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Dawson County Health Department News

August 2024

Volume 14, Issue 8

NATIONAL WELLNESS MONTH

Celebrating National Wellness Month:
Embracing Holistic
Health



August is National Wellness Month, a time dedicated to focusing on self-care, managing stress, and promoting healthy routines. This month is an opportunity to prioritize our well-being and embrace a holistic approach to health that encompasses physical, mental, and emotional wellness.

Why National Wellness Month Matters

In our fast-paced world, it's easy to overlook the importance of self-care and healthy living. National Wellness Month serves as a reminder that taking care of ourselves is not a luxury but a necessity. By dedicating time and effort to our wellness, we can improve our overall quality of life, boost our resilience, and enhance our productivity and happiness.

Holistic Health: A Balanced Approach

Holistic health is about balancing the various aspects of our lives to achieve overall well-being. Here are some key areas to focus on this National Wellness Month:

- 1. Physical Wellness: Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and adequate sleep are the cornerstones of physical health. Engage in activities you enjoy, whether it's walking, yoga, or team sports. Eating a variety of nutrient-rich foods and staying hydrated will keep your body fueled and energized. Remember, rest is equally important—aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night.
- 2. Mental Wellness: Mental health is just as important as physical health. Practice mindfulness and meditation to reduce stress and enhance focus. Take breaks when needed and don't hesitate to seek professional help if you're feeling overwhelmed. Engaging in hobbies and activities that bring joy can also boost mental well-being. To explore thousands of free and accessible mental wellness resources, check out Dawson County's mental wellness website at dawsonmt.crediblemind.com. (Continued on page 2—>)



Upcoming Events

Children's Eye Health & Safety Month

National Immunization Aware-

ness Month

National Breastfeeding Month
Psoriasis Action Month

National Wellness Month

Gastroparesis Awareness Month

August 1st: World Lung Cancer

Day

August 9th: International Day

of Indigenous People

August 15th: National Relaxa-

tion Day

August 26th: National Wom-

en's Equality Day

August 31st: International
Overdose Awareness Day

August 1st-7th: World Breast-

feeding Week

August 14th-20th: OSHA's Safe and Sound Week

August 20th-26th: Contact Lens

Health Week



National Wellness Month

By Taylor Mitchell

- 3. Emotional Wellness: Emotional health involves understanding and managing our emotions. Build strong, supportive relationships with friends and family, and don't be afraid to express your feelings. Practicing gratitude and positive thinking can also improve emotional resilience.
- **4. Social Wellness**: Humans are social beings, and maintaining healthy social connections is crucial. Make an effort to spend time with loved ones, join community groups, and participate in social activities that interest you. Building a strong support network can provide a sense of belonging and security.
- **5. Occupational Wellness:** Finding balance in our professional lives is essential for overall well-being. Strive for a healthy work-life balance, set realistic goals, and take breaks to avoid burnout. Continuing to learn and grow in your career can also contribute to a sense of accomplishment and purpose.
- **6. Financial Wellness:** Financial health is a critical component of overall wellness. Managing your finances effectively can reduce stress and increase security. Create a budget to track your income and expenses, save for emergencies, and plan for future financial goals.

Tips for Enhancing Wellness

- ✓ **Set Realistic Goals:** Small, achievable goals can lead to significant improvements over time. Whether it's drinking more water, taking daily walks, or practicing gratitude, every positive change counts.
- ✓ Create a Routine: Establishing a daily routine can provide structure and help incorporate healthy habits into your lifestyle.
- √ Stay Connected: Reach out to friends and family regularly. Building strong relationships is key to emotional and social wellness
- ✓ Practice Self-Care: Make time for activities that relax and rejuvenate you, such as reading, gardening, or taking a warm bath.
- ✓ **Stay Informed**: Educate yourself about wellness practices and stay updated with health resources and tips. The Dawson County Health Department has created a wellness resource app, download it at bit.ly/dchdfocusonwellness for easy access to local and virtual health and wellness services.

Remember, wellness is a journey, not a destination. By making small, consistent changes, we can create lasting improvements in our health and well-being. Here's to a month of positive change and renewed vitality!



International Day of Indigenous People

From the Dawson County Health Department

Every year on August 9th, the world comes together to celebrate the International Day of Indigenous People. This day is dedicated to recognizing and honoring the rich cultures, traditions, and contributions of indigenous peoples worldwide. In Montana, this celebration holds a special significance as we pay tribute to the diverse and vibrant indigenous communities native to our state.

