



SANSKAR CANADA NEWSLETTER

Highlights!

- Sunderkand Path
- Senior Engagement
- First Day Sanskar Weekend classes and Sanskar Picnic Day
- Navratri Celebration
- Onam
- Philosophy of seva in Sanatan Dharma

Our recomendtion!



Hollistic
Ayurvedic
Consultation
@waterdown
location
Contact:
Vd.Shanti
+1 (647) 867-1505

OUR NEEDS

We receive tremendous community support. If you are wondering what we are in most need of right now here is the list of items:

- Oatmeal
- Can Vegetables
- Can Beans
- Can Tomatoes
- Peanut Butter
- Mixed Beans
- Rice
- Pasta Sauce
- Toilet Paper
- Boost or Ensure



Sunderkand Path at Sanskar Centre



Sanskar activities continue to grow beautifully, with special emphasis on spiritual gatherings and satsangs. What began as a monthly tradition has now blossomed into a weekly practice—Sunderkand is recited every Tuesday and Saturday by our devoted community. It is truly heartwarming to witness the people of Waterdown coming together in devotion, unity, and collective prayer.

Senior Engagement – September Update

As part of our Sanskar Sanskriti Setu activities, the month of September was filled with enriching experiences for our seniors. On September 3rd, members connected virtually through Zoom, while on September 10th we came together in person for a vibrant gathering. September 17th was again a zoom meeting followed by 24th September as in-person.

The in-person meet on Sept. 10th, began with a refreshing Yoga session that energized everyone, followed by an insightful educational talk delivered by Dr. Sankalp Bhavsar, a local rheumatologist. The session offered valuable knowledge for health and well-being, while also creating space for questions and discussion. On September 24th we had an excellent Yoga Session with Uma ji followed by games and food. It was wonderful to see our Seniors stepping up to sing and share the microphone, play Bingo and enjoy musical chairs.

It was a wonderful blend of wellness, learning, and community spirit—truly reflecting the purpose of Sanskar Sanskriti Setu in bringing people together meaningfully.

Food drive during Pitri Paksha:

At Sanskar, we recognized the importance of helping children connect with their roots. Each child created their own family tree, discovering and celebrating the legacy of their ancestors. Along with honoring our heritage, we also embraced the spirit of giving by supporting the Flamborough community. Together, we donated two carloads of food to the Flamborough Food Bank. This experience was not only meaningful but deeply fulfilling for everyone at Sanskar.





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First Day Sanskar Weekend classes and Sanskar Picnic Day

First day of Sanskar Canada Weekend Classes

Sanskar Canada is all about learning and keeping our Indian culture and values alive. Every Sunday, we have classes where we learn about traditions, festivals, customs, and even languages. The word "Sanskar" itself means to build good values and character, and that's exactly what these classes help us with.

Our new academic year started on September 13, and it was super exciting! The classes are not just about learning, but also about having fun together as a community. We celebrate big festivals like Diwali, Holi, and Navratri, which makes us feel connected to our culture even though we live far away from India.

A normal Sunday at Sanskar is really fun. We start with yoga for about an hour, then we have breakfast. After that, we do chanting and bhajans. Then comes dance practice, where we learn different songs. One of the best parts is that parents or volunteers bring delicious lunch for everyone! After lunch, we get to do creative art and craft activities. Personally, one of my favorite things is listening to spiritual stories and having group conversations.

Sanskar Picnic

On September 21, we had our annual Sanskar Picnic, and it was amazing! The day began with kids' performances, which were really entertaining. There were also special games for seniors, and activities like face painting, tattoos, chanting, dancing, and art for the kids. We even had a small bouncy castle!

The food was super tasty, and we played so many fun games like Bingo, musical chairs, and dance freeze. Everyone had such a good time. We are really thankful to all the volunteers and families who made the picnic possible. It was a wonderful day, and we hope that more people can join us for future events like this!

- Ira Sharma, Grade 7



Navratri



Navratri, also known as Ghatasthapana, is a festival dedicated to the Divine Feminine (Devi). The word Navratri comes from Sanskrit, combining the prefix "Nav" (nine) and "Rat" (nights). It is believed that Lord Rama had worshipped a different form of Devi for nine days, and on the tenth day (Dussehra, or Vijaya Dashami), he emerged victorious against Ravana. Each day of the celebration Navratri has an associated color that devotees are encouraged to wear.

In the state of Gujarat, Navratri is celebrated with vibrant Garba and Dandiya dances. Communities gather in open grounds, dressed in colorful traditional attire, dancing in rhythmic circles to devotional music. The nights come alive with energy, devotion, and joy. Furthermore, this celebration does its job by bringing groups of people together to immerse in the traditions of Navratri.

In West Bengal, Navratri overlaps with Durga Puja, a grand celebration honoring Maa Durga. Murtis are installed in beautifully decorated altars, and the air is filled with chants, music, and cultural performances.

