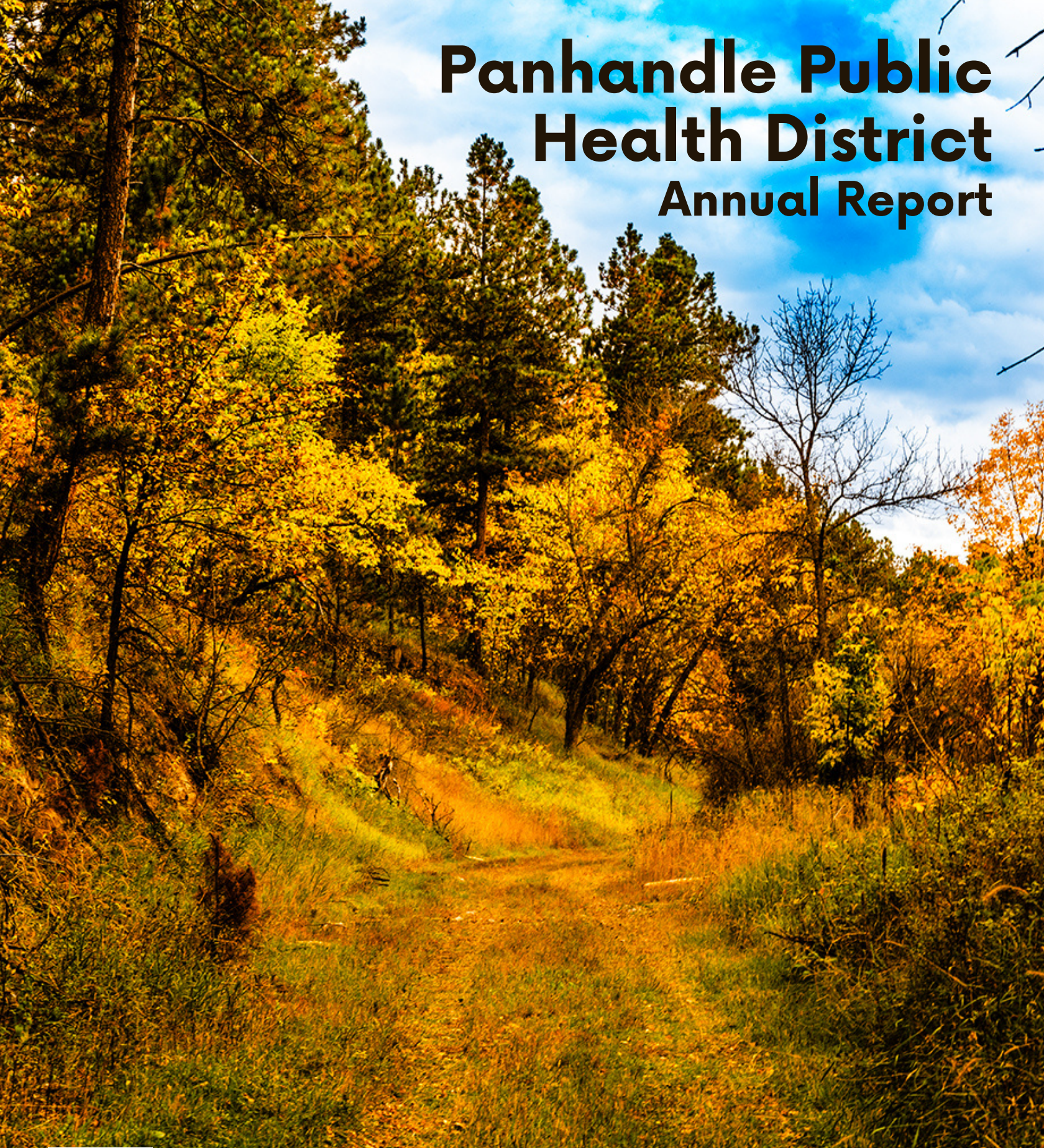


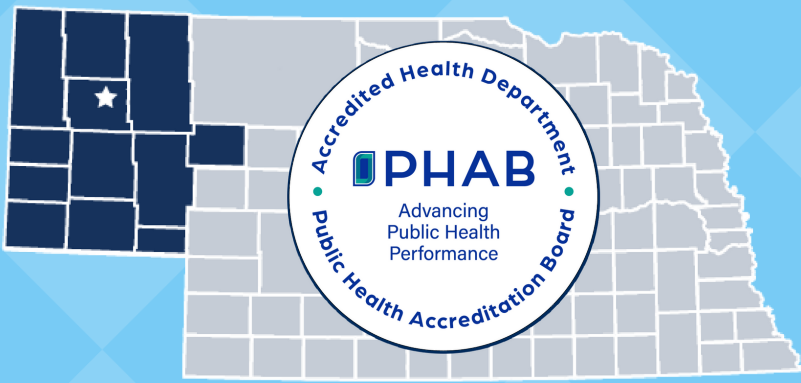
Panhandle Public Health District Annual Report



Escanea el código QR
para ver en español.

