



NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION TEAM NEWSLETTER

Spring & Summer 2019





Health Promotion in the Northeast Region

"Health Promotion Teams strengthen collaborative efforts at the local level...to provide health councils and community partners with data, technical assistance and other resources at the request of local communities."

- 2014 New Mexico State Health Improvement Plan p.10



The New Mexico Health Promotion Program utilizes the public health 3.0 approach, where it is understood that people cannot be healthy if they don't have a stable home, steady income, a living wage, or reliable transportation. Given the rural and frontier nature of the state, many residents lack access to well-paying jobs, safe walking trails, public transportation and even fresh fruits and vegetables. These non-medical components of wellness are what drive the work of the Health Promotion Program throughout New Mexico.

Health Promotion staff have a pulse on the barriers and assets within local communities and are instrumental in providing resources, technical assistance, data, and infrastructure to local coalitions, councils, and committees.



Growth, Connection, & Nourishment

Revamping Leadership Qualities by Amy Sandoval

In the past seven years I have been a part of the Northeast Region Health Promotion Team, I have been exposed to many facets of leadership qualities. But what does it mean to truly lead? The word "lead" can have a variety of meanings, but society has attached the concept to another word, "power". As I navigated through the Health Promotion Program over the years, I've come to see this word in a whole new light as I serve our communities in identifying and solving health related issues and have come to see the word "power" replaced with "advocate". The qualities of an advocate, or leader, in any situation start with 6 key principles.

1. **Acknowledgement:** Knowing what you're willing to stand for starts with acknowledgement of the **worth and value** contained within the concept. This holds true with health councils standing firm with the customs, values, and traditions of the community, or with a manager encountering their staff in knowing their worth, interests, and significance.
2. **Connection:** Having a sense of connection and **forming a relationship** is crucial to having a better understanding of what it all means. Our Health Promotion Team builds relationships and forms connections with communities to best serve the communities' needs.
3. **Advise:** This begins with **listening first**. Operating in this way allows us to advise others according to their aspirations, not our own.
4. **Support:** Everyone wants to feel heard, valued and understood. **Holding space** for others to feel this way helps to develop connection and understanding. Creating links to resources or other connections helps build on the concept of support.
5. **Guidance:** Defining goals or strategies is a shared experience. We must want the same outcomes to drive toward the same shared success. This process includes the pitfalls we will encounter. Knowing someone will always be in our corner to **support and cheer us on** will help guide us to our end goal. This type of accountability is key in knowing the outcome is not reliant on just one person.
6. **Creating Expectations:** In advocating or leading others, we increase their self-belief to **see the best within themselves**. This kind of support, through expectation creation, they will begin to test the limits and rise above them.

Wherever you might see yourself in the six concepts spelled above, I guarantee you are a leader! Through my role within the Health Promotion Program I have had the privilege of seeing many leaders emerge over the years and create something beautiful in giving back to our communities of Northern NM. In looking through a different lens, I hope others will continue to be inspired by turning every experience into an opportunity to lead.

The most powerful leadership tool you have is your own personal example.

John Wooden



Growth, Connection, & Nourishment

Meet Our New Health Promotion Specialist: Ashley Ringwood!

The Northeast Region Health Promotion Team welcomes their new Specialist stationed at the Rio Arriba Country Public Health Office, Ashley Ringwood.

Ashley was raised in Northern New Mexico along the beautiful Rio Grande in Alcalde and earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health at New Mexico State University. Ashley recently relocated back to Northern New Mexico and is motivated to contribute her knowledge and experiences to the Northeast Region. Her past work experience has allowed her to build her skill set by implementing and coordinating statewide trainings and events. She has provided broad health education to working with people with developmental disabilities, the elderly, and children and their families fighting obesity. She has experience evaluating and assessing the needs of client's environmental needs and overall wellness. She has developed positive relationships with contractors she's worked with through various roles to achieve a positive outcome.

