

IN THE LOOP

with LINK

Updates, Observations & Anecdotes for Parents
from Julianne Allen, Family & Community LINK Coordinator

Parent/Family/Community Engagement Opportunities & Important Dates*

- 12/13 OFHS PTA Meeting- 7:00 PM @HS
- 12/14 ECC Family Literacy Night & Book Fair- 6:30-7:30 PM
- 12/16 ECC Preschool Winter Celebration
- 12/20-31 WINTER BREAK- NO SCHOOL
- 1/3 RETURN FROM WINTER BREAK
- 1/10 Parent Program PK-5: Supporting Student Wellness & Behavior at Home**
- 1/11 OFMS PTA Meeting- 7:00 PM @OFMS
- 1/13 OECPTA Meeting- 7:00 PM @ECC
- 1/14 STAFF RECORDS DAY- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
- 1/17 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY- NO SCHOOL
- 1/18 Parent Program- 6-12: Student Wellness- 6:30 PM @OFHS**
- 1/18 OFIS PTA Meeting- 7:00 PM @OFIS
- 1/20 Falls-Lenox/ECC PTA STEM Night- 6:00 PM @FL
- 1/24 OFHS- CCP Info Night (College Credit Plus)- 6:00 PM @OFHS
- 1/24 OFHS PTA Meeting- 7:00 PM @OFHS
- 1/24 OFHS- College Info Night for Juniors- 7:00 PM @OFHS
- 1/24-28 Celebrating Differences Week- District-Wide
- 1/25 Falls-Lenox/ECC PTA Meeting- 7:00 PM @ECC
- 1/26 OFMS Parent & Student DC Mtg.- 7:00 PM @ OFMS
- 1/27 ECC Kindergarten Info Night- 5:30-6:30 PM @ECC
- 1/28 ECC Online Kindergarten Registration 21/22 Opens- 12:00 PM
- 1/28 OFMS PTA Breakfast Buddies (registration required)



*For complete details, contact your building principal.
**See Page 3 for more info!



Parenting Special Needs.org

I am not the parent of a child with special needs, but there are children with special needs in my life whom I love. I want to understand how to support them and their parents. This website (and the magazine of the same name) offer guidance from experts and professionals, as well as tips from parents who share the unique challenges and joys of parenting their awesome kids.

Their mission is to provide parents of children with special needs of all ages and stages of life, both information and inspiration. And who couldn't use a bit more of that? Take a look: www.parentingspecialneeds.org

ICYMI IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



Parent Conference Feedback Survey

Did you take the survey yet? You know, the one for parents and caregivers who attended parent-teacher conferences this year AND for those who did not attend? So basically, the survey for EVERYBODY? Your feedback really helps us to know what is working and what is not. Plus, who doesn't like giving their opinion? I know I do! If you haven't taken the five-ish minutes to fill this out, you have a few more days. Help us help you! Scan the fancy code to the right or click [HERE](#).

THANK YOU!



New Year, New You?

by Julianne Allen, Family & Community LINK Coordinator

In news that will shock no one, I confess that I did not keep any of the resolutions I made at the start of 2021. I'm not sure why I ever thought I could: 1. Wake up at 5:00 each morning to work out; 2. Avoid eating anything after 7:00 PM; 3. Spend less time scrolling through my phone or lurking on social media to see what a better year everyone else is having. To be fair, there may have been a few other things "going on" this year. Hopefully you were more successful, but just in case you failed miserably like I did, I propose a different approach for 2022. How about some resolutions that are not only good for you but good for your kids and family too? Let's see...

1. Resolve to eat dinner together. Or lunch. Or breakfast. Or a bowl of cereal at 9:00 PM (yes, after the 7:00 PM cutoff). As my kids have gotten older (with one in college eating who-knows-what) the opportunities for a family meal are rare. Children have their own schedules and plans and better options (curse you, Bibibop). Try to find a few days when you are in the same place at the same time. Heck, share a bowl of popcorn over a board game or a movie. If you are together and talking, I approve! (See right for proof that I'm not the only one who thinks this is a fantastic idea!)

2. Resolve to go easier on yourself when it comes to parenting. As parents, we don't always want to show our vulnerabilities. We want the rest of the world to think our kids are doing great and that we are cruising through life WINNING at parenting. In reality, even the SWEETEST AND MOST PERFECT ANGEL of a child can give you a real run for your money sometimes. Tweens and middle-schoolers may at times behave as though they are POSSESSED BY SOMETHING NOT OF THIS EARTH. Your high school student finally gets a somewhat reasonable personality back and THEY DRIVE OFF to their job or their practice or to Bibibop (again). They don't need you so much anymore.

Take it from someone with zero professional parenting experience: Do the best you can with the time you have with your kids. If you didn't love them so much, this wouldn't be so hard. Be honest with your friends. Let the school know if you need help. Soon your kids are going to leave you and you'll wish they were a crying baby again. (You may be a crying baby as they pack up to go to college or start their new job.) It's OK. You're doing great. Really.

3. Resolve to quit worrying so much about grades and academic achievements. Much like going easier on yourself as a parent, consider letting go of unrealistic expectations for your kids. I miss the days when I used to worry about my kid getting a "B" for Beginning instead of an "S" for Secure on their elementary report cards. I continued to worry through 8th grade. Now that I have a high school and a college student I realize how much time I wasted worrying about grades. I should have saved all of that energy for WORRYING ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL and COLLEGE GRADES because NOW IT REALLY COUNTS AND WHAT THE HECK IS THIS "C" DO YOU NOT REALIZE THAT C IS AVERAGE AND AVERAGE WON'T GET YOU VERY FAR IN LIFE AND

(Continued on page 3...keep reading!)