Montana is home to twelve Native American tribes, each with their own unique cultures, languages, and histories. These tribes include the Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Chippewa-Cree, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kootenai, Little Shell Chippewa, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d'Oreille, Salish, Sioux, and the Apsáalooke (Crow) people. These communities have lived on and cared for the lands of Montana for thousands of years, contributing immeasurably to the state's rich cultural tapestry.

The International Day of Indigenous People is an opportunity for all Montanans to reflect on the enduring legacy and contributions of these tribes. It's a time to acknowledge the deep connection indigenous peoples have with the land, their commitment to preserving their heritage, and the ongoing challenges they face.

The Importance of Preserving Indigenous Cultures

One of the key aspects of this day is raising awareness about the importance of preserving indigenous cultures and languages. Many Native American languages in Montana are at risk of disappearing as fluent speakers age and pass away. Efforts to revitalize these languages are crucial for maintaining the cultural identity and heritage of the tribes. Programs such as language immersion schools and community workshops are vital in this effort, and they deserve our support and recognition.

Honoring Traditions and Contributions

Indigenous communities in Montana continue to enrich our state through their traditions, art, music, and wisdom. Powwows, which are traditional gatherings featuring dancing, singing, and cultural celebrations, are a vibrant expression of Native American heritage. These events not only provide a platform for preserving traditions but also foster a sense of community and pride among indigenous peoples.

Moreover, indigenous peoples have been at the forefront of environmental stewardship, advocating for the protection of natural resources and sustainable living. Their traditional knowledge and practices offer valuable insights into environmental conservation, which are increasingly relevant in today's world.

Addressing Challenges and Moving Forward

While we celebrate the achievements and contributions of indigenous peoples, it's also important to recognize the challenges they face. Issues such as healthcare disparities, economic inequities, and the need for educational opportunities are ongoing concerns within many indigenous communities. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts from both governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the broader community.

How to Participate and Support

There are many ways to participate in the International Day of Indigenous People and support Montana's native communities:

- 1. Learn and Educate: Take the time to learn about the history, culture, and current issues facing Montana's indigenous tribes. Educational resources, museums, and cultural centers offer valuable information and perspectives.
- 2. Attend Cultural Events: Participate in local powwows, cultural festivals, and other events that celebrate Native American heritage. These events provide a unique opportunity to experience the richness of indigenous cultures firsthand.
- 3. Support Indigenous Businesses and Artists: Purchase goods and services from Native American-owned businesses and support indigenous artists. This not only helps sustain their livelihoods but also promotes the preservation of cultural arts and crafts.
- 4. Advocate for Indigenous Rights: Stay informed about policies and initiatives that impact indigenous communities and advocate for their rights and wellbeing. Your support can make a difference in promoting equity and justice.

As we celebrate the International Day of Indigenous People, let us honor the resilience, strength, and contributions of Montana's native communities. By acknowledging their past and supporting their future, we can help ensure that their rich heritage continues to thrive for generations to come.



Be Aware: Algal Blooms From the Dawson County Health Department

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) are popping up across Montana and it's something you should be aware of as you engage in your summer recreational activities. HABs are caused by blue-green algae and can look like pea soup, grass clippings, or green latex paint in the water and are usually suspended in the water or floating on the surface in a mat. The bloom can be many colors including green, blue, gold, or red. Not all blooms are harmful, but some can produce cyanotoxin.

Ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise coming into contact with these cyanotoxins can cause a range of symptoms including skin, ear, nose or throat irritation, respiratory issues, abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy, paralysis, tremors, seizures, and death in humans or animals. Symptoms can start within a few hours of exposure and last for 2-3 days. HABs can be unpredictable and change quickly so it's important to be aware when visiting bodies of water.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality has created a Harmful Algal Bloom Map that provides a current report of HABs reported across the state. However, it's important to note this map does not provide a comprehensive list of all HABs and caution should still be exercised. Toxin production may occur or dissipate at any moment.

If you suspect a bloom, avoid touching or ingesting the water. If you and/or your pet do go into the water, wash yourself off with clean water immediately after. Always use your best judgment to determine if a bloom is in the area and when it doubt, stay out.

If you think you have seen a harmful algal bloom, you can call 1-888-849-2938 or submit a report online. To view a map of currently reported blooms, visit HAB.mt.gov









Dawson/Wibaux/Prairie County **Tobacco Education Specialist** 406-377-5213



World Lung Cancer Day

By Austin Adams

Observed annually on August 1st, World Lung Cancer Day serves as a reminder of the need for awareness, early detection, and prevention strategies. It aims to educate communities about the risks associated with lung cancer and the crucial role of tobacco cessation in reducing these risks.

