

NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION TEAM NEWSLETTER

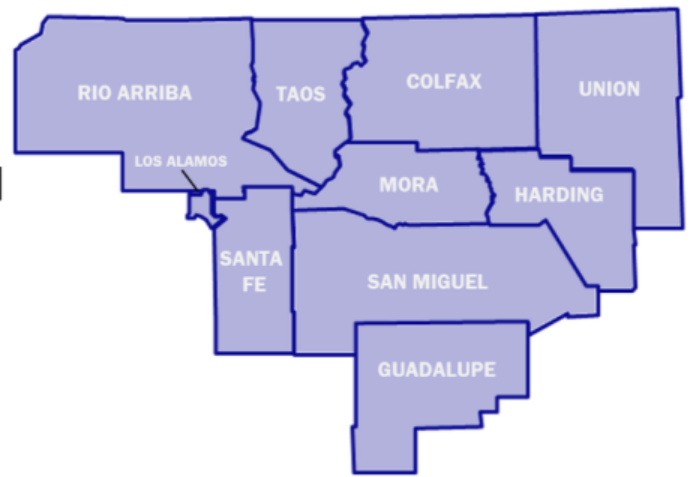
Winter 2020



PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM

We serve our diverse communities by harnessing their power to create positive and lasting solutions to the public health issues they face, as well as locate resources and assist with health initiative development. We envision creating systems with engaged communities striving for a happy and healthy lifespan for all in New Mexico.



HOW WE SERVE COMMUNITIES

- Facilitate connection between community partners and NMDOH programs and resources
- Conduct community-based health promotion with community and tribal health councils, coalitions, and other partners
- Access resources and funding
- Link community partners to data, evidence-based interventions, and NMDOH programs.
- Provide technical assistance with community health assessment, health profiles, communications, and strategic planning
- Maintain open communication between community partners and NMDOH
- Engage in advocacy and policy development around local and state-wide health issues

WE CONNECT THE DOTS



“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

NEW MEXICO
DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH



Resiliency, Inner Strength, & Magic

Wrap Up the Year in a Happy Place by Amy Sandoval

The month of December is often viewed as a whimsical time of year. The quiet and serene atmosphere lies dormant, as if something magical is waiting to happen. Amid the most wonderful time of the year we often lose sight of our own wellbeing, while bringing that same enchantment to others. It's important to recognize you too can experience the magic of the season by practicing self-care in various ways.

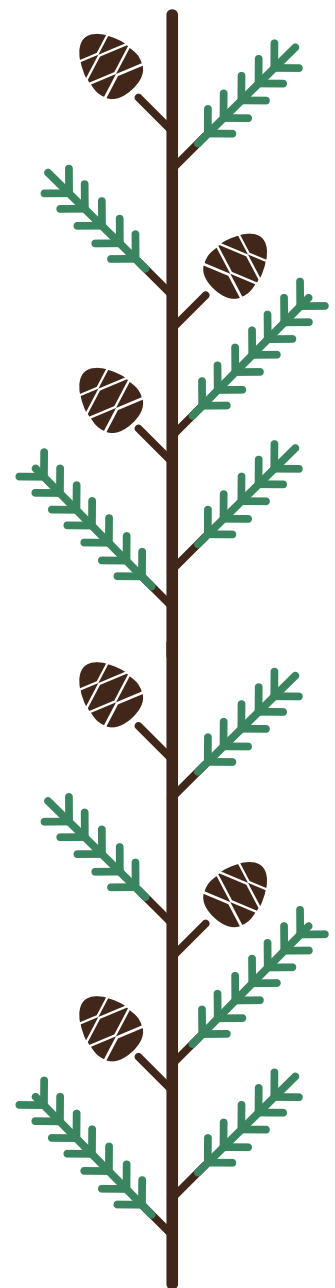
Be of Service: This may seem a bit odd for a self-care tip, but the truth is it can be a moral booster to do a good deed outside your comfort zone. Volunteer at a homeless shelter, a soup kitchen, a nursing home, or an animal shelter. Through this deed, you will find placing yourself in a position of service to others may leave you with a sense of accomplishment. And let's be honest: it feels good to help someone in need!

Give From a Full Cup: You can't take care of others if you're not taking care of yourself first. Focus on your needs, whether it's snuggling up to a book while sipping tea on a cold day, or finding the time to hit the gym, do it for yourself. Finding the time to treat yourself to what makes you feel good is an important part of self-care. Plan ahead and carve time out of the day, week, or month to focus on making yourself happy.

