

# St. William School

## Catholic Community of Caring

LINK: <https://www.cssd.ab.ca/schools/stwilliam/About/Catholic-Community-of-Caring/Pages/default.aspx>

Catholic Community of Caring is a school-based approach that creates a stronger, healthier school climate. Simply stated, the goal of Catholic Community of Caring is to create safe and caring school environments that help students to develop positive values, provide opportunities for the positive development of relationships among students, between student and adults and between teachers and parents. This initiative is a proactive approach to the educational component of character education.

Catholic Community of Caring is grounded in the six essential components of community involvement, ministry & service, Big Family Groups & student forums, parent & family involvement, integration of Catholic values and an emphasis on building relationships. These essential components incorporated into the daily life of the school create a climate that embraces the values of respect, responsibility, trust, family and caring; faith encompasses all of these.

The pedagogy of Catholic Community of Caring assumes that students learn and understand the values in three ways:

- They need to “know the good” through ethical discussion
- They need to “see the good” through role modeling, as well as experience the good by being a part of a caring community
- They need to “do the good” through service-learning opportunities and relations with others

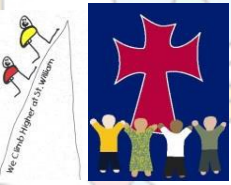
As a result, students will come to desire the good.

Success of the program is dependent upon all school community stakeholders being involved. This includes the administration team, teachers, support staff, parents, students and community members.

Catholic Community of Caring offers schools a framework from which each school assesses their particular needs. A focus for the school year is then created which directs the work of creating the optimal school climate. Many schools form committees encompassing all community representatives. These representatives ensure that the needs, issues and concerns of their particular group are reflected in the larger school plan. Catholic Community of Caring works within the school community to ensure that our Catholic faith is alive in all aspects of our school life.



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## Catholic Community of Caring Essential Components

**Service Learning** – As an essential component school communities provide students with the opportunities to serve those in need and to learn the meaning of the gospel message. The opportunities are endless and work to build community within the school as well to develop relationships with the broader community. Character development in Catholic schools encompasses much more than teaching children to obey rules and avoid wrongdoings. A major emphasis should always be on nurturing goodness and contributing to create a life of virtue full of happiness and spiritual fulfillment.

**Family and Community Involvement** – Families are recognized as the primary educators of their children; it is the place where we learn moral values. Through a Catholic Community of Caring school families are encouraged to participate and are supported in the moral education of their children. The family, not just the child is embraced by the school community. Often parents as well as community members participate on Coordinating Committees and on specific activities in support of the action plans within the school.

**Emphasis on Relationships** - The quality of the relationships and the amount of trust, respect and responsibility that is present in everyday behavior promotes the gospel values. Relationships of staff to staff, staff to support staff, staff to administration, staff to student, staff to parent, staff to community and student to student is emphasized.

**Values in the Curriculum** – Gospel values are embedded and modeled across the curriculum. Teachers re-examine what they are teaching and include lessons and activities that support the five values; placed within the context of the Gospel values. The emphasis is on the question: “Where do you see Jesus?”

**Student Forums and Conferences** – In providing opportunities for students to participate in student forums and conferences, young people share their ideas, experiences and values with teachers and administration, peers and a variety of adults who represent the community. A supportive environment encourages discussion on critical issues that affect students’ lives and permits adults to listen. This also sets in motion active solutions that are student generated.



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