



## Why Wait?

A school in Toronto is different this year. It's different because a young man was shot on the school grounds last year. It's different because the media and political attention put the school and staff under a spotlight for months on end. It's different because the school board had to pay attention to parents and staff. Most importantly, it's different because a new principal walks the hallways talking to kids and has put into place co-curricular activities and programs that make the kids feel the school has a different atmosphere and a different community feeling. The event was tragic, and the response was immediate. The question remains: Why wait?

It is hard to fathom why a school system would wait for a tragedy to cause change, but unfortunately that's the case in education systems around the world. After a tragedy like the one in Toronto, the response of education systems is to restore or enhance the co-curricular activity and leadership programs that help to build a healthy school outside of the classroom—in the hallways, cafeteria, stages and gyms. The Canadian Student Leadership Association (CSLA) has been promoting resources, conferences and activities in healthy schools for over 25 years. The mission of CSLA is to promote and develop student leadership in Canadian high schools, and over 400 member schools receive information and resources to help build their activity programs. These are the same programs that schools that need something “different” suddenly need.

### TD CANADA TRUST SCHOLARSHIPS

The TD Canada Trust 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 2014 is the beginning of December 2014. Let your students know about this opportunity, and visit the website to learn more: [www.tdcanadatrust.com/scholarship](http://www.tdcanadatrust.com/scholarship)

A healthy school cannot prevent the actions of a madman or gang warfare brought to the hallways, but a healthy school has a positive atmosphere of community and connectedness that protects the staff and students from many problems and negative situations. CSLA is made up of junior and senior high school student advisors who work to build the connections in schools that make staff and students feel a part of the fabric of a school. CSLA also provides help for those advisors who are seeking assistance, ideas, and resources so that they can become more effective in their responsibilities.

Think about the following: There is a school in your province that has an amazing choir. The program attracts boys and girls alike and the group travels locally and abroad, amazing audiences with their skills and harmonies. There is another school that always has an incredible volleyball program. Their teams win provincial titles and the trophy case is full of tournament pennants and plaques. Does the first school have better singers than your school? Does the latter school have better volleyball players than the next school in its district? Since both of these programs have a demonstrated track record of excellence over a number of years, it's obvious that they succeed because they have committed and passionate teachers who support students and help them to be their best.

CSLA supports teachers to be their best. CSLA supports co-curricular programs that make a positive difference year after year in schools across the country. CSLA supports conferences and provincial activity organizations working in your province. Don't wait. Find out more about the support and resources available from CSLA for your staff and your school.

*Dave Conlon*

*CSLA Program Director*

*[www.studentleadership.ca](http://www.studentleadership.ca)*

## Seniors at Bow Valley High School

*“ It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.”*

*Harry S. Truman*

In our Grade 9 leadership class, we had the privilege of working with the senior citizens from Big Hill Lodge in Cochrane, Alberta. Every Tuesday, our class got to ride the bus and go to their residence to exercise. They do their exercises every Tuesday and Thursday and were very excited that we were there to join them. Also, our leadership class took part in inviting them back to our home, Bow Valley High School, to communicate with the students. We got them to hand out stickers and candy to the students in the hall during the morning class break. Following this, they got the chance to visit other classes at Bow Valley. For example, the seniors baked cupcakes with the Grade 11 Foods class. Also, some seniors were involved in a math class and were practicing on how to use the general calculator we use today.

The seniors were ecstatic when they spent time with our leadership class and the other students in the school. They felt that they were being heard by the students and appreciated it. The seniors also felt that they could communicate with someone young for a change. They're not very used to it. They gave the students lessons, advice, and told them stories that we could learn from and listen to. The seniors felt as though they are respected, honored and valued when they spent time with the students. It was good for the seniors to be connecting with younger people because they were enjoying the time. The elderly people were trying new things and having more experiences in their lives. They were looking forward to connecting with a new generation of students.

The elderly people from Big Hill Lodge had a huge impact on me and many other high school students at Bow Valley. They gave advice that no one has ever given me before, so I can reflect on it. The seniors told me stories of what they did in their lives. Their lives were so different compared to my life and this generation. In their days, everything was more simple and harder because they did not have modern technology. Also, they were living in the times when major wars were going on which would be hard.

### ANONYMOUS GOOD

This is a website that allows you to post an act of Good. You can see Good being done, receive Good acts or do an act of Good yourself. Your acts can then be sponsored by sponsors on the site to continue the Good.

Brain scientists who study happiness say that every time you do an act of Good, you get a drop of serotonin. That's the feel-Good happy drug. The person you did Good for gets the same high too! So does anyone who witnesses the act of Good. So at AnonymousGood.org you have lots of chances to get happy.

