

THE SCOOP

NEW

on Adolescent and Reproductive Health

● EDITION 8 ●

OCTOBER 2024 ●

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NAVIGATING GRIEF

According to Therese Rando, the author of *Grief, Dying, and Death: Clinical Interventions for Caregivers*, “Grief refers to the

process of experiencing and working through the psychological, behavioral, social and physical reactions to the perception of loss.” Grief is a natural reaction to loss and is both a universal and a personal experience.

According to Judi’s House / JAG Institute’s 2024 [Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model \(CBEM\)](#),

in Nebraska,

1 in 15 children and youth will experience the death of a parent or sibling by age 18.

This is approximately 6.7% or 32,000 Nebraska youth who are bereaved by age 18, which is the lowest rate among U.S. states. For comparison the national rate is 8.6%. It is to be noted that in Nebraska the number of bereaved young adults more than doubles to 79,000 before the age of 25.

continued next page

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Adolescents' Behavior with Grief may express as:

- Hiding their feelings.
- Feeling embarrassed if someone in their family dies.
- Fear being different.
- Having difficulty expressing sadness/hurt for fear of appearing weak.
- More likely to express anger and impulsive behavior.
- Wanting to be in control and believe they are in control of their emotions.
- Continue to have a joking view about death.

From the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) learn more about:

[Grief, Trauma, and How to Empower Children, Youth, & Families.](#)



What to say besides, "I'm sorry"

As a society, we're uncomfortable with death and grief which is why many of us find it challenging to figure out how to articulate our condolences. Even though saying "I'm sorry," is set as our societal default when we find out someone is experiencing loss, it may not be the best choice. It implies responsibility in some way which then requires the bereaved to comfort their would be supporter by stating something along the lines of "it's ok." A great alternative to "I'm sorry" would be "Please accept my condolences" or "I'm holding space for you in my heart." For more options read:

[11 Things to Say When Someone Dies Besides 'I'm Sorry'](#)



Why Remembering Matters

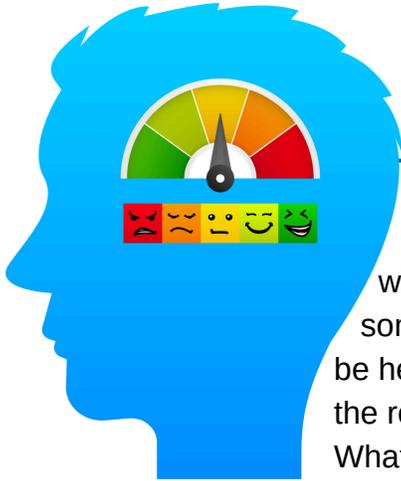
People heal when they honor the legacy of somebody they've lost. Family and friends can help by offering one of the most valuable kinds of support, remembrance of their loved one. One way is by Eating Cake! (or Chicken Parmesan). This memory tool may be the easiest of all! Encourage your friend or family to eat their loved one's favorite food. Chocolate cake? Perfect! Pasta and meatballs? Fabulous! Enjoying reminiscent food is a powerful way to spark memories and stay connected to the individuals we miss most. Check out more ideas:



[Helping Teens Keep Memories of Loved Ones Alive](#)

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MINDFUL MOMENT

Feeling stressed is a normal part of life. How do you know when stress has turned into something more serious? It can be helpful to begin with pinpointing the root of the emotion by asking, What am I feeling?

Stress

is your body's natural, short-term reaction to something overwhelming or difficult, like a big test or an unfamiliar situation. Having some stress is normal and can even help you stay alert and focused when you need to be.

Worry

is that nagging thought in the back of your mind about what might happen in the future. You might worry about your grade in a class, a big social event or date, or whether you'll get the job you want. Some worries can be helpful by getting you to focus on solving problems you are facing.

Anxiety

can involve both stress and worry, and it takes things up a notch. It's when worries feel like they're taking over and are hard to stop, making it hard to concentrate, do the things you need to do, or even sleep. Anxiety is one of the most common mental health challenges facing youth.

1 in 3 young people will have an anxiety disorder at some point in their lives.

A great resource for youth to learn about anxiety and explore strategies for managing stress:

[Calm Minds: A Guide to Easing Anxiety](#)



[Recent research](#) have found toxic metals such as arsenic and lead in several top selling period product brands. More research is needed to determine if people are getting harmful outcomes from exposure of these metals in tampons.

