



*École Elizabeth Rummel School*  
*Early Learning School*

# **Kindergarten Handbook**

**English and French Immersion**

## *Message from the Principal*

*Welcome to École Elizabeth Rummel School! Thank you for choosing to be a part of our Early Learning School. Built in 1990, ERS offers a dual English and French Immersion program from Kindergarten to Grade Three. Our school has strong academic programs. We strive to provide our students with a balanced education in all areas of their academic, social and emotional development. We believe that learning occurs through a variety of learning experiences and in a variety of places within our school walls and throughout the amazing Bow Valley. We invite and encourage our community to be involved in the education of our students.*

*As the Principal of ERS, I encourage you to communicate regularly with your child's teacher. For your child to reach his/her potential we need to work together. Please feel free to contact me as well at any time to talk, to share ideas and collaborate.*

*The School Handbook provides information to help families navigate through some of our school routines and requirements. This handbook can be found on our website along with more information about our school. [www.ers.crps.ca](http://www.ers.crps.ca)*

*We have an open door policy and encourage you to join us in our learning.*

*Come Grow With Us!  
Grondissons emsemble!*

*Brian Wityshyn, B.Ed., M.Ed.*

*Principal*

## **SCHOOL NAME**

Born in 1897, Elizabeth Rummel was an adventurous woman who loved the outdoors. The Order of Canada, presented to Elizabeth Rummel read: "Mountaineer par excellence, protector of the environment, authority on local flora and fauna, and friend to countless hikers in the mountains near Banff. She has enriched her country by sharing her deep love of the Rocky Mountains with all who meet her."

Lizzie's favourite flower was the Moss Campion. It grows at high altitudes, in areas with very little soil, and is a very hardy flower with a delicate purple colour.

## **SCHOOL MISSION**

To create a safe child-centered learning environment where children are inspired to explore, engage and achieve. Our caring learning team is dedicated to the fundamentals of literacy and numeracy.

## **VISION**

Elizabeth Rummel, Early-Learning School is committed to providing an enriching, engaging and inspiring learning environment.

## **VALUES**

We will

- Be supportive and respectful
- Be team players who listen and share
- Be accountable and committed
- Model school values
- Have a positive attitude

We will

- See students who are respectful and cooperative
- See students who believe that learning involves effort, risk and personal triumph
- See confident students who have experienced success

We will

- Provide a diverse learning environment
- Foster respect and tolerance
- Support each other, and our students in collaboration with our learning community
- Provide a safe and caring environment where the basic needs of children are met
- Provide an environment that encourages risk taking

# WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN!!!!

## What is Kindergarten?

### **Canadian Rockies Public Schools Kindergarten Programs**

In **Canadian Rockies Public Schools Kindergarten Programs** we believe that:

- √ It is through play that children make sense of their world.
- √ Play promotes healthy physical, social, emotional, language and cognitive development.
- √ Children are natural learners, full of wonder and curiosity about their world.

Kindergarten was established by the Government of Alberta in 1973. Kindergarten focuses on the needs of the child in terms of the social, intellectual, emotional and physical needs. Our programs provide learning experiences that capture our children's imaginations and encourage them to tap into their sense of wonder! The learning experiences provided through our kindergarten programs are designed to prepare our students for success in grade one and beyond. It is our belief that by providing children and families choice within the kindergarten programs, families will be provided the opportunity to select a program that will best support the learning needs of their children.

At **ERS** both full and half day English Kindergarten programs are provided in addition French Immersion half day Kindergarten program.

### ***Ways to support your child at home***

- *Teach your child his/her phone number, address and birthday*
- *Teach your child to dress him/herself and to tie his/her shoes.*
- *Teach your child to wash his/her hands thoroughly before snack time and after using the washroom.*
- *Please label **all** children's belongings - jackets, sweaters, hat, mitts, scarves, shoes, boots, school bags, lunch kit, etc.*
- *Help your child practice printing his/her name.*

Please remember to bring your child to school no earlier than 8:25 a.m. and to pick-up your child promptly at 11:25 (morning K only) The full day program will break for outdoor play at 11:25 and return to the classroom at noon to eat their lunch. Afternoon session will resume at 12:20 and dismiss at 3:05. Please wait in the Kindergarten boot room where your child will meet you after dismissal. Canmore Community Daycare provides before and after school care. Please contact them at 403-678-5762 for more information.