Check out [www.anonymousgood.org](http://www.anonymousgood.org)

It was so nice meeting and spending time with different people. They're a lot different than the young people who I am used to. They're so friendly and so interesting to talk to. It is such an experience to even have a conversation with any elderly person. It's been great to make so many new and wonderful friends.

*Sophie Samborn*  
*Student at Bow Valley*

*Seniors pass out candy to Bow Valley students and it's not even Hallowe'en.*



# Getting Along Through Forgiveness

## Concept



Have you every heard the phrase, “I don’t get mad, I get even!”? It may sound humorous, but in reality it can be quite damaging to our peace of mind. Holding a grudge against someone can gnaw at our insides and cause us to be bitter and unhappy. When someone has done something to us, the best course of action is to explain to them why you feel the way you do and to “forgive and forget.” Otherwise you will be carrying the pain with you; eventually that bitterness will start to affect other areas of your life. Carrying a grudge doesn’t increase your quality of life, and in many cases can actually diminish it. Forgiving someone for something doesn’t always mean that you can forget about it right away, but it does mean that you can begin moving on. As you go through the process of forgiving, you reduce the pain. Holding onto that feeling will only increase your pain over time.

**Materials Needed:** Two clear drinking glasses; food colouring; bleach

## Activity

This is a demonstration that provides learning through the discussion of the results. Fill one of the large drinking glasses about a quarter full of water. Fill the other large drinking glass a little more than half full of bleach. Make sure everyone can clearly see. Put one drop of food colouring into the glass of water. Do not stir the water. Allow the drop to drift throughout the water.

After about a minute, the food colouring will have spread throughout the glass. At this point you can swirl the water a couple of times to completely distribute the colouring throughout the glass. Take a moment to observe how the food colouring has completely changed the colour of the water. Put one drop of bleach into the glass of coloured water. Watch the reaction. Now pour the entire glass of bleach into the glass of coloured water. After about a minute, you can give the glass a swirl to completely mix the bleach with the water. As you watch the water, it will begin to change back to a clear colour.

## Discussion

### What Questions

- How long did it take for the food colouring to completely colour the water?
- Did one drop of bleach have any impact on the food colouring?
- How much bleach did we have to use to clear up the water?
- Did the bleach clear up the water immediately? How long did it take?

### So What Questions

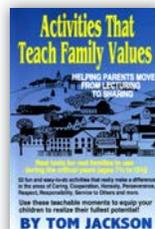
- How can we compare the drop of food colouring with someone making us feel bad?
- How can holding a grudge against someone make us unhappy?
- Why is it better to “forgive and forget” than to hold a grudge?

### Now What Question

- How does forgiving make our lives better?

Tom Jackson

From the book *Activities that Teach Family Values* which is available online from CSLA



*“Preparation is two-thirds of any venture.”*

Amelia Earhart

## DEBRIEF PIXAR STYLE

Ed Catmull was one of the driving forces behind the success of Pixar. In his book, **Creativity Inc.**, he points out that Pixar debriefed after every movie — even the blockbuster classics.

We know that teens don’t like to debrief. Adults dislike it as well, because often they are over critical. Debriefing is not the time to point fingers but to point out problems. Catmull outlines it simply in his book for every Pixar project:

- List the 5 things you would do again
- List the 5 you would not
- What have we learned?
- What core or key aspects would you teach someone else who would do this next time?

Allow people to express their frustrations in a respectful manner. (Yes, there were frustrations even on the blockbuster successes.)

Many people saw Pixar as a smooth running locomotive. Your job as advisor is to lay the track. Debriefing lays a solid foundation for the rails. It is your student leaders’ job to drive the train on to the next event.

# The CSLA Governance Change

Where have we come from? **Where are we going?**



As a national not-for-profit organization, the Canadian Student Leadership Association has grown over the years from a casual meeting in a hotel room during the CSLC, to hiring an Executive Director and office staff who meet the Board at an annual meeting every January. This past January's meeting had 14 Board members plus staff and CSLC chairs, for a total of 21 people attending. This is a large board meeting that has grown from the good intentions of committed leadership advisors and various needs from across this country.

A governance committee was struck at the 2013 January board meeting to review the present form of governance to see if there was a more effective way of governing the organization. They came up with the following conclusions:

- Our board at present eats up a lot of staff time, especially the weeks before the January meeting in Toronto.
- Our costs are out of line for the work actually done by the board.
- Because of the large size of the current Board, the real decision-making (real authority) ends up in the hands of our Executive Director and staff (this is not the fault of the E.D. but is an inevitable side effect of a large board).
- If we are to respond effectively to today's and tomorrow's challenges, we need to reduce the numbers on our board.
- Non-profit boards in general need to embrace radical change if they wish to remain relevant. This especially applies to CSLA as we have to deal with:
  1. Multiple school boards and districts and their differing ideas on the relevance of student leadership;
  2. Ensuring long-term financial stability to meet the challenges;
  3. Creating a governance model that's traditions, structure and processes are not an impediment to effecting positive change.

