



DMS Newsflash

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Student Safety: Social Media and Internet Use

Dear Parents & Guardians,

We live in a world where we are constantly connected. The advancement and prevalence of technology has given us the opportunity to communicate and gather information from all around the world. The Covid 19 Pandemic further increased our usage of the internet and social media platforms to help us stay connected to others. In addition to communication capabilities, the internet and social media allow our students to play games, listen to music, and show their creativity. When used properly and safely, the internet has the capability to enhance our students' growth and inform them about a variety of topics. Unfortunately with all of the great things that social media and the internet offer, there are an equal amount of pitfalls. We will focus this article on social media and internet safety.

What is social media?

Websites, apps, platforms that allow people to communicate, interact, create, and share content. Examples of social media include: TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr.

Different ways social media can be used:

online profiles, to follow or request friends, messaging/chats, boards and walls to post messages, photo/video sharing, blogging, joining groups, and playing games.

How do I keep my child safe while he/she uses social media and the internet?

Learn, know, and oversee the apps your child uses. Gain awareness of age restrictions, policies, and safety on the app.

Show interest in your child's life and ask questions. "Friend" or follow your child and be aware of his/her activity. Let your child know you are monitoring his/her account to keep him/her safe.

Keep devices in common areas where you can watch your child while they are being used. Have devices "docked" at night in your presence.

Access parental controls including time limits, monitors on where your child goes on the internet, and internet conversations.

Talk to your child about who he/she meets online, and about being very careful not to share personal information or agreeing to meet someone he/she met online.

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Remind your child to talk to you or a trusted adult when he/she comes across something unsafe or uncomfortable on the internet.

Discuss the importance of what is safe and unsafe to post online. Children should never post anything they wouldn't want a parent, grandparent, or teacher to see online.

Remind your child that anything that is posted online can turn up years later, so always be safe and careful.

How can you model good behavior for your child with social media and the internet?

Know when to "unplug" and have device-free family time.

Model appropriate and good behavior with your social media accounts.

Set screen time limits for your child.

Ensure you have put privacy settings in place in your child's social media accounts.

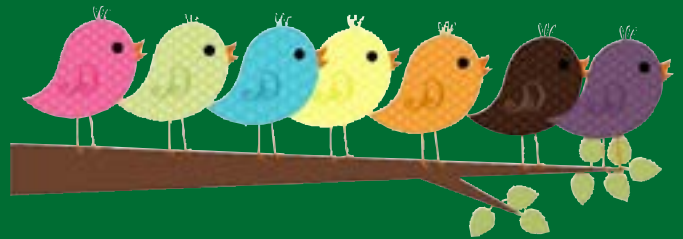
*Many of the recommendations about social media use and safety were referenced from <https://caringforkids.cps.ca>.

In late April, the Stonington Public Schools and Stonington Police Department welcomed Sgt. Kate Cummings from the Connecticut State Police to do a presentation on Social Media and Internet Safety for Parents. The purpose of the presentation was to further educate and help parents promote safe social media and internet usage. If you are interested in viewing the presentation, you can access it [here](#). In addition to this presentation, Stonington Police Youth Officer Kerry Browning will be meeting with all 4th and 5th grade students in May to discuss Internet safety and social media usage.

Important Dates

May

- 6 Basket Raffle sponsored by the PTO
- 9-27 Smarter Balanced/NGSS Testing •
Grades 3-5
- 12 Board of Education Meeting •
District Office • 6:30 PM
- 17 PTO Meeting • DMS • 5:30 PM
- 21 Color Run sponsored by the PTO
- 30 Memorial Day Observance •
No School



June

- 2 Grade 5 Celebration of the Arts at DMS
 - 5:15-6:15 PM ~ Art Show
 - 5:30-6:00 PM ~ Grade 5 Concert
- 3 Science & Technology Day at DMS
(students only)
- 9 Board of Education Meeting •
District Office • 6:30 PM
- 15 DMS Field Day (Rain date: June 16)
- 21 Last day of school • Early Dismissal •
12:10 PM



Thanks for your continued support and partnership in your child's education and well being.

Sincerely,
Jenn & Tom



Winner **CT Arbor Day Poster Contest**

Connecticut Arbor Day Poster Contest Winner

Congratulations to DMS 5th grader, Sophia DeCiutiis, who was selected as a winner of Connecticut Arbor Day Poster contest. Twelve participants were selected throughout the state for the award. Sophia was honored and recognized for her creative efforts on April 29th at Bushnell Park. We are so proud of Sophia for her accomplishments and strong representation of Deans Mill School at the state level. Way to go, Sophia!



