



Paislee Christiansen got help from fellow Crossroad student Kolton McCormick during a craft-making session for Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week. For the craft, students partnered up, read the story "Snippets," built paper houses with scrapbooking paper, celebrated the differences each home had, and worked together to build a little paper house community.

—Sam Odrowski photo

Crossroads marks 'anti-bullying' week

By Sam Odrowski

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The Rainy River District School Board recently participated in an array of anti-bullying and inclusion activities for Ontario Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week (Nov. 18-24).

Students at Crossroads School in Devlin kicked off the week last Monday by holding an assembly with the message that "kindness is cooler."

Since then, students have participated in a series of anti-bullying crafts based on books written by Diane Alber, with the focus on inclusion and being kind.

"Everybody did a piece of art with each book and we're hoping to create a kindness community village that will be

displayed in our library," explained principal Kerri Tolen.

Once the kindness community village is assembled, it will be displayed for the year, she added.

"Then the art will hopefully remind the students of the books and their messages because the messages are pretty simple and the books are very beautiful," Tolen enthused.

To address the current state of bullying at Crossroads School, students in Grades 4-8 participated in "Student Climate Surveys," where they provided input on their experiences.

Some of the questions answered asked about student happiness, how frequently they're bullied, how safe they feel at school, and if there are supports available to help them for mental health.

The surveys will help teach-

ers and staff assess the school climate and which areas of student needs in relation to bullying, safety, and inclusion require improvement.

The best way for students to combat bullying at school is by telling an adult, Tolen noted.

"They need to report it; that's probably the biggest thing," she remarked.

"The adults can't help unless the students report it."

Tolen also encouraged students to stand up for each another if they see someone being a bully.

She is thankful to all the staff for helping to facilitate anti-bullying week and hopes the messages shared make an impact.

"It's really a team effort here with staff trying to promote a really healthy school climate," Tolen smiled.