



**NAUSET
YOUTH
ALLIANCE**

Positively Guiding Today's Youth
Into Tomorrow's World

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

Our Present Is Our Presence

As much as we may love this time of year, it's also a time when we can feel extra stress. As we hurry to cross things off our to-do list, it's easy to miss the most important "to-do" of all: spending time with our children.

When we take a break from the bustle, slow down and give that precious gift of mindful attention to our children, we let them know how much they are loved.

Mindfulness teacher Thich Nhat Hahn reminds us, "The most precious gift we can offer others is our presence."

The gift of our full, undivided attention is hard when we are busy and have lots of distractions and thoughts that weigh on us. Yet we know that this kind of loving presence is something children need. When children receive our nurturing attention, they flourish within warm feelings of being seen and heard.

During the holiday season, it can be even harder than usual to find these moments for calming connection. When we take a break from the bustle, slow down and give that precious gift of mindful attention to our children, we let them know how much they are loved. This attention also helps them adapt to the excitement and unusual routines that may come at this time of year.

Connecting in this way is good for us, too. We get a chance to enjoy the feelings and intentions that are a part of this season – love and gratitude.

Here are some ways to practice presence this holiday season:

- Be intentional. Set some time to silence or turn off all technology (phones, TV) and connect with your child. Daily if you can!



Important Dates

**Early Release
December 6 & 22**

NYA begins at 11 AM following early dismissal. If your child is attending NYA on that day, please be sure to send a lunch as food services will be closed.



**School Closed
December 23rd-
January 2nd**

**NYA Resumes
January 3rd**

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- Find a feeling of calm in your own body before engaging with your child. Take three deep belly breaths (or more if needed) to calm yourself, so that you can be a comforting presence for your little one.
- Let your child lead. Notice and follow your child's interests and attention. Respond with support and encouragement. Is he excited to see the moon through the window of your home at bedtime? Take time to gaze together.
- Use your senses to savor the season.
 - Share a mindful meal or snack together with your child – explore a seasonal food with all your senses. Talk about how it looks, smells, feels and tastes.
 - Take a walk outside together. Look for, listen to, feel, and smell the change of the seasons. Describe what you are experiencing so your child has the words to share your joy.
- Be kind to yourself. Take time to do a special thing that brings you joy. When we offer ourselves care and support, we feel better and are better able to focus our attention on our children.

Have a wonderful holiday season.

Source: Zero to Three



Stony Brook School

SBES December Curriculum: We will begin the month of December talking about pets. Please send in pictures of your pet. From there we will talk about Holiday traditions around the world and in our families. Ask your children about St Nicholas Day and what they found in their shoe.

The final week of school before the holiday break we will learn about Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanza and Boxing Day. Happy Holidays to all and stay safe and well!

Eddy School

November's themes at Eddy were Friendship and Being Thankful. Students in each grade created a Friendship Web that allowed them to see how we are all connected by similarities we cannot see. We also made Thank You posters for people in our Eddy Community.

Students have continued to enjoy our Friday Baking activities where students prepare, cook, and serve the snacks for their friends. We have made pumpkin and apple pies, banana bread, personal pizzas, Mac and Cheese, and sugar cookies so far! If your family has any recipes you would like to share with us to include one Friday, please send or bring them to Emma at Eddy.

We will spend 2 weeks after Thanksgiving Break focusing on teaching students important self-care tactics including self-identification, relaxation, and expression in healthy ways! I have always found this to be an important theme for our students. As children grow, they are faced with many transitions. We hope that these lessons provide them with skills to combat difficult times, both in and out of school!



Please put your child's name in clothing they might remove while at NYA, i.e., coats, sweatshirts, mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, winter boots, etc. If there is a name in them, we can reunite the clothing with your child. Use a marker to write their name on a label, get preprinted labels and iron them in, etc. It would be a shame if a child were to lose a holiday gift from Santa, parents, grandparents... We also request that you put their name on water bottles. We would love to have a completely empty lost and found basket. Thank you!

Parent Resources

Parents have asked for resources on how to support and communicate with their child(ren). The internet is a valuable resource for such information full of webinars, videos, articles, and forums. Below are links to some though a search on particular topics will return results of a multitude of sites. If you find a particular resource that you think that would be valuable to other parents please share them with

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David Rost so he can include the information in future newsletters.

<https://www.common sense media.org/> provides information on helping kids thrive in a world of media and technology.

<https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/> is a site for parents actively supporting kids' social, emotional and ethical development

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx> is developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. This site provides information on children's developmental ages and stages, healthy living practices, safety and prevention, and dealing with health concerns at home.

<https://infoaboutkids.org/> is produced through a collaboration of the Consortium for Science-Based Information on Children, Youth, and Families, the site is committed to publishing resources with a solid research base. It has sections on body, mind, emotions, and relationships.

<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/> includes information about almost every aspect of your child's development.

I Have A Concern. Who Do I Talk To?

A reminder that Nauset Youth Alliance is a non-profit run by a parent board. We are given use of in-kind space by the town in Eddy and Stony Brook Elementary Schools but are not formally affiliated with the school. If you have a concern about your child's experience at NYA please do not contact the school's principals or your child's teacher. Instead, please raise the concern with David Rost, Executive Director; Emma McBrearty, Assistant Director, or a parent Board member. The members of the Board are Heather Sprague, Melissa Oomer, Kelsey Gilmore Ellis, Pat Sylvia, David Ayers, Donna Cormier, Rebecca Harrison, Anna Ramsay, Billy Weimer, and Josh Wile.

Thoughts on Recreational Marijuana

With marijuana now legalized for recreational use in Massachusetts, and the first dispensary open in Brewster, we would like to remind parents of our policy of "Grounds for Not Releasing Students to



Parents". In the event that a person picking up a child appears to be impaired by alcohol, drugs, or a medical condition, the staff is obligated by law not to release the student to that person. In this situation, a reasonable effort will be made to contact other people listed as emergency contacts; if

this is not successful, or the impaired party is resistant to the decision, the Brewster Police Department will be called. Let's keep our children, ourselves, and others safe and not drive impaired!

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