

LEARNING, GROWING AND THRIVING Y-ASPIRE NEWSLETTER



MEETING WATERS YMCA

December 2017

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR Y-ASPIRE PARTICIPANTS, PARENTS, SUPPORTERS, AND STAFF

'TIS THE SEASON...

...for celebration, anticipation, and excitement. However, it is also a time of change—in routines at home, school, and Y-ASPIRE; in weather and daylight; and with all that, in our emotions as well. This is normal for all of us whether we're aware of it or not, but it can be especially difficult on kids. There are many strategies that we use at Y-ASPIRE to help kids cope with holiday stress that are easily transferrable to your home. Here are just a few helpful reminders:

- **Set a calm example** — the holidays are a stressful time for parents/guardians, this we know. How you deal with that stress carries over to your kids. If you remain calm and relatively stress free, it will help your children feel the same way.
- **Don't over schedule** — trying to do too much over the Holidays can easily result in "burn out" for both you and your kids. Keep that in mind when you're making your holiday plans, and be sure to schedule some rest periods between the fun and exciting stuff.
- **Give kids some "downtime"** – and yourself for that matter. Again, being sure to factor relaxed, quiet time into your busy schedules to give everyone the chance to recharge.
- **Let kids be honest about their feelings**—Don't force them to act happy and excited if they're feeling quiet or down.
- **Get some fresh air** — Sure, it's cold, but bundle up and go out for some adventures! Outside time is one of the greatest remedies when feeling cooped-up and stressed out.
- **EAT!**— Seems simple enough, but it's so easy to forget to eat when you're on the move from place to place, and it has a huge effect on your mood. Keep this in mind for both you and your kids.
- **Remind your child, and yourself, what the holidays are really all about** — It's easy to lose sight of the important things when swamped with all the little things. Pause for a moment once in a while to appreciate one another and your time together. Spending time with loved ones is what the holidays are ultimately about, isn't it?



Y-ASPIRE NEWS

FOR A BETTER US

Program fees pay for just 31% of the costs of operating our Y and delivering youth development, healthy living and social responsibility initiatives. Each year, the volunteers on our Board of Directors reach out to the communities that are strengthened by our services to fill in the gap. As a program member of our Y, you are in a unique position to "tell the Y story." We invite and encourage you to let your employer(s) and others know how much you value our programs, staff and contributions to your community. They can go to our website (www.meetingwatersymca.org) to learn more about our efforts and make a donation. For a better us. Thank you!

PREPARING FOR WINTER TRAVEL DELAYS

Winter has arrived, along with its weather, which can slow down your commute from work. We encourage you to be sure you have people you can call on if you cannot make it to your Y-ASPIRE site by your pick-up time.

SUMMER IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Well, maybe a long corner, but we're already preparing for another amazing summer at our Y Day Camp. Last summer, nearly half of our Y-ASPIRE participants also attended our camp. Online registration for Summer 2018 will open January 1st. Be on the lookout for an information sheet at your Y-ASPIRE site with more details about camp and how you can register early .



HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD

Each month, our Y-ASPIRE programs will focus on a particular "theme." The groups' discussions, projects, and activities will center around that theme, and help provide the enrichment that is a crucial part of our programs.

As you may know, November's theme was "Celebrating Diversity." At the various sites, students focused on learning about our uniqueness and our similarities, and through a range of activities, gained a greater appreciation for what makes people different from one another and what makes them so special.



This month's theme is "Holidays Around the World." Throughout the month of December, people from different cultures around the world come together to celebrate a variety of holidays. Through activities, stories, and other interactive mediums, our participants will gain a better understanding of these. They may learn something new about a holiday they're already familiar with, or about a holiday they've never heard of! It is a unique opportunity to highlight cultural differences, while also acknowledging the similarities between the way others celebrate and the way you do.



OTHER MWYMCA NEWS

OUTDOOR CLOTHING

In our HEPA standards, we commit to at least 30 minutes of physical activity during each day of Y-ASPIRE and to have that activity take place outdoors as often as possible (for all of the health benefits spending time outdoors offers). So, please be sure that your child has winter gear for Y-ASPIRE each day.

FULL DAY PROGRAM INFO

- Remember to call your site phone to report absences, late drop-offs, or with questions during break.
- Please send indoor shoes along with winter boots, as time will be spent both outside and in the gym.
- Y-ASPIRE provides snack, but please be sure to send your child with a healthy lunch, in keeping with our HEPA standards. Do not send food that needs to be cooked or heated.
- Please remember to escort your child into the building, and to check in and out with a staff person each day.
- If severe weather is predicted, please check our facebook page, WTSA, or WKVT, for delayed opening or closing info.
- All of our programs are NUT FREE, so please DO NOT SEND ANY PEANUT BUTTER OR NUT PRODUCTS.
- There will be no full day programs on December 26th. Check with your specific site about other dates if you are unsure whether or not we are running.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The best way to cheer yourself up, is to try to cheer somebody else up."

-Mark Twain

If you are not already part of our Facebook community, please join us!