Practice Gratitude: Research shows practicing gratitude helps protect our brains from stress and depression. Gratitude is a powerful human emotion and practicing it continuously can increase our happiness and reduce our stress levels. Focus on acknowledging what you are grateful for, acknowledge it, and practice appreciation toward it. Start by asking yourself, "What am I grateful for?"

Acknowledge the Importance of Sleep: With the excitement of this time of year, people sleep less, whether they are enjoying a late-night holiday party or staying up to wrap "just one more gift". Our emotional and physical health suffer when we don't get enough sleep over time. If you do not acknowledge the importance of sleep now, utilize a sleep log to track your hours of sleep; or research sleep apps to help become more in tune with your sleep pattern.

Being Present: With the hustle and bustle of the season, there is plenty of excitement from seeing family and friends. Use these moments to practice mindfulness by being present in your environment, conversation, or in the moment. Take in the sights, smells, and sounds of this time of year. Reflect on the moments by yourself or share with others. These mindfulness techniques help calm our spirit and mind to experience the magic around us.





Resiliency, Inner Strength, & Magic

Developing Resiliency and Inner Strength While Addressing Community Health

by Christa Hernandez



As winter approaches and our first snowstorms of the season barrel upon us, I am reminded of the perseverance and resilience displayed by Mother Nature. The first time a cold front moves into New Mexico, it is a shocking reminder of the seasons changing. The frost which appears on the windows in the morning, the drop in temperature at night and the lower highs each day are all signs of winter's approach. Each season there are predictions about how much snow we are going to get, how this will impact the summer months and the amount of water in the aquifers, and the potential impact on the fall harvest. It is amazing to see how the abundance or lack of snow will impact so much over the course of the following nine to twelve months.

The same can be said for our efforts around community health and the amount of resilience and inner strength required by us as individuals and as communities to persevere despite the natural changes which occur within a community. Like the seasons, local politics, perceptions, culture, and dynamics within a community will change over time. What is considered a need, or a resource might change from one year to the next. What is viewed as a high priority may no longer be one, while something that has never been viewed as an issue may become one overnight. Our communities are everchanging and fear of these changes or fear of the constant unknown might cause frustration over time. It is through these shifts; one learns to develop resilience and inner strength to carry on. Viewing change as an opportunity to grow rather than fearing the unknown, viewing shifts in priorities as a time to redirect efforts, and viewing problems in a positive light as situations to resolve are all ways to build inner strength and resilience.

Change is a constant in community health and it is how we react to change that will allow for us to make a difference or to become stagnant and feeling hopeless about our efforts. One decision can impact the course of the rest of the year, so we must choose wisely and constantly remember what we are working towards. There is always a certain amount of safety that comes with doing what has always been done, but it is a magical thing to use a change to your advantage.

In the words of Gever Tulley, "Persistence and resilience only come from having been given the chance to work through difficult problems." Let us use this ever-changing world in which we live to our advantage and allow ourselves to develop inner strength and resilience during trying times.



Resiliency, Inner Strength, & Magic

Data & Health Promotion by Gwendolyn Gallagher

Epidemiology is the study of patterns of health/illness and associated factors within a population. So, my role as an NMDOH Community Health Epidemiologist is to obtain and disseminate data to better understand and help improve population health in our local communities.

IBIS, NMDOH's web-based Indicator-Based Information System, (<https://ibis.health.state.nm.us/>) holds data for more than 200 health outcomes. Data for these health outcomes are collected from New Mexico's: births and deaths; surveys administered to youth, adults, and pregnant and post-partum women; hospitalizations and emergency department visits; cancer incidence; infectious diseases; and environmental exposures, just to name a few.

In addition to health outcomes data collected by the NMDOH, there are many sources of data to help us better understand level social determinants of health (SDOH). For example, the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey collects person- and household-level SDOH data for more than 20 categories of hundreds of indicators. Specifically, there are indicator categories such as: health insurance status, educational attainment, income and poverty, computer access, etc.

Lastly, there is access to data collected from many other stakeholders, such as non-profit groups and other governmental agencies. Examples of data collected by our external stakeholders are: food insecurity, homelessness, traffic injuries, crime, educational attainment, and public safety.

"You can have data without information, but you cannot have information without data."

