

White River School
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September 22, 2017

W.R.S. School Directory

Today is the last day to opt out if you do not want your family's name, email address and phone numbers published in the P.T.A. developed W.R.S. directory. (We do not publish physical addresses) IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR INFORMATION PUBLISHED PLEASE EMAIL: P.T.A. president, Krystal Brown at: wrspta@gmail.com The directory is organized by classes here at school so that you can contact families to arrange playdates, carpooling and birthday parties outside of school. (Please remember, we do not allow students to distribute birthday party invitations at school.)

Open House Night - Well Attended

It was a great feeling to have so many of you in our school last week for Open House! Our students appeared to find great joy in "showing off" our school and in introducing their family members to all of our teachers. This is exactly the feeling that we work to promote in our small, special community school; where all the members of a family view White River School as "our school"! The teachers kept track of the numbers of families that were able to attend and we averaged 75% participation. While we strive for 100% we recognize that other events were happening simultaneously that didn't allow some folks to attend.

It was a great pleasure to watch so many of you enjoying one another's company and interacting informally picnic style after the tour of the school. I want to thank the W.R.S. P.T.A. for their effort to provide a hot dog dinner for our families!

Becoming Informed About Technology Use Among Elementary Children

This is my 30th year as an educator and one of the things that I'm greatly concerned about is how many of our students have access to devices at home and apps that they are most likely not mature enough to be responsible with. Over the past 5 years or so, I've received numerous complaints from parents and students regarding upsetting and/or offensive posts or messages that were received through such apps. If you study the typical development levels of children or observe children you know that kids don't have a developed impulse control nor can they think through potential outcomes when they're excited, disappointed or angry. I've become aware of some very hurtful messages that children have posted using apps such as SnapChat, Musical.ly, FaceBook, Twitter and Instagram. **I cannot emphasize this enough: elementary age children are not mature enough to have access to these apps!** There is a wonderful opportunity coming up next week sponsored by Good Beginnings that I strongly endorse and encourage you to attend. (See below and also follow the link below for more excellent resources)

Here are a few other resources for you to read and consider:

[3 Reasons Why Social Media Age Restrictions Matter](#)

[What Age Should My Kids Be Before I Let Them Use....](#) (Common Sense Media www.common sense media.org) (Common Sense Media is my go to resource and I encourage you to sign up for their free newsletters for parents.)

What is Facebook?

Developed in 2004 by then Harvard University student Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook is a social networking site used by more than 500 million people in every country on the planet, so far in 70 languages. *The site's minimum age is 13, but teens represent only a minority population on Facebook.* [A Parent's Guide to Facebook](#)

Raising Screenwise Kids, presented by Dr. Devorah Heitner, PhD

Sep 27, 2017 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm - **Helping Kids Thrive (and Survive) in Their Digital World**; presented by the Dorothy Campion Corcoran Fall Lecture Series of Good Beginnings
Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital Auditorium E-F

1 Medical Center Drive, Lebanon, NH 03766

Free and Open to the Public Good Beginnings presents the 11th annual Dorothy Campion-Corcoran Fall Lecture Series Raising Screenwise Kids presented by Dr. Devorah Heitner, PhD, helping kids thrive and survive in their digital world 6:00 PM Refreshments: 6:30-8:00 PM Lecture/Audience Q&A www.raisingdigitalnatives.com

Cost: free - Free and open to the public

Contact: 603-298-9524, info@gbuvt.org, <http://www.gbuvt.org>

The Norwich Bookstore will have copies of the book available for purchase at the lecture

The White River School Technology Committee is also addressing these concerns by developing consistent, common language and messaging in helping our young students understand the HSD's Acceptable Use Policy. (See our Family Handbook for the complete policy as well as the HSD website: www.hsdvt.com)

Additionally, our teachers explicitly teach about how to be an honest, ethical digital citizen and how to keep oneself safe when using technology by not sharing information that can put one at risk. HOWEVER, OUR STUDENTS' USE OF TECHNOLOGY IS VERY LIMITED WHILE AT SCHOOL AND NONE OF THE APPS LISTED ABOVE ARE USED WHEN STUDENTS ARE IN SCHOOL! In other words, we can carry the message but we cannot enforce it when students are not in school. Every complaint that I've received has occurred when students have used devices when not in school.

Farm Day at WRS Coming Soon - October 13th

One of the many great traditions at W.R.S. is Farm Day! This is when we invite local farmers to our school for the day so that they can teach our students about farming in Vermont which is of course a great part of our Vermont culture, industry and history. We LOVE farm day at the White River School! We are seeking volunteers to help run our "Farm Stand" which the P.T.A. sponsors. We are also seeking volunteers to bake breads for sampling: apple bread, zucchini bread, pumpkin bread, etc.... The students will also sample vegetables and fruits. If you can donate bread or spend an hour or two at school working in the "Farm Stand", please email our P.T.A. president, Krystal Brown at: wrspta@gmail.com

Reminder:

Please be sure to log into Infinite Campus to make necessary changes to your demographic information. Please contact Mrs. Taber to obtain your campus ID# that is required to set up the parent portal. The school office also has a parent laptop for those that cannot access the internet from home. Thank you!

Upcoming Events:

- October 9th - Teacher in-service day no school for students
 - October 13: Farm Day @ WRS!
 - October 15: WRS PTA Fundraiser/Color Run Day at Max Field - more information coming soon
 - October 20 – PTA Family Movie Night 6:30 PM
 - November 2 - Early Release for students at 12:50 for Parent/Teacher Conferences
 - November 3 - Parent Teacher Conferences- no school for students
 - November 30 - WRS Winter Concert @ 6:30 p.m.
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