

## Family-friendly used speeches wanted for website

The administrator of a public speaking website is asking Halton residents, especially students, to post their used speeches.

Melissa Wang, a volunteer with St. Michael Catholic School in Oakville, has put out a call for speech submissions for the website [www.ourspeeches.com](http://www.ourspeeches.com).

The site currently features more than 30 speeches, predominantly written by students at St. Michael. Wang said she would like to expand the submission list to include speeches written by students, as well as adults, across the region.

"It will be helpful for students to read something written by students the same age and see how they write," she said. "Then they will think, 'Someone can do that, so can I.' It is also a good way to see how other kids think about certain topics so they can get their own ideas."

The website came on-line in May 2008 with the intent of helping students prepare for public speaking competitions. The idea was actually the brainchild of Wang's son, Xin-Xin. The St. Michael student came up with the idea when he was taking part in his school's public speaking competition.

"My son was in Grade 5, and he was preparing his speech and he said there should be a website to help students prepare and get ideas," Wang said.

"When he started in Grade 4, he didn't know where to go for help. It is harder for the young kids."

Besides used speeches written by students, the website also features public speaking tips, news and events, and lists of winners from the Halton Catholic District School Board Regional Public Speaking Competition and St. Michael School Public Speaking Festival.

The content for the website was a collaborative effort between the Wang family and St. Michael staff and parents. The pages for the site have been created by Xin-Xin.

People interested in posting speeches need to first sign up as a member on the site, then submit their writing directly on-line.

Although the focus is on speeches written by students, adults can also submit their writing, as long as it is on a family-friendly subject, Wang said.

"Speeches I'm looking for are from anyone who has participated in public speaking," she said. "It started out for students in Grades 4 to 8, but I want speeches from all ages."

Wang said she not only wants to add speeches, but also other winners' lists from public speaking events at schools across the region.

For information, e-mail Melissa Wang at [mwang@ourspeeches.com](mailto:mwang@ourspeeches.com) or go on-line to [www.ourspeeches.com](http://www.ourspeeches.com).

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