

December Newsletter

Wood County Head Start– West Center

2025

Upcoming Events

I/T classes closed– December 1st - P.D.D

PS & I/T – December 18th – Parent Breakfast



I/T & PS Classes Closed- December 22nd – January 2nd : Winter Break

I/T Classes Closed- January 5th – P.D.D

I/T Classes Resume – January 6th

Preschool Classes Resume– January 6th



Policy Council Representatives

Frances Kinsman-Milor- Home Base

Carlee Rendmeister & Lindsey Krenz- I/T

Ashely Webb- Preschool

Preschool

Field Trip- Biron Center

Friday, December 5th

Friday, December 17th

Winter Gear Reminder

When sending winter gear to school with your child, please label coats, gloves, boots, etc. with their first name and last initial so everything gets sent home to the proper owner.

Thank you, we greatly appreciate it!



Bad Weather:

School Cancellation Information

The Wisconsin Rapids West Head Start Center will not have classes if the school district of Wisconsin Rapids cancels classes for the day.

We will have any school cancellations posted on our Facebook page as well as Class Dojo. If you have any questions about our bad weather policy, please contact the Family Service Worker,





9 steps to keep your home lead safe

- **Test your home for lead.** If your home was built before 1978, talk with your local health department about getting your home tested for lead. If you don't know how old your home is, assume there is lead. In the United States, lead is in paint in 87% of homes built before 1940, 69% of homes built from 1940–1959, and 24% of homes built from 1960–1977. Homes in the Northeast and Midwest are most likely to have lead in paint. Ask the landlord about lead before you sign a lease. Before you buy a home, have it inspected for lead.
- **Before any work is done on your home, learn about safe ways to make repairs.** When repairs are being done, seal off the area until the job is done and keep your child away until everything is cleaned up. Be sure to use a certified contractor. Removing lead paint on your own can often make the condition worse. If work is not done the safe way, you and your child can be harmed by increased exposure to lead in dust. See the [EPA's Renovation, Repair, and Painting rule Web page](#) for more information.
- **Keep your children away from old windows, old porches, and areas with chipping or peeling paint.** If it is in your home, cover it with duct tape or contact paper until it can be completely removed. If you rent your home, let your landlord know about any peeling or chipping paint. Landlords are legally required to repair lead problems found on their property.
- **Do not allow your child to play in the dirt next to your old home.** Plant grass over bare soil or use mulch or wood chips.
- **Clean your home regularly.** Wipe down floors and other level surfaces with a damp mop or sponge. Taking shoes off at the door can help reduce tracking in dirt.
- **Teach your children to wash their hands,** especially before eating. Wash pacifiers and toys regularly.
- **Keep clean.** If your [work or hobbies involve lead](#), change your clothes and shoes and shower when finished. Keep your clothes at work or wash your work clothes as soon as possible.

Use cold flushed tap water for mixing [formula](#), [drinking](#), or cooking. If you are in an older home, run the water for several minutes before using it in the morning and start with cold water for drinking or cooking.

- **Eat healthy.** Some foods, especially baby and toddler foods, are known to have detectable levels of lead in them. Reducing your child's exposure to lead is key. Give your child a well-balanced diet that includes a variety of foods that are high in calcium and iron and follow the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations on [fruit juice](#). A good diet can help your child absorb less lead.



FOCUS– The Neighborhood Table (TNT)

Meals are served on Thursdays from 4:30-5:45. Closed holidays

- The dining room opens at 4:15 for seating and guests are asked to not enter the building before 4 PM
- Entrance is thru the Pantry doors with a small waiting area for your convenience.
- All of our meals are healthy and nutritious usually consisting of a meat, starch, vegetable, fruit and dessert.
- Inclement Weather Policy: For the safety of our guests and volunteers, FN Meals will close if the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools cancel school for inclement weather.