At home [cervical cancer screening](#) tests - an alternative to the pap smear, may become available in the near future.

The World Health Organization declared [MPOX](#) a global public health emergency for a second time in two years.

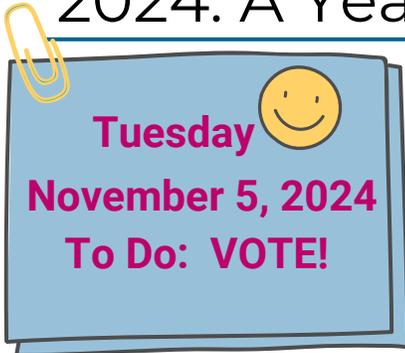
The Food and Drug Administration authorized the first over the counter [syphilis test](#). Access to home tests may help increase initial screening for syphilis.

The U.S. surgeon general is concerned about stress that parents face and has issued an advisory: [Parents Under Pressure](#)

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2024: A Year of Connection



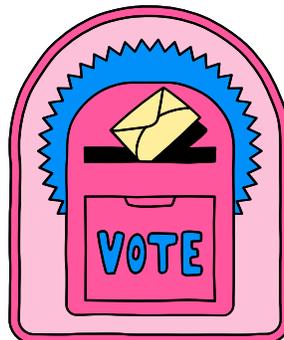
Did you know one of the objectives for [Healthy People 2030](#) is about voting? This objective is to *Increase the proportion of the voting-age citizens who vote.* The reason behind this objective is that voting offers a chance for people to

contribute to decisions that can affect their communities and directly or indirectly impact their health and well-being. Voting can also help people develop a sense of purpose and help them feel connected to their community. Higher rates of community participation and social contact are linked to higher rates of civic participation and better public health outcomes. In 2022, about half (52.2%) of US citizens 18 years and older reported voting in the federal, state, and/or local November election.

Healthcare workers, including physicians, nurses, physician assistants, and dentists are 12 - 23% less likely to vote than the general population.

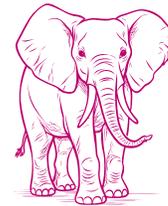
Elections are the largest public events we hold nationally and people are more likely to vote if they have a plan. October is the perfect time to add voting to your to do list! The general election this year happens on the 1st Tuesday in November (the 5th). Here in Nebraska the voting polls are open from 8am - 8pm CST or 7am - 7pm MST. If you have more voting and election related questions such as finding information about candidates, registering to vote, where your county drop boxes are located, etc. a great resource is the State of Nebraska's

[2024 Elections webpage.](#)



Last edition's answer:

There are only 3 mammals that experience menopause. What are the other two mammals besides humans?



Elephants
& Humpback
Whales



What is a common period/menstruation euphemism from Germany?

- A) Aunt Flow
- B) Mensies
- C) Curse of Dracula
- D) Strawberry Week

*Answer in next edition

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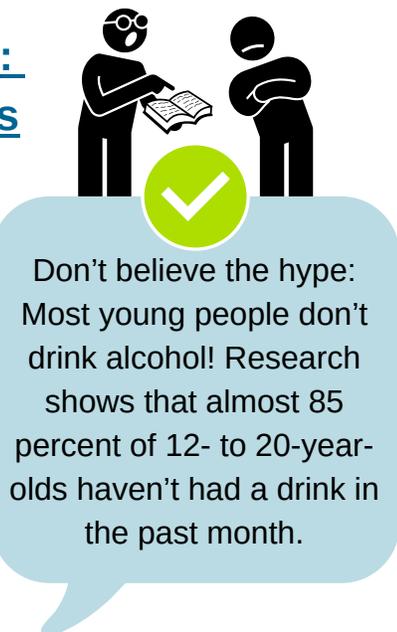
OCTOBER 2024

Youth Substance Use Prevention Month

This [month](#) is about inspiring action to prevent substance use/abuse and reducing harm. Prevention strengthens protective factors and reduces risk factors for individuals, families, schools, communities and society. Prevention helps us get ahead of substance use and mental health challenges so that youth, families, and communities can thrive.

