

Whitby Schools Discover Who Is NOBODY™

Whitby schools have embarked on a year-long character education program. "Who Is NOBODY?™" is a unique, literacy-based program, that provides students with the opportunity to develop empathy and respect for others by getting involved in service projects. Here's how it works.

Throughout the school year, students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 will participate in a service project of their choice, and share their experiences with their peers. Projects can be as simple as walking an elderly neighbour's dog, collecting food for a food bank, or organizing a garbage clean up.

As part of the program, students take home a denim doll called NOBODY for a week, and add something to it that represents their project. They present the doll, their story and a picture to their class. In this way, "everybody" helps the doll evolve from being "nobody" – a doll with no character – to "somebody" who has lots of character as a result of students' actions. Students' written pieces, pictures and photos are also collected, and put into a scrapbook for sharing.

In October, teachers from all elementary schools in Whitby participated in a workshop

at West Lynde PS, to learn about the program, and how to support students as they work through their projects between now and the end of May 2008.

Lynne Malandrino, vice-principal at West Lynde PS, sees enormous potential in the program. "As the students research, prepare and report on their projects, they have the opportunity to develop many skills – researching, writing, reading, critical thinking and oral presentation skills," says Mrs. Malandrino. "Because students' experiences throughout the project are real and meaningful, the impetus for communicating their thoughts clearly and precisely is enormous," she adds.



Look for details about a Whitby-wide celebration of this project in the Spring.