

DECEMBER AT RBS



Classes 2 & 3 Delivered pet supplies to SAVE Animal Shelter and then went to Mooyah for lunch.



Some Class 5 friends at the Roxey Ballet Performance on Saturday 12/1/18



Preschool's Gingerbread Polar Express



Classes 6 & 7 visited the Macy's Believe Mailbox to mail their holiday letters.



Holiday Fun ~ Class 4



Class 5 Friends



Rock Brook Family News - December 2018

Important Upcoming Dates

December 2018

24-31 RBS CLOSED for All Winter Break

January 2019

1 RBS CLOSED for All Winter Break

2 RBS REOPENS for All Regular Day  
8:40 am – 3:00 pm

8 RBS Board Meeting 6:00pm

8 Presentation about RBS HS  
7:00 - 8:00 pm

11 Parent Support Mtg 2:00 pm

21 RBS CLOSED for All MLK Day



From the Director  
Mary Caterson

Thank you to all who have contributed to our bus fundraising appeal. Please consider a donation if you have not done so. Tuition dollars do not cover all the expenses that are necessary to run a quality program. When we have to retire the school bus in June, we want to have our new one ready to go for the summer program.

And on behalf of the staff and myself, we want to wish you all Happy Holidays as we hope for a New Year of happiness and peace for all people.

Cheers and Enjoy the Break!

Mary

By Katie Hardgrove, RBS Principal

COMPASSION FATIGUE?



I participated in a webinar recently regarding Compassion Fatigue and building team and individual resiliency. According to the website, [Compassionfatigue.org](http://Compassionfatigue.org), Compassion Fatigue symptoms are normal displays of chronic stress resulting from the care giving work we do and it effects parents, teachers, health care professionals, animal caregivers, etc.

Kim Johancen, a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), discusses that the chronic stress is really toxic to your body. She also points out that toxic stress is contagious to others. Ways to prevent it include mental flexibility (focusing on solutions) and being resilient (an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change). The four 'shields' include having **awareness** (educating yourself), **acknowledgement** (feeling safe/understood), **acceptance** (can't always control what happens), and **affinity** (understand self/your triggers).

Skills and strategies include taking vacations, taking mental health days, setting boundaries, exercising, paying attention to sleep hygiene, paying attention to nutrition, build in reflection during the day, and laughing! Laughter is one of the best strategies and it can be as simple as watching a lighthearted movie or funny show.

Another website to check out for more information:  
<http://www.healthycaregiving.com/>

Some additional resources can include the following books: 101 Mindful Ways to Build Resilience: Cultivate Calm, Clarity, Optimism & Happiness Each Day by Donald Altman; and The Mindfulness Toolbox: 50 Practical Tips, Tools & Handouts for Anxiety, Depression, Stress & Pain by Donald Altman







By Mary Caterson, RBS Director

How to Make the Holidays Better for Kids (and for Parents too)

1. **Gifts, Gifts, Gifts:** Presents shouldn't be the only focus of the holidays. Giving presents is just as rewarding as getting them and adults need to teach that lesson to kids. Looking for presents for family members or participating in a local toy drive can help children learn to experience giving to others.
2. **Let them help out:** Children can help decorate, wrap presents, and make cookies. They will feel included and won't be glued to the iPad for hours...
3. **Keep routines:** The holidays are fun because it's a break from the everyday but that can be stressful for kids who find routines comforting. Try to keep some things constant.
4. **Remember they are kids:** Some holiday traditions depend on kids being on their best behaviors ( long car rides, or elaborate dinners), so minimize these activities and include physical activity and plenty of downtime. (From childmind.org)