Based on these conclusions, the following steps were taken:

- At the CSLA AGM in Montague, PEI, a motion was passed to give the Board of Directors the task and authority to look at alternative models of governance that would be the most effective for the successful future of CSLA.

The following model was presented at the January, 2014 CSLA board meeting and was approved by the Board of Directors to be presented at the 2014 CSLA AGM in Kelowna:

- An elected member board of no less than six or more than eight members, that would take full fiduciary responsibility for the organization, and a National Advisory Council made up of appointed delegates from all the Provinces.
- The elected Board, much like our current Executive Group, would take on the larger responsibility of the organization, ensuring it continues to grow and build based on its strategic plan. Another key role here would be securing the funds needed to support the organization. The Board would also establish national policy based on input from the advisory councils.
- The National Advisory Council would meet to consider problems/policy issues affecting the provinces and regions of the country. Solutions or policy directives requiring Board adoption would be developed and brought forward for approval. Any policy being developed by the Board that affects the Provinces/Regions would be given to the National Advisory Council for consideration and modification as needed before approval and adoption by the Board.

#### **Transition Plan**

For purposes of a positive transition from the old model to the new model, the first year of the transition (given the expenses involved and the fact that we will already be 1/3rd through our fiscal year) that the Board of Directors has endorsed is the following slate of seven candidates put forward by the Governance committee. The following slate of directors was presented at the 2014 CSLA AGM in Kelowna:

Don Homan – Chairperson

Joanne Jenson – Member at Large

Brent Dickson – Vice Chairperson

Bill Edgecombe – Member at Large

Don Wheler – Treasurer

Sandra Dorowicz – Member at Large

Trisha Klancar – Secretary

In subsequent years, 2–3 members would be elected each AGM held at the CSLC.



**Canadian Student  
Leadership Association**

**Association canadienne  
de leadership étudiant**

# Pot of Gold Teamwork Activity

*“It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.”*

*Herman Melville*

Creativity and communication are two elements of teamwork that must be controlled and practiced during this activity. This activity needs a larger outdoor space but can be adapted to the classroom by shortening the ropes.

## **Challenge:**

To retrieve the Pot of Gold from the center of a boundary circle, without touching or travelling through the interior of the circle, and without spilling the contents of the Pot of Gold.

## **Equipment:**

A plastic pot or bucket to use as the Pot of Gold. Some tennis balls for the gold. One 30 meter rope for the boundary circle. Six or more ropes 2 to 6 meters long, that can either reach across the diameter of the boundary circle, or be tied together to reach this distance. A variety of additional props can be used such as plastic hoops, dowel rods, towels, short boards, etc., although these props are typically of little value to the situation. You can treat your group by adding a box of Pot of Gold chocolates to the bottom of the pot.

## **Story**

While on a hiking trip, your group encounters not only a rain shower, but also a rainbow, and the Pot of Gold at the end of the rainbow. Although this mythical treasure is nearby, it floats on a thin mist, which cannot support the weight of any human. Using only the objects you have available, you must retrieve the Pot of Gold, without spilling any of the precious contents.

## **Variations:**

Placing the Pot of Gold on a small platform will encourage the group not to simply drag the pot. It also challenges them to control the pot before it moves from the platform. Another variation, which increases the communication level, is to blindfold a third of the group. These are the only ones who can touch any of the equipment. Another third of the group are unable to communicate through verbal speech, but they are the only ones who can make physical contact with the blindfolded participants. The final third can see and talk, and move about, but cannot touch anyone or anything. Allow some planning time before the blindfolds are put on.

## **Debrief:**

Were there several techniques presented to solve the problem?  
Were there any props that you decided not to use? Why?  
Were there many leaders or a single leader?  
Did your final solution depend on hard work, good planning, or just luck?  
How would the lessons learned from this activity apply to the teamwork we use in our group?

*Jim Cain*

Teamwork & Teamplay

## **DON'T DO LIST**

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We have all heard of having a “to do” list. This promotes our organizational skills and motivates us to get things done. However, there are behaviours and attitudes that we all possess that hinder us from getting things done. These things go on your “don’t do” list. Write them down and post them in a visible place to remind yourself of what attitudes or beliefs that stop you from getting things done.

One way to discover what is on this list is to ask the important question: What are you not getting done? Why?



# Using Active Learning: Don't be surprised

Active learning, such as the Pot of Gold activity on the opposite page, involves many different behaviours and pieces of equipment, and one of the things that you as the facilitator learn is that people will surprise you with their creativity and ingenuity. Even after running some favourite events for over 10 years there are some people who can come up with an out-of-the-box solution or wrinkle that you have never seen before. Don't be surprised as you are encouraging people to think differently; just be prepared.



