

Great Things Happen at TDSB Schools	
2007	▶
2006	▶

Everybody in Your Class is Somebody!



Who is NOBODY? makes it easy to build on each students' unique strengths by bridging universal needs

Collecting blankets for the Humane Society, building a composter at school, and performing a puppet show about the dangers of drinking and driving are only three of the many *Who is NOBODY?* community outreach projects carried out by just one class over the course of a school year. From September 2005 to June 2006, more than 700 students in grades 1 to 8 across the TDSB participated in *Who is NOBODY?*

The *Who is NOBODY?* program helps young people figure out their unique strengths and then create a project where they can engage in real-life activities that exercise responsible citizenship, build character, and support career goals. The program is also an effective anti-bullying strategy supporting Safe Schools initiatives.

Students gain perspective on their world and come to realize how lucky they are. "I learned that you can help out and make a difference no matter what your age is," says one Lanor PS grade 7 student. "Giving your time makes a change as much or even more than giving money."

Last year's *Who is NOBODY?* projects championed hundreds of causes ranging from anti-racism in sports to rabies awareness, and supported organizations as diverse as Green Peace and the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Posters, 3-D collages, and colourful scrapbooks of stories, pictures and photos are some of the ways each participant can celebrate his or her effort.

Because students follow self-directed decision-making steps to build their projects, anybody can participate and focus on their personal potential. It's exciting to see a cross section of ages, abilities and backgrounds come together and use their differences to make a difference. "All kids, regardless of their background, gain hope and confidence through their own actions, interests and abilities," says Ajike Akande, a teacher at Nelson Mandela PS. "*Who is NOBODY?* teaches young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to discover the talents that make them somebody."

General Mercer PS teacher Cathy Davine is excited about the effect the program has had on the kids in her class. "My special education students are never chosen to be leaders. Now they are living the role as they have a new identity." Students become identified as more than just Special Ed students. They are helpers and leaders, like John who collects batteries to recycle. "Other students and adults now approach them and contribute to their goodwill initiatives."

It is also exciting for teachers to teach by building on the unique strengths of each child. Students make personal decisions, develop personal skills, experience personal success and best of all, students inspire each other! "This program makes any student exceptional," says Heather Gilman, teacher at Forest Hill PS.

For information about participating in *Who is NOBODY?* this school year, email info@whoisnobody.com

