

Wild School: Middle School Program



Our goal is to provide an optimized learning environment that will provide our children the requisite tools that they need to enable them to be happy and free wherever their path leads – *Jeff Barrett, Founder.*

The Middle School Brain

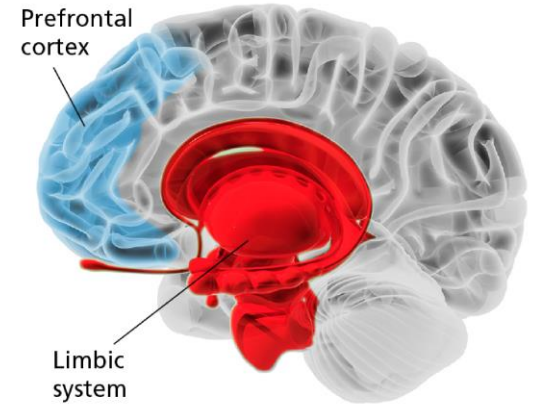
In the last 10 to 15 years new research has emerged about the nature of adolescent brain development. This knowledge has not been integrated into traditional schooling.



The middle school brain is fundamentally different, both biologically and neurologically

During the ages 10 to 14 there is a rapid phase of brain development, second only to infancy.

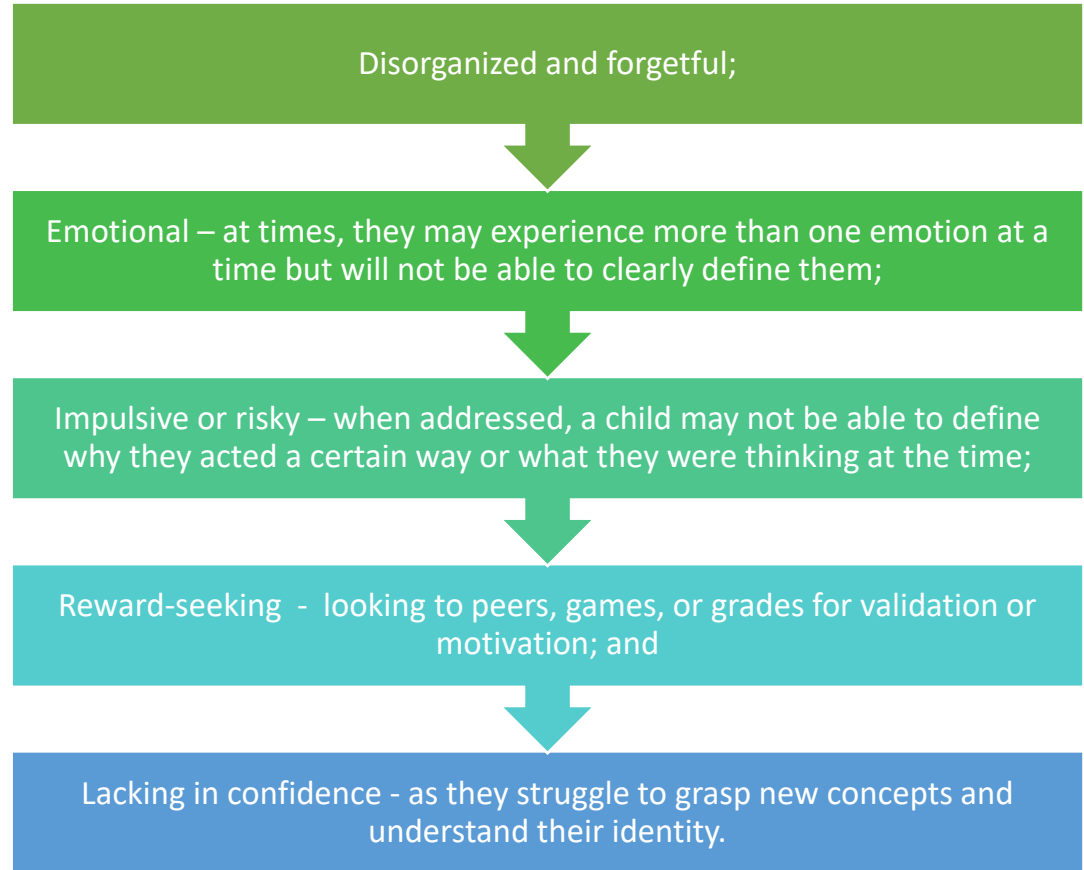
Two neuro systems, the “emotional” limbic and “logical” prefrontal cortex brain develop at different paces



Limbic System - responsible for emotions, and is the seat of motivation, as well as risk and reward systems.

