

Panhandle

Public Health District

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Mental Health Month Reminds Us That We Are Not Alone

Panhandle Public Health District Encourages Small Steps, Strong Connections, and Support

During Mental Health Month, Panhandle Public Health District is reminding residents that mental health is an essential part of overall well-being, and support is available.

Poor mental health among adults can have profound effects on various aspects of life, including relationships, work or school performance, physical health, and overall quality of life. It is essential for individuals experiencing mental health challenges to seek help from mental health professionals, engage in self-care practices, and access appropriate treatment and support services to promote recovery and well-being. Mental Health Month reminds us that reducing stigma surrounding mental health issues and promoting awareness and education can help create supportive environments for individuals struggling with poor mental health.

In the Nebraska Panhandle, 1 in 10 adults and 1 in 5 youth experience a diagnosed mental health condition each year. Many more may struggle without ever receiving a diagnosis. Suicide remains the second leading cause of death among individuals ages 10 to 44, underscoring the importance of awareness, connection, and access to care.

“We have made important progress in how we talk about mental health, but there is still more work to do,” said Holly Brandt, Region 1 Behavioral Health Authority Administrator. “No one should feel like they have to handle stress, anxiety, or depression on their own.”

PPHD offers several upcoming opportunities to learn more and gain skills for managing stress, increasing resilience, and how to have conversations about stress and mental health:

- QPR monthly trainings (see attached): Suicide prevention, second Wednesdays at noon on Zoom. Custom presentations can be scheduled for your organization or community. Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/PPHD-QPR2026>
- Resilience First Aid Starter Training (RFast): April 29th from 3 – 4 pm: Discover Connected Resilience with RFAST's transformative 1-hour workshop, designed to equip you with essential tools and strategies for fostering mental well-being in yourself and others. Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/mwp8ejn8>



- Motivational Interviewing Foundations & Skills: Gering Civic Center, April 30th from 10-4 pm: <https://panhandlepartnership.com/news-events/event-calendar.html/event/2026/04/30/motivational-interviewing-foundations-skills/557136>
- Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) at WNCC – May 6th from 8-5 pm: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/youth-mental-health-first-aid-tickets-1984000518960?aff=ebsoporgprofile>
- Virtual YMHFA: May 7th from 9 – 3 pm- <https://tinyurl.com/3fts7hzn>
- Virtual Adult Mental Health First Aid – May 12th from 9 – 3 pm - <https://tinyurl.com/3fts7hzn>
- My Ascension video showing – May 5th at Midwest Theater (6-8 pm) and Goodhand Theater in Kimball, May 18th (7-9 pm) – MY ASCENSION is an inspiring look at Emma’s story, and includes firsthand experiences of families, friends, school officials, and suicide prevention experts. The film does not shy away from the difficult realities of the ongoing youth suicide crisis but shares valuable resources to help keep teens safe. Followed by a brief question and answer discussion.
- Motivational Interviewing: Beyond the Basics: May 22nd - <https://panhandlepartnership.com/news-events/event-calendar.html/calendar/2026/5>

“Taking care of your mental health is just as important as taking care of your physical health,” Brandt concluded. “This month, and every month, we encourage everyone to check in with themselves and each other.”

During Mental Health Awareness Month, residents are encouraged to check in with themselves and others. Taking time to care for your mental and physical health is an important part of overall well-being. To learn more about many topics related to managing stress, please visit <https://pphd.crediblemind.com/>.

To find a local mental health provider, visit Region1 at <https://www.region1bhs.net/vnews/display.v/SEC/Who%20We%20Are%7CNetwork%20of%20Providers>

Mental health is not only about managing illness. It is about the ability to cope, connect, and thrive. Everyday habits and small steps can make a meaningful difference. Research shows many people try to manage challenges on their own, often turning to self-help resources. However, not all resources are evidence-based, which makes it important to seek trusted, reliable information and support when needed.

Anyone can improve their mental health by starting with small, practical steps using one or more of these six simple ways to support your mental health:

- Take time to rest and recharge. Set aside even a few minutes each day to step away from stress.
- Connect with others. Reach out to a friend, neighbor, or loved one. A simple conversation can make a big difference.
- Care for your body. Healthy eating, movement, and sleep all support mental well-being.
- Practice deep breathing. Slow, deep breaths can help calm the body and reduce stress.
- Seek support when needed. Talking with a healthcare provider, counselor, or trusted professional can help you navigate challenges.
- Practice gratitude. Take a moment each day to reflect on a few things you are thankful for.

You Are Not Alone. If you or someone you know is struggling, help is available. For immediate support, contact the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting 988. Trained counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For more information about local health programs and resources, contact Nicole Berosek, Wellness and Prevention Program Manager, at nberosek@pphd.ne.gov, or 308-279-3496. The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council is proudly part of Panhandle Public Health District. The Council specializes in supporting employers in the Panhandle region. We recognize that many employers support a diverse and remote workforce and offer innovative ways to overcome the challenge of working with a virtual team. We understand that many of our employers do not have full-time wellness resources and work to provide resources and training to make running a worksite wellness program as easy as possible.

Did you see the latest PWWC newsletter? If not, check it out here: <https://pphd.ne.gov/pwwc.html>

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.