Community Events & Activities

Nekoosa Holiday Parade & Fireworks: December 6, 2025



Time: 5:15pm-9:00pm Parade 5:15: Begins @ Nekoosa Library on Buehler Ave, end @ Goodfellas's Pizza

Fireworks 6:30pm: Riverside Park

Central Wisconsin Cultural Fair- Holiday Gifts & Art Fair



Shopping Hours Nov 11 - Dec 20

Tue/Wed/Thu: 10A -5P

Fri & Sat: 10A-1P

Nekoosa Christmas Craft Show: December 6, 2025



December 6th 9:00am-2:00pm 416 Crestview Lane-Nekoosa (Nekoosa Community Center)

9th Annual Christmas Tree Walk: by South Wood County Historical Museum



Head to the South Wood County Historical Museum for the 9th Annual Christmas Tree Walk! Taking place December 6 - 14 | 12 - 6 PM.

Story Time takes place on:

Saturday, December 6 at 2 PM

Sunday, December 7 at 2 PM

Saturday, December 13 at 2 PM

Sunday, December 14 at 2 P

Rudolph Country Christmas: Saturday, December 13, 2025:



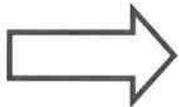
NEW THIS YEAR: Rudolph Village Park (1757 Park Street) for outdoor craft vendors, food vendors, Fireside Stories with Santa's friends, Kids activities with Touch of Wildlife, horse drawn wagon rides, Live Music, Pop Up Christmas Bar and of course visits with SANTA!

*Main Street Parade at 6pm!

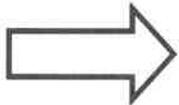


Community Resource QR codes

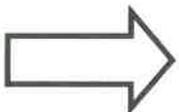
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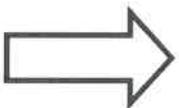
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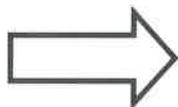
Wisconsin Rapids Events Calendar



United Way South Wood County



Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance (WHEAP)





Center Event Schedule

December 18, 2025– Family Breakfast only
I/T & PS 8:30-9:30

January 15, 2025– Family Breakfast & Activities
I/T 8:15-10:00, 8:30-10:00

February 19, 2025– Science Night
I/T & PS 5:00-7:00pm

March 12, 2025– Family Breakfast only
I/T & PS 8:30-9:30

April 16, 2025– Family Breakfast only
I/T & PS 8:30-9:30

May 14, 2025– Family Breakfast & Activities
I/T 8:15-10:00, PS 8:30-10:00

June - EOY picnic– PS only TBD



Ranch Mac & Cheese

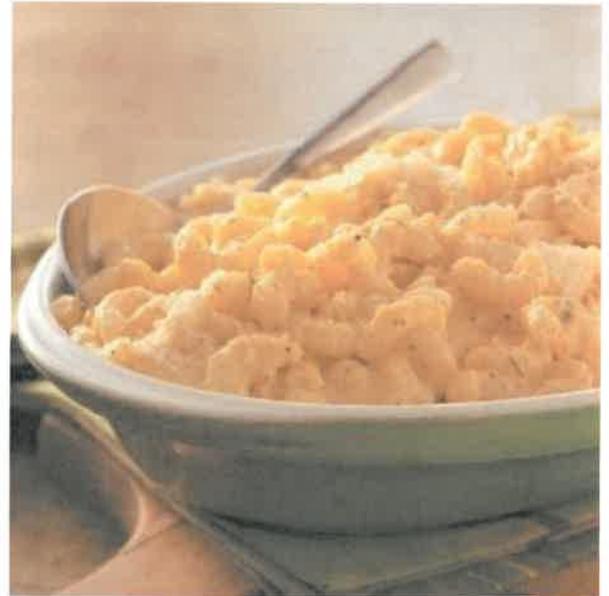
Prep Time: 15 min

Cook Time: 15 min

Yield: 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1 package (16 ounces) elbow macaroni
- 1 cup 2% milk
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed
- 1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic pepper blend
- 1 teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 cup shredded Colby cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup crushed saltines
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese



Nutrition Facts

1 cup: 488 calories, 23g fat (14g saturated fat), 66mg cholesterol, 1357mg sodium, 52g carbohydrate (5g sugars, 2g fiber), 18g protein.

