

COMMUNITY CHAT

Brought to you by the Hot Springs County Prevention Coalition



HAPPY
FEBRUARY!

Hello there and Happy February!! This month we are focusing on the health effects of tobacco and nicotine use, especially on our youth. We are also spreading kindness as we celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Week!! Subscribe to our monthly newsletters and follow us on facebook to stay up-to-date on all things prevention in Hot Springs County.



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Whether you are a community member interested in getting more involved, a student wanting to make a difference, or a professional who works in a related field, there is a place at the table for you! Contact us (jcheney@hotsprings1.org) or come to a meeting or event. We look forward to being in touch!

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FEBRUARY:

9th-15th: Random Acts of Kindness Week.

12th: Prevention Coalition Meeting - Noon-1pm at the County Annex/Public Health Building. Lunch will be provided.

23rd: Winter Blues Bash: Mental Health Night and Dinner - 4:30-7pm at Community Hall. All are welcome.

24th: Local Government 101 - 6-8pm at Town Hall

MARCH:

12th: Prevention Coalition Meeting - Noon-1pm at the County Annex/Public Health Building. Lunch will be provided.

17th-21st: Spring Break

26th-27th: Two-day ASIST Suicide Prevention Workshop(Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training). 8am-4:30pm each day. Workshop will be held in the conference room at the County Annex/Public Health Building.

31st: Local Government 101 - 6-8pm at the County Annex/Public Health

APRIL:

9th: Prevention Coalition Meeting - Noon-1pm at the County Annex/Public Health Building. Lunch will be provided.

23rd-25th: Virtual Suicide Symposium

28th: Local Government 101 - 6-8pm at the Learning Center at Common Ground

WELCOME TO RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK

February 9th-15th is RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK! We can't wait to see how many acts of kindness will be spread throughout Wyoming and our community!

Kindness Kits are available (while supplies last) throughout the community. Stop by Storyteller, Broadway Bakery, or Public Health to pick one up! These kits include some materials to get you thinking, but let your imagination run wild. Share kindness with people in your school, business, neighborhood, and community!

LET'S MAKE KINDNESS THE NORM!



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

FEBRUARY 2025

Need some ideas for Kindness Week? Here are some simple acts of kindness to get you going. Remember, “no act of kindness is ever wasted” (Aesop).



- ♥ Bake goodies for a neighbor
- ♥ Pick up litter in your neighborhood
- ♥ Give a stranger a compliment
- ♥ Hold the door open for others
- ♥ Thank a teacher who has helped you
- ♥ Shovel a neighbor's driveway
- ♥ Pay for someone's morning coffee
- ♥ Take the time to listen to someone
- ♥ Let someone go ahead of you in line
- ♥ Send someone a thank you card in the mail
- ♥ Surprise a friend with their favorite candy
- ♥ Call a relative you haven't talked to in awhile
- ♥ Volunteer in the community
- ♥ Return abandoned shopping carts
- ♥ Leave a kind note to your mail carrier
- ♥ Donate food to a food pantry
- ♥ Spend time with your grandparents
- ♥ Send someone a nice text
- ♥ Play with your pet(s)
- ♥ Leave a friendly note for someone
- ♥ Donate outgrown clothes and/or toys
- ♥ Leave a nice note for your waiter
- ♥ Thank those who serve in your community
- ♥ Smile and say hello to those you pass by
- ♥ Take the day to not complain
- ♥ Be kind to yourself - You deserve it!

NO TOBACCO OR VAPING WINDOW CLING

Would you like a “No Tobacco or Vaping” window cling for your organization/place of business? They are available free of charge by the Prevention Coalition.

- There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.
- People exposed to secondhand smoke, even for a short time, can suffer harmful health effects.

Let's work together to keep the air in our community safe for all of us, including our young children and those most at risk. Contact the Prevention Coalition if you would like a free window cling!

THANK YOU FOR NOT USING TOBACCO PRODUCTS OR VAPING



BREATH EASY: EMBRACING NO SMOKING ZONES

Step into a world where clean air reigns supreme. Our endeavor to establish No Smoking Areas is a testament to our commitment to prioritize public health and ensure everyone can breathe freely without the intrusion of harmful secondhand smoke.

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HOT SPRINGS COUNTY PREVENTION COALITION



MORE ON SECONDHAND SMOKE

FEBRUARY 2025

There is **no safe level** of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even brief exposure can cause immediate harm.

- Secondhand smoke exposure can cause coronary heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, and other diseases. It can also result in premature death.
- Secondhand smoke can cause adverse reproductive health effects in women, including low birth weight.
- In children, secondhand smoke exposure can cause respiratory infections, ear infections, and asthma attacks. In babies, secondhand smoke can cause sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Secondhand smoke exposure can produce harmful inflammatory and respiratory effects within 60 minutes of exposure which can last for at least three hours after exposure.



