



As we close the year, we are grateful for all the wonderful things we've done this school year, (and it's only half way over!) With a contract support from Westchester County and partnership with Accent Dance, students engaged in different types of dances lessons during after school that culminated in a wonderful showcase performance in late December. The kids were spectacular! They were, in all honesty, so proud of themselves. In listening to them talk weeks leading up to the performance, many did not feel prepared; some wanted to quit. As they pushed themselves to be ready, they gained much more than dance or cultural experience. It fostered discipline in preparing for a performance and nurtured perseverance and commitment to self and community. We are grateful to all that attended because you made them feel like rock stars!



Through our Congressional Educational Achievement Gap Community Project sponsored by Congressman Jamal Bowman's Office, we partnered with Stress Less Kids L.C.C. to have three psychologist train students in evidence based tools to cope with stress. Kids were "tapping" to help themselves regulate their feelings of stress, excessive tiredness, or anger. It was amazing! They were implementing the skills from this program, applying it in real-time and it was making a difference. We've even heard parents share

funny stories of how their child was providing strategies to help them, the parent, calm down at home. Truth is, especially after the pandemic, these techniques have proven to be an invaluable tool. We are grateful that so many families opted to take advantage of this free program and that it is having such a positive and life changing impact. (If you are interested, we have one more group scheduled to begin at the end of January with 2-3 seats available. Please reach out to Ms. Tanisha Miller as soon as possible at TMiller@nrymca.org.)

Our Fall Festival was another community gathering for which we are grateful. Families spend a wholesome afternoon with each other. Families burst into laughter at the obstacle course as they faced off. Kids enjoyed the clowns, the face painting, hanging out with friends and, of course, the Magic Show!

The Kidz Club was visited by a local author, Zenda Walker. She not only read her book, *Zara's Wash Day*, to our students but provided such meaningful context. In the book, Zara's mother shared stories as she washed her daughter's hair. The stories celebrated the "hairitage" of the African diaspora through the hair experience and it was beautiful! The experience was further enhanced with special activities, including a little dancing, creating hair styles, coloring book activities and word puzzles. We truly appreciated the event and look forward to the next book of the series."





We ended the year with a special trip to the Bartow Pell-Manor Museum. Through the efforts of Ms. Heidi, our in-house STEM/Arts specialist, the Kidz Club students had their art work displayed in the actual museum. Impressive! Working with students, Ms. Heidi centered the art work around things that soar. Students created ornaments of planes, superheroes, skyscrapers, and birds to name just a few, that are currently on display in the second floor bedroom. During our afternoon excursion to the museum, we also had the opportunity to tour the home. We noticed the bedrooms of the estate owners and how that contrasted to the sleeping quarters for the servants. We observed that bathrooms did not have toilets in how we know them today; they had bowls that had to be cleaned up. The scariest observation, however, was that they did not have any television sets or computers. Although our intent was to see the art work, students gained a great deal more, especially an appreciation for modern conveniences.

We have much to celebrate but we are most appreciative of our kids. We are grateful to you for entrusting your child with us. We take this responsibility to heart and strive to provide the best for them. Towards that end, we will continue to seek opportunities to expose our children to new experiences. In the upcoming weeks, we will have additional staff members to support tutoring for students struggling in school. New dance classes will begin in January. Stress Less for Kids will have one more session starting at the end of January. Our holiday camps in February and April will include trips to

make it an even better week. And in February, we will begin registering for summer camp. (Be sure to book your spot early; last year we closed out early.)

We wish you and your family a special holiday season. May 2023 bring you new adventures, good fortune and much laughter!

Best,
LeMarie, Tanisha and the entire Childcare Team!



Need childcare when school is out?