DEI Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion



The Welcoming Schools Project

The Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) will be visiting the District Office on May 19th to train four building-based teams on the Welcoming Schools protocol. The purpose of this training is to bring teams of parents, staff, and community members connected to each of our schools to examine how welcoming our schools are to all families and students. Four specific areas will be evaluated by the teams: the physical environment/school building, school-wide practices and policies, welcoming school staff, and written materials. The principal at each school will also be interviewed as a part of the process. Teams will provide feedback to the principal on the day of the site visit and CREC will prepare a written report to each school within two weeks of the site visit. Recommendations will allow time for each school to make improvements over the summer for a more welcoming school experience for all families and students next fall. Site visits will occur at Stonington Middle School and Deans Mill School on May 24th and at Stonington High School and West Vine Street School on May 25th. Results will be shared on the district's website. If you would like more information on this process, please contact the principal of your child's school.

Meet and Greet

The Pawcatuck Firehouse is hosting the incoming superintendent, Mary Anne Butler, on May 14th from 10 A.M. - 11:30 A.M. for her first "Meet and Greet" in Stonington. This is an opportunity for you to share your hopes and dreams for the upcoming school year and the future of the district with her. It is the first of several "listening and learning" sessions offered by the new district leader. Please stop by and meet the new superintendent. Coffee and light refreshments will be provided.



Kindergarten Registration

If your child is eligible to start Kindergarten in the fall, please make sure the nurse has a copy of the most recent health assessment and immunization records. Please visit the [Stonington Public Schools home page](#) and select Kindergarten Registration for instructions.

COVID-19 Information

For COVID related information, please visit the [red banner](#) on the [Stonington Public Schools home page](#). Reminder: If your child has been exposed to COVID-19 and has not been vaccinated or has symptoms, please do not send him or her to school until you have spoken with the nurse.

HEALTH TIPS AND SAFETY TIPS

Preventing Sunburn

Sunburn can happen within 15 minutes of being in the sun, but the redness and discomfort may not be noticed for a few hours. Don't forget to apply sunscreen to your children prior to going outside to play.

Wear Safe Shoes

For safety of the children on the playground and climbing stairs in the building, we request children not wear flip flops or slip-on shoes while at school.

Dress for the Weather

Students will be going outside every day for recess now that spring has arrived. Remember to dress your children appropriately for the weather.

Tick Season

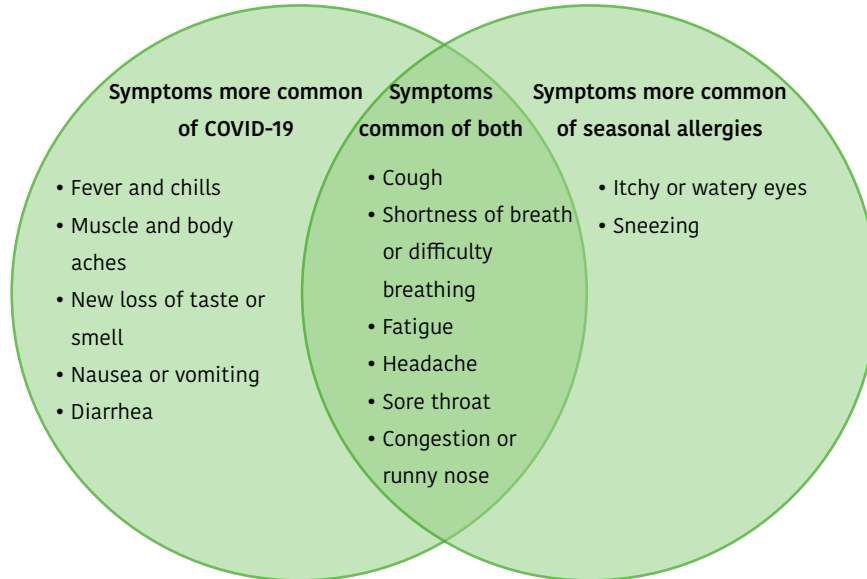
There have already been spotting of ticks found on staff and students. Please be sure that you are checking your child regularly.

How can I prevent Lyme disease?

Check yourself and your family daily for ticks. Look especially in the hair, at areas of the body that bend, in the belly button, in and around the ears, and where pants/underwear waistbands touch the skin. Dress in long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and tuck the pants into socks whenever possible when playing in woods or in tall grass. Use products that are tick-repellent on your skin while outdoors, and treat your clothing with a product that contains permethrin.

Allergy season

As you know, allergy season is here in New England. Please be advised that many symptoms are also consistent with COVID-19 symptoms. Please be sure to check with your child's doctor and manage symptoms accordingly. If your child needs to take allergy medicine, please remember to give it to them before school.



