



PITSCH
EARLY LEARNING CENTER

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- ★ **Dec. 1 - NO SCHOOL**
Professional Development Day
- ★ **Dec 14 - Winter Program**
Morning Classes: 5:15-5:45
Afternoon Classes: 6:15-6:45
Popcorn available for pick up after program.
- ★ **Dec. 18 - Holiday Headwear**
- ★ **Dec 19 - Candy Cane Day**
Wear Red & White
- ★ **Dec 20 - Grinch Day**
Wear Green
- ★ **Dec 21 - Mistle"toes"**
Wear holiday socks or slippers
Cookie Decorating & Read In
- ★ **Dec 22 - Long Winter's Nap**
Wear your Pajamas
- ★ **Dec. 23 – Jan 1 NO SCHOOL**
Winter Break
- ★ **Jan. 2 - Return to school**

SESSION TIMES

Morning

8:50-9:00 Drop Off/Bus Arrival

11:35 Pick Up/Bus Dismissal

Afternoon

12:40 – 12:50 Drop Off/Bus Arrival

3:25 Pick Up/Bus Dismissal

CONTACT US

501 17TH Street South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

715.424.6779

Press 0 - Secretary Tracy Weiss

Press 1 - Teri Thomas

Press 2 - Report absence

Attendance Line

715.424.6765

Press 2 for elementary schools

Option 8 for Pitsch Early Learning Center

Bus Companies

Safeway 715.423.1117

(Typically east of Wisconsin River)

Lamers 715.421.2400 opt. 2

(Typically west of Wisconsin River)

Winter Greetings Pitsch Families,

We look forward to enjoying this exciting month with your students. It promises to be a time filled with fun, laughter, anticipation, and special events.

With all the excitement in the air, children often have trouble sleeping. Attached you will find information about the importance of sleep in children. Sleep is such an important part of overall physical and mental health. Not getting enough sleep has shown to have negative side effects including irritability, difficulties with learning, and increased stress in children. **It is recommended that children ages 3-5 get 10-12 hours of sleep each night.** It is also important that children do not have technology access in their bedrooms as that can interfere with healthy sleep habits. Please take a moment to read the attached article.

Just a few reminders for this month:

- Send the proper winter gear with your child each day. We go outside as much as possible.
- If your family needs assistance with winter clothing or other items, please contact Aisha McDade at aisha.mcdade@wrps.net
- Inclement weather is just around the corner! Please watch our district webpage or local news channels for any school cancellations. In case of cancellations or early releases, there will be no afternoon 4K sessions.
- We ask for your assistance when picking up and dropping off your child. As our parking lot gets snowy and icy, it will be especially important that students are only dropped off next to the sidewalk area where staff can assist. Also, be mindful of your speed as you enter and exit the parking lot.
- If your child *won't* be riding the bus or their van, we ask that you contact the company to let the drivers know.
Lamers - 715-421-2400 opt 2
Safe-Way - 715-423-1117
Van - see card given to you by driver

Enjoy this festive season with your friends and loved ones,

Kelly Schaeffer,, Principal

Teri Thomas, 4K Coordinator and Student Engagement Facilitator

Tracy Weiss, Secretary

715-424-6779

CREATIVE CORNER

Activities to do at home to support your child's learning.

Gingerbread playdough



Ingredients:

- ♥ 1 cup all purpose flour
- ♥ 1/2 cup of salt
- ♥ 2 tsp. cream of tartar
- ♥ 1 Tablespoon of ground cinnamon
- ♥ 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- ♥ 1 teaspoon of ground nutmeg / 1 teaspoon of ground cloves
- ♥ 2 Tablespoons of vegetable oil
- ♥ 1 cup of water

Directions:

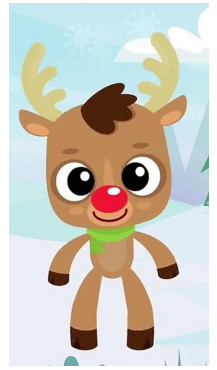
Wisk together all the dry ingredients. Place them in a pot with the water and oil
Stir until a thick batter is formed. Cook this slowly using low heat until a thick dough is formed.
Dump it onto a mat and knead it until it becomes smooth.
Place it in a fancy container for a teacher or send it in with your elf as a gift. It smells yummy!