HAPPY
New Year

ONE OF MY FAVE "LINK APPROVED" WEBSITES, THE FAMILY DINNER PROJECT, SAYS "...RECENT STUDIES LINK REGULAR FAMILY MEALS WITH THE KINDS OF BEHAVIORS THAT PARENTS WANT FOR THEIR CHILDREN: HIGHER GRADE-POINT AVERAGES, RESILIENCE, AND SELF-ESTEEM. ADDITIONALLY, FAMILY MEALS ARE LINKED TO LOWER RATES OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE, TEEN PREGNANCY, EATING DISORDERS AND DEPRESSION." WHAT BETTER REASONS DO YOU NEED? DINNER IS SERVED!

STAY
"IN THE LOOP"
ON TWITTER!
@OFCSLINK
@OFCSDistrict

WHAT IS LINK?

LINK is an acronym for Learn, Inspire, Nurture, Know. The LINK Program is a district-wide family-community engagement resource. The goal of the program is to connect the Olmsted Falls School District with parents and families, to encourage two-way communication, and to help parents support their children's learning at home.

PLAN ON IT!*

*(Put these Parent Programs in your Planner, Please!)

Supporting Student Wellness & Behavior at Home

**3-Part Series for Parents Only
Grades Preschool-5
with
Meghan Barlow, Ph.D.**



**Session 1: January 10
Structure, Routines, & Habits**

**Session 2: February 7
Challenges with Anxiety & Mood**

**Session 3: March 7
Friendships, Conflict Resolution &
Social Skills**

**All sessions 6:00 PM- 7:00 PM
Olmsted Falls Intermediate School
Cafeteria**

**Childcare provided by
OFHS Student Ambassadors**

More information coming soon!

**Presented in partnership with
OFCS Student Services &
OFCS LINK Family & Community Engagement Program**

Focus on Student Wellness

Program for Parents Only
Content will focus on Grades 6-12 & include
Anxiety, Depression, & Suicide Prevention.
All Parents are welcome.

**with
Amy Carlson, MDiv, MSW, LISW-S &
Rebecca Quella, MSW, LISW-S from
Ohio Guidestone**

Information and resources to help
parents/caregivers to identify anxiety and/or
depression in their children and provide tools and
resources for knowing what to do and how to help at
home. Suicide prevention will also be addressed.

**January 18th
6:30 PM- 8:00 PM
Olmsted Falls High School Auditorium**

More information coming soon!

**Presented in partnership with
OFCS Student Services &
OFCS LINK Family & Community
Engagement Program**



New Year, New You (continued from page 2)

Whoa whoa whoa. I forgot where I was going with this. Oh yes. Resolutions. This one is challenging for me. Resolve to quit worrying so much about grades. Stay away from PowerSchool for a few days (a week?). It's ok to care, and you SHOULD care...but things have an interesting way of working out in the end.

Think about the people in your life (maybe even you?) who weren't straight A students and maybe even appeared to be a little disinterested in school...but now they are doing something great that they love and they are happy and successful and no one cares about the C they got in 10th grade? Maybe you have a child with special needs, and the achievements that you worry about are those that many parents can't understand. Fortunately, in our school district, while academics are of course very important, the focus is on the WHOLE child and inspiring and empowering kids to find their path, their passion, and their purpose. If you have a high-achieving kid who is going to change the world, then be proud! Are you raising good humans who don't get all A's? That's pretty awesome too.

Maybe that is what this all comes down to. Spend time with your kids, don't expect perfection out of yourself or them, and raise the kind of person you'd like to know. These resolutions sound almost TOO easy to keep. I've got a good feeling about our chances.

Let's do this, people! Happy New Year!

Julianne

LINK NOTES!

"In The LOOP with LINK" is published periodically throughout the year for parents and caregivers in the Olmsted Falls School District. Have an idea for something you'd like to read about in future issues? Email your questions, comments, and suggestions to OFCSLINK@ofcs.net. Thanks for reading! -Julianne Allen, OFCS Family & Community LINK Coordinator



TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Tech Tips for Non-Techy Types



A poll by the American Speech Language Hearing Association shows that 70% of parents of children under age 18 are concerned about their child developing hearing damage from using popular technology devices such as music players, tablets and smartphones— and 86% think their children listen to their devices at volumes that are too loud.*

Not all children using earbuds or headphones will suffer hearing damage, but parents should be aware that prolonged exposure to too-loud volumes can result in irreversible noise-induced hearing loss.

Here are some tips to remember when purchasing those holiday tech toys that kids have on their lists. Look for:

- **Volume-Control Features.** Devices with volume limiters may help protect hearing.
- **Noise-canceling Capabilities.** Earbuds or headphones with noise-canceling features can lessen the need to crank up the volume.
- **Kid-Size Fit.** Loose-fitting earbuds or headphones can cause sound leakage, prompting your kid to turn up the volume.

Visit the link below for more tips about protecting your kids from hearing damage caused by technology. (This will not protect them from pretending not to hear you when you call them! Sorry!)

*Source: [PTA Our Children](#), 12-2019

MY KID IN EVERY STORE



QUICK QUESTION:

Q: Where can I find tips for having a healthier holiday, ideas for dealing with the picky eater in my house, AND discover a yummy recipe?

A: Look no further than "Bulldog Bites" from OFCS Food Services Director (and my favorite registered dietician) Sam Chin! It's the gift that keeps on giving! Open it here:

[Bulldog Bites December 2021](#)