VAPING AND SECONDHAND SMOKE/AEROSOL

E-cigarettes heat a liquid that usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals to create an aerosol that users inhale into their lungs. Secondhand vape aerosol is exhaled by e-cigarette users and exposes bystanders who are not vaping to potentially harmful chemicals. It is not just water vapor! In addition to the nicotine, E-cigarette aerosol contains cancer-causing chemicals, volatile organic compounds, and heavy metals including nickel, tin, and lead.

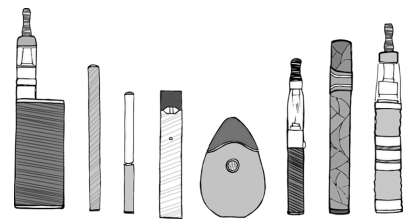
SECONDHAND SMOKE AND OUR PETS



Research has shown that even our pets can be affected by secondhand smoke. Dogs and cats are twice as likely to develop cancer if their owners smoke, compared to animals in households without cigarette smoking. It can also cause our pets to have heart troubles, problems breathing, and diarrhea and vomiting.

DID YOU KNOW?

- 39.4% of our high school students and 10% of our middle school students have vaped in the last 30 days (PNA 2022).
- 20% of our high school students have used smokeless tobacco in the last 30 days and 13% of them have smoked cigarettes in the last 30 days (PNA 2022).
- 42.9% of our middle and high school students believe there is no risk or only slight risk to vaping everyday or almost everyday (PNA 2022).
- 49% of our middle and high school students reported that in the last year, they have NOT talked with their parents about tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs (PNA 2022).



IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT VAPING

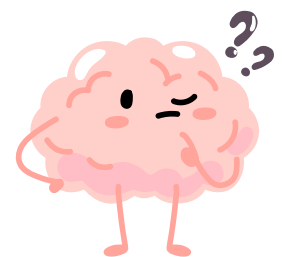
The use of any tobacco product, including e-cigarettes, is unsafe for young people. Did you know that most vapes have high levels of nicotine? Many have at least as much or more nicotine as a pack of cigarettes!

WHAT ARE THE RISKS FOR YOUTH?

» As mentioned above, most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive (as addictive if not more than heroin and cocaine).

» Nicotine exposure during adolescence can:

- » Harm brain development, which continues until about age 25.
- » Impact learning, memory, and attention.
- » Increase risk for future addiction to other drugs.
- » Young people who vape may be more likely to go on to use regular cigarettes.



» Many e-cigarettes come in kid-friendly flavors – including mango, fruit, and crème – which make e-cigarettes more appealing to young people. These flavorings have been linked to lung disease.

» E-cigarette aerosol is harmful. It contains harmful substances, including: nicotine, cancer-causing chemicals, volatile organic compounds, ultrafine particles, flavorings linked to lung disease, and heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead.

HARMS OF VAPING

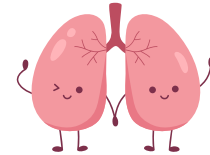
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Since vaping is still fairly new, the long-term effects are not fully known. However, studies show that there are negative effects from vaping for basically every part of the body.

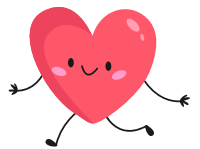
THE BRAIN - Nicotine gives users a buzz, but the brain starts to need more and more nicotine to get the same feeling. This leads to addiction. Vaping also harms the developing brain of youth.



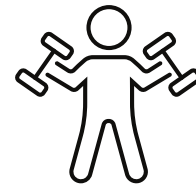
THE LUNGS - Vape aerosol causes swelling and tightening in the lungs and airways. This keeps the lungs from bringing in the oxygen the body needs to function.



THE HEART - Vape aerosol damages blood vessels, which makes the heart have to work harder to pump blood through the body. Over time, this weakens the heart.



THE MUSCLES - Damage to the heart and lungs from vaping leads to weakness and decreased athletic performance from the muscle in the body.



THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM - Nicotine and some flavorings used in vaping devices can cause harm before, during, and after pregnancy.



WY WE TALK ABOUT VAPING

Having open and non-judgmental discussions with your children about vaping is **crucial**. WYWETALK, is here to provide valuable insights, guidance, resources, and support to help you navigate these conversations effectively. It's important for parents to address the pressures surrounding vaping and provide accurate information about its risks. **As a parent, you play a vital role in guiding your children towards healthier choices.** Creating a supportive and non-judgmental environment, fostering open dialogue, and emphasizing the importance of informed decision-making can help your child resist the temptation to vape. Visit WY WE TALK and talk to your kids about vaping!

WY WE TALK Website: <https://wywetalk.org/vaping/>



PROTECTING OUR YOUTH FROM THE HARMS OF VAPING

Individuals and organizations can play an important role in helping youth reject or quit vaping and all other tobacco products. Working together will help ensure that all youth live healthy, tobacco-free lives.



PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

There are many ways parents and caregivers can help protect their children from vaping.