Directions

1. Cook macaroni according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a Dutch oven, combine the milk, butter, dressing mix and seasonings; heat through. Stir in Monterey Jack and Colby cheeses until melted. Stir in sour cream.
2. Drain macaroni; stir into cheese sauce with the saltines. Sprinkle with Parmesan

Recipe by Michelle Rotunno,
Independence, Missouri
Tested by [Taste of Home Test Kitchen](#)

Build a Healthy Eating Routine

You know that healthy eating is key to a healthy life — and the good news is that small changes can make a big difference!

Follow these tips to build a healthy eating routine that works for you.

Choose a mix of healthy foods

There are lots of healthy choices in each food group! Choose a variety of foods you enjoy, including:



Whole fruits — like apples, berries, grapefruit, papaya, and bananas



Veggies — like broccoli, sweet potatoes, beets, okra, spinach, peppers, and jicama



Whole grains — like brown rice, millet, oatmeal, bulgur, and whole-wheat bread



Proteins — like lean meats and chicken, eggs, seafood, beans and lentils, nuts and seeds, and tofu



Low-fat or fat-free dairy — like milk, yogurt, cheese, lactose-free dairy, and fortified soy beverages (soy milk) or soy yogurt



Oils — like vegetable oil, olive oil, and oils in foods like seafood, avocado, and nuts



Depending on your culture and tastes, you might choose different foods than the ones listed here — and that's okay! You can find healthy foods that work for you.



Conscious Corner: A Parent's Guide to Conscious Discipline

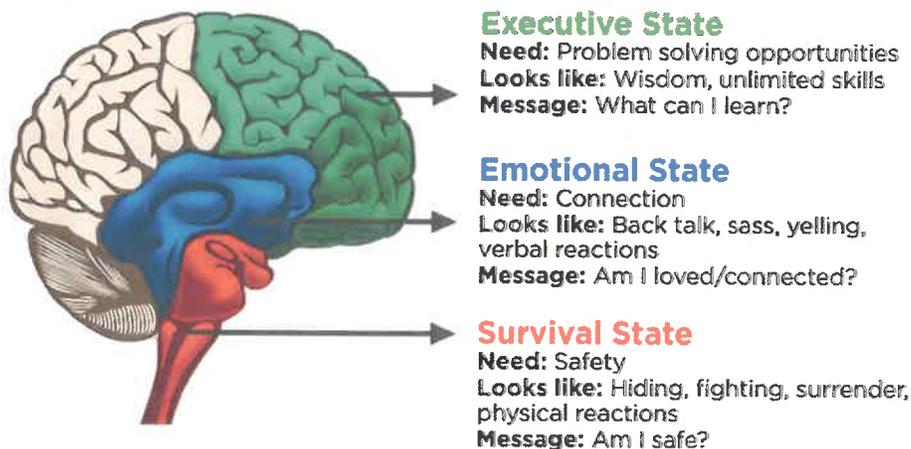
Last month we shared how you can become more conscious, present, attuned, and responsive to the needs of ourselves and our children. This month we would like to share five steps for you to help your children to take to help them learn to self-regulate.

Five Steps to Self-Regulation

“Self-regulation is the cornerstone skill for all development. It refers to both the conscious and unconscious processes that allow us to regulate our thoughts, feelings, and actions in service of a goal. ... The five steps are **I Am**, **I Calm**, **I Feel**, **I Choose**, and **I Solve**. The objectives for children when conducting the five-step self-regulation process are as follows:”

- 1—**I Am**—To recognize they have been triggered and take themselves to a Safe Place.
- 2—**I Calm**—Begin calming themselves enough to identify the feeling they are experiencing.
- 3—**I Feel**—To select the appropriate Feeling Buddy, naming the emotion and then helping the Feeling Buddy regulate its emotion, creating self-regulatory inner speech for themselves.
- 4—**I Choose**—To choose calming and/or engaging strategies in order to shift from an upset state to an optimal learning state.
- 5— **I Solve**—To learn how to address the upsetting event with lifelong problem-solving skills.

Conscious Discipline® Brain State Model



The Conscious Discipline Brain State Model helps us understand how the brain works in relation to discipline. An upset adult is always a threat to children's sense of safety. We must actively calm ourselves if we are to help children calm themselves. Taking three deep breaths helps us calm down by shutting off the stress response in the body.