In this new role, Ashley will concentrate on promoting and improving the health and wellness of the communities with whom she will work. In the Northeast Region, she will work with Santa Clara Pueblo, as well as Rio Arriba, Taos and Los Alamos Counties. She will collaborate with different health councils and coalitions to connect people to resources and to each other. Ashley has a great deal of enthusiasm for this profession, and she enjoys encouraging a positive, innovative mindset in others as well. Ashley brings a unique perspective and enthusiastic approach.

Ashley encourages people to get involved in improving not only their own health but the health of their community. She has taught local Zumba classes at different community centers and tribal elementary schools. She enjoys group fitness classes, CrossFit, running, hiking, and quality time with her family. She encourages a positive attitude to live a positive life. Ashley believes it is never too late to make a positive change and change begins with you.



Ashley Ringwood





Growth, Connection, & Nourishment

Implicit Bias, the “Backfire Effect”, and a Renewed Approach to Presenting Community Health Data by Gwendolyn Gallagher, PhD

As an NMDOH Community Health Epidemiologist, I’m often discouraged when I present to community members data about local, worsening health outcomes. My intention is simply to educate and advocate a “call to action”. Yet often I worry about community members feeling “targeted” with negative news about health outcomes over which they likely have little influence.

Last fall, I attended a Robert Wood Johnson national conference – All In: Data for Community Health. I was impressed with the message from a plenary speaker. Dr. Tiffany Manuel warned that presenting an overwhelming amount of data causes people to shut down and disengage. And presenting data and facts, she stressed, are often opportunities to reinforce and express one’s own implicit bias – a term to describe attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes without our conscious knowledge. For example, the recent, disappointing news headline: “U.S. life expectancy declines for the first time since 1993.” prompted readers’ comments such as: “People who lead unhealthy lifestyles are dying early as a result. And reducing burdens on social security. How is this a bad thing?”

Further, Dr. Manuel explained the “backfire effect” – the tendency to resist accepting evidence that conflicts with one’s beliefs – could elicit a contrary response, attributed to self-preservation and a challenge to one’s world view. A good example is the vaccine debate – a recent study found that when people concerned about possible side effects of the flu shot learned it couldn’t cause the flu, they actually became less willing to get the shot.

Let’s have a *renewed* approach to consider data and celebrate our community health wins:

- 93% of the youth in **Rio Arriba County** report they have a caring and supportive relationship in the family. The national average for this indicator is 48%!
- **Los Alamos County** experienced a 39% decrease in fall-related death rates between 2013-2015 and 2015-2017.
- Over the past several years, the child abuse victim rate for **Colfax County** has decreased steadily and is now the lowest it’s been since 2013.
- Drug overdose death rates for **Mora County** have decreased a 5-fold since 2010, and illicit drug use among Mora County high-schoolers has decreased since 2015.
- During 2015-2017, 60% of surveyed **Union County** adults reported they had a routine health visit in the last year.





Growth, Connection, & Nourishment

Outdoor Activity Safety in the Spring & Summer

By Valentina White

The arrival of warmer weather allows us to plan outdoor activities like hiking, running, or perhaps riding a bicycle. The list for outdoor activities is unlimited and as you start planning and preparing for your activity, remember to complete a safety check on your equipment and safety gear.

If you plan to do some outdoor biking, a safety check is a must! Bike safety checks and inspections are a quick and easy way to check for mechanical failures that can lead to crashes. Taking a few minutes to check your bike is one way to ensure your safety.

When out on a bike ride, properly wearing a bike helmet is one way to prevent a brain injury. According to CDC every 21 seconds there is a traumatic brain injury (TBI). The consequences of a TBI can lead to physical, psychological, behavioral, emotional, and cognitive condition that may last a lifetime.

For New Mexico children under the age of 18, it is a state law requires children riding bicycle, tricycle, scooter, skateboard, or roller skates/blades on public areas wear a protective helmet. A parent or legal guardian found guilty is subject to a \$10 civil fine. Magistrate and municipal courts have similar jurisdiction. This law was passed in the 2007 NM Legislation, SB 397, Child Helmet Safety Act (L. Lopez)..

Bike safety checks or bike inspections and wearing a bike helmets is the smart and easy way to make sure you stay as safe as possible when you're out on your bike.