Panhandle
Public Health District

Photo credit: Nebraskaland Magazine/Nebraska Game and Parks Commission



Letter from the Board President

Board of Health Members

Banner County

Don Lease, County Commissioner
Marie Parker, Community-Spirited Citizen

Box Butte County

Michael Sautter, County Commissioner
Carolyn Jones, Community-Spirited Citizen

Cheyenne County

Randy Miller, County Commissioner
Mandi Raffelson, Community-Spirited Citizen

Dawes County

Vic Rivera, County Commissioner
Diana Lecher, Community-Spirited Citizen

Deuel County

Steve Fischer, County Commissioner
Bill Gray, Community-Spirited Citizen

Garden County

Dixann Krajewski, County Commissioner
TBD, Community-Spirited Citizen

Grant County

Brian Brennemann, County Commissioner
Jon Werth, Community-Spirited Citizen

Kimball County

Carl Stander, County Commissioner
Daria Faden, Community-Spirited Citizen

Morrill County

Susanna Batterman, County Commissioner
Kay Anderson, Community-Spirited Citizen

Scotts Bluff County

Mark Harris, County Commissioner
Kristin Wiebe, Community-Spirited Citizen

Sheridan County

Dan Kling, County Commissioner
Pat Wellnitz, Community-Spirited Citizen

Sioux County

Hal Downer, County Commissioner
Jackie Delatour, Community-Spirited Citizen

At Large

Dr. David Cornutt, MD, Medical Doctor
TBD, DDS, Dentist

² Jon Werth, DVM, Veterinarian

The Board of PPHD is made up of a county commissioner and a community-spirited citizen selected by the county commissioners from each county. We also have a physician, a dentist, and a veterinarian. We serve a population of 83,417 people in a large area of nearly 15,000 square miles consisting of twelve counties Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Grant, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, and Sioux. Our base funding is from the Nebraska Health Cash Fund which is made up of the interest from the Tobacco Settlement, and the rest of our funding is mostly federal dollars that flow to us through the State of Nebraska.

This year brought many opportunities to PPHD. Regional West Community Health's Immunization Clinic transferred to Panhandle Public Health District in September. We were able to make some necessary improvements to our office space and the parking lot and have successfully implemented the vaccination program.

Looking forward to 2024, we will be launching our Healthy Brain Initiative and expanding our environmental health efforts. The future holds great promise for us.

Marie Parker
Board President



Letter from the Director

Over the past 21 years, I have had the immense pleasure of working with a supportive board and committed staff to establish and bring the benefits of local public health to the panhandle. We were recognized this year with Reaccreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, which means we are meeting the national standards of providing optimum public health. The challenges have been overwhelming at times but never insurmountable.

This is my last year at PPHD before my planned retirement in January 2025. As the date comes closer, I find myself reflecting on many memories. The ones I savor the most involve groups of people coming together to make their communities a better place where our children's children will want to live.

We see groups of thoughtful, committed individuals changing the world every day as people come together to... improve walkability in their community, assess and develop a regional community health improvement plan, get thousands of immunizations administered each year, plan for opioid overdose prevention, dream of local treatment options for behavioral health, support each other who have experienced a loss, reduce the stigma of accessing mental healthcare, create a system of care for birth to 8-year-olds including home visitation for new families, provide preventive dental services in the schools, assess and test for lead exposure, engage partners to monitor air quality, create supportive healthy worksites, prepare our communities for emergencies, reduce the impact of chronic illness, prevent vector related diseases and reduce disparities in health outcomes.

These are just a few examples of how we all make a difference in our panhandle communities. As you go through the annual report pages, you will read even more stories about how a small group of committed individuals can change lives.

Our goal in producing this annual report is to increase awareness and encourage engagement from you, the citizens of the Panhandle. Information is everywhere, but know that you can look to PPHD as a credible source. Recently, someone asked if this publication was worth the expense. That is always difficult to judge, but it costs about .50 a copy to create, print, and deliver to you. It is our main way of reaching every household in the panhandle.

We would love to hear your feedback on what we can do better or your thoughts on any of the initiatives in the report.



Kim Engel
Director
308-760-2415
kengel@pphd.ne.gov

One of my favorite quotes, is painted on our Hemingford office wall.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world. It's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

A Special Thank you to Bob Gifford for his 19 years of service, four of which he served as president of the PPHD Board of Health. We appreciate the leadership he provided.

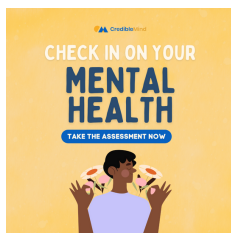


Mental Health: Empowerment & Access

This year has been dedicated to making mental health help easier to access. Through collaborations, we have brought CredibleMind and BASE Education to the Panhandle. We've also expanded training options for groups and individuals. Our focus remains on breaking barriers and fostering positive change.

CredibleMind: Your Trusted Hub for Online Mental Health Support

Discover CredibleMind, a comprehensive online platform vetted by behavioral and mental health experts. Offering a diverse array of tools, resources, and approved apps, it stands as a reliable source of information and support.



Start your journey toward wellbeing today by scanning this QR code.



BE KIND TO YOURSELF

- Be mindful of negative self-talk
- Surround yourself with positivity
- Set healthy boundaries
- Celebrate your success
- Be patient with yourself
- Seek support when needed

Explore Our Training and Event Calendar!