**WHEN THERE IS A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY –  
THERE IS NO SCHOOL FOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS**

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**



### **Play**

Play is a central and necessary part of children's development. Play includes any activity children have freely chosen, is under their control and is not dominated by an adult. Play is a major learning process and, with its risk-free atmosphere, provides a natural opportunity for young children to add to their knowledge, learn new skills and to practice familiar ones. It provides many situations in which the child observes, discovers, reasons, and solves problems. Play brings together physical and intellectual abilities, emotional health, creativity, and the ability to get along with others.

### **Learning Centres**

Learning centres are areas in the classroom, which provide a special focus and are programmed to help the child develop different skills. They provide the children with opportunities to be active learners. Centres in the kindergarten room may include the following: house centre, puppet centre, writing centre, book centre, listening centre, puzzles, games centre, math centre, water centre, science centre. Children are encouraged to make decisions about the centres they will choose and to use their time at the centres productively. Please refer to the ***Kindergarten in Alberta, A Handbook for Parents*** for more information on learning through centres. Copies are available for borrowing from the classrooms. They are also available on the Alberta Education website: [www.education.gov.ab.ca/parents/handbooks](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/parents/handbooks).

### **Various Kindergarten Activities**

Circle Time - This is the time we are all together discussing the calendar (day, date, month), the weather and the theme we are studying. New concepts and new vocabulary are introduced. Repetitions, games, songs and finger plays are the best ways to promote language learning, as well as pre-reading skills. The children will be expected to participate in group discussions, to sing, to mime, and to play games with the group. They are also expected to listen attentively, to raise their hands and to wait for their turns to talk.

Directed Activities - These include art, math, science, writing and other activities.

Centre Time - Independent, child-centred activities.

Outdoor Play or Gym.

Story time and Singing.

### **LEARNING SUPPORT**

The Kindergarten Program helps to identify children with special needs and provides additional support to them and their families. This allows children to increase their potential for learning and to make the most of learning opportunities. Instructional strategies may be adapted to meet the special needs of children.



## CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

All children are expected to:

1. Contribute to a safe environment in the classroom;
2. be co-operative, considerate, and courteous to others.

\* Each child's teacher uses a variety of discipline strategies to encourage positive behaviour. If you have questions about classroom discipline, feel free to discuss this with your child's teacher. An example of a problem-solving approach is a four step process which is effective both with child-to-child and adult-to-child interactions.

1. Send an ignoring message.  
Keep a pleasant face.  
Look away or walk away.  
Keep a quiet mouth.  
Pretend you're not listening.
2. Talk to the person calmly.  
Tell them how you feel.
3. If talking didn't help, find an adult and ask him/her to come with you so that you can talk to the person again.
4. Make a plan.

## **CLOTHING**

Students should dress according to the weather as they will be going outside every day to play or for walks. Mitts, hats, warm boots, etc., are a must during winter months. An indoor pair of shoes should be kept at school all year. Please label all clothing items with your child's name. These need to be appropriate for gym time.

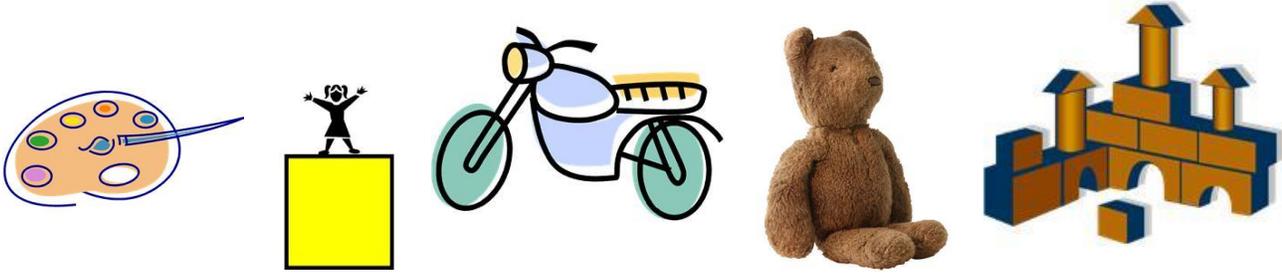
Lost and Found items can be located in each Kindergarten room or in the school- wide Lost and Found.

