global movement, which is active in 29 countries and 6,000 communities worldwide!

Make a Relay for Life part of your Leadership program for next school year. You can honour those who live and have lived in the face of cancer. Your Relay for Life will be an unforgettable, learning experience.

Contact Matt O’Brien for more info:  
[Matt.OBrien@cancer.ca](mailto:Matt.OBrien@cancer.ca)

# Connection Matters

The fishermen know that the sea is dangerous and the storm terrible, but they have never found these dangers sufficient reason for remaining ashore.

*Vincent Van Gogh*

At the end of Semester 1, we held our grade 9 tours. Centennial High in Calgary is a 10 – 12 school, so this was a chance to welcome the Class of 2026! 25 Leadership class all-stars came in to help guide tours on a day when there were no classes or exams in the building.



We know that many students have a choice of schools, so we put on a polished presentation and our Leadership students are the best voices for newcomers to hear. After a quick opening assembly, they escorted their group of grade 9s to several different stations around the school, showing them what opportunities and programs Centennial has to offer.

When they came to the Leadership room, four of our grade 10 Leadership students gave them an introduction to our program. This would be the incoming grade 9s first introduction to a class called Leadership. The grade 10s then asked the Leadership tour guides if they had anything to add. I was sitting in the back corner of the room and got to listen. 90% of the responses, to my surprise, were not about activities and the events that we had run at school. Instead, they talked about what it was like to be in this Leadership class. They wanted to impress the incoming students that this class was different from other classes. Some of their comments were:

“This is my favorite class. I have met so many new people and feel very comfortable here.”

“I have met some of my best friends here the last 3 years in Leadership Class.”

“This is a great place to be where you can be you and feel accepted.”

One of my grade 12 Leadership students told me the reason they signed up for Leadership class at Centennial. Leighton visited the Leadership classroom during the grade 9 tours and saw all the student coloring on display – once a semester – the leadership students spend the first half of class coloring. Then the class puts their fine art up around the classroom like one large fridge door at home to properly display them – Leighton said that looked like a class they wanted to be a part of. Leighton then quickly assured me that they have done many other awesome things in the class beyond coloring. Sitting as a group, colouring and commenting on the artistic efforts of others in the class is an excellent way to build links of connection.

It turns out connection is important. As you take on your Leadership program with new students or those we have been working with all year, keep focusing on building connection. It is what has always mattered most to our students.

*Brent Dickson*

*Check out [brentdickson.net](http://brentdickson.net) for more great ideas from Brent*

## ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS FOR ALL

Each student entering the building gets one set of beads. Staff members receive a fancy set of beads.

Students play students in best two out of three rounds, and once a student gets 5 sets of beads, they can challenge a teacher. If they lose to a staff member, they must hand over all their beads to the staff member.

If students want to play again, they must purchase a new set for \$1. It is an event that is a fundraiser and a fun-raiser!

*Steve Bollar*

# Imposter Syndrome: Age Bias and Standing in your Worth

“If you’re early, you’re on time. If you’re on time, you’re late. If you’re late, you’re forgotten.” This insight from a mentor was the reason I was sitting in an elementary school staff room sixty minutes before the scheduled presentation. It was early in my speaking career; speech number fourteen to be exact. At that point in my journey, the twenty-four hours leading up to each speech were filled with anxiety and nervousness. At home, I would practice my material in the shower so my family couldn’t hear. At schools, I was reserved and found it difficult to converse with teachers and principals because I was often the same age or younger than their own children. Moments later, they would watch me speak and develop their own ideas and opinions. Yet there I was, sitting in the staff room, making conversation, hoping they would categorize me as a professional, not a student.

Twenty minutes before the presentation, the principal escorted me to the gymnasium and helped set up the space. Before I knew it, the speech was finished and my armpits were covered in sweat. Students stuck around to take pictures and were asking questions, when a group of teachers that I had met earlier in the staff room ran over to apologize. “For what?” I asked. “Well, when you left the staff room, we all chuckled and joked that someone your age wouldn’t have meaningful things to share, and we were wrong.”

At the start of my career, one of the biggest obstacles was age. People didn’t take me seriously. On sales calls, prospective clients would laugh when I quoted the investment. After hearing my age, there would be an awkward silence followed by a few comparisons to other youths. I’ll never forget being at a conference in California and jumping out of my seat to ask the first question only to have the speaker on stage make a joke: “Son, don’t be discouraged if you don’t get on stage anytime soon. I wouldn’t even let you around my daughter for sixty minutes!” Embarrassed is an understatement.