Discover our newly launched training and event calendar on the website! Register now for upcoming trainings, and don't miss out on professional development opportunities. From Suicide Loss Support Groups to 8 to Great and Healthy for Life, we offer a diverse range of programs tailored for your growth and support.

01 JANUARY / 24						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31	1	2 Suicide Loss Support Group Virtual 8:30-9:30	3 OPR Webinar Virtual 12-1pm	4	5	6
7	8	9 Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Virtual 9 am - 1 pm Healthy for Life! Virtual 12-1 pm	10	11	12	13

Register now and secure your spot today!



Professional Development for Employees

If our scheduled training doesn't fit your schedule, or you need a tailored session for your workplace or community, get in touch! Elevate your team's skills and career through our customized Professional Development programs. With over 25 trainings led by six experienced trainers, we provide comprehensive learning experiences tailored to your needs.

Scan the QR code to explore our diverse array of professional development opportunities.



Partnering with Schools for Transformative Impact

Through strategic partnerships with ten schools, we've introduced Base Education—an evidence-based program that champions positive youth development and prevents substance abuse. This innovative initiative boasts a comprehensive curriculum and a dynamic online platform, empowering students from diverse backgrounds with vital life skills. By nurturing resilience and fostering positive behaviors, Base Education has made a tangible impact, ensuring our students are equipped for success and experience holistic growth.

Opioid Response

Emily Timm, LPN
Preparedness &
Community Health
Educator
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Opioid Safety & Education

Prescription Drug Lockboxes and Detera Drug Disposal Pouches continue to be provided to Panhandle service providers and community groups. Over 200 of each were handed out at PPHD's booth for National Night Out in August. Free education and training for opioid and stimulant misuse, as well as Narcan training are available. In 2023, over 150 Panhandle residents received education on opioid misuse and Narcan use.

Situation Table Data

Situation Table Data
August 2022-December 2023

67 Situations Brought to the Table
74% Closed and Connected to Services

Top Three's: Communities Served

- Alliance
- Chadron
- Scottsbluff

Risk Factors

- Mental Health
- Housing
- Drugs and Parenting (tied)

Partners Acting as Lead Agency

- WCHR
- Cirrus House
- Region 1

The Panhandle Situation Table has had a successful year connecting individuals and families experiencing crisis to services in an urgent manner. The Panhandle Situation Table meets weekly via Zoom and is comprised of mental health professionals, licensed alcohol and drug counselors, law enforcement, juvenile justice, housing, education professionals, and domestic violence advocacy professionals. An individual or family is considered for the Situation Table when they are at risk for a high probability of harm to occur without immediate assistance and when more than one service sector is needed to decrease that risk. PPHD provides coordination and training for the Panhandle Situation Table.

Opioid Settlement Strategic Plan

Several Panhandle service providers and stakeholders met throughout the year to identify Panhandle needs and priorities for expected opioid settlement funds. Top initiatives in five priority areas were identified. The strategic plan provides a framework for requests for settlement funding, as it becomes available, by the State of Nebraska.

TREATMENT

Implement, Expand & Sustain Treatment Opportunities

JUSTICE

Implement & Expand Justice System Initiatives

PREVENTION

Implement and Expand Prevention Initiatives

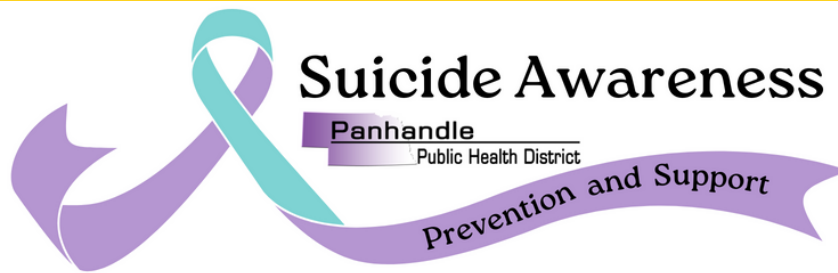
RECOVERY HOUSING

Provide Recovery Services including Adequate Housing throughout the Recovery Continuum

WARM HAND-OFFS

Expansion of Warm Handoffs to Robustly funded Community Supports to Reduce Client Stress

*Data-Sharing and Collaboration Included Across All Sectors



Help prevent suicide. Inspire hope.

Suicide is a permanent solution to problems that can be managed and often overcome. Statistics underscore the importance of timely intervention—individuals who receive the necessary support during a crisis are significantly less likely to experience suicidal thoughts again. It affects all ages and ranks as the 10th leading cause of death in the US and the second leading cause among 10 to 24-year-old Nebraskans, claiming a life in Nebraska every 32 hours.

While suicide rates fluctuate, our actions can make a profound difference. Simple acts of compassion, such as checking in on a loved one or offering support to someone in distress, can be pivotal. Being kind and empathetic can let someone know they're not alone in their struggle.

Question. Persuade. Refer.



QPR, like CPR, can be a lifesaver. QPR training helps participants recognize the warning signs and risk factors for suicide. QPR empowers people of all ages, stages, and backgrounds with the tools and skills to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know. It is an innovative, practical, and proven suicide prevention training.

In 2023, PPHD trained 175 residents, increasing the community's readiness to support those in crisis.

Use the QR code to register for monthly QPR webinar training. We also provide tailored training on-site or virtual for businesses and organizations.