Please dress your child in play clothes when you send him/her to school. We do messy projects and cannot be responsible for paint, mud, glue, etc. on clothes.



## **SCHOOL BAG**

Each child will need a **regular sized** backpack in which to carry home notes and projects. Newsletters and calendars will be sent home at the beginning of each month to keep you informed about the program. Additional short notes may be sent home occasionally. Please check your child's back pack daily to make sure you receive these. We will check the children's backpacks daily for any notes from home.



## Themes

Here is a list of tentative themes that we will follow this year. Our field trips have been planned to support the curriculum. Please feel free to share ideas, materials and games that could help us. These themes may be slightly different in each class.

September .....Colours and Shapes, Apples

October.....Fire Safety, Halloween, Fall

November .....Transportation, Bears and Wolves

December .....Christmas

January.....Winter, The Sea – Castles

February.....Friendship, Valentines, I am Unique

March.....Dinosaurs

April .....Space, Zoo

May .....Spring, Farm

June .....Insects

## **PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS**

You can help your child discern differences between a variety of sounds, and in doing so, you have put her/him on the road to reading readiness. Word play is fun at mealtime, on automobile trips, on walks and as a change from other activities on rainy days. The following “things to do” all will sharpen her/his ability to listen.

***The Letter Game*** - In this simple but helpful game you say, “I went to the store and bought butter, beans and blocks” each time adding a word beginning with the same sound. Each time you play the game, use a different letter of the alphabet as the initial sound. Your child can play this game with you or with his/her friends.

***What Did I Do?*** - While your child hides his/her eyes or looks the other way, move a chair, stir something in a bowl with a spoon, close a door, turn on the water faucet, clap your hands. Have him/her guess what you have done.

***What Did You Hear?*** - To sharpen his/her ear for word dissimilarities say three words that rhyme, like “ball, tall, man”. Then ask him/her, “Which of those words doesn’t belong.?”

***Read Aloud: Talk it Over*** - Reading to your child is the biggest boost you can give him/her toward reading for himself/herself. Make it a happy time, one he/she will look forward to eagerly. Let him/her pick the book, turn the pages, “act out” what’s happening in the story. Ask him/her a question or two about what he/she has heard.

***Read Poetry to your Child*** - Reading poetry aloud is an excellent way to train a child to listen. Nursery rhymes and nonsense rhymes, so appealing to a child’s keen sense of humour, are especially good choices for the five year old. At this age, children are in love with strange, musical and funny sounding words, whether they know their meanings or not.

***Simple Verbal Directions*** - You can help your child to listen carefully and remember what he/she has heard if you ask him/her to perform two or three small jobs in a particular sequence. For example, you may say, “Timmy, please bring me a tissue, then turn off the bathroom light, then hang up your jacket.” Make sure he/she does the chores in the order given.

***Play “Restaurant” with Him/Her*** - Sit at the table and let him/her play the part of the waiter. Give him/her your order verbally, and make sure that when he/she serves what you have ordered he/she repeats the name of each item. Pictures of food cut from magazines make fine servings, or he/she can use pebbles from the yard, leaves, twigs, and the like.

Your child must also be able to use his/her eyes well enough to distinguish small differences in the shape, size, position, and colour of objects.

***Picture Puzzles*** - Start out with simple puzzles with large pieces that are easy to fit together. From these you can progress gradually to puzzles with more intricately cut pieces. Puzzle play teaches children to observe small differences in the shape of things.

