



Fall Newsletter

RMS Counselors Corner

2023



Welcome Back

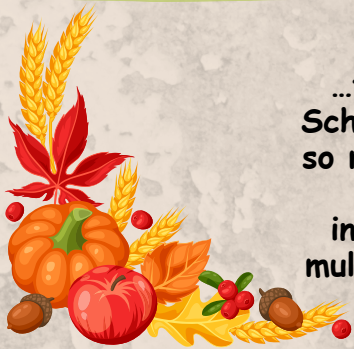
The "Together We Rise" commitment was established last year as a school-wide initiative of caring and inclusiveness. In our counseling developmental lessons this fall, counselors visited classrooms to reintroduce the commitment and asked students to develop pledges in writing about what they plan to do to create an environment at RMS that is respectful, responsive, kind, inclusive, empathetic, thoughtful, safe, and responsible. Counselors will continue to facilitate these lessons on creating a warm and welcoming environment. Each student has also taken the "RMS Pledge" by writing what they will commit to doing to improve the school community. These pledges are posted outside of the health office in the middle school...stop by and take a look!

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING

Each student will have an individual meeting with their grade-level counselor this year. We are excited about tackling this endeavor; as you can imagine, these meetings will take some time to accomplish! During the meetings, counselors will aim to obtain a sense of each student by inquiring about the student's feelings about school and friends, identifying areas of competency, and ensuring each student has a network of support. Establishing a rapport with every student is imperative in order to foster a caring and trusting relationship on which students can rely throughout their time at RMS.

Did You Know?

...the term "guidance counselor" is outdated? The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) states that counselors do so much more than just guide students academically. Over the past century, our duties have evolved. Today, our work involves many aspects of a complex educational system and multiple dimensions of student development. Thus, we are now referred to as "school counselors" - cool stuff!





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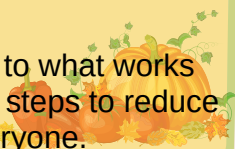
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Tips for Holiday Stress

Coping with holiday stress can be challenging, but following these helpful tips can help you and your family have a more enjoyable and less stressful holiday season:

1. **Maintain Some Routines:** While it's essential to be flexible during the holidays, try to keep some of your regular routines intact. Consistency can provide a sense of stability and reduce stress for both you and your family.
2. **Prioritize:** Choose your battles and focus on what truly matters during the holiday season. Not everything has to be perfect, so don't stress over minor details.
3. **Open Communication:** If you're facing financial challenges or other difficulties, it's important to discuss them with your family, especially with adolescents who can better understand the situation. Being open about challenges can reduce anxiety and foster a sense of togetherness.
4. **Create and Honor Traditions:** Embrace cherished family traditions and rituals from the past, or create new ones. These traditions can strengthen your family's bond and create lasting memories.
5. **Foster a Giving Spirit:** Teach your teenagers the value of giving and helping others in need. Encourage them to participate in charitable activities like food drives, volunteering, or visiting those who may be lonely. This promotes a sense of community and compassion.
6. **Be Mindful of Mental Health:** Recognize that the holiday season can be especially difficult for those with mental health issues as the pressure to be happy and joyful can exacerbate their symptoms. Encourage your loved ones to seek help if needed and be supportive.
7. **Connect with Loved Ones:** Make an effort to spend time with friends and family, whether in person or virtually. Social connections are essential for mental well-being.
8. **Plan Fun Activities:** Incorporate enjoyable and stress-relieving activities into your holiday plans. This could be anything from playing games, going for a walk, or watching a favorite holiday movie together.
9. **Pace Yourself:** Avoid overcommitting and overextending yourself. It's okay to say no to some invitations or activities to prevent burnout.
10. **Try Alternate Forms of Giving:** Instead of focusing solely on material gifts, consider giving the gift of time, experiences, or handmade items. These can be just as meaningful and less stressful.
11. **Remember Loved Ones:** Take time to remember and honor those who may not be with you during the holidays. Share stories and memories to keep their presence alive in your hearts.
12. **Prioritize Physical Activity and Limit Screen Time:** Encourage daily physical activity to reduce stress and promote well-being. Limit excessive screen time, especially for adolescents, to maintain a healthy balance.
13. **Practice Mindfulness and Gratitude:** Incorporate mindfulness and gratitude exercises into your daily routine. Reflect on the positive aspects of your life and the holiday season.
14. **Have Fun and Enjoy Family:** Ultimately, the holidays are about spending quality time with loved ones and enjoying the festivities. Don't lose sight of the joy and togetherness that the season can bring.

Remember that everyone's holiday experience is unique, and it's essential to tailor your approach to what works best for your family. Prioritizing mental health and well-being is crucial during this time, and taking steps to reduce stress and promote a sense of togetherness can make the holiday season more enjoyable for everyone.





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Keep in Mind

- Each counselor posts his/her X-period days digitally; these can be found in the X-period link on the Student Bookmark and outside the Counseling Office. Please encourage your child to seek us out during these times!
- Counselors will reach out to students and parents should tardies (5 plus) and absences accumulate. We are available to collaborate with families to devise a plan of action and support for those having difficulty with attendance.
- Students can seek support from their counselors in a few different ways: by sending us an email, stopping by the office during an elective or lunch period, or asking their teachers for a pass to the Counseling Office.

School Social Worker

Thank you to all who attended my first Parent Workshop on November 14 on cognitive development. This workshop served as a foundation for the upcoming events in my series of Parent Workshops this year. Please save the dates below and look out for the sign-ups to attend in the P.O. Newsletter:

Friday, January 12, 2024

Friday, March 1, 2024

Friday, April 5, 2024

Kristin Quintano x 3043

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

- Rye Youth Council Restore (counseling and therapy for students ages 15-22)
Email: restore@ryeyouthcouncil.org, Phone: (914) 222-0988
- NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Teen and Young Adult Helpline:
1(800) 950-NAMI (6264) or text "Friend" to 6264
- National Suicide Lifeline: Dial or text 988
- Westchester County Crisis Prevention & Response Line: (914) 925-5959
- Rye Police Department: (914) 967-1234 (or dial 911)
- Port Chester-Rye-Rye Brook EMS: (914) 939-4700
- The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+): 1-866-488-7386