As the world marks another World Lung Cancer Day, the urgency to address one of the leading causes of this disease and death becomes ever more critical. Lung cancer remains a daunting health challenge globally, claiming millions of lives each year. While medical advancements continue to evolve, prevention through lifestyle changes remains important.

Tobacco use stands as the single largest preventable cause of lung cancer and death worldwide. It not only affects smokers but also poses a significant risk to non-smokers through secondhand smoke exposure. The carcinogenic substances present in tobacco smoke enters the lungs, leading to genetic mutations that can trigger the uncontrolled growth of cancer cells.

The decision to quit smoking is perhaps the most impactful step individuals can take to safeguard their lung health. Research consistently demonstrates that quitting at any age reduces the risk of lung cancer and other smoking-related diseases. Quitting benefits not only the individual but also their loved ones, by reducing exposure to secondhand smoke.

For those looking to quit smoking or vaping they can utilize the Montana Quitline by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visiting the website quitnowmontana.com. The Montana Quitline is a free, confidential service designed to assist Montanans in their journey

towards quitting tobacco. This service is available to residents statewide, and provides personalized support tailored to individual needs, whether it's quitting smoking, chewing tobacco, or vaping.

On this day, health organizations, governments, and communities unite to raise awareness about the link between tobacco and lung cancer.

World Lung Cancer Day serves as an important reminder of the devastating impact that tobacco has on lung health. It calls for collective action to reduce tobacco use and ultimately lower the incidence of lung cancer globally. By quitting tobacco, individuals not only improve their own health but also contribute to a healthier future for all.

As we commemorate this day, let us reaffirm our commitment to promoting lung health and supporting those affected by this disease. Together, we can strive towards a world where lung cancer is less prevalent and where every individual has the opportunity to live a smoke-free life.

In the United
States, the lifetime
risk of developing
lung cancer is 1 in 16

World Lung Cancer Day 2024







National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

From the Dawson County Health Department

For nearly two decades those in crisis have been able to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), but soon that number will be joined with a simple 988 dial. The new shortcut, approved by Congress more than two years ago, was implemented on July 16 and is positioned as an alternative to 911 for mental health emergencies.

In 2022, Governor Greg Gianforte joined Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) officials, mental health and crisis lifeline experts, and Montana State University (MSU) officials to promote the launch of the Montana 988 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline.

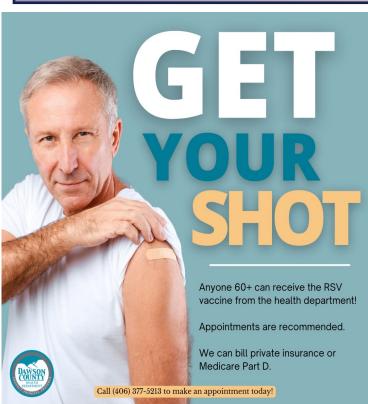
Montana 988 is part of the National 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network of over 200 local, independent crisis centers equipped to help people in mental health-related distress or experiencing a suicidal crisis 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the U.S.

Veterans who dial 988 will be given a prompt to dial "1" to be routed to the Veteran Crisis Line.

According to the National Association on Mental Illness, about 163,000 Montanans have a mental health condition, and more than 573,000 Montanans live in an area where there is a shortage of mental health professionals.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Montana is third in the nation in per capita suicides, and suicide is one of the leading causes of death in our state.







Services Provided by the Health Department

Immunizations: Adults and children, Thursdays: 8:30 am - noon and 1:00-5:00. Walk-ins are welcome. To schedule an appointment call 377-5213.

WIC (Women, Infants and Children): Thursdays 8:00 -12:00 and 1:00 -5:00. Appointments may be made by calling 377-5213.

Family Planning: Walk in hours are Monday—Tuesday: 1-5 pm, Wednesday: 8 am - noon and 1-5 pm, Thursday: No Clinic, Friday: 10 am- noon and 1-3 pm. Services are based on a sliding fee scale. To schedule an appointment call 377-2935.

Blood Pressure Clinics: Wednesday-Thursday: 8 - noon—no charge.

Labs: Wednesday 8:00 - noon. Some labs require 12 hour fast.

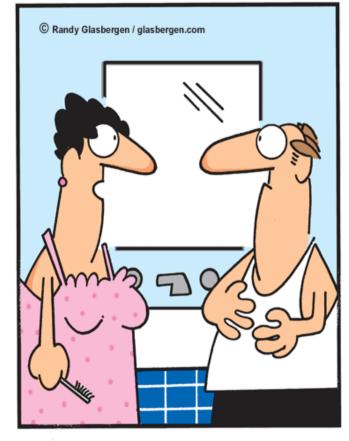
Home Health Services: In home services including skilled nursing. Certified Nurse Assistant, Homemaker and Meals on Wheels. Call 377-5213 for more information or to make a referral.