***Blocks*** - Get sets of blocks that include many different shapes – squares, circles, crescents, triangles. Ask your child to bring you one of each shape, or to divide up the blocks so that all those of the same shape are together. Ask him/her to show you the biggest blocks, the next biggest, the smallest.

***Fun with Pictures*** - Using a pair of blunt-nosed scissors, a child can cut out all the dogs he/she can find, all the pretty ladies, all the space ships. Help him/her make his/her own scrapbook. Look at pictures and talk to him/her about them. “What is the lady doing?” “Let’s see if you can find a lady in a blue dress.” “Is the dog wearing a collar?”

**Go to the Library** - Even before he/she learns to read, your child should be introduced to the joys of his/her neighbourhood library and taken there regularly. If your library has a reading-aloud group his/her age, make this event a happy habit in his/her life.

**Encourage Conversations on his/her Toy Telephone** - When he/she mumbles you can say, "Speak more clearly. We seem to have a bad connection!" Let him/her call his friends on the real telephone too. Teachers in both Kindergarten and First Grade use the toy telephone and toy microphone to exercise children's language fluency.

**Don't Laugh at his/her Mistakes** - When he's/she's bubbling over with excitement as he/she tells about the dog he/she saw or the fact that Billy fell off the swing, don't laugh or cut him/her short if he/she gets the story mixed up or makes funny mistakes.

**Ask him/her to Tell you a Story** - After you have read to him/her or told him/her a story, ask him/her to tell you one. If he/she can't think of anything to say, ask him/her to repeat his/her favourite nursery rhyme. Start him/her off with it, if he's/she's a bit shy.

**Play the "Continued Story" Game** - Start the story with a sentence and let your child carry on from there. You can stop in mid sentence and let him/her finish. For example, "There was once a brown dog running along a country road and all of a sudden he barked at a \_\_\_\_\_". At this point you stop and wait for him/her to finish the sentence you have begun. This helps develop an awareness of story pattern which is vital to reading success



## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

We encourage you to be involved with your child's program to whatever degree time and permits. This involvement can be a most enjoyable and enriching time for you and your child to share. You can help supervise a field trip, bring a special guest to visit, share your skills and talents, assist the teachers with the daily program, help plan special events and outings, but most important of all, you can support your child in his/her learning and get to know him/her better by sharing the Kindergarten experience.

Each teacher would appreciate one parent per class each day to assist with classroom operation. Assistance in the classroom covers a variety of activities. We appreciate any time that you can give us. It can involve preparation of materials, maintenance of classroom and equipment, and most importantly, working with the children on an individual basis or in small groups. To extend the benefit of your visit to your own child, teachers request that siblings do not accompany the parent.

If you are unable to come in, you may also sign up a grandparent, babysitter, nanny, or another important adult in your child's life.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Please join us on our field trips. We ask that you make other arrangements for siblings when you are volunteering on field trips. One of the few exceptions is new born babies. This enables you to have one on one time with your kindergarten child and to help assist with other children.

### **Field Trips:**

Banff Park Museum  
Town Library  
ArtsPlace

Policeman's Creek  
Banff Springs Christmas Party  
Kindergarten Year End Picnic

## **COMMUNICATION**

**To ensure the proper lines of communication and to maintain confidentiality, please follow this protocol.** If you, as a parent, have a concern about your child, please speak to the classroom teacher. If the discussion needs to go further, please contact the administration. Please respect our busy classroom times and arrange a meeting time after class or make contact through e-mail.

### **NEWSLETTER**

Your child will be responsible for bringing home a monthly newsletter and calendar. Please post this in a spot where you and your child can refer to it easily. This will ensure that both parent and child will be well prepared for the many activities planned for each month.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

Students will be released to the parents unless otherwise requested. **Please put your request in writing to teacher prior to your child leaving the school.** If this will be an ongoing occurrence such as going to the Day Care program or having a grandparent pick up your child please provide a letter that will be kept on file. If this request will be occasional then written request is required each time.



