



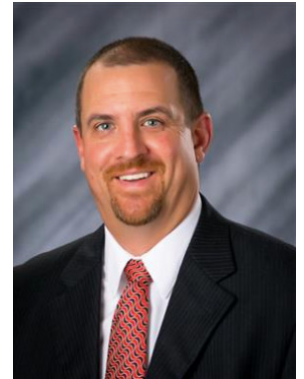
## SUPERINTENDENT MESSAGE

For most districts, the onset of February means that it is time to begin planning for the upcoming school year. As a district, we are required to have the board certify the budget for the 2023-2024 school year by April 15th and as such, the work of preparing the budget and making staffing decisions is well underway.

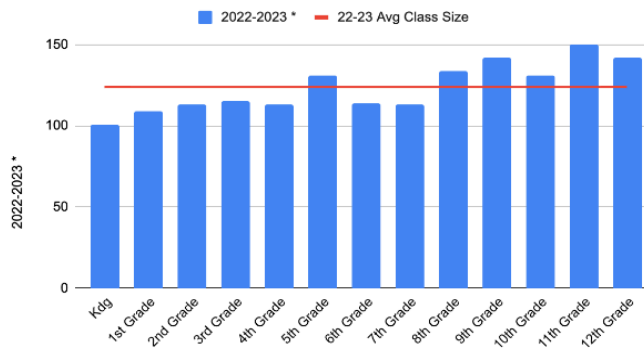
Certified enrollment count is the number one driver of our district's budget. Certified enrollment is the number of students that are verifiably enrolled in our schools. Each enrolled student in then allotted a set amount of money that the district receives to educate them. Unfortunately, our certified enrollment number dropped by 35 students this year, which will impact the funding we receive for the 2023-2024 school year. The graph below

illustrates the number of students currently served by grade level. The orange line represents the average grade size across the district (124 students per grade).

as staff choose to retire and/or leave the district for other reasons, we will assess whether we can absorb that position or if we can rehire at a lower employee cost.



WCSD Fall BEDS Enrollment by Grade Level 22-23



As the graph indicates, classes at the high school are above the 124- student average, while classes at the elementary are below the average. As a district, we are taking steps to prepare for this projected decrease in enrollment. First, we are offering an early retirement package to our staff over the next two years. Additionally,

Moving forward, we will continue to look for ways to better align out staffing level to fit our current and future realities.

No one should be alarmed by this information; we are sharing it simply to keep you abreast of the situation our district is facing. Ultimately, the district is in a strong financial position to weather this decline in enrollment and decrease in state revenue if we take steps each year to keep in line with our enrollment. Due to our proximity to Des Moines

and the quality of life that Winterset offers, it is possible trends could change. I believe the work that the city is doing with regards to their strategic plan will make Winterset an even more desirable location for families.

Winterset is, and will continue to be, a strong district that offers students a great education with a variety of opportunities. While things may look a little different, the steps we take now and over the next few years will allow us to meet these challenges while ensuring our kids receive the best possible education.

Yours in Service,

*Justin M. Gross*

### February Monthly Highlights

February 13 - No School (PD Day)

February 22 - HS Conferences (3:30 - 7:30)

### When Is It Too Cold For School?

In Winterset we try to quantify just how cold is too cold for school. Generally, if the National Weather Service Forecast for the morning is for a windchill warning, classes will be canceled. In most cases, the decision will be made the night before. However, we can't always predict what will happen in the morning with our buses. Sometimes in temperatures warmer than a windchill warning, our buses struggle to start and stay running. In those cases, a decision to cancel or start late is made as soon as possible in the morning.

### When Is It Too Snowy For School?

Families should expect less notice when school is canceled for heavy snow. Road conditions are tested and several websites are viewed for information on weather and road conditions. Mr. Gross also consults with other Madison County and neighboring school districts.

Making the decision to start late, cancel or continue school as planned is a difficult decision that takes into account many factors. Most importantly, we consider our students' safety first.

When WCSD makes a decision to change plans, we utilize our Winterset Community Schools app that calls, texts and e-mails parents and staff. We also post the change of plans on our district website, app, and notify local media.



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### Reminder for Junior High School Families:

Winterset Junior High students will be touring Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny to explore ten academic and career focused pathways with over 240 programs. If you have any questions, please contact Suzy Busta, school counselor at WJH (515) 462-3336.

February 7th - 8th grade

February 21st - 7th grade

\*Please remember to bring a sack lunch

All Kindergarten students must be up to date on their preschool shots and have received their 4 year old boosters of Dtap, Polio, MMR and Varicella.

All 7th grade (and above) students must show proof of having received a Tdap (Tetanus/Acellular Pertusis) vaccination booster AND a Meningococcal vaccination on or after 10 years of age, before the first day of school.

All 12th grade students must show proof of receiving 2 DOSES of Meningococcal vaccine; or 1 dose if first dose was received at 16 years of age or older before the first day of school.

All Kindergarten students must have a dental screen performed between the ages of 3 and 6 years old with a dental certificate on file. All 9th grade students must have a current, within the past 12 months, dental certificate on file.

All Kindergarten and 3rd grade students must have a current, within the past 12 months, vision certificate on file.

## Lunch Menus

Use the new school app for the most up to date menus each day.

**Elementary Lunch Menu**  
**Middle School Lunch Menu**  
**JH/HS Lunch Menu**

## Free & Reduced-Price Meals Applications

- Log into your Parent Portal
- Click on More, then click on Meals Benefits
- Complete Free & Reduced Form, click Submit

You will receive confirmation in your Parent Portal inbox once the application is processed. Questions: Call the administration office at (515) 462-2718.

