

Community Partners News

Checklist for Preventing the Winter Blahs



As Midwesterners, we know that the dark, cold days of a typical winter can affect our mood and energy. Gray days, snowstorms, ice storms and school closings can take a toll on our mental health and may impact our ability to provide the best care we can to our clients. While there's nothing we can do about the weather, Elizza LeJeune, LMSW, walks us through the steps we can take now to help lessen the impact.

[Read 8 Tips for Boosting Your Energy This Winter](#)

Don't let winter weather hold anyone back from making a therapy appointment. Pine Rest teletherapy services allow you or your client to stay home or in the office for the session. Many insurance policies now cover teletherapy and the copay is the same as an office visit.

Speech & Occupational Therapy at Pine Rest Addresses Kids' Needs



“We’re looking at building skills through play, because that’s how kids learn,” Jean Holthaus, LMSW, LISW, shared with Maranda on a recent “Where You Live” segment. Pine Rest now offers Speech Therapy and Occupational Therapy for kids and teens through our recent merger with BRAINS.

What makes our Speech Therapy program different?

- **Conditions we treat** include articulation/phonological disorders, expressive/receptive language disorders, social communication disorders, and much more.
- Our **specialized treatments** are neurodiversity affirming, evidence-based, individual, client-centered, play-based and interaction-focused, and family-centered.
- Our **team approach to therapy**, where we collaborate with teachers, tutors and other providers when needed, so that parent(s) and child receive consistent support across settings.

What makes our Occupational Therapy program different?

- **Highly individualized, child-centered care**—no two treatment plans look the same.
- **Evidence-based therapy** blended with engaging, play-based activities. We offer expertise in sensory processing, motor development, and emotional regulation.
- **Strong family partnership** with clear communication and hands-on coaching.

- **Practical strategies** that carry over beyond the clinic, with a focus on meaningful, lasting change across home, school, and community.

[Watch Jean's Interview on eightWest](#)

[Learn More About Speech Therapy](#)

[Learn More About Occupational Therapy](#)

NEW! Pine Rest Launches Nurse Externship Program



Pine Rest is now accepting applications for its new Nurse Extern Program, a paid 14-week summer experience designed to prepare nursing students for meaningful careers in psychiatric care. Running May 11–August 14, 2026, the program offers hands-on clinical immersion within Pine Rest's inpatient setting, where externs work alongside experienced psychiatric nurses and gain confidence in compassionate, patient-centered mental health care.

The program emphasizes mentorship, professional development and interdisciplinary collaboration, with structured onboarding and one-on-one guidance throughout each shift. Applications are open through February 28, 2026.

[Learn About the Nurse Externship Program](#)

New Program Helps RNs Tackle Student Loans

Pine Rest offers up to \$40,000 in student loan forgiveness for full-time RNs! This program is part of our commitment to supporting the well-being and long-term success of our nursing team.

Free info session, tour and meal on January 29!

We're looking for compassionate, skilled nurses to join us in delivering exceptional mental health care. On January 29, we're inviting interested nurses to meet our amazing nursing team and explore how a career in mental health nursing could be the perfect fit for their goals. Breakfast and dinner options.

[Learn More & Register for January 29 Event](#)

[Read About the Student Loan Forgiveness Program](#)

Call Us: 616.559.5858

Email Us: talentacquisition@pinerest.org

Pine Rest Receives 800 Blankets from Project #EAS and 'i understand'



On Monday, January 5, members of the Spitler family and leaders from 'i understand' gathered at Pine Rest to deliver the blankets. Sarah Spitler spoke powerfully about the journey she and her family have embraced as they remember and honor husband and father, Eric Spitler, through Project #EAS, seeing growing community support for their suicide prevention awareness message and annual blanket drive.

"For patients discharging from our hospital, the transition can be challenging," said Gretchen Johnson, DNP, MSN, RN-BC, Pine Rest's Chief Nurse Executive. "Receiving a blanket may seem simple, but it carries something deeper – comfort, warmth and a tangible reminder that those we serve are cared for and not alone as they take the next steps forward."

[Read More About the Project #EAS Blanket Drive](#)

Stronger Together: Mental Health Education + Resource Night



Free Community Event! Registration Open Now!

Wednesday, February 4 | 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Rockford High School Auditorium

4100 Kroes Street NE, Rockford, MI 49341

2 CE credits available for mental health professionals

An evening dedicated to strengthening our community through mental health education, awareness, and connection. All community members and mental health professionals are invited. The evening includes light refreshments and a Pine Rest table with complimentary materials.

Don't miss **Mariah DeYoung, LMSW, CAADC, CCS**, Substance Use Director for Outpatient & Recovery Services at Pine Rest, who will present on '*Guiding Youth Through the Complex World of Substances*'.

[Learn More & Register for 'Stronger Together'](#)

Need to Refer a Patient? We're Here to Help

When a patient needs mental health care, time matters—and so does simplicity. At Pine Rest, we've made the referral process as smooth and accessible as possible. We offer multiple pathways to fit your workflow:

- **Epic Care Everywhere**
- **EpicCare Link**
- **Phone or Fax**
- **Care Convene & Great Lakes Health Connect**

Have questions? Our referral relations team is available to help you understand our services and how to refer your patients.

[How to Refer Patients to Pine Rest](#)

Call Ryan McPherson 616.222.4591 Ext: 3890

Call Karen Coy 332.322.0790

Email Ryan & Karen at referralrelations-c@pinerest.org

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**Mental Health Matters Newsletter
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