Daniel Keys Moran,
American science fiction writer



If you seek data to help you better understand the health of a community or a special population or to develop a program to improve population health, reach out to Gwendolyn. She can locate diverse quantitative and qualitative data for your specific needs.

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Harding Health Fair Provides Valuable Services to Their Community by Nichole Romero

Staff from the Raton and Las Vegas Public Health Offices participated in the Harding County Health Fair held at the Mosquero High School in October. Nichole Romero, Health Promotion Specialist, attended the event with Tracy Jaramillo, Kristen Johnson and Lydia Ortiz, staff from the Northeast Region Children's Medical Services Program. Both programs provided information on the services available at the Raton and Las Vegas Health Offices. Brochures from each office were provided, as well as incentives for community members. Staff also answered questions from families and the community health office services. Students from Kindergarten through 12th grade, their families, community members, and a variety of vendors also attended the event.

The Harding Health Fair is an important event for the county and is always successful. Harding residents attend so they can socialize as well as take advantage of all the services provided at the fair. The fair occurs twice a year, once in Roy and once in Mosquero. The reason the health fair take place in those communities is so both towns get health services and the entire county gets serviced. The events are planned and funded by the Harding Health Council, so the essential healthcare services are available to community members. The fair offers community members valuable medical services they would usually have to drive at least 1 ½ hours to receive. The services community members have access to during the fair include mammograms, flu shots, lab work, and blood pressure checks. The Harding Health Council also holds a drawing for gifts they have purchased out of their funds. The gifts are an incentive to bring community members to the health fair. The health council also provides all council members and vendors with coffee, snacks, and lunch to show their appreciation. The health council started holding and funding health fairs so community members could have more access to valuable medical tests and services that are needed for good health.



Harding Health Council Members participate in the Health Fair at Mosquero High School





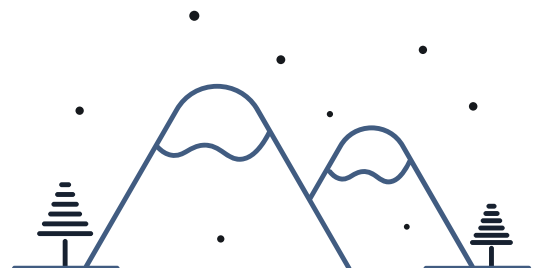
Las Vegas Youth Summit Equips Youth with Resiliency in the Face of the Opioid Overdose Epidemic by Valentina White

A youth summit for the northeast region of the state was held at the New Mexico Highlands University Gymnasium in October. The youth summit is a part of a statewide initiative to host and promote five youth summits in New Mexico about opioid overdose. The youth summit committee included NM Human Service Department, NM Department of Health, Drug Enforcement Agency 360 Campaign, NM Highlands University, San Miguel County Substance Abuse and Prevention Coalition, San Miguel County DWI Program, El Centro Family Health, local schools, Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation, Las Vegas Wal-Mart, and Lowe's. With the support from the various programs, community, and schools, the youth summit provided valuable resources for students on the dangers of opioid misuse. As a state we need to collaborate and continue to work together to bring awareness and education on this preventable public health crisis by making healthier lifestyle choices and accessing resources.

Las Vegas Public Health Office staff, including Nurse Manager, Dominique Martinez, and Health Promotion Program Specialist, Valentina White, took lead roles to plan the summit. The summit was intended for middle school and high school students from Colfax, Union, Harding, Quay, Guadalupe, San Miguel, and Mora counties. Over 1,000 students attended and took part in presentations and gathered information from counseling programs, universities, law enforcement, family planning, oral health, hospital and clinics, and the public health office. There were many volunteers to ensure the event went smoothly and quiet rooms were available for anyone who needed to speak to a counselor during the summit. Every student received a draw string bag with snacks for their attendance.

Guest speakers included Jim Wahlberg, CEO of the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation. Jim Wahlberg spoke about his personal journey with addiction and showed the video "If Only" which he produced based on his experiences. Viviana Sena, another guest speaker, shared her parent story and talked about how losing her daughter to an overdose changed her family's lives. Viviana also talked about the importance and the need for treatment centers in New Mexico and stressed the importance of communication and getting help for those struggling with addiction. During Viviana's story, she was joined by other community members who held pictures of the loved ones they have lost to an overdose for everyone to see. Other guest speakers included; Heather McMurry from DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency), who captivated the audience with a DEA Game presentation about opioids. Felix Jaramillo, a Behavioral Health Therapist, presented data on youth opioid use and underage drinking. Local entertainers included Gabriella Tafoya, Gabriel Serna, and Louie Trujillo, to name a few.