### **ILLNESS AND MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

If your child is ill, we encourage you to keep your child at home so as not to spread germs. We do not have supervision available for children to stay in at recess or at lunchtime.

Non-prescription medicine is not available at the school and will not be administered to any child. For prescribed medication to be given by office staff, the proper forms must be completed according to Board Policy. See our administrative assistants for the appropriate forms.

## ATTENDANCE



### ATTENDANCE LINE



If your child is to be absent, it is **very important** that you inform the Elizabeth Rummel School Attendance Line before 8:30 a.m. Please call 403-678-6292, press **1** and leave a detailed message with the name of the student, teacher's name and reason for absence. If it is necessary to have direct contact with the school, you may call our office at the same number 403-678-6292 and press **2** to speak to our Admin. Assistants. **Please make sure your phone numbers provided to the school are kept up to date.**

### IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE STAFF!



***PLEASE REFRAIN FROM LEAVING MESSAGES FOR YOUR CHILD WITH THE OFFICE STAFF. DUE TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS AT ELIZABETH RUMMEL SCHOOL AS WELL AS TIME RESTRAINTS IN THE OFFICE MESSAGES WILL NOT BE FORWARDED TO STUDENTS.***

## LUNCH HOUR SAFETY PROGRAM



The vast majority of our students are bussed and therefore eat their lunch at school. Kindergarten students go out for recess at 11:25, then eat their lunch in their classroom. They are supervised during these times by paid Lunch Hour Supervisors. It is important to note that for safety reasons, children who eat lunch at school are not allowed to leave school property during the lunch hour without their parents or guardians. Parents who wish to take children home on a regular or occasional basis are asked to pick up their children at the office and also to sign the “sign-out book.”

For the Safety of our students, all adults entering the school are asked to report to the office.

Please see section “Behaviour Expectations and Codes of Conduct” for more information.



## **NOON HOUR SAFETY PROGRAM FEES**



The lunch hour program is coordinated through the office. The program operates on a cost recovery basis to cover the costs of the paid supervisors. Lunch hour fees are paid at the same time as the school fees in September. See School Fees for specific costs associated with this program.

Kindergarten students are supervised outside during their lunch break. Fresh air, exercise and outdoor play are invigorating for the body and the mind.

**If children are well enough to attend school, they should be well enough for outdoor recess, unless otherwise directed by a doctor’s note.** Unless it is heavily raining or it is very cold or there is a severe wind-chill factor, recess will be outdoors. For indoor recess, children are expected to remain in their classrooms for quiet activities. An indoor recess will be called based on the judgement of the principal or designate. Fundamentally, we live most of our months in cold weather and therefore expect students to dress for the weather with proper coats, mittens, hats and footwear. As a rule of thumb, students may still go outside at -20 degrees Celsius however; the wind chill factor will be taken into consideration.

# **ERS HEALTHY NUTRITION**



## **BACKGROUND**

Student health, nutrition and the promotion of healthy food choices are important components in creating a healthy environment for our children in school.

Specific guidelines have been developed by the school, the school council and the school division to help clarify and ensure consistency around the use of food in the school. These guidelines address the promotion of healthy food choices at ERS and build on existing practices that are already working well at the school. Please note that these guidelines are intended to address healthy food choices rather than allergy issues; these will be addressed separately.

## **GUIDELINES**

### **BUILDING COMMUNITY WITH CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS**

In our society, food plays an important role in building community and in celebrating special events. At ERS, food is often used as part of the celebration of special occasions such as Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day and year-end. In celebrating these events, the following procedures should be followed:

- The classroom teachers will inform all parents (e.g. by their monthly newsletter, email, phone tree) of any upcoming classroom celebrations that include food. This communication should include the type of food that will be offered so that parents who wish to do so can make alternate arrangements for their child. In a majority of cases, healthy choices are expected.
- If parents are contributing food to a classroom celebration, the teacher will coordinate the types of food to be brought in to ensure that a variety and a balance of healthy choices are available.
- Parents are urged NOT to bring food into the classroom other than when asked to do so by the classroom teacher for special events.