## SCHOOL FEES

Attention parents: This year's school fees were due October 15th. You may pay them through your **Parent Portal**, at any of the school offices or at the administration office.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE

When you have a change of address or phone number, please contact the school or the administration office. It is important for the school to have updated information on our students for messages and emergency situations.

## STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOKS

The Winterset Student/Parent Handbooks are posted **on the district website under the Parent tab**. We have produced a district-wide handbook that aligns to board policies and current state law. The handbook includes addendums for each school, covering building specific expectations. Paper copies are available in each school's office. All students are expected to follow the policies, procedures and expectations. Please take the time to review the handbooks with your child.

## WHS STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

In the new year, the Winterset Student Council has been planning multiple projects for the coming months. Plans for potential dress-up days and activities are underway for Valentine's Day in two weeks - more information to come out soon. The council is also gathering in committees to plan out the details of the Mother-Son Dance, which will occur on March 24. We held two meetings in January and plan to have a third one on the 31st to discuss food services for the school. On January 28th, 24 students and staff members from the student council and National Honor Society packed meals at Meals from the Heartland for a couple of hours. We are looking forward to finishing out these projects soon and have had a successful year so far.



Meals From the Heartland

Article by Lily Applegate, secretary  
Advisor: Jessica Gibbons

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## BEST BUDDIES NEWS

The WHS Best Buddies Club went bowling in Stuart on Saturday, January 21st. We had approximately 20 students and staff attend our monthly social event. The students had a great time bowling and eating lots of pizza! Our next social will be in February.

Our chapter is always looking for new members. If your child is interested in building lasting and meaningful friendships and creating an inclusive environment at WHS, please have them reach out to our chapter leaders.



Bowling Fun

Jaycee Hatten (chapter president)  
23jhatten@winterset.k12.ia.us

Callie Drake (chapter vice president)  
23cdrake@winterset.k12.ia.us

Lana McDonald (chapter advisor)  
lmcdonald@winterset.k12.ia.us



# WHS Guidance Department

Visit the Guidance Webpage at [www.winterset.k12.ia.us/Page/1552](http://www.winterset.k12.ia.us/Page/1552).

**HIGH SCHOOL  
CONFERENCES  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY  
22nd 3:30PM-7:30PM**

Registration for Courses  
We will be registering students for courses for next year. We work on this process with groups here at school. We value the parents' input in this process. Proper course selection and sequence is very important to a student's success in high school and beyond. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.



When it comes to money for your education, it's easy as... 1, 2, 3. Applying for financial aid is fast and easy with the online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Visit the Department of Education's web site – [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) or see the counselors in the Guidance Center. For student financial aid information, eligibility criteria, and the various student aid programs, you can call toll-free 1-800-4FED-AID.



The next ACT at Winterset is April 15th with registration deadline of March 10th (March 24th with late fee). Below you will find a link to information about a special offer your student may use to receive discounted access to an online ACT and/or SAT study guide to help students prepare for the ACT and/or SAT test. This program is offered through the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). Professional athletes and other organizations fund the program. The cost of a standard ACT or SAT study program is usually \$350, but through this program, each is available for \$20.00, which covers licensing, registration, customer support, shipping, or online access fees.

The link below provides ordering information and additional information about all programs. The online program or DVD can be ordered using a credit card or check.

[www.eknowledge.com/IAHSAA](http://www.eknowledge.com/IAHSAA)

Career opportunities in the Electrical Construction Industry are available to minorities and females. The Electrical Apprenticeship program is open to high school graduates or persons with a GED, 18 years of age and over who have successfully completed not less than one year of high school algebra. The Apprenticeship program is an "earn as you learn" program providing on the job training and classroom in-

struction. Contact Ron at 515-224-4349 or 800-572-6191, website <http://www.dmelejtc.org/>.

Scholarships!  
Information is available on the Guidance Page of WHS Website.

The Winterset Local Scholarship Application is available on the high school's website or in the office. The application qualifies students for over 30 different scholarships around Madison County. **Deadline is March 1, no late entries will be accepted.**

The Iowa Farm Bureau Foundation Scholarship will award fifty-four \$1,000 scholarship awards to students pursuing the completion of a two or four-year undergraduate degree. The tuition awards will be distributed in \$500 increments during fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters. Six district winners will be selected in each of the nine Iowa Farm Bureau Federation Districts. (Madison Co is in District 8). Applications are available on the guidance page of the WHS website. Deadline is February 3.

The Madison County Farm Bureau Scholarship will award two (2) \$500 scholarships to Madison County students. Also, \$1,000, in \$100 increments, may be awarded to additional winners at the discretion of the scholarship committee. Applicants must be from Madison County, have a GPA of 3.0, and plan to enter a profession or vocation requiring at least a minimum of two years of college.

## WHS Guidance Department, Continued / *Guidance Webpage*

Applications are available on the guidance page of the WHS website. Deadline is February 3.

Winterset Lions Club Scholarship Program will award two scholarships, one worth \$1,000 to a WHS student enrolled in a four-year college and one worth \$500 to a WHS student enrolled in a two-year program. Applications are available on the guidance page of the WHS website. Deadline is March 1.

Winterset PEO Chapter AG applications are now available on the guidance page of the WHS website. The Winterset PEO Chapter

AG is providing a \$500 scholarship for a female high school student graduating in May 2021 with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. For more information about PEO, please visit their website at <http://www.peointernational.org/>. Deadline is March 15.

The Winterset Community Education Association (WCEA) scholarship will be presented at the Winterset High School Awards Ceremony in May. It is a \$500 scholarship. It will be awarded to a student who is planning on majoring in education. Applications are available on the guidance website. Deadline is March 15.