- Set a good example by being tobacco-free. Ensure your child is not exposed to secondhand smoke or aerosol from any tobacco products, including vapes.
- Talk to your child or teen about why vaping is harmful to them. Ask them to stay away from all tobacco products, including vaping products. It's never too early or too late to start these conversations (but the sooner the better).
- If your child vapes, encourage and support them to quit. Talk to their healthcare provider about getting help to quit. Also, check out the quitting resources on the next page.

EDUCATORS

Talk with students about vaping, help them understand the risks, and empower them to develop positive coping skills. As an educator, coach, or school administrator, you have an important role in protecting students from vaping.

- Learn about the risks of vape use for young people and the different types of vape devices.
- Discuss the dangers of vaping with your students.
- Be supportive. Encourage students to quit tobacco and help them connect to resources.
- Implement prevention programs and enforce tobacco-free school policies.
- Learn about school policies that support students to quit tobacco use as an alternative to suspension.

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Ask young patients if they use tobacco products, including vaping. Take the following actions with your young patients and their caregivers to help protect them from vaping.

- Ask all adolescent patients if they use any tobacco products, including vaping.
- If they do, consider treatment options
- Discuss the risks of vaping and tobacco use with your young patients and their caregivers.

WHAT ABOUT ZYN?

Zyn is a brand of oral nicotine pouch. Oral nicotine pouches are microfiber pouches containing flavored nicotine powder that users dissolve in their mouths without spitting. Other common brands include On! and Velo.

Oral nicotine pouches have gained popularity and are now the second most commonly used tobacco product among middle and high school students, following e-cigarettes.




While specific long-term health effects of nicotine pouches remain unknown, **the use of nicotine in any form by youth is unsafe**. Nicotine use during adolescence disrupts the formation of brain circuits that control attention, learning, and susceptibility to addiction. Additionally, nicotine may increase or worsen symptoms of anxiety or depression.






HELP WITH QUITTING

Ready to quit tobacco and nicotine products? You don't have to do it alone.

HELP FOR YOUTH

- **My Life My Quit:** Free coaching program to help you develop a quit plan, identify triggers, practice refusal skills, and receive ongoing support. 
- **This is Quitting:** Free text messaging program from the Truth Initiative. Text DITCHVAPE to 88709 
- **TeenSmokeFree.gov:** Free tips, resources, and support to help you quit. www.teen.smokefree.gov. 
- **Not On Tobacco:** Free in-person cessation program. Contact Jen Cheney to get signed up at jcheney@hotsprings1.org.

HELP FOR ADULTS

- **Wyoming Quit Tobacco Program:** Free coaching program. www.quitwyo.org 
- **Ex Program:** Free help and support. www.exprogram.com 
- **SmokeFree.gov:** Free tips, resources, and support to help you quit. www.smokefree.gov 



Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Please join us for our upcoming ASIST Suicide Prevention Workshop! ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid. It teaches participants to recognize when someone may be at risk of suicide and how to help them create a plan to support their immediate safety. ASIST is for caregivers and community members of all backgrounds and experiences.

MARCH 26-27, 2025

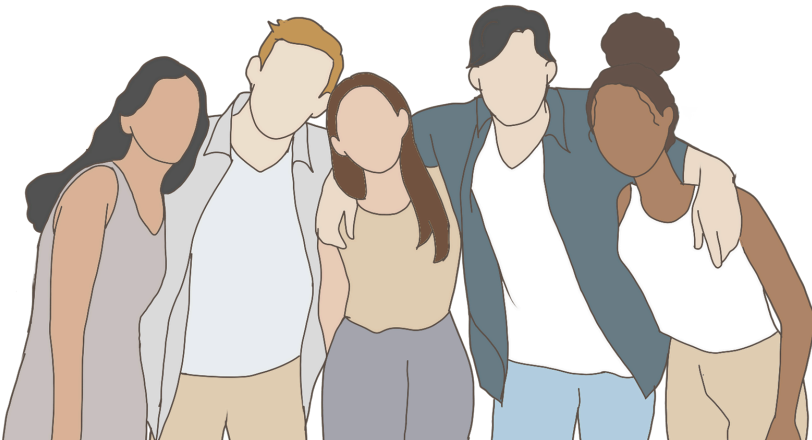
8:00AM - 4:30PM (BOTH DAYS)

COUNTY ANNEX/PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE ROOM - 117 N. 4TH ST. THERMOPOLIS

As an ASIST participant, you will gain:

☒ Knowledge about suicide ☒ Skills to reach out ☒ Confidence to help save a life

Lunch and snacks will be provided. Space is limited, however, a minimum of 12 participants attending is required for training to occur. Scan QR code to register, or email jcheney@hotsprings1.org.



CONNECT WITH US



FIND US ON THE WEB: WWW.HOTSPRINGSCOUNTYPREVENTION.ORG

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK: FACEBOOK.COM/HOTSPRINGSCOUNTYPREVENTION

EMAIL: JCHENEY@HOTSPRINGS1.ORG