Information courtesy of: <https://consciousdiscipline.com/methodology/seven-powers/>

West Head Start Center December 2025 Menu

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1  Center Closed | <p>2 WG French Toast Bread, Applesauce</p> <p>WG Fish Nuggets, Buttered Noodles, Mixed Vegetables, Pineapple</p> <p>Rice Cakes</p> | <p>3 Canadian Bacon, Hashbrown Patties, Banana</p> <p>Chicken Fajita Strips with Bell Peppers, WG Tortilla, Cheese, Salsa, Sour Cream, Lettuce, Corn, Pears</p> <p>WG Chex Mix</p> | <p>4 WG Life Cereal, Strawberries</p> <p>BBQ Pulled Pork on a Bun, Cheese Slices, Pickles, Coleslaw, Cheesy Tater Tots, Apple Slices</p> <p>WG Peanut/Seed Butter & Jelly Sandwiches</p> | <p>5 WG Mini Waffle, Peaches</p> <p>HM Meat/Cheese Pizza on Thin Crust, Cottage Cheese, Lettuce Salad, Orange Slices</p> <p>WG Goldfish Crackers, 100% Juice</p> |
| <p>8 WG Bagel, Cream Cheese, Jelly, Mandarin Oranges</p> <p>HM Chicken Noodle Soup, Crackers, Cheese Cube, Green Beans, Pineapple</p> <p>WG Muffin</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IT Only</p> | <p>9 WG Cheerios Cereal, Peaches</p> <p>HM Mac & Cheese, Diced Ham, WG Breadstick, Cooked Carrots, Pears</p> <p>Ritz Crackers & Peanut/Seed Butter</p> | <p>10 WG Blueberry Bread, Applesauce</p> <p>HM Sloppy Joes on a Bun, Cheese Slices, Potato Smiles, Pickles, Apple Slices</p> <p>WG Tortilla Chips & Cheese Sauce</p> | <p>11 Breakfast Croissant Sandwich with Egg & Cheese, Banana</p> <p>Meatballs with Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, WG Roll, California Blend Vegetable, Grapes</p> <p>Trail Mix with WG Goldfish Crackers</p> | <p>12 WG French Toast Sticks, Blueberries</p> <p>Cheesy Flatbread with Sauce, Turkey Slices, Peas & Dip, Fruit Salad</p> <p>WG Animal Crackers, 100% Juice</p> |
| <p>15 WG Oatmeal, Raisins, Pears</p> <p>Chicken Strips, WG Roll, Corn, Fruit Cocktail</p> <p>WG Cheez-It</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IT Only</p> | <p>16 Rice Krispies Cereal, Peaches</p> <p>Ham Rollup with WG Tortilla, Cheese Slices, Pickles, Tater Tots, Pears</p> <p>WG Pumpkin Bread</p> | <p>17 Scrambled Eggs, WG Toast, Banana</p> <p>Meatloaf, WG Brown Rice, Cooked Broccoli, Mandarin Oranges</p> <p>Yogurt, Pineapple</p> | <p>18 WG Pancakes, Sausage, Yogurt, Mixed Berries, Granola</p> <p>Roast Beef with Gravy, Buttered Noodles, Cooked Carrots, Hawaiian Roll, Apple Slices</p> <p>WG Graham Snacks</p> | <p>19 WG Muffin, Applesauce</p> <p>Meat Sauce, Spaghetti Noodles, Parmesan, Garlic Toast, Green Beans, Orange Slices</p> <p>WG Sun Chips</p> |
| 22  Center Closed | 23  Center Closed | 24  Center Closed | 25  Center Closed | 26  Center Closed |
| 29  Center Closed | 30  Center Closed | 31  Center Closed | <p>All-day session children receive breakfast, lunch and snack.</p> <p>Milk is served with meals and snacks, occasionally juice is served at snack time instead of milk, to 1-5 year olds. Unflavored whole milk is served to 1 year olds, unflavored 1% or skim milk is served to 2-5 year olds. Water is available throughout the day.</p> <p>WG = whole grain WGR = whole grain rich HM = homemade</p> | |

