

MILESTONES MATTERS

Movin' On Up!

Milestones is excited to announce our student-run technology help desk, **Gateway**, opening in January 2021!



Transitions and Post High School Spotlight: *Gateway*, Milestones' own student run IT help desk organization, will create opportunities for students to gain real-world experience in IT and hardware support while simultaneously earning resume-building certifications from Google and Microsoft. *Gateway* will also foster an active, collaborative learning environment between students and faculty as we explore and expand our scope of technology and its application in the classroom, including testing and teaching educational apps and programs.

To further support our expanded technology programming, Milestones has also partnered with Cisco Networking Academy, a global IT and cybersecurity education program designed to provide students with education, technical training, credentialing, and career opportunities in this ever-growing field.

Networking Academy is Cisco's largest and longest-running Corporate Social Responsibility program, with 12.6 million participating students worldwide since its inception.

Students have already been off to an impressive start of their IT internship by running an extensive inventory check. Check out intern Matt's amazing IT inventory overhaul as he prepares all of all the outdated equipment to be properly recycled!



On October 5th we celebrated **World Teacher's Day**! We truly appreciate all of our teachers, teaching assistants, clinicians, and administrative team members across the Milestones faculty.

We continue to be beyond impressed by the team's dedication to our students each and every day, especially during a global pandemic! We are stronger together and we look forward to brighter days ahead!



Upcoming Events

Parent Advisory Group Meetings

PAG Dyslexia Presentation: January 15th, 2021 | 10:00-11:30am

PAG Presentation Topic TBD: March 5th, 2021 | 10:00-11:30am

PAG Presentation Topic TBD: May 14th, 2021 | 10:00-11:30am

Important Dates

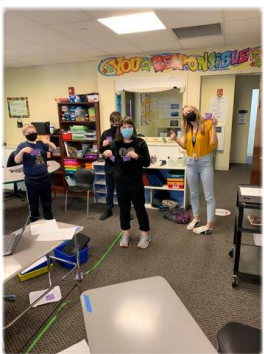
December 23rd, 2020: Half Day- Noon dismissal

December 24th, 2020 through January 1st, 2021: Winter Break- No School

January 4th through January 15th, 2021: Remote Learning Pivot

January 18th, 2021: MLK Day - No School

February 11, 2021: Winter Festival | 12:30PM Virtual Live Stream



Boston Parents Paper Recognition



Milestones was voted in the top 10 Family Favorite Special Needs Schools for 2020 in the Boston Parents Paper!

Thank you for your nominations and votes. We love our Milestones community!

Upper School Highlights

High School

ELA

The Blue, Amber, Purple, and Green groupings had fun working on a horror unit this fall to get in the Halloween spirit. 9th graders read Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" and "Tell Tale Heart". 10th graders read Roald Dahl's horror stories, "The Landlady" and "Lamb to the Slaughter". 12th graders read "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and

Poe's "Masque of the Red Death". We read together, created horror art pieces and stories, watched episodes of "Twilight Zone", Simpsons "Treehouse of Horror", and other adaptations. We ended the unit by writing analysis essays.

ER Group

Amber students in high school have done a fantastic job demonstrating their knowledge of the Zones of Regulation and expanding their emotional vocabulary. We are beginning to delve deeper into understanding our 'triggers' and building our repertoire of positive coping skills.



Lower School Highlights

Middle School

ELA

Denmark worked hard to complete their writing unit on Opinion Essays. Following the Massachusetts State Standards, each student wrote a five paragraph essay on a topic of their choosing. Some topics students wrote about are: why dogs are the best, why cats are the best and why students should be allowed on their computers all day.

Science

In science class this quarter we focused on life science. Portugal and Italy made their own board games based on animal reproduction that was super fun! Portugal and Italy dissected flowers and labeled all the different parts. Norway spent a lot of time

learning about ants this quarter and taking care of their ant farm.



History

November 3rd, 2020 brought a flurry of excitement to the Middle School. Election Day 2020, had finally arrived! First, students casted a "virtual vote" in the Milestones Middle School 2020 mock presidential election. Next, students researched real-time voting results through the Associated Press Website and finally... students generated their own predictions on which presidential candidate would win each state. Students used the interactive historic map on 270towin.org to assist them in developing these

predictions. This map allowed students to scroll through election results dating back to the U.S.'s first Presidential Election in 1789. Students were amazed to see how U.S. Territory expanded and diversified over time.