Public Health Home Visiting: Home visiting program for pregnant women, infants and children. Services help to build parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete supports in times of need and social and emotional competence of children.

Tobacco Prevention: Preventing tobacco use among youth and promote quitting among adult users. Free signs for CIAA compliance.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness: Planning and coordination of community resources to prepare for public health emergencies.

Insurance Billing: Yes, the Dawson County Health Department does bill insurance for children's immunizations and most adult immunizations.



"Chasing the ice cream truck does not count as a summer fitness program."









CONTEST RUNS JULY 1ST-OCTOBER 1ST, 2024

7TH GRADERS

Who get their Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis-whooping cough) vaccine at the Dawson County Health Department will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card

KINDERGARTENERS

Who receive their DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis), IPV (Inactivated poliovirus vaccine, MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) and Varicella (chickenpox) vaccines at the Dawson County Health Department will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card

EXTRA IMMUNIZATION HOURS IN AUGUST!

Tuesday, August 6th & 13th 8am - Noon

REGULAR IMMUNIZATION HOURS

Every Thursday 8am - Noon & 1pm - 5pm

CALL (406) 377-5213 TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT



OR BOOK ONLINE USING THE FOCUS ON WELLNESS APP!

HTTPS://WWW.DAWSONMT.GOV/DEPARTMENTS/PUBLICHEALTH/INDEX.PHP



Breastfeeding Support

By: Rachel Stewart

In celebration of National Breastfeeding Month, it's important to understand the journey of breastfeeding and be aware of the resources that are available to you if you need assistance.

It's normal to feel frustrated if you're having difficulty breastfeeding. For many moms, overcoming challenges is part of the breastfeeding journey. Remember, there are people who can help and ways to make breastfeeding easier. Take it day by day and set small goals. Breastfeeding gets easier! At any point in your breastfeeding journey, you can call your local WIC clinic at the Dawson County Health Department and speak to a breastfeeding expert. You can also use the tips below when you feel like breastfeeding isn't working:

Get support. Your partner, your mom, your family, and your friends are all an important part of your breastfeeding support system.

Talk to them before you start breastfeeding. Help them understand how they can help you. Talk to your employer, too. That way, you will have a support system when you go back to work or school.

Take care of yourself. Taking care of a new baby is a lot of work. It's easy to forget about your own needs with all the feedings and diaper changes. But remember, you also have to take care of yourself. That will help you take care of your baby. That means making sure you are eating and drinking enough, resting, taking breaks for yourself, letting someone know if you're not feeling well (physically or mentally), and asking for help with baby care.

Address pain. If you have discomfort or pain from sore nipples, engorgement, or plugged ducts and infections, there are steps you can take to make it better. Talk to a WIC breastfeeding expert for help.

Understand your milk supply. It's normal to worry whether your baby is getting enough milk. Most women make plenty of milk. As long as you're feeding your baby regularly (at least 8-12 times a day), you probably don't have anything to worry about. What usually causes low milk supply is limiting your baby's time at your breast, skipping a feeding, or feeding baby formula or solid food instead of breast milk. If you think your baby is not getting enough milk, check in with your WIC breastfeeding expert or your pediatrician.

Breastfeeding is natural, but that doesn't mean there isn't a lot to learn! Dawson County WIC is here to help answer and questions you may have. Breastfeeding is a priority in the WIC program. We know just how challenging breastfeeding can be, and we are dedicated to supporting your breastfeeding journey.





Overdose Awareness

By Brant Gordon

Overdose: A Tragic Reminder of the Dangers of Mixing Medication and Alcohol

Several years ago I lost a beloved coworker, Michelle, in a tragic overdose incident. Michelle was a dedicated team member and single mom of two beautiful young children, known for her warmth, humor, and unwavering support for her colleagues. Her untimely death serves as a stark reminder of the dangers of mixing medication with alcohol.

Michelle's unexpected passing was the result of an accidental overdose. She had a few drinks after work and later took pain medication, apparently not realizing the potentially lethal combination. She went to sleep and was later found dead in her bed. The interaction between the medication and alcohol led to a fatal reaction, claiming her life far too soon.

