

THE SCOOP

NEW

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

EDITION 4

OCTOBER 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Mindful Moment
- 2 Period Pains and Trivia
- 3 - 4 Healing Effects of Social Connection, New Facilitators, and Resources
- Upcoming Events, Awareness, and Trainings*
- 5 October 2023
- 6 November 2023
- 7 December 2023 and News
- 8 Additional Resources



MINDFUL MOMENT

Bird song is good for your mental health. Two studies published last year in scientific reports said that seeing or hearing birds could be good for our mental well-being. Other recent research suggests that listening to recordings of birds' songs, even through headphones, can alleviate negative emotions. Even just six-minute audio clips of bird song could reduce feelings of anxiety, depression, and paranoia in otherwise healthy participants. By contrast, listening to traffic noise worsened symptoms of depressive states.



Take a moment for yourself and listen to the songs and calls of Nebraska's State Bird the Western Meadowlark. [Click here to listen](#)



NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Discover ARH websites

[Adolescent Health](#)
[Reproductive Health](#)

THE SCOOP

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

Period Pains

One in five teens in the U.S. have struggled to afford period products or were not able to purchase them at all since menstrual products are not covered by food stamps or WIC.



Period poverty is the lack of access to period products and education. The reality is that 86% of menstruating people in general have reported starting their periods in public without the supplies they need. Some public restrooms have period product dispensers but these are not reliable or accessible for all people. Many times, these dispensers are inoperable. If they are in working order, they require change, which many people do not carry with them. Four out of five menstruating students have either missed class time or know someone who missed class time because they did not have access to period products. When the average age of menstrual onset is around 12, and this being a monthly struggle, imagine how much school they may miss by high school graduation. [Aunt Flow](#) believes there is a better way and is committed to ensuring everyone has access to period products. They partnered with NYC Public Schools to offer free menstrual products, and found that school attendance increased amongst girls by 2.4%. This is not just an issue for teens;

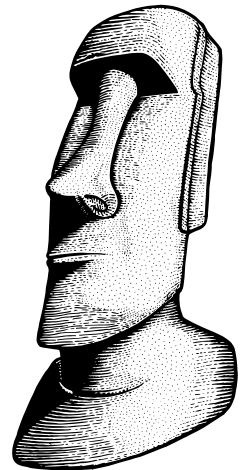


[early puberty soared during the pandemic, and scientists don't know why.](#) Early-onset or “precocious” puberty, defined as the appearance of secondary sex characteristics in girls eight or younger and boys nine or younger, and has been difficult for researchers to attribute to a single cause or mechanism.



Last edition's answer:

This rare gestational event, which has only 330 known cases throughout history, translates to mean "stone baby." What is this event called?



Lithopedion

What is the 1st country where cesarean procedures were consistently survived by both mother and baby documented?

- A) Switzerland
- B) Japan
- C) Mexico
- D) Uganda

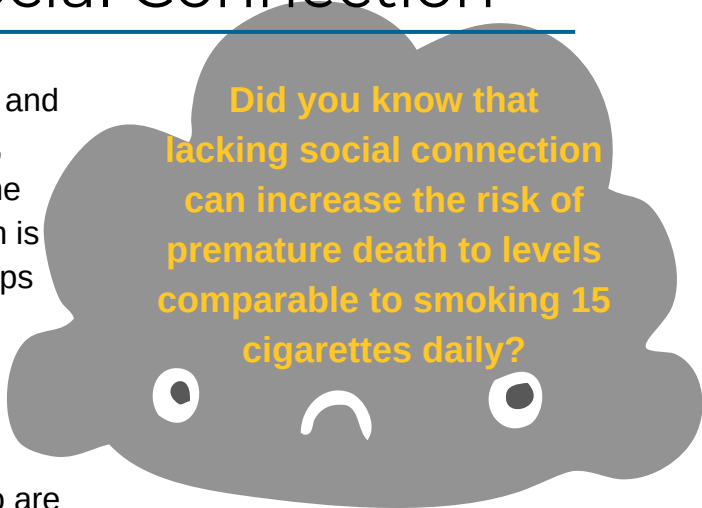
**Answer in next edition*

THE SCOOP

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

Healing Effects of Social Connection

The Surgeon General has issued an advisory on [loneliness and social connection](#). Our relationships and interactions with family, friends, our neighborhoods, digital communities, schools, and work are just some of what create social connection. Social connection is the structure, function, and quality of our relationships with others. It is a critical and underappreciated contributor to individual and population health, community safety, resilience, and prosperity. Large population studies have documented that, among initially healthy people tracked over time, those who are more socially connected live longer, while those who experience social deficits including: isolation, loneliness, and poor-quality relationships, are more likely to die earlier, regardless of the cause of death.