With effort and support from all those who donated items, volunteered, presented, and the participation from the schools in attendance helped contribute to the success of the youth summit. There has been much positive feedback from community members, students, and volunteers to youth summit committee members since the summit. By using the post-event survey information, the committee members hope to plan another youth summit in the future. Like the motto of the youth summit, "Together We Are Stronger NM".





Resiliency, Inner Strength, & Magic

ACES and Resiliency: *It takes a community to raise a child*

by Ashley Ringwood

The vision of the future of our communities is optimistic and rests with our children, the future leaders, parents, community members, and workforce. However, many community members, families, and children are struggling with poverty, hunger, behavioral health, and academic and economic opportunity. Childhood is thought to be a time filled with joy, laughter, and innocence but for many this is not true. Throughout childhood many people have experienced trauma influencing their brain development, behavior, physical and mental health. This trauma is known as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

ACEs are events occurring during a person's first 18 years of life and defined within three broad categories: Abuse, Neglect, and Household Challenges. ACEs can vary from person to person, but personal strategies and community resources exist to support whenever someone has an issue stemming from trauma. These personal strategies and community resources help build resiliency in a person who is suffering from the ramifications of ACEs in their life. Resiliency is the ability to adapt well, or "bounce back" in the presence of difficult life event and a resilient community, socially connected with access to resources for community members, can help folks survive and thrive.

Ashley Ringwood, Health Promotion Specialist who serves Rio Arriba, Los Alamos and Taos Counties, and Santa Clara Pueblo, has attended a variety of community meetings discussing ACEs, resiliency, and preventative measures. She is collaborating with Rio Arriba County, who is working on a community initiative called Anna, Age Eight.

Anna, Age Eight is a book and a movement to prevent childhood trauma and strengthen families. The recommendations on addressing trauma in the book brought together two political parties to create a senate bill that started the Anna, Age Eight Institute. The institute is focused on ending the epidemic of childhood trauma by strengthening communities. Much of their work revolves around studying ACEs. They are partnering with Northern New Mexico College and other key stakeholders in Rio Arriba County to assess services.