### **SUPPORTING THE GUIDELINES**

- Students will be empowered to make healthy choices through education on nutrition. Health providers such as our school nurse and dieticians will support the classroom teachers in reinforcing the concepts outlined in the curriculum.
- When food is used as a fundraiser in the school, it should involve items with a reasonable nutritive value.

## **LITTERLESS LUNCHES**

Litterless lunches are part of our Earth School status. Children are encouraged to bring lunches in reusable containers and to take home all food not eaten. Milk and yogurt containers may be deposited in the recycling bins provided. Tetra paks and other refundable containers are also being collected for refund in the lunchrooms. The money goes to support various school activities.



### **MILK PROGRAM**

The Grade Three classes provide a noon hour milk program for any students in Grades K-3. Milk (chocolate or white) may be pre-ordered yearly. Information about this program will be sent home with each student in September. Proceeds from this program are used to purchase items that will enhance the curriculum. Please note that although we offer sugar reduced chocolate milk as per Alberta Education recommendations; please encourage your child to choose chocolate milk only occasionally.



### **PIZZA DAYS**

Pizza Fundraising Days are provided, twice a month, by School Council with the help of parent volunteers. Orders are taken in advance and a notice will be sent out in September detailing the program. Panago Pizza provides us with pizzas made with whole wheat crust and low fat cheese.



### **FOOD FOR LEARNING**

The Food for Learning program helps support the children of families who are having difficulty providing a nutritious, balanced lunch for their child. It is available free of charge. For more information contact the school office. The program is offered through the generous support of local businesses, community organizations and parent donations.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

**If your child suffers from allergies, please report all information to the office immediately. Parents of children with severe allergies will meet with the principal and/or the teacher to review the protocol and policies of the school division.**

In ERS we believe that students need to learn to manage their allergies so they can grow up and be able to live a full life. The school is an excellent place for them to learn strategies for managing their allergy because there are personnel who can help them deal with reactions if they arise. All staff are trained to recognize allergic symptoms and to administer an Epi-pen if needed. Children who have been prescribed an Epi-pen must keep it on their person at all times. A fanny pack works well for this purpose. See section on Illness/Emergency procedures.

The school can only help the child learn how to deal with their own food allergies if they know about it. Once we are informed, a personal program will be devised for the student in conjunction with the parent. For more information on the Canadian Rockies Public Schools' Administrative Procedure for Anaphylaxis, visit the CRPS website ([www.crps.ab.ca](http://www.crps.ab.ca)), then go to Information, Documents, Administrative Procedures Manual, Administrative Procedure 316-1 Anaphylaxis.

**If your child is allergic to anything, we need to know in order to keep them safe.**



## **TRANSPORTATION**

You may access the school bus if you reside more than 2.4 km from the school. There is NO FEE for bussing but students must be registered before they can ride the bus. Only one Drop-Off Location is permitted.

Call the Transportation Department, at **678-5545** for further information.

## **PARENT PARKING**

The bus loop is restricted to use by **buses only** during the times when buses are bringing students to school and picking them up. Drivers are not allowed to pull past a school bus in the loop. Parents wishing to drop their children off or pick them up should use the designated drop-off/pick up zones.

If you are visiting the school, please park in the lot adjacent to the playground on the east side of the school grounds.

## **BIKES AND OTHER WHEELS**

Bikes should be parked in the bike stands at the east side of the school.

Students who come to school on scooters are required to fold them up before entering the school. Unicycles, heelies, skateboards, bikes, rollerblades, scooters, etc. may NOT be used on school property

***Please do not bring bicycles, skateboards, scooters, burleys or baby strollers into the school. They add to the congestion and track water and mud down the hallways.***

## **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES**

Canadian Rockies Public Schools policy encourages the use of school buses rather than the use of privately owned vehicles to transport students to and from internal and external school related activities such as field trips and outdoor pursuit activities. Where the Division provides transportation, volunteer vehicles will not be recognized.