For more information on Brain Injury and Bike Helmet Safety contact The New Mexico Brain Injury Advisory Council at (505) 476-7328 or visit www.nmbiac.com.

Things to check before you ride your bike:

- **Tires and Wheels:** Make sure the tires are properly inflated and the wheel is secure with no bends, and the spokes are in place.
- **Brakes:** Squeeze your brake levers to make sure they have enough pressure to stop the wheel/bike.
- **Frame:** Check for any damage
- **Handlebars and Post Seat:** Check for damage and make sure the handlebars and post seat are at the correct height and secure.
- **Helmet:** Check for cracks on inside and outside of helmets. Make sure the straps are adjusted to fit properly.





Growth, Connection, & Nourishment

Growth & Innovative Ideas in the Harding County Health Council

By Nichole Romero

The Harding County Health Council has been growing in leaps and bounds the last few years. The group has accomplished many helpful services and events for their community. For example, the health council puts on two health fairs a year in Harding County. These health fairs bring services into the community not normally available in the county.

Harding County has a high number of elderly community members with little to no access to medical equipment and other needed services such as dentists and pharmacies. The Harding County Health Council has drastically taken steps to address their lack of services for their community members. This includes working with the Veterans Administration and Senator Heinrich to bring Veterans Services into Harding County, which is almost up and running.



Veterans Administration ribbon cutting with Senator Martin Heinrich, the Harding Health Council, and Local Community Members



Above: Members of the Harding County Health Council

The Harding County Health Council has also started collecting new and used medical equipment for their community member's to use. Mary Laumbach, Harding County Health Council Coordinator, and the health council decided many of their elderly community members need access to free medical equipment and the health council wanted to assist with serving this need. Mary worked with Nichole Romero, Health Promotion Specialist, to advertise the medical equipment collection program and to encourage community members from Harding and Colfax County to donate their medical equipment they no longer use.

Community members who need medical equipment can access this program by speaking to the Harding County Health Council members and submitting a request for what they need. Once this request has been processed, community members can check out the equipment for however long they need it. So far, several community members from both Harding and Colfax County have donated walkers, canes, an electric hospital bed and crutches. The Health Council is also going to purchase an electric bath lift for this program. The Harding County Health Council plans to continue to grow and make wonderful things happen for their community members. Way to go Harding County!





Growth, Connection, & Nourishment

Growing, Connecting, & Nourishing Tips by Desiree Valdez

Spring and summer are times of growth, connection, and nourishment. The natural world shows examples of this as the weather gets warmer, we become more active, and we seek out nourishing food, fun activities, and essential relaxation for our minds and bodies. Below are tips to help you pursue growth, connection, and nourishment:

GROWTH

- Develop a new habit - See what adding a 10-minute walk or 5 minutes of meditation to your daily routine does for you.
- Check out Youtube or other online avenues for project tutorials - Get inspired to work on your own projects by seeing how other folks work on theirs.
- Ask questions - There are really no stupid questions. By the time your question is answered, folks have forgotten it was asked in the first place!



CONNECTION

- Learn how to be a deep listener - Take the time to listen to others before reacting or telling your own story.
- Make eye contact when greeting people - Simple eye contact acknowledges the humanity of the person you are passing in the hall.
- Create space in your life to be vulnerable - Share yourself with others in places you feel safe and you will gain more courage to be vulnerable in other situations.



NOURISHMENT

- Learn how to cook your favorite dish and teach someone how to make it, too - Food is the most basic form of nourishment.
- Get back into music by making a playlist or uncover some of your old favorites in vinyl, cassette, or CD form - Music feeds our spirits and our bodies, too.
- Work on increasing your hug quota - "We need four hugs a day for survival. We need eight hugs a day for maintenance. We need twelve hugs a day for growth." - Virginia Satir, family therapist,



The time we take to invest in ourselves can help us grow professionally, strengthen our ability to connect, and is elemental to nourish our communities. Give yourself time to build up your reserves so you are equipped to handle whatever you encounter on your path.



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