

Holiday Spirit Week

Our school is getting into the holiday spirit with a fun and festive Holiday Spirit Week that brings cheer to every corner of campus! Each day offers students and staff a chance to show off their creativity and seasonal style.

The week kicks off on Monday with Pajama Day, giving everyone a cozy start to the celebration. Tuesday is Tinsel Tuesday, where outfits that glitter, sparkle, and shine take center stage. On Wednesday, Winter Wonderland Day invites everyone to dress in cool blues and crisp whites to capture the magic of the season. Thursday brings Holiday Chaos Day, encouraging participants to pile on as many holiday accessories as possible for maximum festive flair. The week wraps up on Friday with Holiday Sweater Day, showcasing favorite (and possibly ugly!) sweaters to end the week in true holiday style.

Holiday Spirit Week is a joyful way for our school community to come together, have fun, and celebrate the season in style.

Nicole Desharnais, MA
Board Liaison & Communications Specialist



Learning

Snowflakes

This month in the art room our students have been focused on creating snowflakes of all kinds. We talk about symmetry, work on folding and cutting, and get creative with paper while making snowflakes. The art room is beginning to resemble a winter wonderland with the snowflakes left on the tables from classes this week!

Robyn Allen
Art & Music Teacher

Student Art



Healthy Changes

Many people look at the New Year's holiday as a time to make changes. If you are looking to make healthier diet and nutrition changes here are some tips.

- Make gradual changes. You are more likely to make changes that stick if you make changes a little at a time.
- Avoid the "diet" mentality where you are going without a food or treat for a period of time, then "allowing" yourself to have foods that are not so healthy after reaching your goal. It's better to watch portions and frequency of not-to-healthy foods.
- Think about what you can add to your diet! Eating more fruits and vegetables is beneficial to help reach your nutrient goals but also to reduce your risk of chronic disease. The fibers in fruits and vegetables will help you feel full longer.
- Don't think eating healthier means you have to give up taste and flavor. Try some new herbs, spices or seasonings. Just choose ones without added sodium.
- Try healthier cooking methods like baking or sautéing instead of frying.
- Use plant-based oils rather than butter or tropical oils.
- Reduced processed foods.
- If you use frozen meals, look for one that comes with a vegetable.
- Limit your intake of added sugars from beverages and sweet treats. It is recommended to limit dessert to 1-2 times per week as part of a healthy diet.
- Focus on behavior and lifestyle changes.
- Stay away from fad diets.
- Avoid setting weight-related resolutions.
- Increase your activity in fun ways that are enjoyable for you. If you are not a winter-lover, check out on-line walking challenges.

Happy Holidays!

Lesley Robie, RDN, CNSC
Registered Dietitian

Nutrition



Holiday Happenings

Our annual Staff Holiday Party is a cherished tradition and one of the most anticipated events of the year, bringing colleagues together to celebrate the season and one another. This year's gathering was filled with warmth, creativity, and appreciation.

Staff were excited to receive Spaulding vests, a special gift that reflects our shared sense of community and pride. Once again, our talented Dining Services team catered the event, treating everyone to delicious treats that made the celebration even more memorable. Adding a whimsical touch to the festivities, staff put on their creativity caps while decorating holiday stocking ornaments, each one as unique as the person who made it.

The Staff Holiday Party is a meaningful way to pause, connect, and celebrate the hard work and dedication of our team throughout the year, and a tradition many look forward to year after year.

Nicole Desharnais, MA
Board Liaison & Communication Specialist



Happenings



S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Clinical

January is often seen as a fresh start—the beginning of a new year filled with possibility and the familiar mindset of “new year, new me.” It’s a time when many of us pause to reflect and set New Year’s resolutions, identifying goals we hope to carry with us in the months ahead. These resolutions are typically rooted in change and growth. But what if, alongside change, this year’s resolution also made space for acceptance and embracing progress at a realistic, meaningful pace?

That balance between growth and acceptance is something we prioritize every day within our treatment program. Our program is grounded in goal-based progress on behalf of our students and families, with an emphasis on setting goals that are both purposeful and attainable. When you attend treatment team meetings for your child, you are actively participating in this process—working together on what are known as S.M.A.R.T. goals.

S.M.A.R.T. goals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound, providing a clear framework that supports steady and meaningful progress. By creating goals that are realistic and individualized to each person, we increase the likelihood not only of success, but of long-term skill retention and confidence. Much like a thoughtful New Year’s resolution, these goals are designed to support growth while honoring where each student is right now.

Liz Lowrey, M.S. CMHC
Behavioral Health Clinician

S	M	A	R	T
Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-Bound
				
Create a clear, concise goal	Ensure you can measure progress	Ensure you can achieve the goal	Does the goal align with your business?	Make sure your goal has a deadline

Forbes
ADVISOR

Reinforcement in Real Life

Reinforcement isn’t just an ABA thing – we all use it every single day! It’s the little boosts that make us more likely to repeat a behavior in the future.

Think about it...

- Grabbing your morning coffee after surviving the school-day drop-off? That’s reinforcement.
- Clicking “Next Episode” because the last one ended perfectly? Reinforcement.
- Treating yourself to a new candle or cozy blanket after a long week? Reinforcement.
- That first glorious sip of Diet Coke? Yep... definitely reinforcement.
- Kids earning stickers, screen time, or a high-five for completing a task? Same principle!

Reinforcement helps all of us build habits, stay motivated, and feel successful. When we notice what’s reinforcing, we can use it intentionally – at home, in school, and in our daily lives – to support positive behavior and meaningful growth.

Nicole Hilliker
Behavior Specialist

Behavioral

Parenting Tips for Positive Reinforcement



Be Specific

“Great job at putting your toys away!”



Use Rewards They Love

Stickers, extra playtime, or a favorite activity.



Reinforce Immediately

This is so they connect the action to the reward.



Goals

When thinking about family and treatment goals, you may ask yourself "what supports do I have in place to help me reach these goals?" That is where your permanency worker is, yet again, a great resource for you! When a child or client arrives at Spaulding, the team completes an assessment on the student to determine their individual strengths, needs and goals. This is also an important time for connection with the family/externals. From this information gathered, we create the student's treatment goals. Often times, there will be goals that include the parents/family or are exclusive to the parent(s). Working with Spaulding's permanency worker and giving feedback on the feasibility of the goals is so important in the success of the parent and child.

Liz Lowrey, M.S. CMHC
Behavioral Health Clinician

Permanency

Note to self:

- Goal without Deadline = **Fantasy**
- Goal + Deadline = **Objective**
- Goal + Deadline + Plan = **Intention**
- Goal + Deadline + Plan + Consistent Action = **Success**
- Personal Meaningful Goal + Deadline + Plan + Consistent Action = **Fulfillment**

Source: unknown

Student Holiday Party

Every year, our campus lights up with joy during the much-anticipated Student Holiday Party, a festive celebration that truly captures the spirit of the season. As students eagerly await Santa's arrival, they enjoy cozy cups of hot cocoa, sweet holiday cookies, and get creative with seasonal crafts alongside friends. The atmosphere is filled with cheer as Christmas music, provided by DJ Cain, keeps everyone smiling and singing along. When Santa finally makes his grand entrance, the excitement reaches its peak. Each student has the opportunity to meet Santa and receive a special early holiday gift—making the day feel extra magical. It's a heartwarming tradition that brings smiles, laughter, and holiday cheer to students and staff alike, and a wonderful way to celebrate the season together.

Nicole Desharnais, MA
Board Liaison & Communications Specialist

Residential