\*These scholarships and more are on the guidance page of the WHS website. [Link](#)

**Loans**  
The Lillard-Miller and Eva Rogan Funds were established to help students finance post high school education. The funds are financed through private contributions. Loans are available for up to \$1,000 per year per student and a maximum of \$3,000 per student. No interest is charged, but the loans must be paid back. Applications are available on the guidance webpage and in the guidance office or the administrative office and may be completed anytime now through August.

## Term 2 Renaissance Award Winners

These students were chosen by teachers based on character, volunteer work, leadership, and/or academic commitment. Students can only win once in their high school career. Union State Bank provides a \$50 award for each student.

Congrats!!

They are in order from L-R.

USB Rep Mark Baudler

9- Luca Wetzel

10- Cheyenne Capps

11- Zac Mortvedt

12- Callie Drake





# FEBRUARY ATHLETIC CALENDAR

Check for updates at [raccoonriverconference.org](http://raccoonriverconference.org)  
or call the high school at 462-3320.

## HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

DATE	TIME	LEVEL	OPPONENT	SITE
Feb 7	4:30 PM	9/JV/V-G/B	ADM	ADM
Feb 10	4:30 PM	9/JV/V-G/B	Ballard	Winterset

## JUNIOR HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL

DATE	TIME	LEVEL	OPPONENT	SITE
Feb 2	4:15 PM	7th	Boone	Boone MS
		8th	Boone	Winterset JH
Feb 6	4:15 PM	7th	Carlisle	Carlisle MS
		8th	Carlisle	Winterset JH
Feb 7	4:15 PM	7th	Norwalk	Winterset MS
		4:30 PM	8th	Norwalk
Feb 14	4:15 PM	7th	Bon-Far	Winterset JH
		8th	Bon-Far	Bon-Far
Feb 16	4:15 PM	7th	Ballard	Ballard MS
		8th	Ballard	Winterset JH
Feb 20	4:15 PM	7th	ADM	ADM HS South
		8th	ADM	Winterset JH
Feb 21	4:15 PM	7th	Perry	Perry
		8th	Perry	Winterset JH
Feb 23	4:15 PM	7th	Carlisle	Winterset JH
		8th	Carlisle	Carlisle MS

## HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING

DATE	TIME	LEVEL	OPPONENT	SITE
Feb 4	TBA	V	State Regionals	Corralville
Feb 11	TBA	V	District Tournament	ADM
Feb 16-18		V	Dual State	Wells Fargo



WHS HUSKY HELP  
DAY DATE:  
MAY 9, 2023

Please contact  
[jgibbons@winterset.k12.ia.us](mailto:jgibbons@winterset.k12.ia.us) with  
questions or donations

## ADMISSION PRICES

**BUY TICKETS ONLINE ON TICKET SPICKET  
IN ADVANCE OF THE GAME**

Admission prices to all Varsity events will be \$6 for everyone. Tournaments will be \$6 for everyone. Junior High events will be \$4 for adults and for students

## ACTIVITIES TICKETS

The passes that are available are:

1. Student Pass (\$55)
2. Adult Pass (\$100)
3. Family Pass (\$250)

These passes are good for all Junior High and High School regular season events.

To purchase your tickets & passes for the 21-22 school year go to [Ticket Spicket.com](http://TicketSpicket.com) or download the app.

Activity Passes for the 2022-2023 school year will need to be purchased through Ticket Spicket.

# Mother Son Dance

## "Light up the Night"

**Who:** Any boy ages 4 (ish)-10 (ish) years old and an important lady in his life- \$15 a couple, \$5 for each additional boy

**What:** A fun, semi-dressy **GLOW** dance with refreshments, a photo booth, mom & son door/contest prizes, and music

**When:** Friday, March 24, 2023; 7-8:30 PM

**Where:** Winterset High School Commons Area (cafeteria)

**Why:** Winterset Student Council is holding the dance to raise money to enroll students in Student Council leadership conferences and camps. These camps and conferences provide students with a strong base of leadership skills to prepare them for tackling future leadership roles.

Please return the below slip & money to the elementary, MS, or high school office. You can also give it to any WHS student council member or sponsor Jessica Gibbons ([jgibbons@winterset.k12.ia.us](mailto:jgibbons@winterset.k12.ia.us)). The mailing address is WHS Student Council – 720 Husky Drive Winterset, IA 50273

Make checks payable to *Winterset Student Council*. We will also take same-day registration but can't guarantee flowers. Same day registration...\$20.



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**Couple Name:**

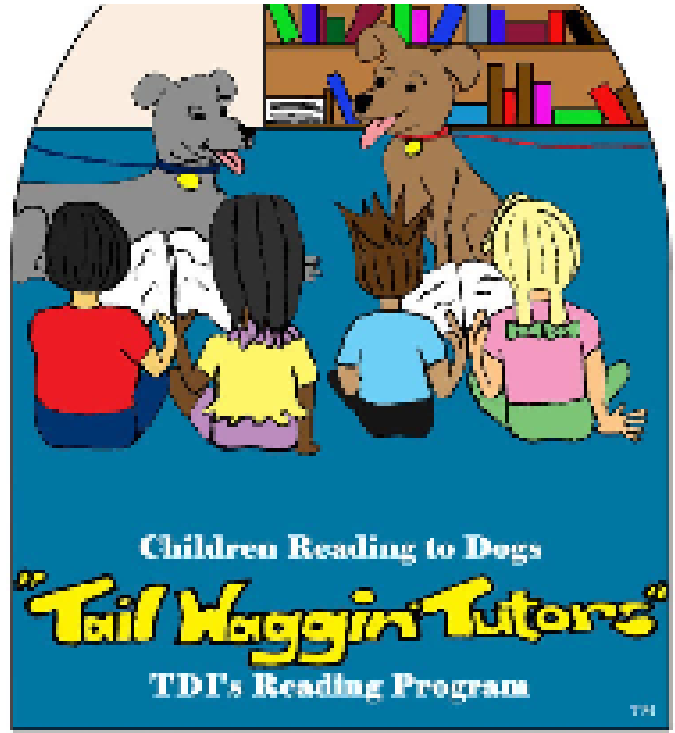
**Additional boy:**

**Enclosed \$15 Registration, \$5 for additional boys**

**Optional wrist corsage (only guaranteed until March 10) \$10 extra Yes No**

**Total Enclosed:**





Sign your child up to read to a 4-legged friend at the library the last Saturday of the month from January to May! 15-min. slots available anytime between 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Register on our website at:

<https://www.wintersetlibrary.org/calendar> or call the Library at 515-462-1731 for assistance.