Did you know that lacking social connection can increase the risk of premature death to levels comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes daily?

The rate of loneliness among young adults has increased every year between 1976 and 2019. Studies concluded that loneliness and social isolation among adolescents increase the risk of depression and anxiety, and that this risk remained high even up to nine years later. Other research shows that adolescents who enjoy positive relationships with their peers, parents, and teachers experience improved academic outcomes. Furthermore, school and family connectedness during adolescent years may predict subsequent positive outcomes in early adulthood, including a higher likelihood of graduating college and attaining a four-year college degree. In contrast, the lack of quality social connections inhibits student progression even in higher education settings. The “lack of social connection” is cited as a prime reason for leaving an educational program.

Social networks are getting smaller and at the same time, social participation across several types of relationships has steadily declined. This is starkest for young people ages 15 to 24. For this age group, time spent in-person with friends has reduced by nearly 70% over almost two decades, from roughly 150 minutes per day in 2003 to 40 minutes per day in 2020. Social connection continued to decline during the COVID-19 pandemic as well, with one study finding a 16% decrease in network size. *Continued next page*



THE SCOOP

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

Healing Effects of Social Connection

How we engage one another, significantly influences social connection. Creating a culture of social connection is vital and involves three components: structure, function, and quality.

Structure: The number and variety of relationships and the frequency of interactions.

Ex. Household size, friend circle size, relationship status

Function: The degree to which relationships serve various needs.

Ex. Emotional support, mentorship, support in a crisis

Quality: The positive and negative aspects of relationships and interactions.

Ex. Relationship satisfaction and/or strain, how much your social circle opens up and/or stays closed.

When asked, youth would like adults to: prioritize mental health, nurture healthy communication, aid in encounters with conflict, and promote authentic interactions to help them build and sustain healthy peer-to-peer relationships.



Newly Certified Teen Outreach Program[®] Facilitators



Pictured from left to right: Michaela Jennings ARH Program Manager; New Facilitators: Kelsey Molina, Jennifer Simmons, Rachel Stephens; and Emily Rivera ARH Community Health Educator Senior

Nebraska Network of Care for Behavioral Health's



mission is to provide connection to resources that promote and facilitate resilience and recovery for Nebraskans. You can search to find behavioral health agencies, programs, and/or facilities near you such as Naloxone Prescribing Pharmacies.

You can also find interactive health tools, a symptom checker, and other health resources.

THE SCOOP

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

OCTOBER 2023

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

Breast cancer awareness campaigns started in 1985 with aims to promote screening and prevention of the disease. Initially only a week long, it has since expanded to include the entire month. In 1992 the pink ribbon was introduced in partnership with *Self Magazine* and Estée Lauder cosmetics which has become an easily recognizable symbol of breast cancer awareness today.

Breast cancer is the second most common type of cancer in women. Accounting for one in three new cases of cancer in women in the U.S. each year. Most breast cancers are diagnosed after the age of 50, though the new recommendations are for mammograms to begin at the age of 40. Young women under 40 can also be diagnosed with breast cancer. It is important to know your [risk factors](#) and speak with your primary care provider about any concerns. If you have delayed your annual mammogram, schedule your appointment this awareness month and encourage others to do the same.

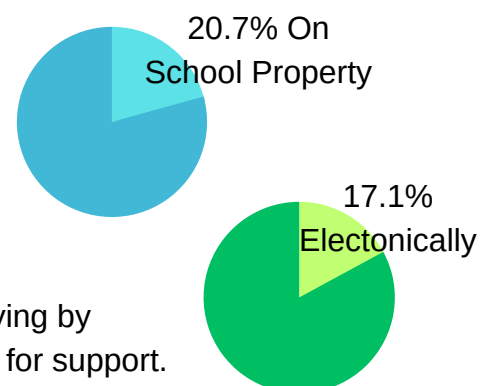
National Bullying Prevention Month

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Bullying prevention is when people work actively to create healthier communities by modeling and promoting positive social behaviors such as kindness, acceptance, and community building. Since schools are a primary location where bullying occurs, it is crucial that faculty and other trusted adults in the school establish a supportive and safe environment.

Encourage youth to become upstanders and stand up to bullying by signing a [pledge](#). A reminder that those in crisis can call [988](#) for support.