Hope Squads

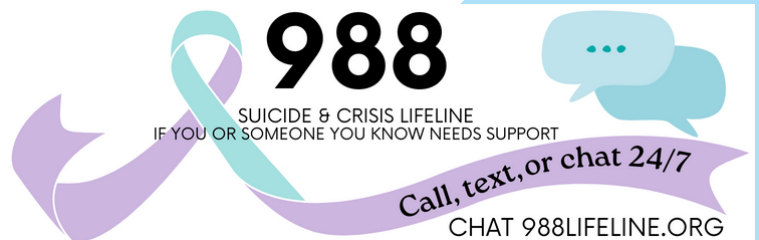


Hope Squad is a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program to reduce youth suicide through education, training, and peer intervention. Hope Squad members are nominated by their classmates as trustworthy peers and are trained by advisors. Ten Panhandle schools are currently participating in the Hope Squad program. Hope Squad schools are encouraged to offer the My Ascension film in their community. We encourage all schools to join this mental health/suicide/anti-bullying effort.

Suicide Loss Support Groups

Coping After Suicide Loss Support Groups are intended to be a confidential, non-judgmental space where those bereaved by a suicide loss can find some comfort and support. Support group facilitators have lost someone to suicide, too, so they know the pain, questions, and complexity of losing a loved one to suicide.

If you've lost someone to suicide, consider joining a virtual or in-person group. Use the QR code to join a support group.



For more information, contact:

Cheri Farris, cfarris@pphd.ne.gov
 Liz MacDonald, lmacdonald@pphd.ne.gov
 Janelle Visser, jvisser@pphd.ne.gov
 Kelsy Sasse, ksasse@pphd.ne.gov



PPC Vision: Healthy, Safe People Thriving Across Their Lifespan

Liz MacDonald
Community Prevention
Coordinator
308-633-2866 Ext. 204
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The Panhandle Prevention Coalition focuses on the prevention of suicide, binge drinking, underage drinking, tobacco use, drug use, and overdose, in addition to promoting mental health through collective impact and is supported through braided funding.

PPHD was one of five nationally to receive a SPACECAT grant. The National Association of County and City Health Officials guided the PPC through a SOAR analysis and practical visioning to help devise a strategic plan to address the intersection of Adverse Childhood Experiences, Suicide, and Overdose.

Strategic Directions include Position the Panhandle for Increased Access and Continuity to Care, Catalyze Collective Impact to Improve Systems, and Empower Communities through Prevention, Education, and Engagement. This work is moving forward through the work plan and CHIP process.

Throughout the year, the PPC has continued to provide education to its members, including how to engage youth in prevention efforts using Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategies; Dr. Cali Estes presented on Adverse Childhood Experiences and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome and a presentation on Tobacco Use in the LGBTQ+ Community. The PPC is an initiative of the Panhandle Partnership, Inc.

PPC Mission: Enhance a Sustainable Collaborative Prevention System

Suicide Awareness & Prevention Month Activities

Every September, we observe Suicide Prevention Month with various impactful initiatives aimed at raising awareness, providing support, and ultimately saving lives. Our goal is to ensure that everyone living in the Panhandle has access to the tools, resources, and information needed to have conversations about preventing suicide and to feel comfortable seeking help if needed.

My Ascension Film Showings

A suicide attempt left 16-year-old varsity cheerleader Emma Benoit paralyzed but propelled her on a mission to use her painful experience to help others find hope and stay alive.

This September the film was shown at the Fox Theatre in Sidney and at Garden County High School following the walk.



NEIGHBORS
SUPPORTING
NEIGHBORS

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Community Walks

PPHD and partners coordinate walks in September; all funds donated support the annual walks and evidence-based suicide prevention programs throughout the Panhandle, including Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR) and Hope Squads.



Walks happened in Sidney and Alliance in September with over 80 walkers. The first annual Hope Walks Here community walk happened in Oshkosh this year with 60 walkers. Region 1 Behavioral Health Authority hosted the walk at lunch to enable anyone from anywhere to participate.



Tobacco Free Nebraska

Stress can complicate your life, tobacco use makes it worse.

Worrying about the effects of tobacco products on newborn babies can cause increased stress. Smoking during pregnancy can cause serious health problems, complications, and premature birth. Secondhand smoke and thirdhand smoke are dangerous to babies and can cause respiratory issues.

Quitting tobacco use while pregnant or even before can help lower the risk of preterm delivery, low birth weight, and developing gestational diabetes.



Quitting tobacco can be an important part of a behavioral health treatment. For people who experience depression, anxiety, or stress, quitting tobacco can help them feel better.

Tobacco use can intensify symptoms of depression and anxiety and increase stress levels. People with behavioral health conditions are twice as likely to use tobacco products.

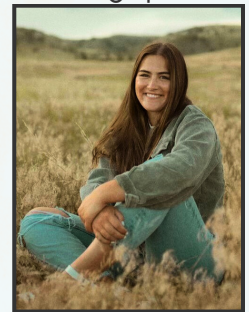
PPHD teams up with area athletes and the Panhandle Prep magazine to highlight students who are leaders in their community by advocating for living tobacco free.

Thank you to all students who are a positive role model for the younger generation! Congratulations to our Fall and Winter Scholarship winners!