*\*\*Drop-in's are permitted if time slots are not filled that day but cannot be guaranteed. \*\**



- Saturday, January 28
- Saturday, February 25
- Saturday, March 25
- Saturday, April 22
- Saturday, May 27



## Viewing student reports on Infinite Campus Parent Portal

WCSD has recently uploaded your child's 2022 ISASP reports to their student Infinite Campus account. To view these reports please follow the instructions below. First, you will need to sign into your Parent Portal account.

The image contains three screenshots illustrating the steps to view student reports on the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

**Click "More" in the right menu**  
The first screenshot shows the Infinite Campus Parent Portal home screen. A red box highlights the "More" option in the right-hand navigation menu.

**Next click "Student Reports"**  
The second screenshot shows the "More" dropdown menu. A red box highlights the "Student Reports" option.

**Select your Student - Select "ISASP Spring 2022 Report" - Click "Generate Report"**  
The third screenshot shows the "Student Reports" page. It includes a header "Student Reports" and instructions: "Instructions: Select the student and report you would like to view". Below this, there are two dropdown menus: "Select Student:" with "Winterset Middle School" selected, and "Select a Report:" with "ISASP Spring 2022 Report" selected. Red arrows point to these dropdowns. At the bottom, a red box highlights the "Generate Report" button, with a "Return to Portal" button next to it.

Once you click Generate Report a .pdf file will download to your device's download folder. Click the .pdf file to open and view it.

# FREE LIVE HOMEWORK HELP

Did you know all Iowa Libraries offer free online homework help? All you need is your library card. Whether you are learning in-person or from a distance, free live online tutors are available to help you succeed.



It's easy to get free help with your homework in math, reading, writing, science, social studies, and more.

1. Log on to HelpNow.
2. Click "Live Tutoring".
3. Select your subject and level.
4. Click "Get Live Help".

## Writing a paper?

HelpNow has a Writing Lab! Send your paper to a tutor and receive constructive feedback to help you become a better writer. Or connect with a live tutor to get help with any stage of the writing process.



## Preparing for a test?

Visit SkillsSurfer to learn with lessons, videos, and practice tests. Take practice tests on the SAT, ACT, GED, and many more. You can also create your own flashcards and study games with Flashbulb.

## Children and Technology: How to Be a Cool, In-Control Parent

by *Steve Spring*.

(This article is part of the *Be Positive* series)



Do you ever feel that you made the wrong decision as a parent? Maybe your decision had unintended consequences. Maybe you made a decision based on the best information that you had available, *but it just didn't work out like you planned.*

My wife and I experienced one of these situations last year, when we gave our daughter, Sarah, an iPhone for her 13th birthday.

We thought that it was the perfect gift. She'd been wanting one for a while and it would allow us to keep in touch with her by phone and text, and even keep track of her whereabouts.

We soon found out that children and technology don't always mix quite the way we anticipate. You know where this is going...

### The Shocking Unintended Consequences

Almost immediately her grades dropped from A's and B's to C's, D's, and F's.

A little research into our Verizon account showed that she had sent and received *over 4000 text messages in less than a month!*

My jaw hit the floor when I first saw the sheer number of text messages, but soon learned that this wasn't as ludicrous as it first seemed to me. A *Pew Internet Survey* indicates that 1 in 3 teens sends more than 100 text messages a day, or 3000 texts a month.

My daughter had also used about 3 GB of data, (75%) of our total data plan, in less than a month. Again, this is apparently not very surprising since the same survey indicates that 1 in 4 teens go online with cell phones.

### **How Could This Have Happened?**

In hindsight the reason seems so simple — we gave Sarah a smartphone without **setting any limits** or putting any controls on it.

*We expected a 13 year old to be mature enough to make good decisions about a highly advanced tech toy without any guidance from us.*

This is really part of a bigger issue for us as parents.

How do we **give our children the freedom** to grow and mature, while at the same time setting limits that will keep them from hurting themselves?

The lines get particularly blurry when it comes to children and technology — where do we draw the line? And how can we anticipate the issues of **giving something to our kids that didn't even exist while we were growing up?**

In general, we struggle with giving Sarah the freedom to make her own decisions — like most parents of teens do, I suspect. We encourage her to make as many decisions as possible and after she decides on something, we try to **help her understand the results** of both her good and not so good decisions.

But when it comes to technology, like our little smartphone incident showed, things get infinitely more complex.

### **So, What Did I Do About It?**

When I discovered the problem, I did what any good father would do — *I immediately seized control of her iPhone.*

I called our cell phone provider and blocked all of her text messages. I restricted her phone's access to YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and any other app that could distract her.

I set the restrictions on her phone so that she could only access content approved for *a 12 year old or below*. I turned her smartphone into a device that could only be used for making phone calls.

There you go smart technology — I'll show you who's boss!

Yeah, not cool.

In all fairness though, isn't that what any parent would do — *totally overreact to protect our kids?*

### **A Better Way to Handle the Situation**

This situation taught me that I didn't understand as much as I thought I did about children and technology. Because of this, I decided to educate myself on how teens are using their cellphones, and the bigger issue of how they use technology in general, including computers, video games, the Internet etc.