Prefrontal Cortex - driver of executive function skills – abilities related to decision making. E.g. time management, self-control, working memory, and organization.

This causes
Middle
Schoolers to
be...



Recent data is revealing that many middle school students are....



Bored in class, unengaged and most don't enjoy being at school;

Often suffering from a host of mental issues: E.g. pressure, anxiety, sadness, loneliness, etc.;

Losing their confidence, resulting in poor choices (bullying, etc.);

Losing their sense of community / connectiveness to adults (maturation issues); and

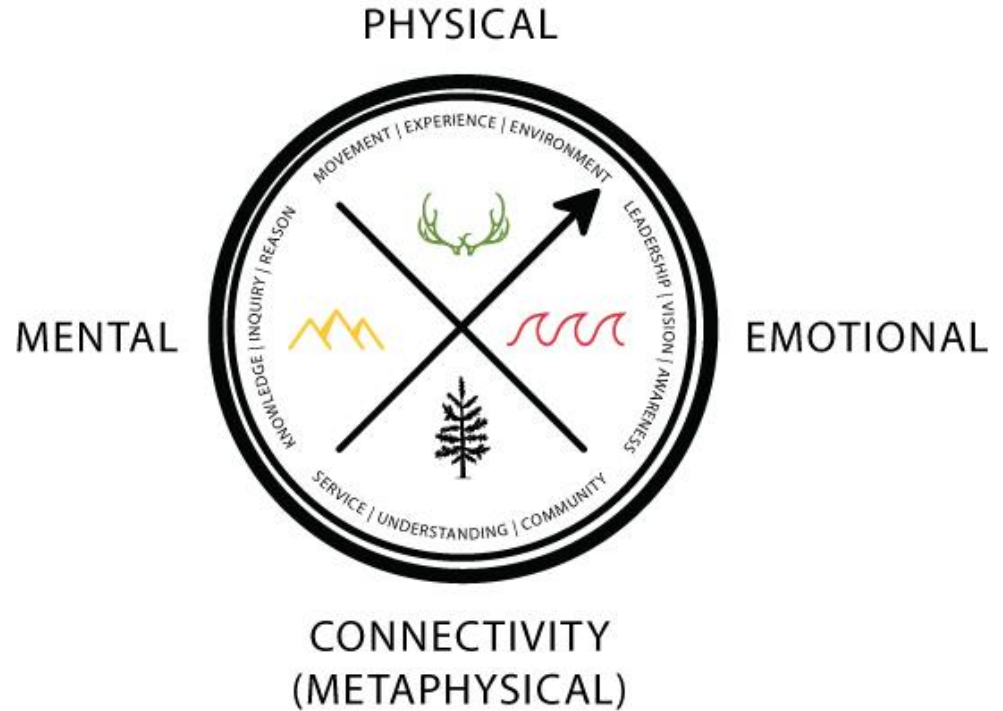
Declining in physical activity.

Middle School Program Philosophy



We work with emerging science on adolescent brain development and understand that the ages of 10 to 14 provide a unique opportunity to imprint lifelong healthy outlooks and habits that we call **“Whole Being Education”**.

The Wild Way



We use an “**Enduring Educational**” approach which focuses on skills that can never be replaced by technological innovations.



We ensure students have a set of core skills that they will thrive in any situation that their life journey takes them.



Program Goals

- To provide a learning experience for students which is challenging, engaging and is in keeping **with the emerging science on adolescent brain development.**
- Continue to teach to the whole student: Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Metaphysical
- To develop a strong community to ensure students attach to healthy role models and ensure proper maturation.
- To teach students where “they are at” by differentiating instruction and expectations.
- To ensure students sustain a love for learning and a natural curiosity for life.
- To teach the skills that will allow students to get off of the Hedonic Treadmill and embrace Sustainable Happiness



Program Objectives

- Prepare students for high school in a manner that addresses the most common sources of stress and anxiety.
- Teach students how to learn.
- Focus on learning skills vs. memorization for testing learning forgettable facts.
- Continue to teach critical problem-solving skills through direct application of student's interest.
- Provide opportunities for risk and failure in a safe environment (E.g. public speaking, music performance, canoe tripping, etc.)
- Continue to teach the development and maintenance of healthy relationships.
- Provide opportunities for social and community cohesion while maintaining critical connections with peers, teachers and family.
- Provide many opportunities for experiential learning.
- Develop a world class out-tripping program.
- Develop a world class service program.