Parents may make arrangements with the classroom/supervising teacher to transport their child to and/or from an activity. However, for reasons of liability, we will not allow students to be transported by other parents. A parent cannot authorize another parent to transport their child for a school related activity.

## TRAFFIC SAFETY



In the spring of 2006, ERS School Council formed a Traffic Safety Committee. The goal of the committee is to improve traffic safety around L'École Elizabeth Rummel School site to protect children. The committee includes representatives from Canadian Rockies Public Schools Transportation and Facilities, Town of Canmore Bylaw, RCMP, school administration and ERS School Council.

The areas of focus for the committee are:

- To educate students, parents, teachers and nearby residents of the traffic dangers around the school
- To reduce congestion, illegal parking, parking in the drop-off zone, excessive idling in winter and children being dropped off or picked up in a way that encourages them to cross the street mid-block
- To encourage parents and students to get involved with the Walking School Bus and other active modes of transportation

When dropping their children at school or picking them up, parents should:

- Drop their children off/pick them up on the school side of Cougar Creek Drive in the 5 minute drop off zone
- Ensure that you are legally stopped and that your children cross safely at the cross walk
- Utilize the long term parking if you plan to stop longer than 5 minutes
- Consider more active modes of transportation such as walking or riding a bike as much as possible.

The bus loop is restricted to use by **buses only** during the times when buses are bringing students to school and picking them up – 8:15 – 8:30; 11:20-11:35 and 2:55 – 3:10. **Drivers are not allowed to pull past a school bus in the loop.** Parents wishing to drop their children off or pick them up should use the drop-off zone along the west side of the front of the School, on Cougar Creek Drive. There is a Visitor Parking area on the east side of the school grounds for parents and visitors.

Please refer to the map for information on drop off zones and parking as well as traffic safety rules. The Town of Canmore Bylaw Services monitors traffic around ERS weekly throughout the school year.

## **FIRE DRILLS AND LOCKDOWNS**

It is a requirement that all schools practice Fire Drills and Lockdowns procedures. To support student and staff safety our school division requires 3 fire drills in the fall and 3 in the spring. We also have lockdown practices in the fall and in the spring. Teachers also do practices with their classes and the Canmore Fire Department joins us for class presentations during Fire Safety Week. If you have any questions please contact your child's teacher or the principal for more information.



## **"Right from the Start": Mental Health Capacity Building Project**

Dear Parents of ERS Students;

The Right from the Start (RFTS) team would like to welcome you back to ERS! We hope that you enjoyed your summer holidays. For those who are new to the school; the Right from the Start project commenced in September 2008. RFTS is a mental health capacity building project for children and families and is designed to increase coping behaviours, knowledge and skills of children to enable them to make healthy choices and adopt behaviours to self-protect their mental, physical and emotional health at as early an age as possible.

The "Right from the Start" team is housed in ERS, Banff Elementary School and in Lawrence Grassi Middle School. Our project team consists of three members: Mary Wieghell, Project Coordinator; Kate Rive , Success Coach and Deren Alward, Wellness Mentor.

The Success Coach provides support of identified students in order to foster self-esteem, appropriate social skills and assist in accessing additional community resources. The Success Coach also provides dynamic and individualized support for families. Parents are welcome to make support referrals to our program, please contact the school for a referral form or drop in and speak with any project staff.

The Wellness Mentors assist in the creation of a school culture of health and wellness by establishing and promoting resiliency in the entire student and staff body. They provide in class presentation and group facilitation for students, staff and parents on a wide variety of topics including positive behaviour management, character development, citizenship, healthy eating and exercise. Parents can also request that their child participate in small group work for a variety of social skill development.

The "Right from the Start" team aims to achieve school and community wide mental health and well-being through the provision of integrated and innovative programming and services, positive communication and relationship building, and providing opportunities for healthy physical and emotional development.

We are very excited about working together again this year with the entire school community in creating a safe and healthy environment for our students to grow and learn!

Sincerely,

Your "Right from the Start" Team