Parent Communication / Support & HS Student Features		School Counselor Ms. G. Jessica Gosses, M.Ed., LPC	
<div><div><div>Happy Winter Holidays!</div><div></div></div><div><div>RBS CLOSED for All</div><div>Monday, December 24, 2018</div><div>Tuesday, January 1, 2019</div></div><div><div>RBS RECONVENES for All</div><div>Wednesday January 3, 2019</div><div>Regular Full Day 8:40 am - 3:00 pm</div></div></div>		<p>The holidays bring us so much to look forward to-friends, family, gatherings and gifts...but they also bring a high level of stress for many parents. There are lots of things you can do to reduce holiday stress, but even picking one from below and committing to it would probably help! Children pick up on adult's anxiety and being more mindful during the holidays can benefit everyone. Just a few ideas are below- there are of course many more!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Simplify.</b> Things do not have to be perfect as much as we want them to be. Make one less dessert, attend one less gathering- anything that will help simplify your hectic schedule during this time.</li><li><b>Delegate.</b> Accept help! Family members can all bring a dish.....do a gift swap instead of buying for everyone. Lots of options here!</li><li><b>Budget.</b> This one is tough since we all want everyone to be happy, especially the kids! But if you create a budget and stick to it, it makes decision making more black and white with regards to shopping.</li><li><b>Balance.</b> Try to not overindulge food-wise, and if you do, try and balance it with healthy eating and exercise. How we feel physically greatly affects our stress and vice versa. And try to remember to get your z's.</li><li><b>Last but not least, take some time for yourself.</b> You don't need to wait until New Years to start meditating or taking a ten minute walk daily, etc. These LITTLE moments can make a BIG difference.</li></ol> <p>I hope everyone has a wonderful, peaceful holiday break!</p>	
<div><div>Parent's Night Out / PNO / 5:30 - 9:30 pm</div><div>The next PNO is scheduled for : February 9</div></div>			
<div><div>SAVE - Halloween Necklace Sale Continued....</div><div>Here are a few pictures of HS students with the great blankets they made and then donated to SAVE.</div><div><div></div><div></div></div></div>			
<div><div>Staff Interview of the Month ~ By HS Student Evan</div><div><div><div>1. What is your name? "Miss Sarah"</div><div>2. What class do you work in? "I work in class 4"</div><div>3. What do you do at Rock Brook? "I am a speech therapist"</div><div>4. What do you like about Rock Brook School? "I like that I can be in the same classroom all day"</div><div>5. How long have you worked at Rock Brook School? "I have worked here for six months"</div><div>6. What do you do when you are not working? "I am cooking or going to the gym"</div><div>7. What is your favorite food? "My favorite food is pizza"</div></div></div></div>			
<div><div>HS Student Larry's News</div><div><div>Interview with Javier</div><div><div>I interviewed Javier from the High School on December 12<sup>th</sup>. He went to Buffalo Wild Wings for a Blazin' Hot Wing Challenge. He had to eat 12 ghost pepper sauce wings in 6 minutes without any drinks or napkins. After the challenge, he felt that his mouth was in flames and his eyes were red. He felt like he was going to cry. he drank milk to get the spice out.</div><div>Congratulations Javier for winning the Blazin' Hot Wings Challenge!</div><div></div></div></div></div>			

By , Colleen Rademaker, Speech Language Specialist, PS & Class 7	
<p>This month, it is a pleasure to recognize my student Audrey, Class 7, as student of the month! It has been a blast getting to know and work with Audrey since I have joined the Rock Brook School family this September.</p> <p>In the short time I have known Audrey, she has showed me her desire to participate both socially and academically. Audrey brightens up the room with her eagerness to engage with all of those around her. You can always count on a big smile and "good morning" when you run into Audrey in the hallways of the Rock Brook School!</p> <p>In class 7, we spend time working on expanding our language to increase participation academically as well as socially. Audrey so enjoys being a part of all activities and demonstrates a genuine desire to increase her language to further interactions with her friends and teachers. Her drive and willingness to try new things in our lessons is truly motivating to her peers. It is so enjoyable to work with Audrey and witness her gains in the area of speech and language!</p> <p>Audrey's enthusiasm to grow and learn personally, socially, and academically reminds me how lucky I truly am to have such an amazing job. I look forward to watching Audrey continue to grow and try her best in all areas. Thank you for working so hard and being such a joy, Audrey!</p> <p><b>Congratulations on being student of the month!</b></p> <div></div>	
<div><div>By Lisa Mantz, RN CSN, Rock Brook School Nurse</div><div><div>Gift Giving</div><div><div>During the Holidays many children, and adults, give and receive gifts. It seems you cannot watch television without seeing another commercial about the newest, latest, or best toy for your child. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers the following suggestions when purchasing gifts for children.</div><div><div><div>• <b>Choose toys for your child's developmental (not chronological) age.</b> Children with special needs have a unique risk for injury if their physical or behavioral development does not match the age on the package, according to a 2016 study.</div><div>• <b>Watch for choking hazards.</b> If your child is small for her age or has a swallowing condition, avoid toys with small parts, balls, marbles or balloons.</div><div>• <b>Look for toys that help parents and children play together.</b> This helps kids explore with pretend play and creativity. Being involved in these fun activities also helps parents notice their child's strengths and achievements.</div><div>• <b>Ask your child's therapist for ideas.</b> Speech, occupational, or physical therapists can suggest toys, activities, and interactions to help your child master new play skills at home.</div><div>• <b>Adjust the toy to fit the child.</b> Putting foam, Velcro, larger buttons and other aids on a toy can help children with motor, visual or other disabilities enjoy play.</div><div>• <b>Limit digital screen tboys.</b> 'Children and adults talk less when they play with electronic toys. Traditional toys inspire active, creative pretend play.</div><div>• <b>Books are toys.</b> Read with your child to inspire ideas for pretend play. The AAP recommends parents read to or with their children every day.</div></div></div></div></div></div>	
<div><div>Last Updated 12/10/2018 Source AAP News (Copyright © 2018 American Academy of Pediatrics)</div><div>Happy Holidays!</div><div></div></div>	