We live in a world that is exploding with new technology each day. And our children are going to be exposed to it no matter what.

As parents we need to make an intentional effort to figure out how our kids interact, use or abuse this technology. And look for ways to **handle it in a positive way**, so this does not turn into a source of constant tug of war and power struggles.

My better-late-than-never education has helped me develop a simple 6-step plan that not only let me give back my daughter her iPhone, but deal with future situations related to technology use in a more reasonable manner. I'm sharing it with you in the hopes that you can learn from my mistakes without having to go through the drama we did.

## **6 Steps to Handling Children and Technology**

### **#1 Educate Yourself on the Latest in Technology**

Today's teens are more technology savvy than most parents will ever be. They have been exposed to electronic devices from an early age, and they master the technology much faster than we do. As parents, we must educate ourselves on how our children are interacting with this technology. Here are a few great places to start –

- [Wired Safety](#)
- [Get Net Wise](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics Safety Net Initiative](#)
- [FBI Parent's Guide to Internet Safety](#)

### **#2 Talk to Your Child About Risks and Teach Them How to Be Safe**

It is important for your child to know about the dangers that can be found online. Discuss these dangers with your child in an age-appropriate manner, and work together as a family to minimize these risks by teaching them how to be safe.

- [Cyber bullying conversation](#)
- [Facebook risks to discuss with teens](#)
- [NPR list of safe social media site for kids](#)

### **#3 Create Realistic Rules Together**

At first, in my over-protective dad mode, I limited my daughter's access to the Internet so much that she was unable to use it to complete her homework assignments!

Instead of overreacting like I did, work together with your child to set realistic rules that limit their technology interaction. Here are a few great resources to get you started –

- [A list of family media agreements](#) — use any one on this list as a starting point for establishing rules that work in *your* family
- An [ingenious way to manage media time](#) using *marbles*

### **#4 Use Parental Controls**

Use parental controls to protect your child from explicit content, and to monitor your child's online activity. Here are a few resources that will help –

- [Parental controls for Microsoft Windows](#)
- [Parental controls for iOS](#)
- A review of the [top 10 cell phone monitoring software tools](#)

## #5 Obtain Your Child's Passwords

No matter how old your child is, it is important to obtain the passwords to your child's cell phone and all of their online accounts. Since our children lack the maturity to handle online problems, we must take the responsibility for keeping them safe.

## #6 Limit Multitasking

It is not easy for children growing up in today's connected world. They are exposed to many things that we were not exposed to at their age. They also face more distractions than any generation before them.

It is not uncommon for teens to be texting, watching videos, listening to music, and trying to do their homework – all at the same time. According to this [Kaiser Family Foundation report](#), kids now average 7 hours and 38 minutes a day plugged into media.

As parents, we need to limit these distractions so that they can focus on getting what they need to accomplish done.

The good news for us is that we were eventually able to work through these issues with Sarah. We were able to agree on reasonable limits, and she is now a high school student getting all A's.

I hope that these tips will help you work with your children and the technology they use to figure out reasonable solutions too.

## The 2-Minute Action Plan for Fine Parents

Take the next 2-minutes to answer some of these simple questions –

- Imagine you open your phone/Internet bill and find out that your kids have run it up through the roof (either in overages, or by accidentally renting paid on-demand blockbusters). How would you react?
- What if you suddenly realized that this might explain the sudden degradation of your child's school grades?
- Would your reaction help channel your kids towards better understanding their mistakes and preventing it in the future? Or would it invite power struggles?
- Now look around at all the technology your children are using. Which of these might cause unintended side-effects? How can you **prevent a nasty situation from occurring in the first place?**

## The Ongoing Action Plan for Fine Parents

Increase your understanding about the technology that your kids might be using. Find **ways to start a conversation** with your kids about staying safe. Establish clear limits on what is acceptable and what is not in terms of technology use, and get buy-in from your kids on these limits. And remember to stay open to discussion, should your child bring up something, irrespective of how unpleasant it might be!

## Your Complete ADHD Diagnosis and Testing Guide

A thorough ADHD diagnosis includes symptom tests and interviews, plus a thorough medical history and evaluations for conditions commonly diagnosed alongside ADD — namely ODD, OCD, anxiety, depression, and autism spectrum disorder. It's a complicated process — as it should be to ensure accuracy. Here, learn what to expect from start to finish.

By [Bob Seay](#), [Laura Flynn McCarthy](#), [Penny Williams](#) Verified Medically reviewed by [William Dodson, M.D., LF-APA](#) Updated on July 11, 2022

### How Is ADHD Diagnosed?

Testing alone cannot diagnose symptoms of ADHD. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD or ADD) is a nuanced neurological condition with three distinct subtypes, symptoms that appear along a spectrum of severity, and overlapping comorbid conditions that often complicate diagnosis and treatment. Add to that lingering misinformation and myths in the medical community, and the barriers to an accurate [ADHD diagnosis](#) and medical care may seem impossibly high.

Here, we break down the essential information on finding an [ADHD specialist](#) and pursuing an accurate diagnosis.

### What Are ADHD Signs and Symptoms?

You're worried. Your son's teacher sent home a note saying that his lack of focus is holding him back in class.

Your daughter phoned a classmate to set up a playdate, and was turned down for the third time. The so-called "friend" told your daughter that she's weird.

You are concerned about your job. You were late to work twice last week, and you frequently miss deadlines and meetings. You won't be getting the promotion you've been after — in fact, you may be fired.

You've wondered for months what's causing you or your child to come up short — stress, [learning disabilities](#), a medical condition, or ADHD? You're tired of wondering. It's time to find out. You want to get an evaluation — to take an [ADHD test](#).