Landon Amundsen
Scottsbluff



Grace Dean
Bridgeport



1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)
1-855-DÉJELO-YA (335-3569)

The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline is free, 24/7 support that can help you successfully quit.

Source: [Quitnow.ne.gov](https://quitnow.ne.gov)
truthinitiative.org

VAPING PREVENTION

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2021, nearly 25% of Panhandle 12th graders reported using electric vapor.

Contact us today to schedule a training or implement a tobacco or vaping prevention program.

Signs a Teen Might Be Vaping

- Behavioral changes*
 - Irritability, anxiety, prone to mood change, lack of impulse control*
- Difficulty concentrating*
 - Cognitive and performance impairment leading to poor grades*
- Change in eating patterns*
 - Leads to weight fluctuation*
- Mouth sores*
- Dry mouth*
- Unexplained nosebleeds*
- Sudden interest in burning scented candles or incense*
- Sudden use of perfume/cologne*

Nicotine is found in all tobacco products; this includes vape pods. It is an addictive substance, no matter what form it is in.

Young adults still have developing brains. When they use nicotine as teens, the brain develops a "need" for it. Almost 90% of adults who use nicotine started as teens.

My Life, My Quit™ is a free and confidential way for youth to quit smoking or vaping. Take control of YOUR LIFE so you can live it YOUR WAY.



**LUNGS BURNING?
IS IT YOUR VAPE?**

Text "Start My Quit" to 36072 or call 855-891-9989.
Free, confidential help to quit vaping, smoking or chewing. Just for teens.

WWW.MYLIFEMYQUIT.COM

MY LIFE MY QUIT.

Programs & Trainings

Catch My Breath



CATCH My Breath is the only FREE evidence-based youth nicotine vaping prevention program for grades 5-12 that has been proven to reduce students' likelihood of vaping substantially. Be sure your loved ones get the message, too.

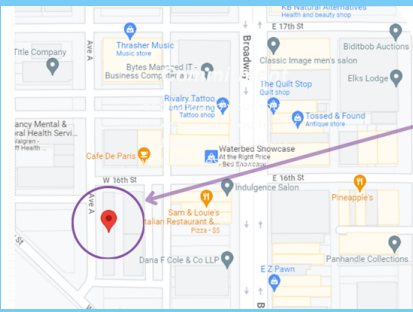
How to talk with young people about vaping

Becoming a trusted adult requires skill development and practice. At this workshop, participants will get both: learning the keys to being a trusted adult and applying that approach to conversations with the youth in their life. You will be able to use trusted adult principles to have conversations with youth about electronic nicotine devices, e-cigarettes, and vaping.

To schedule a training, please contact Janelle Visser, jvisser@pphd.ne.gov.

IMMUNIZATION SERVICES

WALK-IN OR SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT



Have questions about immunizations, please call 633-2866 or go to www.pphd.ne.gov/immunizations.html

TAKE A LOOK AT OUR SERVICES



ROUTINE IMMUNIZATIONS

We provide routine immunizations for all ages. If you are underinsured or have no insurance, we provide immunizations at no cost to you.



TRAVEL IMMUNIZATIONS

Going on a trip and want to make sure you are protected. We provide travel consults and provide recommended immunizations.



WORKSITE/ SCHOOL CLINICS

We can provide immunizations at the worksite or the local school. This makes it easy for the employees/students while providing a healthy environment.



FOR THOSE 60+

Older adults are more likely to develop severe RSV and need hospitalization. Immunizations are available to protect adults 60 years and older from severe RSV.



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Tina Cook, RN, BSN
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Cynthia Garza, LPN
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Immunization Clinic Nurses

Clockwise:

- Cheri Berry, RN
- Peg Jackson, RN
- Deb Keener, RN
- Bethany Trapp, RN
- Teresa Thomas, RN
- Sheila Roberts, LPN

MRC Volunteer Nurses

- Betty Walsh, RN
- Marilyn Noel, RN





Why Age 9?

Prevent 90% of HPV Cancers

Human papillomavirus (HPV) cannot be treated, but there is an immunization that can prevent transmission and protect against six cancers if initiated prior to exposure. HPV immunization is a critical prevention tool, safeguarding children and adolescents against more than 90% of HPV cancers when given at recommended ages.

Why Age 9?

Routine HPV immunizations can be given starting at age 9 through age 26. Getting this immunization starting at age 9 results in a strong immune response and provides long-lasting protection.

Recommended Immunization Schedule Guideline

On Time
AGE 9-12
2 Doses
6-12 months apart

Late
AGES 13-14
2 Doses
6-12 months apart

Critical
AGES 15-26
3 Doses
1st dose at visit one
2nd dose 1-2 months later
3rd dose 6 months after 2nd

HPV vaccine is safe and effective, with no long-term side effects

The HPV vaccine has been given for more than 15 years and provides long-lasting protection. In fact, 109 studies conducted among 2.5 million people in 6 countries have shown that there have been no serious side effects other than what is typical for all vaccines (i.e., allergic reactions, fainting).