In Maharashtra and North India, the festival begins with Ghatasthapana, the ritual installation of a sacred pot symbolizing the goddess. Devotees offer daily prayers, light lamps, and fast during the nine nights. The focus is on inner devotion and discipline, culminating in Dussehra, which marks the victory of good over evil—the day when Lord Rama defeated the evil rakshasa Ravana.

Navratri is celebrated in many different ways across India, but what I love the most is getting to pray with my family and celebrate together.

-Avish Sareen, Grade 8



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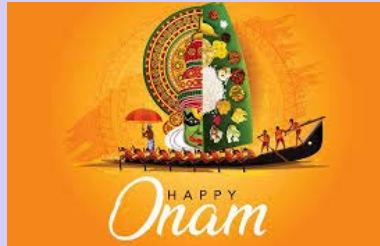


Navratri celebration at Sanskar Canada

This year, Sanskar Canada celebrated Navratri in a very special and beautiful way! Every evening for 9 days, we gathered for Bhajans, Aarti, and Garba. The energy was full of devotion and joy, and it felt amazing to be part of it. On September 28, we had *Mata Ki Chowki*, where everyone joined in devotional singing. Prasad was shared, and chunni was offered to Maa Durga. It was a truly spiritual moment for all of us. On Ashtami, we celebrated *Kanjak/Kanya Poojan* with Sanskar families and kids. It was such a meaningful and heartwarming tradition. The whole Navratri at Sanskar was devotional, spiritual, and filled with happiness. Everyone really enjoyed being part of the celebrations, and it brought us all closer as a community. We are also looking forward to celebrating Dassera/Vijayadashmi on October 1st, which will mark the grand conclusion of these wonderful festivities.



Onam



Onam is a major annual harvest festival celebrated in Kerala, India. It represents unity and inclusivity, with people of all religions joining the festivities.

Historical Significance:

Onam commemorates the homecoming of King Mahabali, a much-loved ruler from a golden era of prosperity and equality. According to legend, the Devas grew insecure of his fame and sought Lord Vishnu's help. Vishnu incarnated as Vamana, a dwarf Brahmin boy, who asked Mahabali for "three feet of land." The generous king agreed, but Vamana grew into Trivikarma, covering earth and heaven in two steps. For the third step, Mahabali offered his head, and Vamana sent him to the netherworld. Touched by his devotion, Lord Vishnu granted Mahabali a boon to visit his people once every year. Onam marks this return, celebrated with joy, unity, and remembrance of his reign.

How it is celebrated:

Onam lasts 10 days, with the final day being most significant. Highlights include Pookalam (flower rangolis), Vallamkali (boat races), traditional dances, and martial arts. The grand Onam Sadya, a vegetarian feast on banana leaves, is the centerpiece, symbolizing abundance and gratitude.

How we celebrate here in Canada:

We celebrate Onam at community events and at home. We decorate with flower rangolis, light the lamp, and prepare Onam Sadya. Friends often join us to enjoy the Sadya on banana leaves, making the celebration even more joyful. Here are some pictures from our celebrations over the years.



-Sona Mooliyil, Sanskar family



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Philosophy of Seva in Sanatan Dharma



In Sanatan Dharma, Seva means selfless service—helping others without expecting anything in return. It is not only an act of kindness but also a spiritual practice that connects people, society, nature, and God. By doing seva, we grow emotionally, morally, and spiritually, while also supporting our community and following dharma.

Meaning of Seva

Seva means offering service to others as a way of serving God, because God is believed to be present in all living beings and in nature. This makes every act of service sacred.

Religious and Spiritual Context

Seva is linked to Karma Yoga, the path of doing one’s duty without selfishness. The Bhagavad Gita teaches us to dedicate our actions to God. Seva can be done in many ways—helping in temples, feeding the poor, caring for animals, or protecting the environment. It helps reduce ego, purifies the mind, and brings spiritual growth.

Types of Seva

- Sharirik Seva (Physical Service): cleaning, cooking, volunteering
- Vaachik Seva (Service through Speech): teaching, kind words, sharing knowledge
- Maanasik Seva (Mental Service): praying for others, good thoughts, showing care

Examples in Daily Life

Helping in temples, feeding the hungry, caring for animals, supporting elders, or even doing chores at home with love are all forms of seva.

Values Taught by Seva

Seva teaches humility, compassion, gratitude, and teamwork. It reminds us to see God in everyone and to live selflessly.

Conclusion

In Sanatan Dharma, seva is more than kindness—it is a sacred duty. By serving others, we also serve God, and it helps us live with love, responsibility, and unity.

-Keeshika Dhussa , Grade 8

Upcoming Events

- Sunderkand- Tuesdays and Saturdays-October- 4, 7, 11, 14, 18, 21, 25, 28
- Sanskar Sanskriti Setu- Senior meet- Oct. 1 On Zoom, October 8th-Inperson, Oct. 22nd-on Zoom, Oct. 29th -in-person
- Sanskar Deepavali Milan- October 18th 2pm-5pm