Congratulations. You are taking an important step in changing your life. But you are plagued by questions: Where do you start? What kind of doctor diagnoses ADHD? How do you know if you're getting a state-of-the-art evaluation and an accurate diagnosis? And what should you do after you get it? Keep reading for answers to these important first questions.

### How Do You Get an ADHD Diagnosis?

An [evaluation for ADHD](#) (or ADD) often starts with a routine visit to your primary-care physician, but chances are it won't end there. As a rule, most general practitioners are not trained in the idiosyncrasies of ADHD and its overlapping conditions, or not equipped to perform the in-depth evaluation needed. One reason is time. It can take several hours of talking, test taking, and analysis to diagnose someone with ADHD.

In addition, general practitioners sometimes overlook co-existing, or comorbid, conditions with overlapping symptoms, such as learning disabilities, mood disorders, or [autism spectrum disorder](#). Professionals trained in diagnosing ADHD routinely screen for these problems.



Any good ADHD diagnosis will begin with a clinical interview to gather the patient's medical history. This is often supplemented with neuropsychological testing, which offers greater insight into strengths and weaknesses, and helps identify comorbid conditions.

## How Do You Find an ADHD Specialist?

How can you [find an ADHD specialist in your area](#)? Follow these five steps to find the right help and diagnosis, and a treatment plan that will best manage symptoms:

- **Ask a school psychologist or guidance counselor for a referral for your child.** If you'd prefer to see an outside expert before getting the school involved, move to the next step.
- **Talk with your internist or your child's pediatrician.** Start the conversation this way: "I've noticed these symptoms in myself (or my child), and I'd like an evaluation. Do you know of someone who specializes in diagnosing ADHD?" If the doctor says that he can do it, ask about the tests he uses and how long he typically spends making the diagnosis. If the only basis for a diagnosis is a quick interview with you and/or your child, ask for a referral to a specialist.
- **Contact a medical school near your home.** "Call the department of psychiatry and ask, 'Is there anyone on your staff experienced at working with adults or children with ADHD?'" suggests [Edward Hallowell, M.D.](#), a psychiatrist with offices in New York City and Boston, and co-author of *Superparenting for ADD*. "When you get the name of a professional, ask him how many people he has treated. It should be at least a hundred."
- **Check with your insurer.** Ask if there are experts trained in diagnosing ADHD covered by your plan. If not, consider going out of network. Remember that your goal, initially, is to get a thorough, accurate evaluation and diagnosis. When you have that information, the diagnosing doctor can work with your plan's physician to prescribe treatment.
- **Call your local chapter of the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) or [CHADD](#),** and ask for names of professionals who specialize in ADHD. Another good option: an ADHD support group in your area. Word-of-mouth recommendations are often the best assessment of a professional's ability.

## How Do Doctors Diagnose ADHD?

In making an accurate diagnosis, your doctor will first want to determine is whether you or your child has the ADHD symptoms listed in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fifth Edition (DSM-V)*<sup>1</sup>.

"The *DSM-V* remains the basis of the diagnosis for children, but most clinicians go beyond that in their assessments," Hallowell says. In addition to reviewing these criteria, doctors will conduct a thorough clinical interview using one standardized ADHD rating scale. A screening test is also often administered to rule out common coexisting conditions like learning disorders, autism, and mood disorders.

According to the latest *DSM-V* guidelines, in order to be diagnosed with ADHD, a patient has to have shown at least six of the nine symptoms of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity prior to age 12. In addition, these symptoms must impair the person's functioning in more than one setting — home, school, or work.

Not all doctors subscribe to these criteria. Many professionals point out that some patients' ADHD symptoms aren't recognized until later in life — this particularly true for twice-exceptional individuals, [women](#) and [girls](#), or those who have the [inattentive form of ADHD](#).

Diagnosing an adult is trickier than diagnosing a child. The *DSM-V* symptom guide is really invalid for adults; almost all of its criteria is geared toward diagnosing children. An ADHD diagnosis in adulthood emerges only from a careful clinical interview conducted by a specialist in ADHD who takes his or her time with the evaluation.

"The *DSM-V* criteria are based only on research with children four to 17 years old," says [Thomas E. Brown, Ph.D.](#), Yale-trained clinical psychologist. "As a result, most clinicians bend the criteria when it

comes to the age of onset — recent research has shown that, in some people, symptoms don't appear until adolescence, when there are greater challenges in self-management. Clinicians also may diagnose adults who have just four or five symptoms, not seven or eight, if they show significant impairment.”

Some doctors use computer programs, such as continuous performance tests (CPTs), to check for attention and impulsivity problems. Others use brain scans, such as single-photon emission computed tomography (SPECT), to look for abnormalities in the brain. But the most reliable evidence for a positive diagnosis, according to most experts, is found in a patient's history.

## **ADHD Diagnosis Step 1: The Consultation**

Expect the ADHD diagnosis consultation to take an hour or longer. If your child is being evaluated, the doctor will talk to you and your child, and get feedback through checklists and written information from teachers and other adults who spend a lot of time with your child. Sometimes the doctor's office will forward these forms to you before the consultation and review them with you at the initial meeting. Other doctors will meet with you first, do the interview, and give you the forms to be filled out before your next appointment.

If you are being evaluated, your doctor will interview you and someone who knows you well — your spouse, a sibling, or your parents. She may or may not use similar checklists designed to identify symptoms of adult ADHD. The doctor will use the patient interview to determine which, if any, tests might rule out other conditions that may be causing symptoms.

“The clinical interview is the core of any evaluation,” Brown says. “The more input from different sources, the better. Many adults come for a consultation alone, but it's helpful to come with a spouse, sibling, or close friend.”

