

APRIL 2025

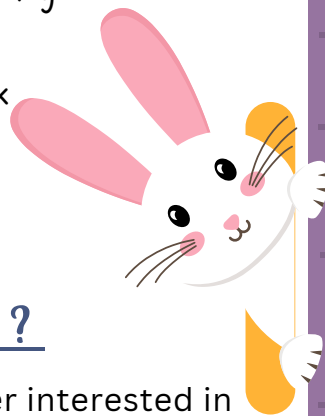
COMMUNITY CHAT

Brought to you by the Hot Springs County Prevention Coalition



HAPPY
APRIL!

Hello there and Happy April!! April is Alcohol Awareness Month—a time to learn the risks of alcohol misuse & its impact on individuals & communities. It is also a good time to talk to teens about drinking and to equip them with the knowledge to handle situations involving alcohol. 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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APRIL 2025

APRIL:

9th: Prevention Coalition Meeting - Noon-1pm at the County Annex/Public Health Building. Presentation by Kinship Connections of Wyoming. All are welcome. Lunch will be provided.

23rd-25th: Virtual Suicide Symposium. See information below.

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

MAY:

14th: Prevention Coalition Meeting - Noon-1pm at the County Annex/Public Health Building. Lunch will be provided.

TBD: Mental Health Matters: Let's TACO bout it! Community lunch. Free tacos and mental health resources. Date to be determined. Watch for updates.

JOIN US AT OUR APRIL PREVENTION MEETING TO LEARN ABOUT KINSHIP CONNECTIONS OF WYOMING!

Wednesday, April 9th, 2025 at Public Health. Noon-1pm. Lunch will be provided.



**Kinship
Connections
of Wyoming**

Kinship Connections of Wyoming is a free service to grandparents, relatives, and other caregivers who are raising children that are not their own.

It is the vision of Kinship Connections of Wyoming to cultivate resilient individuals, families and communities by providing kinship caregivers with the connections, support, and respect they need in order to provide a safe, stable, and loving home for the children they are raising.

VIRTUAL SUICIDE SYMPOSIUM

A banner for the 4th Annual Suicide Research Symposium. The background is a gradient of blue and teal with abstract geometric patterns. On the left, the text '4TH ANNUAL SUICIDE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM' is in large white capital letters, with 'APRIL 23-25, 2025' below it. At the bottom left, 'VIRTUAL MEETING' is written in large white capital letters. On the right, there is a logo for 'SUICIDE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM' with a teal ribbon, a blue life preserver icon, and the text 'American Foundation for Suicide Prevention'. At the bottom right, the website 'SUICIDERESARCHSYMPOSIUM.COM' is listed.

**4TH ANNUAL SUICIDE
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**
APRIL 23-25, 2025

**SUICIDE
RESEARCH
SYMPOSIUM**

**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**

VIRTUAL MEETING

SUICIDERESARCHSYMPOSIUM.COM

DID YOU KNOW?

- 55.39% of middle and high schoolers reported being at a community event in the last 12 months where adults were drunk or intoxicated (PNA 2024).
- 15.8% of HSC adults reported binge drinking on at least one occasion in the last 30 days (5 or more drinks for men, and 4 or more drinks for women) (BRFSS 2017-2021).
- 59% of arrests involved alcohol (Alcohol & Crime Report, 2023).
- 24.19% of high schoolers reported drinking alcohol on at least one occasion in the last 30 days (PNA 2024).
- 33.35% of middle and high schoolers reported getting their last alcoholic drink from their parents (PNA 2024).
- 38.9% of middle and high schoolers reported that it was sort of easy or very easy to acquire alcohol (PNA 2024).

ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

It's #AlcoholAwarenessMonth—an opportunity to update your knowledge about the adverse effects of alcohol misuse on health and our community. Whether you're starting conversations with your kids, reflecting on your own habits, or supporting someone you care about - every step matters.



ALCOHOL'S EFFECTS ON THE BODY

Drinking too much – on a single occasion or over time – can take a serious toll on your health. Here's how alcohol can affect your body:

Brain:

Alcohol interferes with the brain's communication pathways, and can affect the way the brain looks and works. These disruptions can change mood and behavior, and make it harder to think clearly and move with coordination.