Families, students, and staff continue to do a fantastic job keeping themselves healthy by staying hydrated and practicing good hand washing!

Thank you for doing your part to keep the DMS community **HEALTHY!**

Nurse Lori

DMSnurse@stoningtonschools.org

Reminder!

Basket Raffle May 6th

- **Friday, May 6th in DMS Gym •**
- **Early Ticket Sales: 3:45 PM @ DMS •**
 - **Ticket Sales: 5 PM-6:15 PM •**
 - **Drawing begins at 6:30 PM •**
 - **\$10 for a sheet of 25 tickets •**
- **Refreshments will be sold in the DMS cafeteria to support the Grade 5 Party •**



Thank You



Thanks to Stonington Education Fund, our students have had some very exciting opportunities to use the DMS Outdoor Classroom!

The Outdoor Classroom is surrounded by native plants and bird feeders. Recently, students have planted bulbs along the perimeter using child-sized shovels and watering cans.



Students walk on a new pathway to reach their seats on benches and picnic tables near the outdoor whiteboard. Teachers have had the chance to use the white board to teach their lessons outside, and students are able to use materials bought using funds from the SEF Grant.



The Outdoor Classroom Committee would like to thank the Stonington Education Fund for providing the materials needed to facilitate outdoor learning.



It has been an amazing experience to watch the children explore the world around them!





THANK YOU!

Dear Parents and Families,

We're sending our sincere gratitude for making our Spring 2022 Scholastic Book Fair an outstanding success!

Thanks to your contributions, we were able to bring nearly 250 new books into the school and classroom libraries. We earned over \$6400 in cash and Scholastic Dollars for our PTO and school to use for future needs. We also collected more than \$475 for All for Books™, a program turning Book Fair donations into books for children who cannot afford them all across the country.

Our reward for hosting a Book Fair is watching your kids discover new books. All that joy wouldn't be possible without the wonderful staff members and volunteers from our school community – you deserve our special thanks:

Ms. McCurdy, Mr. Bousquet, Mr. Irvine, Mrs. Petrie, Mrs. Gavitt, and ALL the custodial staff, as well as our school community volunteers: Alison Taylor, Amanda King, Christine Morales, Dan Volpe, Dana Dupont, Daniel Cleary, Dylan Lawrence, Edie Morren, Christopher Morren, Elizabeth Lille, Erin Janicek, Gabrielle Richards, Keith Richards, Katie Gauthier, Glenda Dexter, Heather Turcotte, Jennifer Dahlgren, Jasmine Myers, Jennifer Flynn, Jill Bessette, Jolene Freiart, Joshua Penfield, Julia Leeming, Katie Williams, Keelie Driscoll, Leeann MacDonald-Christie, Lena Ellison, Marcy Kelly, Marie Cleary, Megan LaCour, Rachel Sherman, Ruth Peterle-Dzurec, Sara Page, Tracey Strelczuk, and Wesley Hilyard.

We hope to see you and your child at our next fair in the fall. Until then, happy reading!

Gratefully,

Stephanie and Heidii
The Deans Mill School PTO

Basket Raffle Fundraiser

The PTO is excited to host the Basket Raffle. The **May 6th** raffle will help to raise funds for student activities. This will be our first big fundraiser since Winter 2019!

We are looking forward to a great turnout for the raffle and we thank those who have provided a donation for their child's classroom basket.

Look at the wonderful assortment of themed baskets for this event!



Basket Theme	Classroom Teacher	Grade
Games & Puzzles	Lance	5
Retro (80's/90's)	Barth	5
Disney+ (Marvel, Star Wars, Pixar)	Salsich	5
Sports Equipment	McGowan	5
School Supplies	Pescatello	4
Pet Lover	Peay	4
Road Trip	Durham	4
Ice Cream Party!	Garceau	4
Candy, Candy, Candy!	Whipple	3
Camping Basket	Rogers	3
Chapter Books	O'Lari	3
Picture Books	Gill	3
Birds and Bloom	Wilkins	2
Movie Night	Discordia	2
Fidget Fun	Sartor	2
Arts and Crafts	Hansen	2
Beach Day	McKee	1
Fun in the Sun (Outdoor Play)	Watson	1
Backyard/Driveway Games	Rovella	1
Coffee Basket	Mellow	1
Arts and Crafts	Hetu	K
Spa Basket	Lettiero	K
Reading Fun!	Romano	K
Chocolate Lovers	Wade	K

Be sure to mark your calendar for **May 6th**. Thank you for your support! This event would not be possible without your willingness to help.

Contact Susan Isif, Basket Raffle Chair, at susanisif03@gmail.com if you have any questions.