



Kids Need Mental Health Days Too

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Please check Brightwheel every day. There is important information there! Also, make sure your child always has a change of clothes and/or diapers/pull-ups, if necessary. Thank You!

What do you do when your child wants to stay home from school but they aren't sick? Do you allow them to take a day off if they say they need it?

I was a model high school student by practically every measure. I got good grades in honors classes, was involved in various clubs and activities, and had a healthy network of friends. I never skipped school, never got into trouble, and never caused my parents or teachers any undue grief. I usually walked the 1 1/2-mile trek to school, but one day during my sophomore year, I asked my dad to drive me. I'd been up late studying for a test that I didn't feel prepared for, and I didn't think I'd make it to school on time if I walked. As my dad drove me to school, I could feel it welling up inside — the pressure, the overwhelm, the exhaustion. I looked out the window and tried to pull it together, but my dad could sense something was wrong. He asked if I was okay, and the dam broke. "I think I need a mental health day," I squeaked, as the tears started to fall. My dad did the best thing he could have done in that moment — he immediately turned the car around. I told him I had a test that day, and he said he was sure I'd be able to make it up. "I need mental health days sometimes, too," he said. I exhaled, the weight of my young world slipping off my shoulders. It was one of those moments from my upbringing that really stuck with me. That sense of understanding from my father, the message that self-care is important, the permission to take time when you really need it. That simple act of turning the car around without question was one of the most validating things I've ever experienced.

*Childhood and adolescence are hard — harder than we often give them credit for being. Kids and teens are constantly growing, learning, and figuring out how to navigate the world. They are surrounded by adults telling them what to do and what not to do, and by peers often telling them the opposite. **Continued on page 3...***

Caterpillars/Buttercup Butterflies



The Caterpillars & Buttercups will be exploring colors in many different ways, making yummy snacks, and painting too. The Buttercups welcomed Ms. Jessica into the room, she is helping the children learn as they explore and play.

-Ms. Natalie, Ms. Stacey, & Ms. Jessica

Pixie Butterflies

This month the Pixies will continue to learn different colors while working on their Brown Bear, Brown Bear book. We will also talk about fall and participate in activities like jumping in leaf piles. We are very excited to have our parent/teacher conferences this month on the week of October 19th. We look forward to a wonderful new month!

- Ms. Maria & Ms. Vanessa



Elf Butterflies



The Elves are currently talking about exercise; how we like to exercise, where we like to exercise, and what are some cool exercises we can do inside or outside. As we are entering the second half of our exercise study, we will introduce gardening to our students, talking about what foods we find in the garden and at home.

-Mr. Steven & Ms. Shay

Julia Butterflies

Welcome to October! Our new study will be all about roads and learning about maps and our neighborhood. Please practice with your child their street name while we work on addresses. We will also continue to work on writing skills, which include our names and letters, and will create some fall art work.

-Ms. Paige & Ms. Vicky



October Happenings

Ms. Heather's 3rd Work Anniversary– October 3rd

Ms. Maria's Birthday– October 6th

Ms. Stacey's Birthday– October 11th

Ms. Natalie's 4th Work Anniversary– October 18th

Ms. Stephanie's 5th Work Anniversary– October 23rd

Ms. Shay's Birthday– October 28th

Ms. Vicky's Birthday– October 29th

Kids Need Mental Health Days Too continued...

Their present is filled with schoolwork, activities, family time, friendships, and admonitions to think about their future. Add on the fact that many kids are dealing with anxiety or depression, bullying, learning disabilities, or other mental and emotional challenges, and it's pretty clear that most kids and teens aren't living simple, care-free lives. I know a lot of people think kids these days are too coddled. The term "special snowflake" gets tossed around as the consummate label for a generation of children perceived to be treated as delicate, fragile souls who can't handle the inevitable challenges they're going to face in life. I understand that sentiment in many instances. I really do. However, I don't think giving kids occasional mental health days is coddling. Not when we have a population of people who do not know how to prioritize self-care. I've seen both kids and adults who reach the point of burnout, who either suffer the health consequences of overextending themselves or from self-medicating habits with various kinds of addictions to numb themselves. That's not what I want for my kids. It's important to teach our children to work hard, to do their best, to strive for excellence, absolutely. But it is equally important to teach them to listen to their mind, body, and soul, and to recognize when they need to take a break. Adults get personal and sick days — why shouldn't kids get them too? As long as a kid isn't being habitually lazy or taking advantage of a parent's sympathies, letting them stay home from school when they aren't physically sick is a good idea once in a while. Of course, it's not always that simple. Many parents work outside the home and can't simply take a sick day for their kid who is emotionally struggling. Though I could argue that mental health is as important as physical health, our society doesn't view them the same way. But maybe we should. It's easy as adults to think that children's lives are simple, that their problems are small just because their bodies are. But they're not. If your kid tells you they need a day off to breathe, don't dismiss them out of hand. Teach them that their mental health is important. Give them the tools they need to tackle life's challenges, and include self-care in that toolbox. We all need mental health days on occasion.

Spider Web Plates

These little paper plate webs are so easy to make and are a great way for kids to practice their hand eye coordination.

Here's what you'll need:

- ◆ Black Round Paper Plates, Hole Punch, White Yarn, Scissors, & Spiders

1. Punch holes around the edges of the plate.
2. Cut the yarn and tie it into a knot through one of the holes.
3. Using the cut yarn begin threading it through each hole back and forth into a web like pattern. If the yarn seems to long for the kids you can tie it off and two ends and thread it that way. Cut extra yarn where needed.

4. Get your spiders ready to place. You can find felt spiders with sticky backs at a craft store in packages of orange, black, and purple. Or cut some out of thick construction paper. You can place the spider under the web or on top.



Super Supper

Baked Ziti with Ground Beef & Side Salad. Pick-up Thursday, October 8th.

Black Bean Chili w/Corn Muffins. Pick-up Thursday, October 22nd.

\$5.00 each. Payment is due before pick-up.

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Mission:
The Winter Park Day Nursery provides a secure, nurturing and educational environment that is affordable and supports family diversity.

Vision:
The Winter Park Day Nursery will build a stronger community by providing high-quality, affordable early childhood education that will prepare our children to succeed in school and life.

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