<http://www.sweetsugarbelle.com/2011/12/gingerbread-playdough/>



Reindeer Pokey

(tune of Hokey Pokey)



You put your **antlers** in,
You put your **antlers** out,
You put your **antlers** in and
shake them all about.

You do the Reindeer Pokey and you
turn yourself around,
That's what it all about!

Repeat with: **hooves, red nose, fluffy
tail, reindeer body.**



Instructions

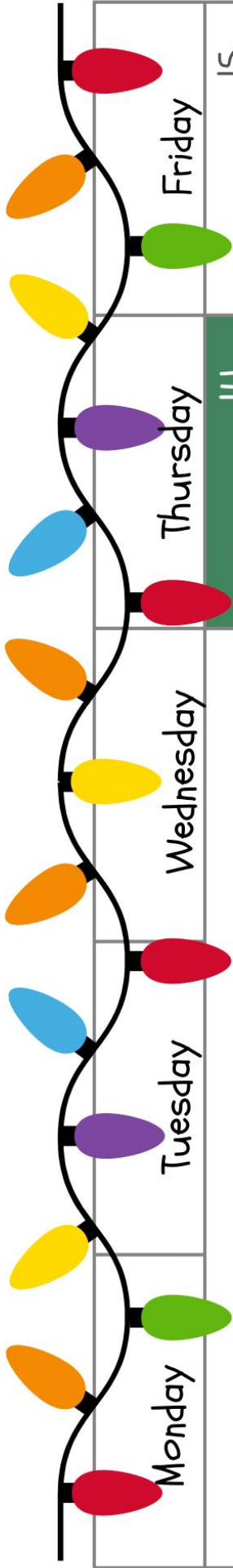
1. Cut the stems off all the strawberries.
2. Slice the bananas to a medium thickness (if they're not thick enough, they'll break putting them on the skewers).
3. Toss the bananas in lemon juice to slow down the browning process.
4. Slide the grapes down onto the skewer slightly more than you need to.
5. Slide on the banana slice, followed by the strawberry and top with the marshmallow.
6. Slide the grape up slowly (so you don't break the bananas).



Dance Like Snowflakes

(tune of Frere Jacques)

Dance like snowflakes
Dance like snowflakes
In the air
In the air
Whirling, twirling, snowflakes
Whirling, twirling, snowflakes
Here and there
Here and there.



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

December

18

Holiday Headwear

Wear Holiday Hats



19

Candy Cane Day

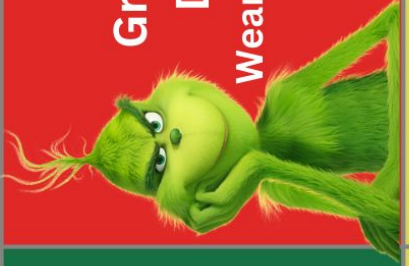
Wear Red & White



20

Grinch Day

Wear Green



21

Cookie Decorating & Read-In

Mistle"toes"
Wear Fun Socks or Slippers



22

Long Winter's Nap

Wear your PJs



25

NO SCHOOL



29

WINTER BREAK



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Winter program

Thursday, December 14

Pitsch Gymnasium

The Morning classes will perform at: 5:15-5:45 pm

The Afternoon classes will perform at: 6:15-6:45 pm



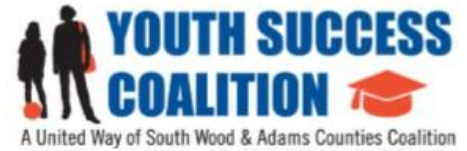
Pitsch Early Learning Center



Rainy Day Play Gear

We want to provide more outdoor learning and play opportunities for our 4K students in all weather, including rainy days. Young children learn through play and experiences; we have created a Donor's Choose Project to help provide rain gear and storage for the gear for our WEPs 4K classrooms. Click the Donor's Choose icon below for more information on how you can help.





NOTES FROM THE NURSE

Hello Pitsch families,

Happy December! Just a reminder that students are allowed sick days throughout the school year. Anything covered by a doctor's excuse does not count towards the sick days. Please request a doctor's excuse anytime your student has an appointment or is seen for illness. If your child has a fever of 100.4 or greater, vomiting or diarrhea please keep them home until 24 hours have passed with no medication use. It is recommended to follow up with a healthcare provider if your student has been ill for 3 or more days.