Elementary School

SLP/OT Group

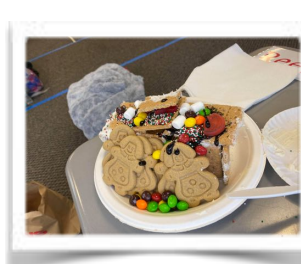
Elementary and middle school students participated in a fun Halloween activity making skeletons out of q-tips. In this activity students had the opportunity to practice their fine motor, visual motor, motor planning and social skills! Many students got creative in placing their skeletons in fun positions such as jumping jacks, dancing and riding a skateboard.

ER Group

Elementary and middle school students have done a fantastic job demonstrating their knowledge of the zones of regulation. Students are beginning to delve deeper into understanding our emotions and why we react strongly to certain situations. Classes have printed out visuals of the brain and learned more about a cool word- amygdala!

Holiday Fun

Elementary students enjoyed a sweet project in the days before winter break. Students designed and built their dream house masterpieces out of some yummy snacks and treats.



What's Going On

Adopt-A-Family

Each year during the month of December, students in the upper and lower school participate in our annual Adopt A Family program, one of our favorite Milestones traditions! For those of you who are less familiar with this holiday tradition, for the last 10+ years Milestones has teamed up with the Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) during the month of December to give back.

ABCD's Adopt a Family program matches donors with families in the greater Boston area who are working hard to improve their lives. Donors help their sponsored families by filling a family's wish list (needs and wants) during the holiday season. Many of these donations will support families in surviving the harsh winter ahead. Helping these families can prevent crises and build a brighter future for those struggling.

This year we are proud to announce that **over \$4,400 was raised to support a**

family of 9 this holiday season! Shout out to Occupational Therapist Kyle Adragna, countless other team members, students and families for coming together to make this happen. This far surpassed our original fundraising goal and we're so proud to see our communities' giving spirit during an extra difficult time in the world.



Understanding Gender Identity

Milestones would like to thank Adam Glick, LICSW for partnering with us to offer a fall Speaker Series presentation, *Understanding Gender Identity: Working Effectively with Transgender and Non-Binary Clients*.

Topics covered included gender dysphoria, name changes, social transition, medical transition (including hormones and surgeries), working with schools and parents, and particular clinical implications for this population.



We appreciate and welcome opportunities to learn, grow, and best support our community!

Keep an eye out for future Speaker Series events, which we offer as a free of charge community event sponsored by Milestones.

Bulldog
Pride

MILESTONES



Get your Milestones merchandise!

online,
Please visit the **Squadlocker** Bulldog store
link below:

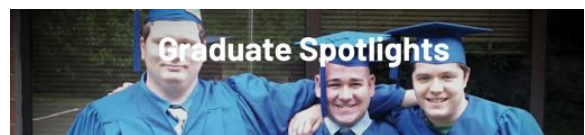
<https://teamlocker.squadlocker.com/#!/lockers/bulldogs-527>



New
Website!

Check out our new look!

www.advancingmilestones.com



Success After Milestones

Milestones' Alumni Spotlight

A handful of graduates from the Milestones' Class of 2018 came back this summer to participate in a Speaker Series for high school students. Alumni guest speakers created and presented PowerPoint presentations to current students, sharing the inside scoop on life after Milestones and how Milestones has helped prepare them for what came next. These former students shared that their time at Milestones prepared them with many skills, including: time management, self-advocating for extra help, homework planning, social interactions, and navigating the community - just to name a few!



College, Career and Internships

Creating and maintaining strong community partnerships are an essential part of Milestones' transition planning. Our college dual enrollment and work-based learning programming provide students with authentic opportunities to develop future education, employment, and transition skills based on career interests and strengths.

Clinicians' Corner

Clinicians' Corner: A Message From the Milestones Occupational Therapists Agendas!

We have entered our 2nd year of implementing school wide agendas to support the growth and development of executive functioning skills with our students. Agendas are meant to be used as a consistent, daily habit that helps transition communication from school to home and vice versa.

As students build more independence with writing down assignments, checking their agendas at home and building the routine of completing their work, they develop more regulation with the structure of their days. It helps to slowly acclimate them to

accepting more responsibility and time management skills. The growth of this responsibility helps further their sense of self-efficacy and self-determination, which are so important for student success, self-esteem and transition skills.