Where does bullying occur? According to the Nebraska [YRBS](#) , High School Students Who Were Bullied,



THE SCOOP

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

NOVEMBER 16, 2023

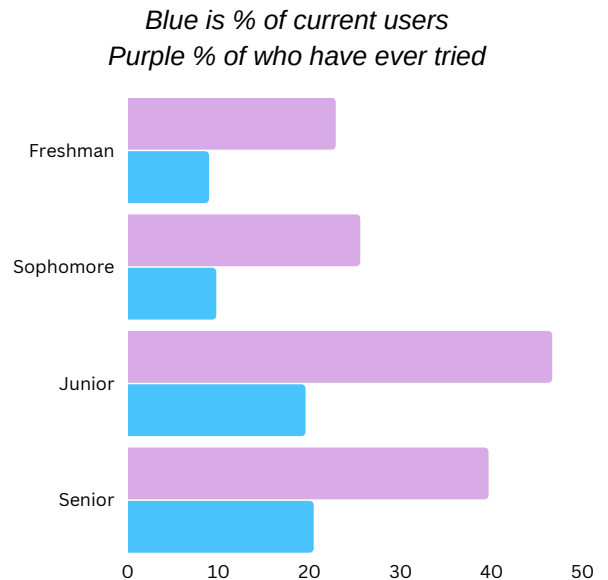
Great American Smokeout

The American Cancer Society sponsors the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday of November (November 16), challenging smokers to give up cigarettes or electronic vapes for 24 hours.

Tobacco product use is started and established primarily during adolescence. According to the [CDC](#), “Nearly 9 out of 10 adults who smoke cigarettes daily first try smoking by age 18. If cigarette smoking continues at the current rate among youth in this country, 5.6 million of today’s Americans younger than 18 will die early from a smoking-related illness. That’s about 1 of every 13 Americans aged 17 years or younger who are alive today.” In Nebraska, smoking amongst High School students peaked in 1993 with 33.7% of students smoking cigarettes compared to just 3.6% in 2021 who currently smoke.

Even though cigarette smoking is trending downward, vaping (like shown above) is not. E-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth since 2014 with a total of 14.7% of Nebraska high schoolers who currently vape in 2021. Vapes are not safe for use since they contain many harmful chemicals such as nicotine. If a young person needs help to quit vaping they can text **QUITNOW** to **333888**.

According to the Nebraska [YRBS](#), High School Students Who Ever Used An Electronic Vape Product by Grade shown below



[No Limits Nebraska Youth Tobacco Prevention Program Mini Grants Application](#)

No Limits Mini Grants will provide useful materials that will help the youth grant recipients take a stand against Big Tobacco at school and in their communities! There are three project options to choose from, including vape and cigarette cleanup.



THE SCOOP

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

DECEMBER 2023

NATIONAL STRETCHING DAY | December 11

Is sitting the new smoking? Over 25% of American adults sit for more than eight hours every day. 44% of those people get little to no exercise according to the [Heart Foundation](#). The average American is active less than 20 minutes every day. A study in 2011 found that those who sit the most are at a greater risk for disease such as a 147% increased risk of cardiovascular events like heart attack and stroke. To counteract the affects of prolonged sitting, try to incorporate 60-75 minutes of steady activity like walking everyday.



While at work we spend hours hunched over computers and smartphones which over time can take a toll on your back, hips, neck, and shoulders. Its not always easy to find time to practice self-care. One way to incorporate more movement into your work routine is to set a timer for every hour to move! You could stand up, take a short walk to refill your water, or even do some light stretches. Check out Web MD's [Stretches You Can Do at Work](#) or [6 Yoga Exercises You Won't Be Embarrassed to Do at Your Desk](#) for stretching break ideas!

Sitting in front of computer screens for most of the day can lead to eye strain. [Eye Yoga](#) may be able to offer some relief. According to one study, participants felt their eyes were less tired and fatigued.



[DoxyPEP](#) offers a new way to stop STIs. This post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) treatment is a dose of the antibiotic doxycycline taken in the hours immediately after sex, which works to extinguish an STI before it leads to symptoms or spreads to others. A growing body of research shows using DoxyPEP in this way can substantially lower the risk of contracting three of the most common bacterial STIs: chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis.

The [FDA](#) approved the first nonprescription daily oral contraceptive, Opill. This is expected to remove barriers to access and reduce unintended pregnancies. Opill is expected to be available early 2024.

THE SCOOP

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[American Cancer Society - About Breast Cancer](#)

[Breastcancer.org](#)

[National Day: Great American Smokeout](#)

[Nebraska Tobacco Quitline](#)

[The Power of Peer-to-Peer Relationships](#)

[Truth Initiative: This is Quitting](#)

[Stopbullying.gov](#)

[Why birds and their songs are good for our mental health](#)

This resource is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$3,912,446 with 0% financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](#).



This newsletter was supported by Grant Number 2101NEPREP and 2201 NESRAE from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Its contents are solely the responsibility of NEDHHS and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.