Key Outcomes

- ✓ Independence in learning, research, writing and mathematics
- ✓ Ability to determine fact through the recognition of bias and data manipulation
- ✓ Ability to eloquently argue and debate
- ✓ Ability to read critically and comprehensively.
- ✓ Ability to expertly write to express their ideas and opinions in a variety of formats.
- ✓ Mathematics: Meeting the expectations of the curriculum with a focus on mental math, linear relations and algebra.
- ✓ Curious and engaged students with a sustainable love of learning
- ✓ Ability to self regulate and understand themselves not only as they are currently but how they will grow and change over time
- ✓ Ability to understand the effects of poor choices - I.e. self piloted, responsible, etc.
- ✓ Confidence and sense of self
- ✓ Ability to not be negatively influenced
- ✓ Physically fit and well-rounded in agility, strength and balance



Essential Life Skills

The skills that studies have revealed to be the most beneficial to life long success:

- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Effective Communication Skills
- Decision-Making
- Creative Thinking
- Interpersonal relationship skills
- Self Awareness Building Skills
- Empathy
- Coping with Stress and Emotions.

Source: *Unicef, Unesco, WHO and Harvard University: Centre on the Developing Child*



Frames of Learning

Same Wild Way Frames of learning:

- **Proficiency Frame ----- Practice**
focuses on Foundational skills that require repetition and practice to reach mastery, namely in literacy and mathematics. Small class sizes allows attention to detail for individual learners and maximizes success in these areas. While relating practice to the other frames allows students to appreciate relevancy.
- **Thematic Frame ----- Apply**
is an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to learning where units are focused on a particular theme. Thematic units inspire students through relevant concepts and real-world experiences. They allow students to explore a subject matter (theme) and provide opportunities for students to ask questions and follow their own paths of inquiry, as they bring to life the beauty, surprises and connections in the world around us. Thematic lessons are holistic in that they engage multiple styles of intelligence, learning and relate to proficiencies.
- **Experiential Frame ----- Try**
is the “hands-on, getting dirty” part of Wild School. Whether it means working in the school gardens, creating art, learning wilderness first aid, going on expeditions or carrying out work experience, you will find students exploring and problem solving around the campus and around our community. Students in every level engage in real-world practical projects that deepen their understanding of their physical place in the world.



Program Components

Component	Targeted Outcome	Duration
Emotional		
Self Assessments	Drawing on work done with the Student Strategic Plans to develop an awareness of students' own assessment of progress and results in all aspects of their education.	On-going
LIT Camp Program	Students will take part in the LIT program to further refine their leadership skills and practice them in a real world setting.	Min 1 week + training week
Leadership Program	Will continue to grow and become more challenging for students. A focus on practical application and implementation with our younger students will be a focus in 7/8	On-going
Life Coaching Program	TBD - Adler Program?	2 weeks
Journaling	Ongoing journaling work, which includes weekly check-ins with the 'the balance tree.'	On-going

Component	Targeted Objective	Duration
Mental		
Passion / Mentorship	Students individually or in small groups will work with a mentor or expert in a field that they are passionate about.	On-going
Habits	Students will be taught and will incorporate into their day-to-day the skills and habits that research and our own observations have determined are the most beneficial to not only adolescence but throughout life.	“
Student Paper / Magazine	Rotating Student editor and contributors to E.g. The Wild Quarterly.	“
Studying	Students will come to understand the various study methods and determine which is best suited to themselves and will become experts at utilizing it.	“
Finding fact/Reading Critically “Beyond the Headline	Using a variety of media students will learn the techniques utilized by the media to present information. This will allow them to identify manipulative techniques and determine fact.	“
Writing	Ability to write persuasive papers.	“
Mathematics	Students will develop thematic math based projects based on curriculum proficiencies.	
Debate	Students will learn formal and informal debate techniques and the ability to be able to discuss ideas without identifying with them on an emotional/biased level.	On-going / 1-day. The Wild School will be hosting the “Wild Debates” next year and be inviting other schools/students to compete.
Wilderness Medicine Course	Students will take an intro to wilderness medicine course. Learn about various systems and basic first aid. Tie into biology.	3-days

Component	Targeted Objectives	Duration/Details
Physical		
Out Trip Fall	Curriculum linked Canoe Trips: Geography and History	3 to 5 days. Possibly include ORCA level certifications
Out Trip Spring	Culminating Assignment trip Challenge: Students will plan the trip using parameters linked to the curriculum covered in multiple strands as well as incorporating budget and logistical considerations.	5 days
Formal Yoga Instruction	Students are able to improve and extend their morning circle stretching skills	This would take some more investigation and it would be nice to get the kids some sort of certification here.
Wild Fitness Testing	Ongoing physical testing in some standard activities as well as seasonal pursuits. Students will compete against themselves for consistency and improvement	Monthly
Orca Level	Canoe Levels and Canoe Tripping Levels	1 week
Babysitters Course	Integrate this into the Leadership course?	3 days
Sports	Building out strategic in school sport programs including: cross country running, nordic skiing, mountain biking, canoe racing, track, soccer, archery and potentially horseback riding.	On-going