We offer special holiday camps at the Y when school is not in session for families that need childcare or simply want to make sure their child is engaged and entertained when school is closed. Space is limited so be sure to register in advance. These are the school closing dates:

- Jan 16 Day Camp for Martin Luther King Day
- Feb 10-24 Holiday Camp for Mid-Winter Recess (Maritime Aquarium)
- Apr 3-7 Holiday Camp for Spring Recess. (Trip included)
- Jun 19 Day Camp for Juneteenth Day

Applications for the most holiday camps are [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Family Meeting: Info Session on Stress Less Kids

TBD--January

We invite you to attend this meeting to learn about a **great** opportunity for our Kidz Club children. The New Rochelle YMCA Congressional Education Achievement Gap is a Congressional Community Project awarded to the New Rochelle YMCA by

Congressman Jamal Bowman's Office. The YMCA will provide a *highly effective and hugely praised program called Stress Less Kids TM*. This is a mindfulness program to teach school-aged children coping skills to deal with anxiety and pressure, enabling them to achieve healthier social relationships and greater academic achievement. Integrating evidence based tools, the program reaches children early enough to have a significant impact on their ability to navigate the pressures they face with greater confidence and success. This program will speak directly to alleviating the pandemic-related turmoil and attendant stresses and anxieties, that our children have experienced these past two years. Based on the feedback from students and families who completed the first session, we highly recommend this program as it teaches life-long and invaluable tools.

During our meeting, we will introduce the founders of the program, learn more about the philosophy, children successes, and how it can benefit not only *your* child, but everyone.

REGISTRATION OPEN for UPK Program 2023

The New Rochelle YMCA is honored to partner with the City School District of New Rochelle's Universal Pre-K program and provide our community with an outstanding educational foundation. New Rochelle residents can choose to have their child enrolled through the New Rochelle Board of Education; if they are selected in the district-wide lottery, the 2.5 hour Pre-K program is free. Families outside New Rochelle or those that did not win the lottery may also register their students privately. All are welcome.

For families in need of a longer day, supplemental programs are available to extend your child's day from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM for additional fees.

New Rochelle families interested in learning more about the free Pre-K program offered by the City of New Rochelle, please visit their website, [Pre-Kindergarten Lottery](#). The



lottery will open on January 10th and close on January 27th, 2023.

To learn more about our UPK program, we invite you to attend one of our Open Houses:

- Thursday, January 12th: 10 AM English / 11 AM Spanish
- Wednesday, January 18th: 6 PM English / 7 PM Spanish

In the event that you cannot attend one of our Open Houses, feel free to contact us to schedule an appointment. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Bianca Zayas at 914-632-1818 or at BZayasnymca@gmail.com. You may also contact LeMarie Laureano at LLaureanonnymca@gmail.com. We're happy to address your questions and share all the great things we're doing in our Pre-K program.



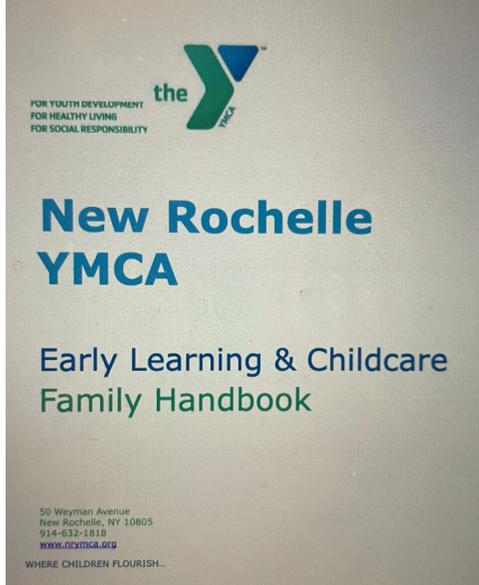
FOOD PANTRY

Thursday, Jan 19th
Thursday, Feb 16th
Thursday, Mar 23rd

We are part of a network that supports many communities throughout Westchester, including our lovely community. If in need, a mobile food pantry will be providing complimentary bags of food in the NR YMCA parking lot starting at 4:00 PM until the food runs out (about 5:30 PM).

FAMILY HANDBOOK FOR EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE PROGRAMS

We share our new Family Handbook which provides much information about our programs, our mission and purpose, and overall expectations of our programs. Simply click on the



handbook.

Please refer to this handbook to find the answers to many frequently asked questions. If you need further clarification or additional information, please contact us.

New Rochelle YMCA | 50 Weyman Avenue, New Rochelle, NY 10805

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