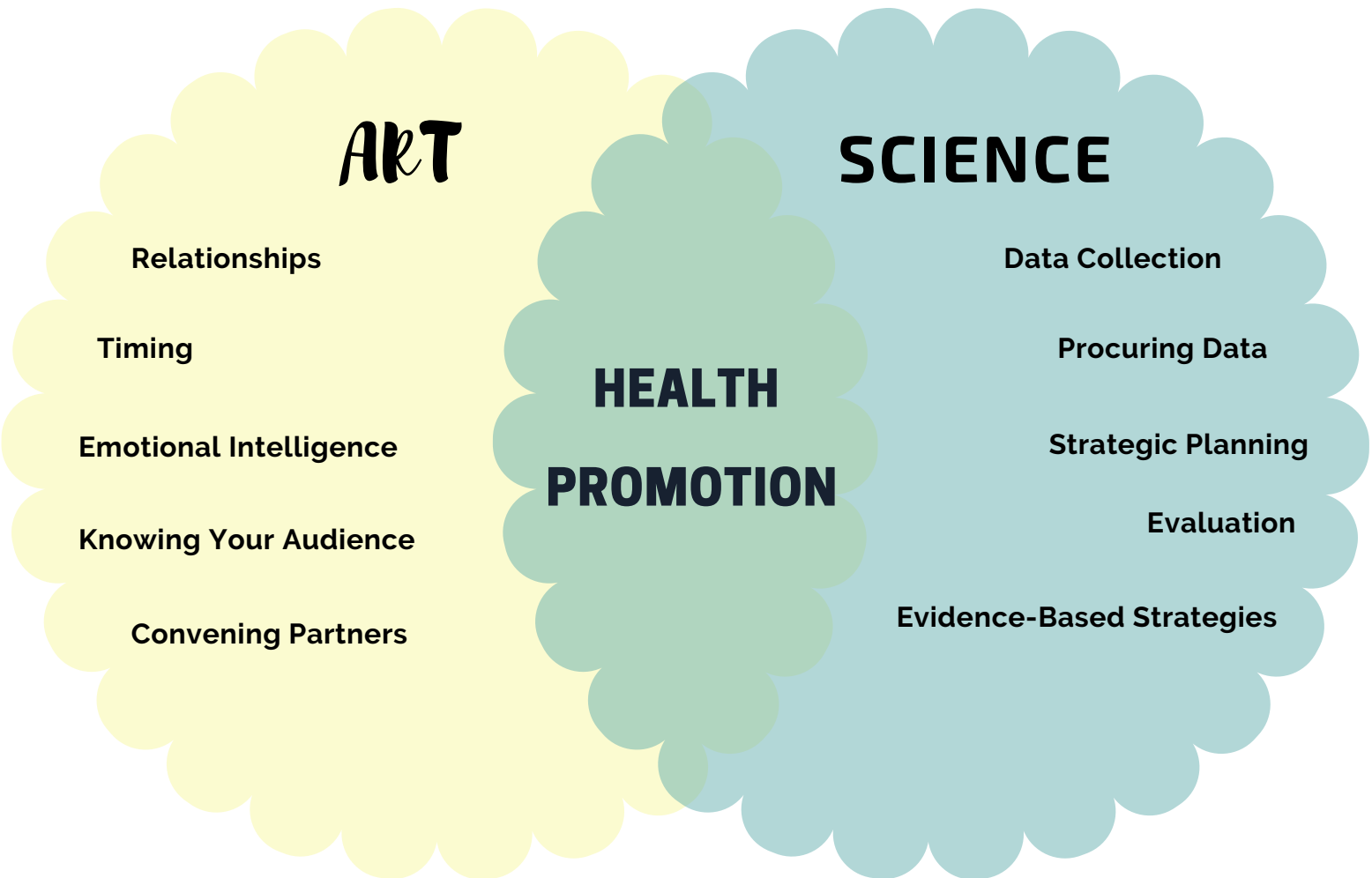
The county is involved with a coalition who is moving forward with the 100% Community Initiative which works to prevent childhood trauma. The coalition is in the assessment phase and have conducted community surveys. The community survey asks adults and youth 18 and older about what access they have to ten services for surviving and thriving. Surviving services include: Behavioral Health Care, Medical/Dental Care, Housing, Food, and Transportation. Thriving services include: Parent Supports, Early Childhood Learning Programs, Community Schools, Youth Mentors and Job training. Once the survey results are compiled, the next steps are to plan and identify barriers currently existing in the community around ACEs. Identifying these barriers will inform evidence-based solutions for Rio Arriba County. By working in alignment with local organizations to improve services and then evaluating and tracking progress to ensure community members, families, and children have resources to help prevent ACEs and build resiliency.



Resiliency, Inner Strength, & Magic

The Art & Science of Health Promotion by Desiree Valdez

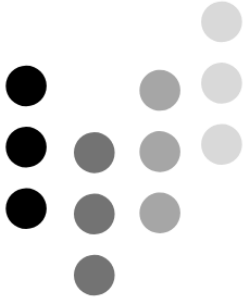
The Northeast Region Health Promotion Program is unique to NMDOH and to the communities we serve. In our organization, the Health Promotion program serves as a bridge to communities, as well as being the subject matter expert in the realm of relationships, communication, interventions, and many other skills we use to work in and with communities. We draw upon our experiences of working in communities and the data collected about the health indicators prioritized by communities to problem solve and assist when called upon by internal and external partners.



Contact your friendly neighborhood
Health Promotion Program Team Member to learn more!

REGIONAL STAFF

NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM TEAM



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WHAT THE PROGRAM MANAGER DOES:

Leads the team to facilitate the Public Health Division mission and initiatives, coordinates and implements strategies to address health priorities and indicators, and supports community preventive and population-based services

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WHAT THE EPIDEMIOLOGIST DOES:

Provides leadership for assessment, evaluation, and public health planning, develops and builds capacity within the team to increase assessment skills in data interpretation, analysis, program evaluation, and other related skills

WHAT THE COORDINATORS DO:

Assure coordination of community health improvement activities with DOH by assessing community readiness, assist with provision and interpretation of data, identify local partners and include them in the planning and implementation of regional and state initiatives

WHAT THE SPECIALISTS DO:

Work within and support their local Public Health Offices, engage with their local communities to address health priorities through the development of policy, supporting health councils, and implementing special projects and grants

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