Other Clinical Services

UNMC Munroe-Meyer Clinics

Genetic outreach clinics are held multiple times yearly and include evaluations with a board-certified medical geneticist and genetic counselor. Typical reasons for referral include:

- A suspected genetic disorder or syndrome
- Abnormal genetic test results
- Autism
- Developmental delay
- Hereditary cancer
- Multiple congenital anomalies
- Multiple family members with the same genetic condition
- Pre-conceptual counseling

Medically Handicapped Clinic offers a program that provides specialized medical services for families with children with disabilities or those who have ongoing healthcare needs. This is provided in conjunction with UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute.

N-95 Respirator Fit Testing

A fit test is a test protocol conducted to verify that a respirator is comfortable and provides the wearer with the expected protection. PPHD provides the medical evaluation and Fit Test for organizations or individuals required to do this.



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Sandy Preston,
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Disease Surveillance

PPHD strives to prevent the incidence of disease by promoting healthy communities, families, and individuals.

Staff work with local hospitals, schools, nursing homes, labs, and Nebraska DHHS Epidemiology to conduct surveillance of reportable diseases, detect outbreaks, and help prevent and control the spread of disease.

2023 Disease Report

Panhandle Public Health District	2022	2023
Animal Exposure (bite or nonbite)	13	62
Aseptic meningitis	2	6
Botulism (infant)	0	1
Campylobacteriosis	39	60
Cryptococcus gatti	1	0
Coccidioidomycosis	2	2
Cryptosporidiosis	4	5
Cyclosporiasis	1	1
Ehrlichiosis/Anaplasmosis, undetermined	0	1
Enteraggregative Escherichia coli (EAEC)	22	29
Enteropathogenic Escherichia coli (EPEC)	41	75
Enterotoxigenic Escherichia coli (ETEC)	2	4
Escherichia coli (STEC) gastroenteritis	19	15
Giardiasis	6	7
Group A Streptococcus, invasive	2	12
Group B Streptococcus, invasive	5	17
Haemophilus influenzae, invasive	1	1
Hepatitis A, acute	1	1
Hepatitis B virus infection, chronic	3	4
Hepatitis B, acute	1	1
Hepatitis C virus infection, chronic or resolved	41	57
Hepatitis C, Acute	0	3
Hepatitis C, Perinatal	0	1
Kawasaki disease	1	1
Lead poisoning, child	29	23
Lead poisoning, adult	6	0
Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C)	1	0
Lyme disease	0	1
Measles (Rubeola)	0	2
Mumps	0	1
Noroviruses, outbreak	5	2
Rabies, animal	1	0
Rotavirus, outbreak	2	1
Pertussis	2	0
Q Fever, acute	0	1
Salmonellosis	11	24
Shigellosis	2	2
Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis	1	1
Staphylococcal enterotoxin	1	0
Streptococcus pneumoniae, invasive disease (IPD)	6	11
Strep, other, invasive, beta-hem (non-A, non-B)	1	5
Toxoplasmosis	0	2
Trichinosis	1	0
Tularemia	0	2
Varicella (chickenpox)	0	2
Vibriosis (non-cholera)	1	1
West Nile virus disease, neuroinvasive	2	23
West Nile virus disease, nonneuroinvasive	0	17
Yersiniosis	4	6
Total confirmed, probable, & suspect cases	250	493

For questions or to schedule an appointment,
please call 308-633-2866



Dental Health Program Keeping Teeth Strong

Completed 4,655 Dental Screenings



Dental Screenings are designed to detect early signs of dental disease.

Applied 5,040 Fluoride Treatments



Fluoride strengthens tooth enamel to help prevent cavities.

Placed 630 Dental Sealants



Sealants protect molars by keeping out plaque, bacteria, and food

My favorite part of having the dental program at our school was getting to see how many students participated and received dental care. -- participating school

PPHD's school-based dental health program is available for all students. Every child should have access to preventive dental care. We provide screenings, fluoride treatments, sealants, and education.

Dates TBD:
Dental Days with UNMC College of Dentistry- children ages 3-21 years without insurance can receive free dental care. Check our website for more information.



Kendra Lauruhn, RDH
Public Health Dental Hygienist
klauruhn@pphd.ne.gov

DRIVER SAFETY



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2021, 79% of Panhandle 12th graders reported texting or using an app on a cell phone while driving.

Bring back national speaker **Cara Filler** to your school at no charge!

Contact Nicole Berosek @ nberosek@pphd.ne.gov to find out how.

Cara Filler is DRIVEN to Inspire. She is a compelling author, entrepreneur, and traffic safety specialist who has shared her moving presentation with more than 2,000,000 people in 5 countries.

Drawing from an immense personal tragedy in her own life, Cara's inspiring presentation focuses on dealing with peer pressure, traffic safety, and making everyday choices count. Why? Because it could just save a life!

6 Panhandle Schools offered Cara's Highway Safety Assembly in 2023.

What a Panhandle school staff member said about Cara's message...

Thank you for the work you do. I love the way you're sharing your story with so much humor, kindness, and also some good confrontation. What you said to those kids in 42 minutes was incredible and I hope life-saving. Our school is fairly small, but some days I can't fathom all the heartbreak and difficult things our students are dealing with. Your presentation was a gift. So thank you!

Retired Nebraska State Patrol Officer Chuck Elley is available to provide worksite or school presentations regarding highway safety.



