

# WSCC

## WHOLE SCHOOL. WHOLE COMMUNITY. WHOLE CHILD. NEWSLETTER

January | 2025

### BOUNCING BACK FROM WINTER BLUES



When winter rolls in and the days get shorter, it's easy to feel a little "off"- like your energy is on snooze mode. If you've noticed yourself feeling extra tired, down, or just not yourself during the colder months, you're not alone. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), sometimes referred to as seasonal depression, can affect people of all ages. While it sounds daunting, SAD can be prevented and treated with the right know-how and support.

One of the most commonly thought causes of SAD is lack of sunlight during the winter months. Light therapy has been proven to lessen some SAD symptoms and brighten your day with just 20-30 minutes of use. Additionally, going outside, whether on a picturesque walk through the snow or having a full on snowball fight with your family, are great ways to release energizing endorphins while increasing your exposure to sunlight. Teachers can be proactive in the classroom setting with these practical tips to combat SAD to keep classrooms vibrant and engaging. To learn more about Seasonal Affective Disorder, you can visit the Mayo Clinic and Mind.org.



### A NEW SPOT FOR FRIENDSHIP AT FAIRVIEW ELEMENTARY

On Friday, December 6th, Fairview Elementary School in Bloomfield, NJ, proudly unveiled their new Buddy Bench! This exciting initiative was made possible through the Parents as Champions training hosted by The Center for Prevention & Counseling in collaboration with SPAN, and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health. A dedicated parent from Fairview Elementary applied for a mini grant after completing the training and successfully secured funding to enhance the school's playground with this new addition. The students at Fairview are well-acquainted with the book "The Buddy Bench" by Patty Brozo, recognizing it as a special place for those feeling lonely, where peers are encouraged to reach out and offer friendship. The entire school gathered for an assembly to sing the Buddy Bench song and enjoy role play scenarios presented by 5th grade students. Kudos to the Fairview Elementary School community for promoting kindness, friendship, and inclusion!

# ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD SPOTLIGHT ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Andrea, Social Media Chair of the Youth Advisory Board and senior at West Caldwell Technical School, was accepted on a full ride scholarship to Pomona College in Claremont, California, through the Questbridge Scholars College Match. Questbridge is a nationally renowned program that matches high school seniors with scholarships to one of 52 of the nation's top colleges. At Pomona, Andrea plans to study law or medicine. During the January YAB meeting, she shared more on the [Questbridge program](#) and how others can apply. Congratulations to Andrea for this achievement!



On Pajama Day at Sussex County Technical School, YAB members Louis, Madison, Lily, and Tamar spread holiday cheer in style! They tackled the important topic of Seasonal Affective Disorder. Using fun games like the Spin-the-Wheel, they handed out prizes and provided resources on mental health. They also shared information on the free counseling services offered at their school through School Based Services. Additionally, students wrote heartfelt holiday cards for local seniors and veterans.

YAB Head Chair Chadi and member Sandra spread holiday cheer in Jersey City by volunteering at a festive event that supported families in need during the holiday season. Chadi and Sandra enjoyed acting as elves for Santa while wrapping toy donations and handing them out to the children of Charles E. Trefurt School, PS8. The event was a heartwarming success, and we thank Chadi and Sandra for helping to make the day very special for the children of PS8.



**[REACH OUT TO RACHELK@CENTERFORPREVENTION.ORG](mailto:RACHELK@CENTERFORPREVENTION.ORG) FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW YOUR STUDENTS CAN GET INVOLVED WITH CFPC'S YAB!**

Happy New Year 2025



**[COMMENTS & QUESTIONS: EMAIL TAMARA@CENTERFORPREVENTION.ORG](mailto:TAMARA@CENTERFORPREVENTION.ORG)**