



December 2020 Newsletter

Jean McNair Elementary School

304 East McNair Road, Winnebago, IL 61088

HOLIDAY GIVING TREE

Thank you to all who have already donated to the Pecatonica Food Pantry Holiday Giving Tree Project in partnership with Schoolhouse Farm.

You may still bring in canned food and be a part of helping members of our community this holiday season. Canned goods and non-perishable foods will be picked up from McNair Elementary the week of December 14.



IMPORTANT DATES

- **Second Quarter Midterms Available** Friday, December 4 (*Information will be available on this day regarding access to your child's second quarter midterm grades*)
- **No School** Wednesday, December 23-Friday, January 1 (Winter Break)
- **School Resumes** Monday, January 4, 2021
- **Second Quarter Grading Period Ends** Friday, January 15
- **No School** Monday, January 18 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday) and Tuesday, January 19 (School Improvement Day)
- **Second Semester Begins** Wednesday, January 20
- **Second Quarter Report Card Grades Available** Friday, January 22



WINTER RECESS

Outside recess happens when the “feels like” temperature is 22 degrees or higher per the Childcare Weather Watch guidelines. If it doesn’t quite make it to that point, recess will be held inside. For outside recess, please make sure students are dressed for the colder temperatures. This should include, at a minimum, winter coats, hats, and gloves. In order to play in the snow, students should also have snow pants and boots. An extra pair of socks for days where our feet might get cold and wet isn’t a bad idea, either.



In addition, since there is virtually no barrier to the wind whipping across our playground, there could be an occasional time where we decide to stay in ignoring that “feels like” number due to extreme winds.

NWEA ELA AND MATH TEST INFORMATION

Fall NWEA Map Test Reports are being sent home with students today for all in-person learners and mailed home to our remote learners. Should you have any questions about these reports, please feel free to reach out to your child’s teacher. The Winter NWEA Map Test window opens in late January.

MCNAIR’S TWELVE DAYS OF SPIRIT



Join us in dressing up to celebrate upcoming Winter Break and to try and put a little “fun” into a not so typical school year!



<p>December 7 “Clash of the Carolers Day” <i>Wear a mismatched outfit</i></p>	<p>December 8 “Holiday Hat Day” <i>Wear your favorite hat</i></p>	<p>December 9 “Festive Flannel Day” <i>Wear your favorite flannel or plaid</i></p>	<p>December 10 “Jingle Bell Rock Day” <i>Rock your grade level colors (3rd-blue, 4th-red, 5th-green)</i></p>	<p>December 11 “Merry and Bright Day” <i>Dress in your favorite tie dye attire</i></p>
<p>December 14 “Snow Hair, Don’t Care Day” <i>Come to school with your craziest hairdo</i></p>	<p>December 15 “Blizzard Day” <i>Blend in with the snow and wear white</i></p>	<p>December 16 “Wacky Winter Day” <i>Sport your wackiest winter outfit</i></p>	<p>December 17 “Happy Feet Day” <i>Wear your crazy socks</i></p>	<p>December 18 “Winnebago Wonderland Day” <i>Show your school pride by wearing orange and black</i></p>
<p>December 21 “Deck the Halls Day” <i>Kickoff the last two days before break by wearing red and green</i></p>	<p>December 22 “Long Winter’s Nap Day” <i>Wear your coziest outfit to celebrate the last day before Winter Break</i></p>	<p>December 23 Winter Break Begins</p>	<p>December 24- January 3 Winter Break <i>Have fun, rest up, and be safe!</i></p>	<p>January 4 School Resumes</p>

GUIDELINES FOR HELPING KIDS COPE WITH UNCERTAIN TIMES



The global health crisis affects everyone in some way and parents all over the world are wondering, “What do I tell my kids about this? What do I do?”

Children have an incredible capacity for strength, and parents can play a powerful role in helping their children cope with these extraordinarily uncertain times. Here are some practical guidelines for helping you help your kids.

1. Be honest about your emotions while modeling strength. Because our children copy our behaviours, they will learn to respond in difficult situations only as well as we do. Children who see their parents become overwhelmed with anxiety, fear, and grief will also become overwhelmed. At the other end of the spectrum, parents who stuff their feelings inside will deprive their kids of the opportunity to learn healthy expression of feelings.

The key is being honest about your emotions while showing that your family remains strong. For example, you can hug your child and say:

This is a very sad time. Sometimes I feel like crying about it and it also makes me a little afraid. But I know that we will be okay...because we are strong.

2. Limit your children's exposure to media coverage. Turn the television and radio off when your kids are in the room. Repeated exposure to visual and spoken images of a crisis can create more anxiety and fear. Younger children who don't understand how to put media coverage in perspective can become overly concerned and frightened.

3. Give them the facts about the event. Don't try to keep the current situation a secret! First, it's simply impossible to do. Second, humans create information when they lack it. When children only get bits and pieces of bad news, they "fill in the blanks" with their imagination. Typically, their fears, or the rumours that they might hear from their friends, will produce more anxiety than hearing the truth.

Children, even children as young as two years old, may need you to lay out the facts about the event. Tell them the basics while leaving out more sensitive details. Remember, your tone of voice must communicate compassion as well as strength.

4. Listen, listen, listen. There is nothing more powerful for comforting a child than an open ear, heartfelt understanding, and a warm hug from a parent.

5. Let them know that they are safe. Our children need to hear about the thousands and thousands of wonderful people who are working day and night to keep us safe and healthy. Despite any fears or doubts that we might have, our kids need to hear and feel that they are safe.

Make your reassurances short and to the point. When parents spend too much time, say too many words, or exhibit too many emotions trying to reassure kids that they are safe, then the message can backfire. Your message will be more powerful and believable if it is very brief and to the point.

There are thousands of people working to keep everyone safe and healthy. We are going to be okay. Have a good day with your schoolwork. I love you.

6. To the greatest extent possible, maintain daily routines. Daily routines give all of us a sense of predictability, control, and safety. When we stick to them, we also communicate with our youngsters that we are strong enough to keep going—and they are too!

7. Involve them in helping others. There are few things more therapeutic than helping others. Even actions that may seem small, like writing letters of support or sending a box of food to healthcare workers, can mean a great deal.

One last thought—following these guidelines can help, but it is just as important to take good care of yourself. The healthier you are, the healthier your kids will be.

Retrieved from <https://www.loveandlogic.com>

HOME AND SCHOOL CONNECTION



Here's the latest news from Home and School Connection. Please take a moment to look over the information on Managing Emotions, Reviewing Report Cards, Creative Writing, and other strategies for supporting your child's education.

[Home and School Connection #3](#)

[Home and School Connection #4](#)

NEWS FROM THE LUNCHROOM

Winnebago Schools offer both breakfast and lunch for students. Also, if you notice your child's lanyard and ID at home, please make sure they bring it to school and keep it here as it's used to scan when they take a hot lunch or breakfast.



BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

The Winnebago PTO may look a little different this year, but they are still collecting Boxtops for Education through the mobile app that requires no more clipping! More information can be found here, [Boxtops for Education](#)



From all of us at McNair Elementary, we wish you a happy and healthy holiday season

and best wishes in 2021!