While 64% of Panhandle drivers always wear seat belts when driving or riding in a car, we are 13% lower than the state average and nearly 26% lower than the U.S. average. This is concerning considering how far distances are between rural Panhandle communities, travel on country roads, and heavy agricultural traffic with trucks.

ALMOST
ONE-THIRD
OF TEEN DRIVERS INVOLVED IN
FATAL CRASHES WERE
SPEEDING
LEARN THE 6 RULES FOR THE ROAD

If we obey the speed limits...
...we wouldn't be speeding
Genius.

NHTSA
RULES FOR THE ROAD
WWW.NHTSA.GOV/TEENDRIVING
SOURCE: NHTSA

#ParentsofTeenDrivers!
Add this message to your daily talks with your teen: Don't drive impaired or distracted, don't speed, and always wear your seat belt.

Walking & Rolling for Good Health



Janelle Visser
Health Educator
308.760.6493
jvisser@pphd.ne.gov



Kimball added four crosswalk art projects, two near the school and two on the Lincoln Highway! These projects were led by residents Jamie Bright and Jessica Rocha with students painting the one near the school. The crosswalks give vibrancy to areas while also helping to slow traffic.



Alliance added another crosswalk art project and updated their existing ones. Carnegie Arts Center Director Kyren Gibson and center volunteers painted Bulldog-inspired paw prints from the High School to the practice field to make the crosswalk more visible to drivers.



Activate Alliance, a community group working to make Alliance a safer place to walk, bike, and roll, is excited to offer a bike repair station for community use. The bike repair station was sponsored by Healthy Blue.

At left, Alliance Chamber Director Owen Burnett demonstrates how to use the station. It is conveniently located at 18th and Box Butte on the south side of Laing Lake and is available for anyone needing spur-of-the-moment maintenance and repair. The station offers bike mounting, nine common bicycle tools tethered to the station, an air pump, an ADA-compliant design, and a QR code for maintenance instructions for viewing from a smartphone.

Additionally, they added cart carriers to the bikes they offer for the bike share program to carry groceries and more!



Walking, bicycling, and rolling to school enables children to incorporate the regular physical activity they need each day while forming healthy habits that can last a lifetime.



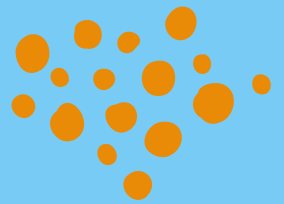
Kid's Fitness & Nutrition Day

This exciting, interactive day of nutrition and physical activity stations was held for 804 area 3rd graders from 26 schools with 87 volunteers assisting with the stations this Fall. These events take place in Alliance, Chadron, Scottsbluff, and Sidney and couldn't be done without the incredible volunteers and instructors!



What the teachers say...

- I like the balance of inside and outside activities. I saw lots of positive attitudes and patience from the station instructors.
- Well-organized event, a good balance of fun and educational!
- Excellent day! I like activity stations mixed with nutrition stations-the kids love movement!
- I absolutely LOVE this field trip and my 3rd graders learn so much information! It is a blast getting to workout with them and learn all about nutrition!!



Healthy Families America (HFA) is a nationally recognized, evidence based home visiting program

HFA Enhances Family Well-Being

LINKAGES AND REFERRALS

- HFA reduces barriers and connects families with essential community services, including referrals to health services and links to economic supports.



MATERNAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- HFA moms show improved mental health and lowered parenting stress.



ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

- HFA moms are more likely to continue their education, FIVE times more likely to enroll and participate in school and training programs, and teen moms are nearly TWICE as likely to complete at least one year of college. Children are more likely to have health insurance.

HFA Strengthens Parent-Child Relationships

POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES

- HFA parents are more confident as parents and are more likely to parent in ways that promote healthy child development.



CHILD MALTREATMENT

- HFA parents use more positive discipline, with less physical punishment and yelling.

HFA Promotes Healthy Child Development

CHILD HEALTH

- HFA parents have fewer low-birthweight infants, and more moms choose to breastfeed. HFA children receive more well-child visits and developmental screenings.



CHILD DEVELOPMENT & SCHOOL READINESS

- HFA children show enhanced cognitive development and have fewer behavioral problems.



Dez Brandt
Program Manager
dbrandt@pphd.ne.gov



Jenn Buxbaum
Program Supervisor
jbuxbaum@pphd.ne.gov

We offer Specialized Training and Supporting Services

- Circle of Security Parenting
- Breastfeeding
- Safe Sleep
- Child Development
- Understanding Children’s Cues
- Early Language and Literacy
- Referrals to Community Resources
- Behavior Concerns
- Developmental Screenings
- Positive Parent Child Interaction
- Building Healthy Brains
- Opportunities to meet other parents
- And much more!



Linda Ainslie



Monica De Los Santos



Myrna Hernandez



Ash Rada



Val VanWinkle



Amber Salazar

Parent Coaches and Intake Specialists

We pay attention to each family’s story and shape our work around what they want and need!



