



École Cascade Heights Elementary
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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Today we activated a shelter in place at Cascade Heights Elementary as a bear was spotted near the school when school was about to be dismissed. A shelter in place means that students and staff are kept inside the building for safety until the safety issue on the outside is dealt with.

When you live in a neighbourhood close to nature we occasionally encounter wild animals, including bears. While incidents between bears and people are very rare, lately there have been more sightings than usual.

We are asking for your help in educating your child to be “bear aware”. This includes:

- Walking together in groups, and making some noise to alert bears that you are there.
- Avoid taking food in/eating food in the woods, and using trails that run alongside creeks.
- If you encounter a bear, try to remain calm. Face the bear without making eye contact and back away slowly. Do not approach it or chase it.
- If the bear makes blowing or snorting noises and then charges and veers off at the last second this is likely defensive behavior so continue to back away.
- Extend your arms above your head appearing as large as you can, talk in a gruff voice, and look for a weapon such as a rock or stick. Try dropping your pack to distract the bear, but only do this if absolutely necessary because the bear could learn to pursue people for their packs.
- Get rid of garbage cans and food scraps that may be near your home.

Bear sightings or problems can be reported to Conservation Office Services at 1-877-952-7277. The Burnaby RCMP Non-Emergency phone number is 604.294.7922. In any emergency safety issue because of a bear, call 911 right away.

Additional information can be found at www.bearaware.bc.ca

Thank you for your help in educating your child and keeping our school community safe.

Sincerely,

Anthony Yam
Principal