Component	Targeted Outcome	Duration
Connectivity:		
Giving Garden	Students will be responsible for donating a set number of hours to tend the gardens..	20 hours
Meditation / Breath Work	Formal Lessons in a variety of techniques and strategies	On-going
Volunteer Squad	Once a month the kids will spend a half day volunteering at a local organization.	3 hours / per mo.
Service Project	Longer term service project E.g. develop a relationship with an international project help with fund raising, equipment needs, etc.	On-going
Fundraising Event	Students will be tasked with helping to organize a fundraising event: E.g. Wildhood Festival, Christmas Market, Ski Loppit, or their own initiative.	On-going

WILD ACADEMICS

Grade 7

Curriculum Strand	Overall Expectations	Wild Way Learning Focus
Language Arts:	Thematic Based •Oral Communication •Reading •Writing •Media Literacy	•Speeches High School Preparation •Debate: •Writing Essays, Reports, Dramatic pieces... •Creation of Media for a variety of purposes, like Advertisements, Movies, Play scripts
Math	Thematic Based •Social Emotional Learning •Number •Algebra •Data •Spatial Sense •Financial Literacy	•Leadership •Mental Math exercises •Jump Math Program •Integration into Science, Geography, Art Music •Adventure Planning and "" Program
Science	Thematic Based •STEM Skills and Communication: Science Fair and Coding/Robotics •Life Systems: Human Impact on the Environment/Interactions between Biotic and Abiotic •Matter and Energy: Evaluate the environmental and social impacts of the use and disposal of various pure substances and mixtures •Structures and Mechanisms: •Earth and Space Systems:	•Science Fair •Robotics/Coding •Leadership •Critical Thinking/Problem Solving •Bushcraft
Geography/History	Thematic Based History • New France and British North America, 1713–1800 •Conflict and Challenges in Canada 1800-1850 Geography •Physical Patterns in a Changing World •Natural Resources around the World: Use and Sustainability	•Canoe and Adventure Trips •Role Playing Activities •Museum Trips and Excursions •Property Exploration •Discussion/Debate
Art/Music	Thematic Based •Dance •Drama •Music •Visual Arts	Painting, Sketching, Sculpture Ukuleles Choir Wild Rock Band Dramatic Performances Design / Art Installation
French	Thematic Based •Listening •Speaking •Reading •Writing	•Trip to Quebec •Performances •Scavenger hunts
Physical Education	Thematic Based •Social Emotional Learning •Active Living •Movement Competence: Skills, Concepts and Strategies •Healthy Living	•Wild Fitness Testing •Breathwork •School Sports •Canoeing / Mountain Biking / Nordic Skiing

WILD ACADEMICS

Grade 8

Curriculum Strand	Overall Expectations	Wild Way Learning Focus High School Prep
Language Arts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Oral Communication •Reading •Writing •Media Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Wild T.E.D. Project •Debate High School Prep •Writing Essays formal Research Essays, •Creation of Media for a variety of purposes, like Advertisements, Movies, Play scripts
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Social Emotional Learning •Number •Algebra •Data •Spatial Sense •Financial Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Leadership •Mental Math exercises •Jump Math Program •Integration into Science, Geography, Art Music •Adventure Planning and "New Service Project"
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •STEM Skills and Communication: Science Fair and Coding/Robotics •Life Systems: Cells •Matter and Energy: Fluids •Structures and Mechanisms: Systems in Action •Earth and Space Systems: Water Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Science Fair •Building Projects •Robotics/Coding •Leadership •Critical Thinking/Problem Solving •Bushcraft
Geography/History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creating Canada, 1850–1890 •Canada, 1890–1914: A Changing Society •Global Settlement: Patterns and Sustainability •Global Inequalities: Economic Development and Quality of Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Thematic Projects •Canoe and Adventure Trips •Role Playing Activities •Museum Trips and Excursions •Community Engagement •Property Exploration •Discussion/Debate •Costume / Theme Days
Art/Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Dance •Drama •Music •Visual Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Painting, Sketching, Sculpture •Ukuleles / Bongo •Choir •Wild Rock Band •Dramatic Performances •Design / Art Installation
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Listening •Speaking •Reading •Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Performances •Games
Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Social Emotional Learning •Active Living •Movement Competence: Skills, Concepts and Strategies •Healthy Living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Wild Fitness Testing •Breathwork •School Sports •Canoeing / Mountain Biking / Nordic Skiing