Through persistence, my biggest insecurity became my greatest advantage. Relatability was always my unique selling point, although it took time to fully embrace. After building enough credibility, the conversations began to shift. What I realized was that challenges always exist and people have opinions that are outside your control. More important than the opinions of others is what you choose to believe about yourself. Although the opinions of others impact your self-image, it’s often your perception of yourself that holds you back. Your age can be your biggest advantage or your Achilles heel, and the choice is yours. My advice to young leaders is to forge ahead, stand tall, and know your worth. If you stand in it long enough, the world will begin to agree.

*Sam Demma*

Check out Sam’s book, **Empty Your Backpack** at [SamDemma.com](http://SamDemma.com)



The chief prevention against getting old is to remain astonished.

*Kevin Kelly*

## INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Good leadership is not a fixed skill. You must continually work on improving your skills and these chances to improve come from attempting different tasks. A complete leader has many tools at their disposal and each task will require different skills.

Mentors will help leaders grow and improve at every level. It’s not just the rookie leader who needs a mentor.

Leaders must show an open mindset. They remain adaptable to situations and work through setbacks.

Finally, being open and accessible allows you to relate to your team. Maya Angelou says, “I think we all have empathy, but we might not have the courage to display it.”

*Rose Patten*

# What is Interact?

Interact is Rotary International's Service Club for young people ages 14-18. Interact Clubs are sponsored by individual Rotary Clubs, which provide support and guidance. Currently, there are more than 250,000 Interactors in over 120 countries and areas and is a world-wide phenomenon!

Interact is a chance to make new friends, improve your community, develop leadership skills, and meet youth from around the world. The Interact Clubs are self-governing and financially independent which makes it possible to choose and carry out projects that the Interactors care about. Clubs normally carry out two community projects each year, one for their local community and one that furthers international understanding and goodwill.



Besides the above, Interactors learn the importance of community service, learn to value what you have that you might take for granted, meet new and like-minded friends, improve your resumé for College and Work, and gain leadership skills and so much more.

Taking part in such an organization as Interact, the person becomes a better student, helps the world and gives back to the community even in small ways, clean the environment, spread awareness of gender equality, help feed the poor and raise funds to help the less fortunate – there are folks around the world without sufficient food, clothing, a chance to gain a good education, maybe victims of hurricanes – being aware of these things makes you appreciate what you have and this makes you a better person.

When applying to post secondary education and/or work, the recruiter will prioritize your application more than others as helping the community does not only mean you are empathetic, it also means you have leadership skills and can handle responsibilities.



In our District 7815 on an annual basis at the end of October, we hold an Interact Round-Up on Zoom for all the Interactors and interested students with guest speakers on various topics such as RYLA, Youth Exchange, Rotaract and various other topics. We also annually hold a photo contest for the Interact Clubs to display the work they do, and the winners receive funds to go towards their various projects. They showcase their pictures and projects on our District Interact FB page.

Just a note about famous people who came from Interact and Rotary clubs — former President John F. Kennedy, Thomas Edison, Walt Disney, just to name a few.

For more information on Rotary Interact, please scan the QR code which will take you to Rotary International or contact a Rotary Club near you.

*Paula Hiltz  
Rotary District 7815  
Interact Chair*



# LEAD

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Join an Interact club and develop leadership skills while helping others.

Interact clubs are self-governing and financially independent, making it possible to choose and carry out service projects that you care about.

Meet youth from around the world — and in your own school or community — who are interested in making the world a better place.

With more than 250,000 Interactors in over 120 countries and geographical areas, Interact is a worldwide phenomenon!

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# CONNECT

# SERVE

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Interact clubs carry out two community service projects each year, including one that furthers international understanding and goodwill.

Interactors are donating relief supplies to victims of natural disasters, organizing fundraisers to purchase books for needy schools, and volunteering their time and energy in the community.

## 007: Licensed to Change

One does not advance the swimming abilities of ducks by throwing the eggs in the water.

*Multatuli*

### TD SCHOLARSHIPS

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Next year's grads can get a jump on the scholarship possibilities by planning ahead.

