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Dear WRS families,

On Tuesday we held an assembly for students in grades k-5. Kaitie Eddington of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance introduced "Passport to Winter Fun" to our students. "Passport to Winter Fun" challenges children to engage in physical activity for an hour daily. Please look for the parent letter and the booklet in which students will record their physical activity. After 10 days of physical activity the students will bring their ticket to school and we will pass it on. There are opportunities for family fun when students hit their goal in 10 day increments.

I took advantage of this assembly to teach our students what scientists tell us about sleep, play and screen time. My purpose in doing this is to motivate our students to engage in the "Passport to Winter Fun" challenge! Scientists tell us that children need more physical activity than many children are getting and they recommend one hour of physical play daily. This means that children need to get their heart rate up and really move their bodies. The "Passport to Winter Fun" challenge is for time spent engaged in physical play **before or after school**. I personally challenged students to go "screen free" and use their time engaged in physical play, reading, playing board games etc... There is current research that shows that children are in front of screen as much as 7.5 hours daily! This is my 31st year as an educator and I have a growing concern about the number of students here at WRS who struggle to find conversational topics about things other than video games. Additionally, the students re-enact video games during recess play times and try to physically act out these video games. We are trying to help kids re-engage in "good old fashioned" play and to help them understand the negative effect of too much screen time.

Please find more information by looking at the following websites:

American Academy of Pediatrics:

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx>

Kids Matter: (Screen time and sleep deprivation)

<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/families/enewsletter/screen-time-and-sleep>

Science News for Kids:

<https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org/article/evening-screen-time-can-sabotage-sleep>

<https://www.iflscience.com/health-and-medicine/why-screen-time-bed-bad-children/>

American Academy of Pediatrics and Sleep Requirements:

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Supports-Childhood-Sleep-Guidelines.aspx>

**Upcoming Events:**

January 21st : Martin Luther King, Jr. Day No school for students- teacher inservice

January 22nd - teacher inservice

January 28 - February 8: Upper Valley Smiles, Dental Hygienist visits for students whose parents signed for child to participate

February 18-22 - no school - Winter Break

March 7 - Literacy Night (Flight Night) for Everybody Wins VT! students/mentors/parents 6:00 – 7:30 pm

March 21st - release two hours early for parent/teacher conferences

March 22nd - parent teacher conferences - no school for students