At School: Students are reminded to write down homework in the boxes in the last 5-minutes of their classes. Staff have encouraged students to use abbreviations as needed to accommodate for fine motor and visual-motor deficits (legibility, spacing, etc.) or to advocate for support from staff to scribe. *If your student encounters difficulty with the paper-based agenda, please make note of it with your student's case manager.

What to do at home: Students should routinely schedule time in their day when they get home from school to check their agenda. They should check off an assignment so it is easier to keep track of what is done and what needs to be done.

The Milestones OT Department,
Brianna, Casey,
Colleen, Gina,
Marianne, & Trevor



Clinicians' Corner: A Message From the Milestones Speech Language Pathologists

The 12th graders were able to have a piece of the community come to them virtually this November during Community Based Instruction groups! Guest speakers Tim Mahoney, Milestones' new Assistant Principal/Curriculum Director, and Kaitlin Owens, Actress/Short Film Producer, both gave creative and engaging presentations.

Tim spoke about job experiences he gained in high school and college and how that relates to his current job. He also shared that his vision and career aspirations shifted many times before deciding to enter the field of education. He highlighted his

strengths and challenges and discussed the importance of teamwork and having a positive mental attitude.



Kaitlin shared her experiences in theatre, acting, directing and more! She showed a recent commercial she starred in and discussed an

upcoming pilot episode on HBO to look out for. She also let students know about some famous actors she had the opportunity to work with behind the scenes, including Lady Gaga and Jake Gyllenhaal! Kaitlin discussed the importance of hard work and emphasized being passionate about whatever career you choose to pursue!



Clinicians' Corner: A Message From the Milestones School Psychologists:

We are living in a time where many things are unknown, and it can feel exhausting, scary, overwhelming, and all out of our control. We all want to regain a semblance of "normal". To create an environment that is conducive for our children and students to learn new things, we all need to focus on our own mental health. The more adults practice self-care and put our "own oxygen masks on first", the more we can give to others. Therefore, it is important that adults take at least 5-10 minutes every day to focus solely on themselves.

Helpful Resource App Links:

- **Headspace:** www.headspace.com/headspace-meditation-app
- **Breathe2Relax:** apps.apple.com/us/app/breathe2relax/id425720246
- **Happify:** www.happify.com/
- **Calm:** www.calm.com/
- **WorryWatch:** worrywatch.com/#slide-1



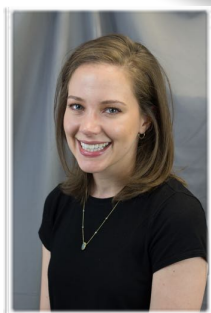
Additional Website Resources:

- Two websites of use would be **Child Mind Institute**, and for local mental health support, **Interface**, a free and confidential mental health referral service.
- <https://www.peps.org/ParentResources/by-topic/self-care/self-care-for-parents>



Team Shout-Outs

Congratulations to Reading Specialists Julia, Karen, and Joan on another successful annual book fair as the team transitioned to a virtual fair this year!



Shout out to Speech Language Pathologist, Grace Little for her wonderful parent training on Executive Functioning during the November Parent Advisory Group meeting!

Welcome back Henrik!

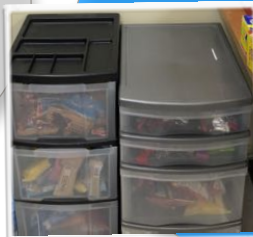
Former High School Counselor, Henrik Harms rejoined the Milestones team this school year as a Float Special Education Teacher after earning his Special Education teaching licensure.

In his role, Henrik has been providing additional teaching capabilities across the school during the pandemic, which has been a tremendous help to the team!



Shout out to the Parent Advisory Group for stocking the staff kitchen with yummy snacks.

As always, thank you parents for your thoughtful care of the Milestones team!



Shout out to the Milestones clinicians for organizing a safe way to celebrate Friendsgiving this year!

With individually wrapped snacks and socially distant activities, students were still able to connect in a meaningful way this holiday season!



Shout out to Math Specialist, Janine Hart-Hueber and her math students for brightening up the walls with their favorite animals!

Students have been invited to send in pictures of their pets! If they don't have a pet they can send a picture of their favorite animal. We are sharing the pictures on a colorful bulletin board to remind us how much our furry friends mean to us!