As the days grow shorter and the weather gets colder, any people feel sad or get into a slump at the end of the year. Sometimes when there is less natural light, we can feel down or in the dumps. This is called the winter blues. It can be caused by shortened daylight hours, increased stress, or even a drop in serotonin (a neurotransmitter) levels in the brain. Feeling stuck inside with nothing to do can increase our feelings of sadness. Opening your blinds or curtains to let in natural sunlight, when possible, increase Vitamin D, eating a balanced diet and staying active are all good ways to combat the winter blues. Staying busy, accomplishing a goal, and socializing with others can also help beat the winter blues.

I have put together a Winter Break Bingo sheet (see back of this page) that the students can do during their winter break. Staying active and accomplishing a goal is a great way to prevent the winter blues. Finish at least one bingo (5 in a row) and turn it in to me, Nurse Mandy, after break by Wednesday, January 10, 2024, for a treat. I will be doing a drawing for a grand prize winner of 4 Wisconsin Rapids Riverking tickets. Children must attend Pitsch to get a treat or win the prize. Feel free to do more than one bingo and stay active all winter break!

Good luck, stay healthy and happy!

Nurse Mandy

Find Fun at McMillan Library: Events & Activities For All Ages!

Did you know McMillan Library has year-round programming for children and teens?! Here are some highlights happening at the library!

Teen Game Day

2-4pm, December 1st & 28th

Enjoy snacks, PS5, Nintendo Switch, & tabletop games with others!

Teen Anime Matinee

2-4:30pm, December 9th

Watch anime with friends!

Teen Lego Build Day

2-4pm, December 27th

Have snacks, build cool stuff.

Family Take Home Kits

Learn to knit at your own pace—yarn & instructions included! Sign up ahead and pickup on December 29th.

Family Movie Night

6pm, December 12th

Enjoy a showing of the new Super Mario Bros. Movie!

Taylor's Version Celebration

4:30-6pm, December 21st

All ages of Swifties are invited to dress as their favorite era & party like it's 1989! Enjoy snacks, trivia, a photo booth, and supplies for friendship bracelets and paper rings!



Winter Break

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G

O

Practice ABC's and counting with someone	Read a story with someone special	Crabwalk across the living room 	Play outside for 20 minutes	Phone or video call a family member or friend
Help with washing dishes	Do a chore	Make a snow angel	Help clean your room	Help prepare a meal or snack
Do 5 jumping jacks, 5 push-ups and 5 sit ups	Try one new food		Draw a picture of your favorite animal	Do a Cosmic Kids Yoga on Youtube
Build a snow man	Bake a treat with an adult	Family game night!	Do a puzzle	Share two things you are grateful for
Donate a toy you no longer play with	Make paper snowflakes	Play charades	Craft a gift for someone special	Help write a thank you note

Please complete at least one Bingo and turn in to Nurse Mandy by January 10, 2024 for a treat. One Grand prize drawing of 4 Wisconsin Rapids Riverking tickets will be drawn on January 12, 2024. *Must attend Pitsch to win prize*

Student's name: _____

School: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____



November, 2023

Dear WRPS Families,

Supporting students, their families, and our staff members' mental health continues to be a priority for Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools. WRPS has several available resources to meet these needs.

The District has continued our partnership which we began last year with Care Solace to provide students, their families, and staff access to mental health care coordination services at no cost. WRPS and Care Solace continue to focus on removing barriers in accessing mental health care. Care Solace streamlines communication and coordination to connect individuals with the right resources and appropriate level of care. Individuals seeking mental health care now have a trusted companion to rely on. With a team of more than 500 dedicated Care Companions, Care Solace connects stakeholders within WRPS to licensed mental health and substance use treatment providers. Through a human-centered and technology supported approach, these Care Companions navigate the mental health care system on behalf of individuals, helping them find the perfect fit for their unique needs and insurance requirements. These multilingual Care Companions are available 24/7/365 ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for the entire school community. It is important to note that this service is an optional resource, available at your discretion, and is not mandatory. Care Solace is not an emergency response service or a direct mental health service provider. In the case of a life-threatening emergency, please call 9-1-1 or the National Suicide Hotline at 9-8-8. To learn more about Care Solace and its services, visit caresolace.org.



