



BES School Counselors

Paige Simpson – Full time
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Tracy Ballard – Half time
 (Tuesdays midday, all day
 Wednesdays and Thursdays)
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Belvedere Main Office:
 703-916-6800

Bell schedule: M-F 9:20-4:05

NEED HELP? MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES
 24/7 EMERGENCY NUMBERS

In case of a life threatening emergency, call 911

CrisisLink Regional Hotline: 703-527-4077
 CrisisText: Text **NEEDHELP** to 85511
 Dominion Hospital Emergency Room:
 703-536-2000
 Inova Emergency Services: 703-289-7560
 Mobile Crisis Unit: 1-844-627-4747
 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
 1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-SUICIDE
 Merrifield Center Emergency Services:
 703-573-5679
 TTY dial 711

We are focusing on attendance the remainder of the school year. We appreciate your support in encouraging regular school attendance. If you have obstacles to getting your child to school regularly, please reach out and we can help!

Below are links to a video in each English and Spanish.



How is it December already? We were so excited to provide coats to many of our students who attended Partners in Print night. We know not everyone who needs a coat received one, so please reach out through your child's teacher or email one of the school counselors and we will do what we can to find a coat for you. Mrs. Ballard also has a bin of new winter hats and gloves, so please reach out if you need them.

December lessons are all about how to handle stress, respecting each other's differences and appreciating our own uniqueness. We are all unique in our own way and beautiful in our own skin. We are reminded to not make fun of someone just because they are not just like us.

For some the holidays can cause anxiety and sometimes we feel down or sad and dread celebrations. It helps to realize that these feelings are normal, and we don't need to try to deal with them alone. Looking ahead at two weeks of togetherness at home or traveling may seem like a lot. Below, we have put together a list of ways to reduce stress and enjoy a stress-less winter break.

Challenge your assumptions about what the holidays SHOULD be and think about what you really want to celebrate and/or accomplish. Think about what works and what doesn't – it might be time to make some changes. Focus on the holiday stresses that you can control. That includes making different plans and changing your responses to situations.

Here are four key *don'ts* for the holidays.

- **Don't do the same old thing.** If the usual family gathering is causing holiday stress, try something else. If you're too overwhelmed to host, discuss other possibilities with family members. Maybe a sibling could have the dinner this year.
- **Don't expect miracles.** If your holiday [anxiety](#) stems from a deeper history of family conflict, don't expect that you'll be able to resolve any big underlying issues now. Sure, it's supposed to be a season of forgiveness and good will. But in the midst of a hectic holiday season, you can't pin your hopes on leading family members to big emotional breakthroughs. You may be better off focusing on your own state of mind and confronting difficult issues during a less volatile time of year.
- **Don't overdo it.** To reduce holiday stress, you have to pace yourself. Long before the family gatherings actually happen, decide on some limits and stick to them. Stay one or two nights at your parents' house instead of three or four. Plan to drop by the holiday party for a couple of hours instead of staying all night.
- **Don't worry about how things should be.** "There's a lot of cultural pressure during the holidays," says Duckworth. "We tend to compare ourselves with these idealized notions of perfect families and perfect holidays." But in fact, most people have less than perfect holiday gatherings -- they have family tension, melancholy, and dry turkey too. If you have negative feelings, don't try to deny them. Remember that there's nothing wrong or shameful or unusual about feeling down during the holidays.

We hope you are checking out what is happening at Belvedere through our Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/besbulldogs?lang=en> You may even see a photo of your child working on a project!

We are still collecting gift card donations (\$25 grocery, or Target gift cards) and will distribute to qualifying families before the holiday break to offset holiday expenses. If you choose to donate a gift card or cards, please send to Mrs. Ballard tmballard@fcps.edu or Ms. Simpson pesimpson1@fcps.edu no later than Dec 12.