The need for prevention has never been greater. Studies show that the earlier in life a young person starts using alcohol or other drugs, the greater their lifetime risk of misuse or addiction. We also know that early intervention is vital for youth. Every year that substance use is delayed while the adolescent brain develops, the risks of addiction and substance misuse decrease.

Underage Drinking: Myths versus Facts

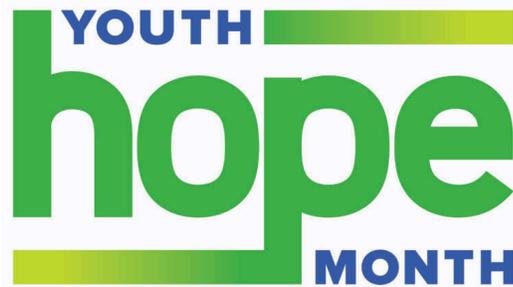


Adolescents use alcohol more than any other drug, including tobacco and marijuana. Binge drinking is the most commonly reported and most dangerous way that adolescents consume alcohol. Those who drink alcohol are more likely to experience negative consequences such as injury or death, difficulty at school, addiction, and legal problems. Fortunately, overall alcohol use among adolescents has decreased. According to Nebraska Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBSS), peak alcohol consumption for High Schoolers was in 2003 with 46.5% reported as current alcohol drinkers. The newly released YRBSS [2023 data](#) reports a record low with only 10.8% of who currently drink alcohol.

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NOVEMBER 2024



**For Support Call:
1-800-RUNAWAY**

National Runaway Prevention Month has been rebranded to Youth Hope Month. As the landscape surrounding youth experiencing homelessness has evolved it was important to recognize the need for a rebrand to more accurately reflect the broader issues impacting youth today. The mission of Youth Hope Month is to illuminate the challenges faced by youth who runaway and/or are experiencing homelessness. This month it is important to raise awareness and promote resources that offer hope and support. Your involvement is crucial in creating safe, empowering spaces for young people to thrive.

Youth who run away may be perceived as “bad” kids, but typically they’re dealing with situations that feel overwhelming, be it stressful family dynamics, bullying, or abuse/neglect. It is important to understand that a youth’s reason for leaving is unique to that individual. Youth who runaway and/or are experiencing homelessness come from every kind of neighborhood, rich and poor, rural and urban.

It is estimated that 4.2 million young people, ages 13 to 25, experience some form of homelessness each year in the United States, with considerably more young people experiencing crises that put them at risk of facing similar housing insecurity. Think about it this way: in a classroom of 30 students, at least one of them will experience homelessness this year, without a safe living environment to call home and forced to couch surf, bounce among relatives and friends, live in shelters, or stay on the streets. 41% of youth who contacted the National Runaway Safeline (NRS) were described as being in a state of crisis at the time of contact.

**In 2023 Nebraska’s counties that had the most calls into the NRS:
Douglas (45%), Lancaster (19%), Sarpy (13%),
Hall (5%), and Cherry (3%).**

For more information on raising awareness and providing support, visit: [Youth Hope Month](#)



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DECEMBER 2024

National Handwashing Awareness Week 1st - 7th

Handwashing with soap is one of the best ways to stay healthy. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. Germs can spread from person to person or from surfaces to people. Some key times to wash your hands are: before, during, and after preparing and/or eating food; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; after using the toilet; and after touching garbage. There are five steps for good hand hygiene, they are:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or an air dryer.



If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to clean your hands.



National Cookie Exchange Day on the 22nd



National Cookie Exchange Day is a sweet tradition that brings people together during the holiday season. It's a day for friends, family, and coworkers to exchange homemade cookies, share recipes, and enjoy each other's company. Whether you're baking classic favorites like chocolate chip or trying new festive recipes, the day is all about spreading joy through the simple pleasure of sharing cookies. This fun and delicious event not only satisfies sweet tooth cravings but also strengthens connections and creates lasting holiday memories. Looking for a Nebraska inspired recipe, try these

[Butter Brickle Cookies](#), these buttery cookies are full of toffee bits and will become a favorite!



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [About Handwashing](#)

Healthy Democracy Healthy People: [Health & Democracy Index](#)

Office of Population Affairs: [Substance Use in Adolescence](#)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: [Substance Use Prevention Month](#)

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