Heart:

Drinking a lot over a long time or too much on a single occasion can damage the heart, causing problems including:

- Cardiomyopathy – Stretching and drooping of heart muscle
- Arrhythmias – Irregular heart beat
- Stroke
- High blood pressure

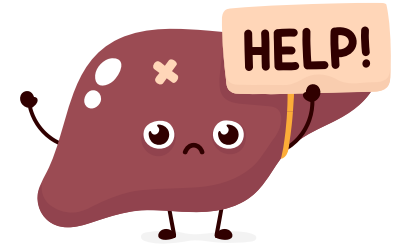


ALCOHOL'S EFFECTS ON THE BODY, CONT.

Liver:

Heavy drinking takes a toll on the liver, and can lead to a variety of problems and liver inflammations including:

- Steatosis, or fatty liver
- Fibrosis
- Alcoholic hepatitis
- Cirrhosis



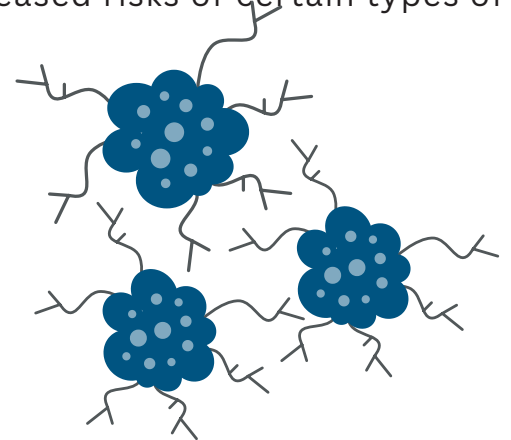
Pancreas:

Alcohol causes the pancreas to produce toxic substances that can eventually lead to pancreatitis, a dangerous inflammation in the pancreas that causes its swelling and pain (which may spread) and impairs its ability to make enzymes and hormones for proper digestion.

Cancer:

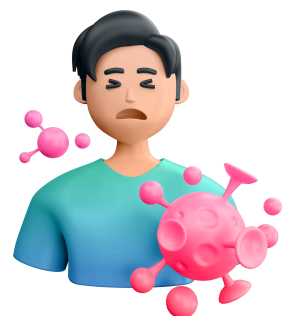
According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI): "There is a strong scientific consensus that alcohol drinking can cause several types of cancer. Clear patterns have emerged between alcohol consumption and increased risks of certain types of cancer:

- Head and neck cancer, including oral cavity, pharynx, and larynx cancers.
- Esophageal cancer, particularly esophageal squamous cell carcinoma. In addition, people who inherit a deficiency in an enzyme that metabolizes alcohol have been found to have substantially increased risks of esophageal squamous cell carcinoma if they consume alcohol.
- Liver cancer.
- Breast cancer: Research has shown an important association between alcohol consumption and breast cancer—even one drink per day can increase a woman's risk for breast cancer by 5% to 15% compared to women who do not drink at all.
- Colorectal cancer.



Immune System:

Drinking too much can weaken your immune system, making your body a much easier target for disease. Chronic drinkers are more liable to contract diseases like pneumonia and tuberculosis than people who do not drink too much. Drinking a lot on a single occasion slows your body's ability to ward off infections – even up to 24 hours after getting drunk.



HELP KEEP OUR YOUTH ALCOHOL FREE

Underage drinking poses significant health risks, including impaired brain development, increased risk of injuries and risky behaviors, and potential for long-term alcohol-related problems.

Here's a more detailed look at the health effects of drinking on youth:



- **Impaired Brain Development:** The adolescent brain is still developing, making it particularly vulnerable to the effects of alcohol. Alcohol can interfere with normal brain development, potentially affecting both brain structure and function.
- **Cognitive and Memory Problems:** Drinking can impair cognitive functions, hinder memory formation, and disrupt the development of crucial brain regions.
- **Increased Risk of Alcohol Use Disorder:** Early alcohol use can increase the risk of developing alcohol use disorder (AUD).
- **Increased Health Effects:** Heavy alcohol use can increase the risk of heart and liver disease and cancer.
- **Increased Risk-Taking:** Alcohol impairs judgment and can lead to poor decision-making, increasing the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors.
- **Injuries:** Underage drinking contributes to a range of injuries, including those from motor vehicle crashes, falls, burns, and drowning.
- **Sexual Risk-Taking:** Early alcohol use has been shown to correlate with increased sexual risk-taking, including unprotected intercourse, multiple partners, substance use during intercourse, and teen pregnancy.
- **Violence:** Alcohol is a factor in violence, including homicide, suicide, and sexual violence.