The TD Scholarship for Community Leadership rewards students who have shown leadership in the areas of local employment programs, environmental cleanup, support group creation, and family services initiatives. Twenty students from different communities across Canada received this scholarship last year.

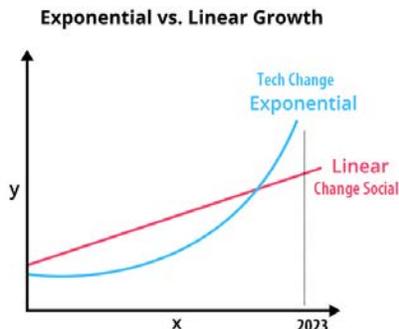
As a Student Leadership Advisor, you are in a unique position to help your students learn about this scholarship. Or perhaps you know a student in grade 9, 10 or 11 who, with a little coaching, could easily become a strong candidate. This scholarship is open to all students in their final year of high school or CEGEP.

The application deadline for 2023 is the end of November 2023. Let your students plan for this opportunity, and visit the website to learn more: [www.tdcanadatrust.com/scholarship](http://www.tdcanadatrust.com/scholarship)

The iPhone arrived in 2007 at a time when there were other options for communication. Does anyone remember the PalmPilot, Nokia Flip, and Blackberry? How did this Apple device become an essential part of our lives after starting out as a niche product? Niche no more, as there are now over 1 billion iPhones in active use around the world.

Thomas Friedman states in his book, "Thank You for Being Late", that our accelerating world of change went into hyperdrive at the advent of the iPhone. It was the confluence of shrinking memory storage, speed of transmission and the introduction of a digital device that brought it all together. 2007 was also the year that Facebook and Twitter went global; Kindle and Android were released; Airbnb was founded; and Google bought YouTube.

Today's parents don't know how to handle this spinning digital world that surrounds their family, because it is all still so new to them. Parents don't have the social structures, experience, rules and tools to deal with the constant change. (How many parents do you know who are constantly fighting with their kids about their screen time?) These parents grew up with the old rules and approaches, before all of the new tech devices matured and before the software giants had become part of our everyday world. Grandparents look at the job of raising children right now and fondly look back at their ability to control the VHS stream of Disney that was coming into the house on one device.



The reality of our human situation is that our social change evolves in a straight line adaptation, while present technology is increasing at an exponential curve. We are having problems keeping up with our present rules and expectations because the old rules do not function any more. The exponential curve of change is too far ahead of our social change line.

Friedman maintains that the solution to our change problem is to use the technology we have (which will keep on improving) and combine it with the efforts of educated people using this technology and working together to overcome existing and future problems. We will be overwhelmed by impending change—whether it is climate or social—unless we approach it through human cooperation and interaction.

Student leadership teaches cooperation and teamwork as a basic tenet of getting things done. When students are actively leading and running events, they are practicing the needed skills, and secondary school is the safest place to practice. These skills are core tenets of the future that our students will inherit and they must be ready for. They must have access to the latest technology and learn how to use it effectively and cooperatively. You as the advisor don't need to be the expert; you are the advocate and provider of technology and cooperation.

Because of 2007, our students must now be the agents of change and leadership advisors are the M and Q providing technology and permission to proceed.

*Dave Conlon*

# We Words for Team Success

Words matter. When you are a leader, your team watches your actions and they listen carefully to your words. Student leaders know that their actions must be what their words promise, but it is the framing of the words that mean the most.

It is the sign of a novice leader who uses too much “I” and not enough “we” in their statements. This is natural because of inexperience and the student leader want to appear to be in charge of the situation. The

rookie leader feels that they must be telling and directing to manage the team and when they ask the group for input they are losing their status as leader. Eileen Chadwick states that it is the experienced leader who “asks more questions and listens more, with genuine intent to hear and to understand.”



Student leaders must be aware of the wisdom of the group and not be afraid of the input from people with more information than them. Leaders don’t have to have all of the information or all of the skills necessary to complete a task. When they frame their statements with active “we” in mind the group feels included. Chadnick give statements like: “Let’s hear your thoughts on this. In your experience, what ideas do you think are worth considering?” Or, “Help me understand your thinking on this. Let’s figure this out together.”

As the planning and preparation for an event progresses, the leader is the overseer of the activities and not the only driving force. They must trust their team members. During a meeting, it is easy to ask a committee chair, “I want to know how you are doing with . . .” A change to, “We are checking in with your progress on . . .” The check-in is the same but the framing is different.