Many doctors ask people in the patient's life — a spouse, parent, or sibling for an adult; or a teacher, coach, or nanny for a child — to write a few sentences describing the patient. Personal insight often uncovers information that can't be culled from questionnaires.

Says Hallowell: “A teacher might write, ‘Johnny is sweet, adorable, and cute as a button, but he can't remember to come in out of the rain. He is disorganized. He speaks out of turn. He needs more discipline.’ It's what I call the moral diagnosis, but it often reveals a lot about a child who may have ADHD. Those one-paragraph narratives give a wide range of input. Checklists don't.”

What are doctors hoping to find by evaluating those checklists and narratives and conducting the clinical interview? **These five things:**

**Social history.** “Describe a typical day in [your life or] your child's life” is often the first question a doctor will ask to get a sense of how [you or] your child functions. This reflects what usually goes smoothly and what is challenging in everyday life.

**Medical history.** Medical problems, ranging from sleep apnea and thyroid conditions to hormone fluctuations and substance abuse, can present symptoms similar to those of ADHD.

**Family history.** “I ask questions about the immediate family, as well as grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins,” says Brown. “I'll ask things like, ‘Is there anybody who has had trouble paying attention or learning certain subjects, or who was smart but didn't do well in school — and did better later? The answers will give me an idea of what's floating around in the gene pool.”

**Strengths and weaknesses.** “Every person I've seen with ADHD can focus well on some activities,” Brown says. “Sometimes it's sports. Sometimes it's artistic or mechanical stuff. Those are telltale symptoms of ADHD. In the process, I identify strengths I want to protect and encourage during treatment.”

**Education.** “Everybody comes in with some information about the condition. Some of it is sophisticated and accurate; the rest is just wrong,” Brown says. “I take 15 or 20 minutes to tell them what I think about ADHD, how ideas about the condition have changed, and the latest thinking on managing symptoms.”

By the time the clinical interview is over, most doctors with experience treating people with ADHD will have a good idea of whether you or your child has the condition. Even so, most will want to back up their opinion with objective proof from tests.

## ADHD Diagnosis Step 2: ADHD Tests

Most clinical interviews include completing one or more of the ADHD rating scales, as well as other ADHD tests. A proper ADHD test should do two things: determine whether a person has ADHD and rule out or identify other problems — learning disabilities, autism, auditory processing disorders, or mood disorders. Depending on your doctor’s concerns, tests may take from an hour to more than eight hours and may require several appointments.

### Common tests used in diagnosing ADHD include:

**ADHD rating scales.** These questionnaires can identify specific symptoms of ADHD that may not emerge in the clinical interview. Answers to the questions can reveal how well a person functions at school, home, or work. The scales are specifically formatted for children, adolescents, and adults. “ADHD rating scales have their pluses and minuses, and doctors go with the ones they feel most comfortable using,” says [Patricia Quinn, M.D.](#), cofounder of the [National Center for Girls and Women with ADHD](#). “I recommend using at least two scales that gauge both ADHD and other symptoms.”

**Intelligence tests** are a standard part of most thorough evaluations because they not only measure IQ but can also detect certain learning disabilities common in people with ADHD.

**Broad-spectrum scales** screen for social, emotional, and psychiatric problems, and they may be ordered if the doctor suspects that a patient has a mood disorder, [obsessive-compulsive disorder](#), or another condition in addition to ADHD.

**Tests of specific abilities** — such as language development, vocabulary, memory recall, motor skills — may also be recommended to screen for learning disabilities or other processing problems. The doctor may decide which tests to do based, in part, on which kinds of tasks you or your child find easy or difficult.

**Computer tests** are becoming popular because patients enjoy taking them, and because they can screen for attention and impulsivity problems, which are common in people with ADHD. These “continuous performance tests” (CPT) challenge the patient to sustain attention. A series of visual targets appear on the screen, and the user responds to prompts while the computer measures his ability to stay on task. In practice, some experts have found that these tests are better at identifying impulsive symptoms and less successful at flagging symptoms of inattention.

**Brain scans.** Neuro-imaging procedures, such as positron emission tomography (PET) scans, SPECT scans, and magnetic resonance imaging (MRIs), have long been used in research studies of ADHD. But their use in diagnosing ADHD has not yet been validated with conclusive scientific research. They have revealed, though, that certain parts of the brain appear different in people who have ADHD than in people who don’t have the condition.

“You do not need a brain scan to be diagnosed with ADHD, and they are not the standard of care,” Hallowell says. “Scans are not a cost-effective way of spending your healthcare money, and they don’t contribute much to the diagnosis of ADHD. But it seems that patients love seeing a picture of their brain, and the scans can often help them own the diagnosis.”

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) practice parameters clearly state that scans and computerized continuous performance testing should not be done because they do not give

either diagnostic or clinically useful information and they expose the patient to very significant levels of ionizing radiation<sup>2</sup>.

### **ADHD Diagnosis Step 3: Learning How to Manage Symptoms**

After the clinical interview and the recommended tests are completed, most doctors will call you into the office to go over the results of your ADHD evaluation. This is the best time to ask the doctor questions. When you leave that appointment, the doctor should have formulated an action plan to manage symptoms. It should include:

- A list of **accommodations** for work (or school) that will help you (or your child) perform well
- A plan for follow-up therapy with a psychologist, therapist, ADHD coach, or another expert
- Recommendations for ADHD medication, if considered appropriate
- A schedule of follow-up appointments with the diagnosing physician or your primary-care doctor to see how well the treatment plan is working

“After the psychologist finished evaluating my son — a process that included eight hours of testing — she met with me to discuss his strengths and weaknesses, and handed me a list of accommodations that would help him at school,” says Joanna Thomas, of Lubbock, Texas, whose son, Ryan was diagnosed with ADHD at age seven. “Every year since the initial evaluation, I discussed the list of accommodations with his new teacher. I have also used it to write an introductory letter to the teachers that focuses on his strengths. Having that diagnosis meant everything to me. It gave me the tools I needed to help him at home and in working with his teachers.”