Other Health Problems Include:

- **Alcohol Poisoning:** Consuming too much alcohol at once can lead to alcohol poisoning, a potentially life-threatening condition.
- **Mental Health Problems:** Drinking can increase the risk of depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem.



**ENCOURAGE
SAFE FUN!**

NO AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL IS SAFE FOR YOUTH

Did you know that parents (and other trusted adults) are the number one reason young people decide not to drink? Talk to kids about alcohol!

- 1- SHOW YOU DISAPPROVE OF UNDERAGE DRINKING.**
- 2- SHOW YOU CARE ABOUT THEIR HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING.**
- 3- SHOW YOU'RE A GOOD SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT ALCOHOL.**
- 4- SHOW YOU'RE PAYING ATTENTION AND YOU'LL NOTICE IF THEY DRINK.**
- 5- BUILD THEIR SKILLS AND STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING ALCOHOL.**

TALK. THEY HEAR YOU.

COMMUNITY EVENT TOOLKIT

Community events are an important part of our culture. They can be a fun place for children to play, and friends and family to gather. They are a great place to build connections and to celebrate our community.

If alcohol is going to be available at a community event, especially if youth will be present, it is imperative to have measures in place to prevent intoxication and any underage alcohol use.

These events may unintentionally support and encourage heavy alcohol use. With beer tents, advertisements, and sponsorships, alcohol can easily overshadow the purpose of these events and become the main attraction. This can raise the risks of alcohol-related problems such as public disturbances, injuries, violence, vandalism, or traffic accidents. This puts a negative reflection on the event.

Careful event planning and commitment to a safe and fun event are keys to lowering the risks associated with alcohol. Below are a list of items in our Community Event Toolkit that can be used to help reduce alcohol-related harm, and to send the message that underage drinking and over-consumption are not acceptable or consistent with our community values. Our goal is to keep our community events fun and safe for everyone!

The Community Event Toolkit Contains the Following:

- Portable ID Scanner
- Wristbands
- Signs
 - We ID
 - No Alcohol Beyond This Point
 - ID Required
 - Must be 21
- Best Practices Manual
- We "ID" buttons
- UV Flashlight
- Barricade Tape
- Alcohol Control Laws
- ID Checking Guide
- TIPS Training Vouchers - TIPS (Training for Intervention Procedures) is a training designed to prevent intoxication, drunk driving, and underage drinking.



You can check out the Toolkit and use these items free of charge from the Hot Springs County Prevention Coalition. Call or text Jennifer Cheney at 307-431-8404 or email jcheney@hotsprings1.org



SPRING CLEANING??



DON'T FORGET TO CLEAN OUT YOUR
OLD, UNUSED MEDICATIONS!

Clean out your **unused, expired, or unwanted** medications during National Medication Take-Back Day. Medication drop boxes are located in the Law Enforcement Lobby and inside Hot Springs Health Lobby.

National Medication Take-Back Day is
SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2025

Please note that our local medication drop boxes are available 24/7.

Proper storage and disposal of medications saves lives. It prevents accidental poisoning, misuse and overdose in our community. Thank you for keeping our community safe and healthy!

OUR NEWEST ASIST TRAINED COMMUNITY MEMBERS!



We are a suicide-safer community because of amazing individuals like these. Thank you for your commitment to suicide prevention.

What is ASIST? Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a groundbreaking workshop designed to equip anyone - no matter their background - with suicide first aid skills. This 2-day workshop empowers participants to recognize the signs of suicide, intervene effectively, and save lives.

CONNECT WITH US



FIND US ON THE WEB: WWW.HOTSPRINGSCOUNTYPREVENTION.ORG

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK: FACEBOOK.COM/HOTSPRINGSCOUNTYPREVENTION

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