As deadlines approach, an active, we-centric student leaders will check in with their team members by asking, “What do you need from the group to help you succeed?” This puts the leader in the position of being an assistant to the task or deadline rather than a nag.

Leaders are allowed to have pride in success, but it is very easy to say, “I got it done.” Leaders are the reason the team worked well together, but good leaders will share the spotlight with their team by saying, “My team came together and we were successful in getting it done.” This makes team members feel good about the recognition and makes them willing to work with the leader again.

It is with constant awareness of the power of their words, and the framing of those words, that student leaders can practise the inclusionary “we” statements that build strong teams and successful events.

Adapted from an article by Eileen Chadnick PCC, of *Big Cheese Coaching*

Teaching is successful only as it causes people to think for themselves. What the teacher thinks matters little; what he or she makes the child think matters much.

*Alice Moore Hubbard*

## SIMPLE COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon, graduated from Princeton University in electrical engineering and computer science and considered being an astrophysicist. His communications tend to be written for a person with a high school education. His famed commencement speech to the 2010 graduating class at Princeton – surely a time to display an erudite touch – had a readability score of Grade 7, indicating it was likely to be understood by someone at age 12.

Warren Buffet, famed investor, addresses his yearly letter to shareholders addressing his sisters and keeping them in mind as he composes. They are smart women, but not active in business; he pretends they have been away for a year, and he is reporting on their investments.

Royal Bank chief executive officer W. Earle McLaughlin said that he didn’t want to read mysteries at work – he wanted the key message communicated at the start. These memos are known as BLUF (bottom line up front). You have 15 seconds to grab a reader’s attention in an e-mail, document or article. Remember, bottom line up front.

*Harvey Schachter*

The most common way that people give up their power is by thinking that they don't have any.

Alice Walker

## Above and Beyond

is the official newsletter of the Canadian Student Leadership Association. The newsletter is published 3 times a year for schools all across Canada.

To learn more about membership, go to: [www.studentleadership.ca](http://www.studentleadership.ca)

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**Canadian Student Leadership Association**

## Resources

Be sure to visit the CSLA website for more lesson plans, activity ideas, and a complete list of resources.  
[studentleadership.ca](http://studentleadership.ca)



**Canadian Student Leadership Association**

This newsletter has been printed with the generous support of Friesen Yearbooks.  
[www.friesens.com/yearbook](http://www.friesens.com/yearbook)

## Consider the Sauce

In an effort to sell more product in the 1990's, the makers of Prego spaghetti sauce contracted food scientist Howard Moskowitz to discover what types of sauce that people really liked. Moskowitz believed that people would tell you what they liked in a focus group, but they actually preferred something else. The best-selling sauce at the time was plain Ragú and that version of sauce was all that was available in the pasta aisle. Prego wanted a larger market share.

After testing various recipes, Moskowitz came back with the discovery that there were actually three types of spaghetti sauce that people preferred on their pasta: there was the popular, plain tomato sauce; the second version was extra-chunky; and the third kind, which was a smaller but adamant group, was spicy. Prego immediately brought out an extra-chunky version and their sales went up significantly. This food research success explains why we now have over 20 different versions of spaghetti sauce in the pasta aisle.

What does this mean for the events you run at your school?



One type of event that you run is the plain-sauce type. It offends nobody and participation is reasonably high, but never 100%. This is the Terry Fox run at your school. You get the greatest percentage of participation because of tradition and appeal. Everyone is reasonably happy with the activity and result.

The second event is the chunky version. This appeals to a different and smaller portion of your school. This type of event makes this group truly happy and glad that you made it available for them. However, you will never get more than 35% of your school to actively attend because it naturally appeals to a smaller crowd.

The final event type that you run is your spicy version. These are the risky events like a polar bear swim or eating contests. The chunky people will watch as an audience (sorry, the people who like it chunky), but they won't participate. You need the spicy events, but you must realize that this group will be the smallest participation rate of all three.

As with the pasta aisle, you can run different versions of events combining all three preferences, but to make people happy, you must provide and accept what they want in an event. You also must realize that your participation numbers are driven by taste. Understand your sauces!

Dave Conlon

Watch the YouTube video from Malcolm Gladwell on his thoughts of "Choice, happiness and spaghetti sauce."