“An accurate diagnosis is good news,” Hallowell says, “because things can only get better. When you learn how to manage ADHD, it can become an asset in your life. I tell patients, ‘You’ve got a Ferrari engine for a brain, and you’re lucky, because you’re going to win a lot of races. The only problem is, you have bicycle brakes.’ The point is that someone with ADHD is on the way to being a champion, not a loser. And with the correct diagnosis and treatment, 100 percent of those with ADHD can improve their lives.”

### **What Are Common ADHD Diagnosis Mistakes?**

The following are a few common ways in which an evaluation for ADHD may go awry or arrive at a false conclusion.

**Not taking enough time.** A thorough evaluation for ADHD can’t be done in a 15-minute visit. Rushed visits raise the likelihood that you or your child will be misdiagnosed, or that the doctor will miss a secondary diagnosis that may be important to treat.

**Diagnosing the symptoms, not the underlying problem.** “Physicians sometimes misdiagnose secondary symptoms as the person’s primary problem, without looking for coexisting ADHD,” says Patricia Quinn, M.D., cofounder of the [National Center for Girls and Women with ADHD](#). In many cases, when the ADHD is treated, the secondary symptoms also improve. For example, a physician may focus on only the mood dysregulation symptoms intrinsic to ADHD, and make a mood disorder diagnosis that totally misses other underlying ADHD symptoms.

**Thinking that academic failure is intrinsic to ADHD.** Many children with ADHD do well at school because they work hard, and teachers and doctors will not suspect they have the condition.

**Thinking that a high IQ means your child doesn’t have ADHD.** Your child may score well on an IQ test, but her grades are mediocre and teachers “diagnose” her as being lazy or undisciplined. An evaluation by an outside psychologist may indicate that she has ADHD and/or a learning disorder.

**Sticking with a doctor you don’t like.** If you don’t feel a positive connection with your doctor —if he doesn’t seem to respond to you as a person or if he reprimands you for asking too many questions — you won’t have confidence in his diagnosis and ADHD treatment won’t go well.

# Card-a-palooza



Monday, February 13th

← ♥ → 10-noon → ♥ →

**Come make a homemade Valentine with our stamps and other craft supplies in the children's area while supplies last. Come and go anytime from 10:00-noon that day. Be creative and share your unique creation with someone special!**



APPLY TODAY:  
<https://forms.gle/cVEcvAnkBMszK8Ss7>



**WINTERSET PARKS & RECREATION**

# WE'RE HIRING

**APPLY NOW**

**LIFEGUARDS**  
**\$12.50HR**  
(MIN OF 15 YEARS OF AGE)

Illustration of two lifeguards in red shirts and shorts, one holding a red rescue tube.



**FRIDAY 6PM - 8PM** **FEB 10** **JACKSON BUILDING**

# FATHER/DAUGHTER DANCE

**DJ MESZ**

Illustration of three couples dancing.

**WINTERSET PARKS & RECREATION**

**\$30 PER COUPLE | \$10 ADDITIONAL ALL YOUTH THROUGH 6TH GRADE**  
**FOOD | BEVERAGES | PROFESSIONAL PHOTO**

## OFFERINGS FROM WINTERSET PARKS AND REC



**WINTERSET PARKS & RECREATION**

# MOTHER-SON NERF WAR

**Saturday, Feb 25th**  
**\$20/Pair & \$10/Additional Person**

Participants need to bring their own nerf gun (bullet style - no ballistic rapid fire guns)  
Nerf bullets provided. Protective goggles are required



# BASEBALL CLINIC

**DEVELOPING, IMPROVING, & REINFORCING FUNDAMENTALS**

3rd & 4th Grade: March 1 & 2  
5th & 6th Grade: March 6 & 7  
7th & 8th Grade: March 7 & 8

\$20/Participant  
20 Slots Available Per Session

Program Led by Varsity Coach and Players

Illustration of a baseball bat, a baseball, and a catcher's mitt.

**WINTERSET PARKS & RECREATION**

# Stay Connected with WCSD!



## Upgraded Website:

- [www.winterset.k12.ia.us](http://www.winterset.k12.ia.us)
- District homepage updated weekly
- School homepages are updated frequently with information
- Daily calendar of events for schools as well as athletics/activities is located on district homepage

## Electronic Backpacks:

- Located on both the district and school homepages - includes fliers, newsletters, important and timely information

## Instagram:

@wintersetschools

## Facebook:

Winterset Community School District:  
@wintersetschools

Winterset Huskies for Athletics and Activities updates:  
@WintersetHuskies

All buildings now have their own pages



Winterset Community School District  
December 5, 2022

25 Winterset elementary students sang "God Bless America" at the Iowa Wild game on Saturday, December 3rd. They put in a lot of practice time and sang on the ice. They represented Winterset very well.  
[#wintersethuskypride](https://www.instagram.com/wintersetschools)



WintersetSchools @WintersetSchool · Jan 26

Congrats to Liz N., Celia O., Sean J., Gracie C., David Michael N., Elise P., Franklin P., Addie B., Noah A., Sadie H., Hunter J., Lucas P., Aric W., Brooks N., James S., and Brenden T. who all advance to State Speech in their categories! [#wintersethuskypride](https://www.instagram.com/wintersethuskypride)



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## Twitter:

- WintersetSchools: @WintersetSchool
- Winterset Huskies for Athletics and Activities updates: @WintersetHusky
- All schools now have their own pages too

## Infinite Campus:

- Must have a **portal account** - contact your school's office or the Administration Building to request account

## Madisonian:

- Article by Superintendent every other week