This heartbreaking event underscores the importance of understanding the risks associated with mixing medications and alcohol. Many medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter, can have dangerous interactions with alcohol. These interactions can amplify the effects of both substances, leading to severe health consequences, including overdose and

It's crucial for everyone to be aware of the medications they are taking and to heed warnings about alcohol consumption.

Here are a few steps we can all take to prevent such tragedies:

- 1. Consult Your Doctor or Pharmacist: Always ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about potential interactions between your medication and alcohol. They can provide guidance tailored to your specific situation.
- 2. Don't Take Any Drug Not Prescribed to You- what you don't know can kill you!!!
- 3. Read Labels Carefully: Pay attention to the warning labels on your medication. If a label advises against consuming alcohol, take it seriously.
- 4. Educate Yourself and Others: Share information about the dangers of mixing medication and alcohol with family and friends. Awareness can save lives.
- Avoid Alcohol When in Doubt: If you're unsure about the safety of drinking alcohol while on medication, it's best to avoid it altogether.

Michelle's tragic death was a profound loss for everyone who knew her. We honor her memory and that of every victim of accidental overdose by taking steps to protect ourselves and our loved ones from similar risks. By being informed and cautious, we can help prevent future tragedies and ensure that no other family has to endure the loss and heartache we experienced.



Protecting CHILD MOLES TON YOUR Children Workshop for Parents and the Community



This program is designed to educate and inform adults (18+) about child sexual abuse.

Hear from trusted community advocates Lt. Detective Caleb Fry from the William's County Sheriff's Office and Holly Votava, CPS Lead Worker with the North Star Human Service Zone to learn how to prevent, recognize, and report instances of abuse.

Program content was developed and written by child molesters in treatment at The Center for Behavioral Intervention in Beaverton, Oregon.

DO YOU KNOW?

- How many children are sexually abused prior to their 18th birthday?
- What grooming looks like?
- · How many offenders are out there?
- What to say to your children?

Wednesday, September 18, 2024 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm Dawson County HS Auditorium 900 N. Merrill Ave | Glendive, MT



GET YOUR VACCINE!



COVID-19 AND RSV VACCINES NOW AVAILABLE!

Appointment Required

Vaccines For Children (A program for uninsured or underinsured) for COVID-19 vaccine available for children

Cash, insurance or part D Medicare is required for adult vaccines.

Call (406) 377-5213 to make an appointment!



Immunization Month

By: Laureen Murphree

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw a concerning drop in routine immunizations for children and adults. Routine vaccination is rebounding but unevenly and has not yet recovered among all groups. Many children and adults that delayed vaccination during the pandemic are still behind schedule. While we continue to investigate the impact of the pandemic on routine immunizations, it is crucial that we take steps to help get everyone back on schedule with their routine immunizations. Children and teens can still catch up on vaccinations even if they start late.

National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) is an annual observance held in August to highlight the importance of routine vaccination for people of all ages. Routine vaccinations are a great tool to keep kids healthy, in school, and ready to learn. Vaccines can optimize student health by:

- Providing immunity and preventing disease outbreaks,
- Reducing the spread of disease in school thereby reducing the:
 - ~ Number of students and teachers that get sick and are absent
 - ~ Probability of an unplanned school closure due to illness, and
- Reducing duration of disease and thereby number of school days missed due to poor health.

Well-child visits and recommended vaccinations are essential and help make sure children stay healthy. Children who are not protected by vaccines are more likely to get diseases like measles and whooping cough. These diseases are extremely contagious and can be very serious, especially for babies and young children. In recent years, there have been outbreaks of these diseases, especially in communities with low vaccination rates.

Well-child visits are essential for many reasons, including:

- Tracking growth and developmental milestones
- Discussing any concerns about your child's health
- Getting scheduled vaccinations to prevent illnesses like measles and whooping cough (pertussis) and other serious diseases
- It's particularly important for parents to work with their child's doctor or nurse to make sure they get caught up on missed well-child visits and recommended vaccines.

There are 14 diseases that we have almost forgot about because of routine vaccinations. Recently, some of the diseases have been

appearing because of low immunization habits. Look into these diseases and see why you don't want these to come back. Polio, Tetanus, Influenza, Hep B, Hep A, Rubella, Hib, Measles, Whooping Cough, Pneumococcal Disease, Rotavirus, Mumps, Chickenpox and Diphtheria.

The Dawson County Health Department is here for your immunization needs. We have opened extra immunization hours during the first two weeks of August. Besides our immunization hours on Thursday, you can schedule appointments on Tuesday mornings as well. Call and schedule your immunizations before school starts!

We are also entering all those who complete their Kindergarten shots or 7th grade shots with us in a \$50 gift card drawing.



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