*“If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan. And guess what they have planned for you? Not much.”*

*Jim Rohn*

The first rule in any active learning lesson is that the group must come up with their own solution. However, the solution must not jeopardize the safety of any individual within the group participating. The facilitator must be aware of the proposed solutions and discuss any problems before the activity is engaged in. The simplest way is to ask the group what their plan is. Safety is not only the physical safety of the participant. The emotional safety of the participants must also be considered. A good facilitator is aware of the dynamics of the whole group and proctors the activity with the intention of providing a good experience for all.

The activity or learning challenge is introduced to the group as an interesting event and most of these events will have points or a finish time associated with successful completion. Don't be surprised if the more competitive groups focus on the points and the “winning” of the activity. Your role is to make the intended learning the real focus, so encourage the competitive inclination of the groups but stress the learning that has taken place. Take the lead from the video gaming that the students participate in and assign 10,000 points instead of 10, but make the point totals so ridiculous that they no longer become the focus. You must debrief for learning to take over from the game experience.

You are the leader of the activity and you have the job of creating a learning experience that can be achieved in many different ways that can surprise the group and you yourself. Active learning is not like a basic math lesson that follows a prescribed step-by-step process, however you know the general direction that a group must follow to be successful. You need forethought and planning to create a learning situation where the surprises are minimal, and even though it appears that you are not providing the solutions, you must continually monitor the success of the groups. This may mean adjusting the time or the rules of the activity on the fly.

You should not be surprised by the amount of energy that participants generate in an active learning environment. You have planned activities that get them moving and thinking in ways that they have not experienced in a standard classroom. However, don't be surprised if you are expending more energy than a typical lesson, because you are actively teaching as well.

## **RECOGNITION RULES**

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Recognition should spotlight the little achievements — not always the earth-shaking accomplishments; attempt to highlight or showcase participation, involvement, and the little everyday happenings of the adults and support staff who help make the school a great place to be.

Recognition should be personalized. All notes and invitations should be signed by one or more students on behalf of the group. Hand write rather than just send a printed letter. Deliver the recognition in person rather than using the school mail boxes.

Thank-you and holiday notes should always let the recipient know that the note was written especially for them. A quick remembrance of something they did or said should be included. Remember the truth in that old saying, “The sooner you send the thank-you note the shorter it can be.”

# The New Context of Leadership

*“There are two types of people who will tell you that you cannot make a difference in this world: those who are afraid to try and those who are afraid you will succeed.”*

Ray Goforth

## 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/join/](http://www.studentleadership.ca/join/)

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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)

In their book for business leaders, *The Leadership Challenge*, Kouzes and Posner state that the fundamentals of leadership have not changed, but the context for leadership is what has changed in this 21st century. They state that the new leadership context is about “People First” and companies must put families and friends at the top of the work agenda. This means that our student leaders must find ways and programs to bring a family feeling back to the school house.

One of the drivers of this new context is the fact that we are even more connected than before. Students are carrying computers in their pockets and soon will be wearing them as glasses and watches. This connectedness allows people to be more collaborative and cooperative. However, our students must be taught how to use technology in this new context effectively. We had no problem giving toddlers crayons because we knew that we would teach them how to write with pencils and pens. We forget that with adolescents, comprehension precedes competence. Just because a teen knows *how* to use a device doesn’t mean that they know what the power of the device or program truly is.

Kouzes and Posner were writing ahead of the ascendancy of Facebook, and they stated that knowledge was an old resource and that social capital is the powerful, new economic resource. It is the “collective value of people who know each other and what they’ll do for each other. It’s human networks that make things happen, not computer networks.” Our student leaders need to work on their ability to network and get the most out of those human connections. This means that they must get out in the hallways and cafeteria and be meeting real people. “Likes” on an Instagram account are only placebo friendship nods. You can’t replace a friendly smile or a simple “hi” when you pass someone in a hallway. When you build a family feeling, you create a human atmosphere.

Make your school a School House and your student leaders will be making your school ready to learn together.

### How to make your school a School House:

1. Be aware of the balance in performance and recognition to academics, athletics and the arts. Are academic and artistic successes celebrated as much as athletic wins? Success in one area helps to foster success across your school for all students.
2. Despite the new food rules, make your cafeteria a school-centred gathering spot. Food unites people and look for opportunities to enhance this. You know how everyone gathers in the kitchen at social gatherings at your home: encourage and support this at your school.
3. Remember the artwork on the fridge at home? Is there a spot for student artwork to be prominently displayed?
4. Engage and celebrate community service by the school. Make efforts to be good neighbours with surrounding homes and businesses.
5. Display visible symbols, celebrations and traditions that add to a rich school culture.
6. Mark Scharenbroich asks, “Are the student bathrooms a place that adults would use?”
7. Make sure your school has a strong identity with the mascot and school colours. Students want to belong to the “family” — they want to belong to your School House.