Students, staff, and families may access Care Solace services in two ways:

- 1) **Call (888) 515-0595** at any time. Support is available in 200+ languages. A dedicated Care Companion™ will help you every step of the way to research options, secure appointments, and follow up to make sure it is a good fit.
- 2) For an anonymous search, answer a few questions to get matched with an extensive list of care providers at caresolace.org.

Another resource available is Gaggle Therapy. Since the start of the 2021-2022 school year, WRPS has contracted with Gaggle Therapy to provide therapy services to students as a way to address the local counselor shortage. Gaggle Therapy provides secure video platform-based mental health and support services to students, facilitated by licensed therapists and counselors who are experienced in working with children and teenagers. With parental consent, students participate in 45-minute weekly video therapy sessions. All FERPA and HIPAA guidelines are adhered to, and there are no costs for families or parents. For more information, please reach out to your child's school counselor.

Additionally, WRPS has partnered with several local agencies to provide in person individual and/or small group support. These supports are available in many of our schools. Please reach out to your child's school counselor to learn more about what is offered at school.

If you or a family member is seeking counseling-related services, please consider reaching out to Care Solace assistance or to your child's school counselor. These resources are provided to you by the District, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. You can contact me via email at steven.hepp@wrps.net or by phone at 715-424-6724.

Sincerely,

Steven Hepp
Director of Pupil Services

Signs Your Child Is Exhausted: Spotting Sleepiness, From Babies to Teens

From pulling on ears and hyperactivity at night to irritability and napping during the day



From health.clevelandclinic.org

You know that feeling after a great night's sleep? That bright-eyed-ready-to-take-on-the-day feeling? It's a good one. It's the kind of feeling you want for your kids.

If your child isn't sleeping enough, though, you're far from alone. A recent study shows that more than a third of kids between 4 months and 17 years old are getting less sleep than is recommended. That means more groggy mornings and the potential to really impact their social skills and cognitive growth.

We talked with pediatric sleep specialist Vaishal Shah, MD, about signs your kid isn't getting enough sleep and how you can help kids of any age get more ZZZs.

Signs your child may be exhausted

Sleepiness can look different in kids of various ages. Whether they're too young to tell you they're tired, or getting too old to want to admit to it, learn to spot the signs of exhaustion in your children.

Tired babies

Research shows that when babies get too little sleep, it can have lasting effects on their growth, speech, memory and overall cognitive development.

The thing about babies is that the more tired they are, the harder it can be to get them to sleep. They get all amped up and it's harder to settle down. Learning to recognize the early cues that your little one is getting sleepy will help to avoid a full-blown, overtired meltdown.

Signs your baby is getting sleepy include:

- Fussing, whining or crying.
- Looking "zoned out."
- Pulling their ears.
- Rubbing their eyes.
- Yawning.

Tired toddlers

Tired toddlers can be a walking contradiction. They may outwardly seem "wired" or overexcitable when they're actually on the verge of exhaustion. It's like your toddler's little gas tank is running on empty so they lay on the gas pedal to see just how many more laps they can make it before the wheels fly off.

Dr. Shah says sleepy toddlers may exhibit signs similar to younger children, such as rubbing eyes, yawning and crying. They also may be:

- Clingy.
- Hyperactive at night or around naptime.
- Irritable.
- Slow to interact with peers or parents.

Tired children

For school-aged kids, a lack of sleep can make learning a challenge.

"If your child is struggling with excessive sleepiness, it can cause impaired memory and inhibited creativity, making it difficult to learn," notes Dr. Shah. "Their metabolism, immune system and cardiovascular system can be affected. Sleep deprivation can even cause depression and difficulty coping with stress and emotions."

If your child isn't getting enough sleep, they may:

- Be difficult to wake in the morning and want to reset wake-up alarms multiple times.
- Experience frequent mood swings.
- Have trouble concentrating in school or falling asleep in class.
- Look and act tired long after waking up.
- Sleep very long on weekends or take frequent naps