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## November Monthly Update

Good Afternoon Orchard School Families!

Here we are - heading into the final month of the calendar year. For many of us, this is a busy month filled with holiday preparations and over scheduled weekends. Amidst the hustle and bustle that is sure to come, try to take a moment to give thanks. I know we'd all agree that our children are our most precious gifts. Take the time this month to tell them just that!

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As we head into December, there are a few topics I want to share:

Community Outreach Programs: This month, the Ridgewood Public Schools will host two community outreach programs. To start, on Tuesday, December 6th, New York Times columnist Ron Lieber will join us for an interesting talk entitled: "How, When and Why to Talk to Your Kids About Money". This promises to be a meaningful talk focusing on family values. This talk will take place at Benjamin Franklin Middle School. On Tuesday, December 13, Ridgewood Director of Special Programs, Kim Turner will host "Special Education 101" at the Ed Center. For more information, please visit the [RPS website](#) to view the folder for the 2016-17 Well-Being series.

Last month, the district hosted Ken Bartolo, a former standout athlete and since recovered addict. His talk was extremely powerful and quite moving. If you missed it, here are a few (serious) items of note.

- Addiction in America is a real problem. Roughly 1 in 10 Americans are currently addicted to alcohol and drugs. 90% of all addictions start in the teenage years.
- The connection for our adolescents is all about emotions. Do we talk to our kids about their emotions? Do we only ask "how's school/sports/music?" Do we ask "how are you feeling?"
- Alcohol and marijuana are not gateway drugs. They are drugs!
- A note about athletes. Athletes play hurt. They play on painkillers. They will seek out and find doctors who will clear them to play. 4 out of 5 heroin addictions start with painkillers.

- And, finally, a reminder to us all, to not be so hard on ourselves. “Perfection doesn’t exist. People who love themselves love their imperfections too.” When you are in your own head, “*What do you tell you about you?*” A powerful question for all of us.

American Academy of Pediatrics: As the mom of a two year old, and an educator by trade, I am always interested in the advice given through this impressive and comprehensive organization of doctors. Recently, there were some press releases that are worthy of attention. See the summaries below, and hopefully you too will find some topics of interest to your family!

- *Teen depression is on the rise.* Sadly, this is a topic we are hearing more and more about these days. [Read this summary from the AAP](#), with links to a study. You may have also seen a [cover story](#) about this in Time Magazine in late October. Bottom line: keep the conversations going with your child as they reach pre-adolescent and adolescent years. One on one time with mom/dad, before bedtime, and driving in the car are all less intense times to really talk with your child and hear how they are feeling.
- *Posting about your children on social media sites.* We’ve all been there. Maybe it’s us, maybe a friend, but we scroll through and see that pouting face, tantruming kid, captured in an instant. Or, someone’s pre-teen daughter, in a bikini on the beach. If you’re like me, you scroll, cringe and know that while these posts are made with the best intentions, social media is a slippery slope. As your child grows from baby to toddler to young adult, keep in mind the digital footprint you are leaving for them, and what types of photos/information you are sharing. It’s important for us to always remember that what is shared in the digital world is public - and can land in some unintended hands very easily. [Read more from the AAP here.](#)
- *Sports specialization in young children can lead to injury.* Let’s face it - we are a sports nation and Ridgewood is no exception as a sports town! Whatever your child’s interest, we hope that they maintain a healthy and active lifestyle - period. However, focusing too intently on one sport not only can lead to burnout (as we heard last year from [John O’Sullivan - Changing the Game project](#)), but can also lead to physical injuries and emotional stress. See more from the [AAP, including a link to their full report.](#)
- *Guidelines on media use with children have been adjusted.* Whew - we’re safe! All those face times we did with my sister and her family in Boston during my son’s first year were actually meaningful - despite the “no screen time before 2” rule. (I know, I know, he’s the first born, okay?!) We learned that and more when the [AAP released new recommendations](#) on children’s media use. See their article for recommendations for babies to 18 months, children aged 2-5, and children aged 6 and older.

As with every monthly update, we need some short reminders. Please read below on a few items of note:

- Link and follow our Google Calendar for HSA events! [Go to this link](#) and click on the +Google Calendar in the right bottom corner.
- Some special school spirit days are coming up:
  - **Thursday, 12/1: Team Spirit Day for Dan Gutman visit**
  - **Monday, 12/5: Orchard Spirit Day to kick off Change Drive**
  - **Friday, 12/9: Pajama Day to end Change Drive**
- Lunch Ordering: Just some reminders for ordering lunch through [Village Fresh](#). All orders are placed online. Orders must be in by 8:00 AM, otherwise, they will not be delivered on that day. December lunches begin TOMORROW! There is a change to the lunch schedule with pizza on Thursday, 12/15 and regular hot lunch on Friday, 12/16. Thank you! You can view the [ORCHARD DEC LUNCH MENU](#) here.

Please review the list of dates below for upcoming events at our school. Wishing you a busy and bustling December!

Warmly,

Mrs. Ferreri

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#### Upcoming events:

- 12/1: Author Visit - Dan Gutman - Team Spirit Day! (Wear your favorite team shirt and/or jersey)
- 12/2: Marking Period #1 ends
- 12/5: Orchard Spirit Day to kick off Change Drive
- 12/6: How, When and Why to Talk to Your Kids About Money - Ron Lieber, NY Times Columnist - BFMS, 7 PM
- 12/8: Grade 3 Play, 9 AM; Report Cards posted to Skyward
- 12/9: Pajama Day to end Change Drive
- 12/13: Special Education 101 - Ed Center, 7 PM
- 12/15: Pizza Day - Thursday (pizza for lunch)
- 12/16: Regular Hot lunch; HSA Holiday Luncheon for staff
- 12/23: 9:00 - Community Sing A Long; Minimum Day