Alma Sanchez

- Enrolled 68 Families
- Served 125 Families

2023 Highlights!

- Provided 1,871 Home Visits
- Added an additional Bilingual Parent Coach/Intake Specialist

★ Completed accreditation process and continue to operate the Healthy Family America’s national evidenced based model to fidelity!! ★

Serving Counties:

- Scotts Bluff
- Box Butte
- Morrill
- Kimball
- Cheyenne
- Deuel
- Garden
- Banner



For more information call or text (308) 765-5249



PANHANDLE WORKSITE WELLNESS COUNCIL

We offer staff training, monthly promotions, newsletters, public communications, quarterly wellness chats, health risk appraisal and interest surveys, mental health toolkits, wellness challenges, and consultations. Set up an appointment today to complete the Governor's Wellness Award application. For a minimal fee, the council also provides onsite health screenings and vaccinations, & an annual Safety & Wellness Conference.



Council Advisory Committee

Dan Newhoff, Chair
Box Butte General Hospital

Diana Lecher
Chadron Community Hospital

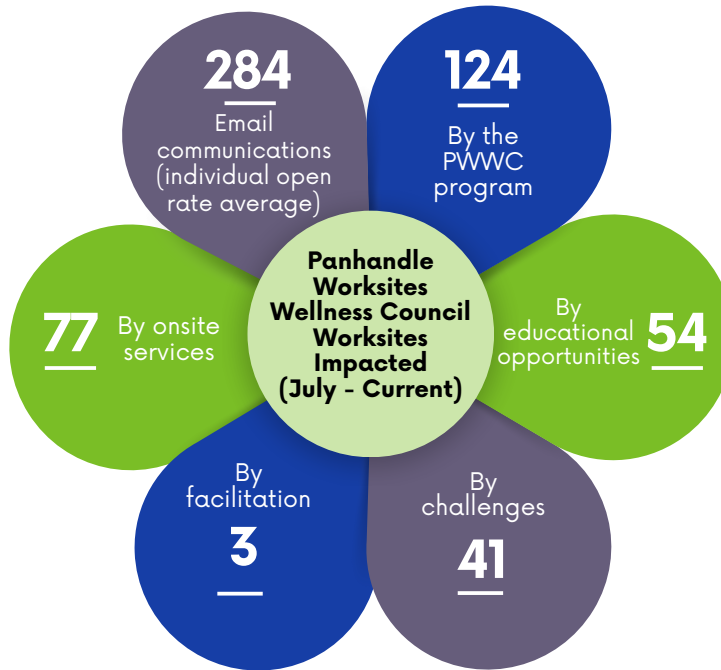
Susan Wiedeman
Panhandle Coop

Amy Doll
Platte Valley Bank

Brooke Smith
Northwest Community Action Partnership

Terri Allen
Western Nebraska Community College

Jamie Bright
Nebraska Extension



Nicole Berosek, MS
Organizational Wellness Coordinator
308.279.3496
nberosek@pphd.ne.gov



Jessica Davies, MPH
Assistant Health Director
308.487.3600 Ext. 101
jdavies@pphd.ne.gov

We serve area worksites, organizations, schools, and hospitals with a multitude of wellness and safety services to choose from. We proudly oversee the Governor's Wellness Award. This award was developed to help organizations of all sizes across the state of Nebraska become recognized for their wellness efforts and is sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services.



Of the 78 businesses surveyed since 2011:

- 38% have policies allowing flextime for employees to participate in physical activity during work hours, an increase from 19% in 2011.
- 37% have onsite exercise facilities, such as a workout room or basketball court, open to employees during working hours, an increase from 13% in 2011.
- 74% have policies that require employees to wear seatbelts while driving a car or operating a moving vehicle while on company business, an increase from 56% in 2011.
- 72% have a policy prohibiting smoking in outdoor work areas, an increase from 50% in 2011. Additionally, 59% have adopted a policy that restricts smoking within a certain distance from the entrance of the building, an increase from 25% in 2011.

2023 PANHANDLE SAFETY & WELLNESS CONFERENCE

Dan Newhoff of Box Butte General Hospital was named the 2023 Leading Light Award Recipient

“ Dan has been a staple of the Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council since 2012 providing time and talent to lead the council serving as Chair and being a presenter at many conferences and wellness chats. He serves on the statewide Advisory Committee for the Governor’s Wellness Award bringing a wealth of knowledge and support as a peer-reviewer and with the recent overhaul of the application process to make it more accessible and relevant to what worksites are facing. Not only does he bring a great deal of experience and knowledge to serve the communities in the panhandle, but he also leads a robust Wellness program for employees and the community at Box Butte General Hospital. ”



Dan Newhoff and Family.

100% of attendees said the conference met their overall needs!

Here's what else they said...

- I LOVED being able to walk the dogs. I can't name a specific thing. Some things I knew, re-learned and saw it a different way. One of the best conferences I've been to.
- Excellent conference! Excellent flow of the day! Loved the wellness pieces and puppies.
- It was full of helpful information that all people could use.
- I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and all of the offerings.
- One of the best conferences that each presentation was relevant to me and/or my work.



Take your pick or let us customize a training for your worksite, organization, hospital, or school!



CPR

CPR – or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation – is an emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating.



Tools for Becoming Inclusive: Training & Toolkit

This training provides information on:

- Honor Diversity Within & Around
- Roll With Resilience in the Face of Diversity



This resource was designed to assist and empower employers in their efforts to implement inclusion as a core value throughout their organization.



Financial Wellness

Information on:

- Thought Barriers to Financial Wellness
- Budgeting

Lead Poisoning Prevention

What is lead?

Lead is a toxic metal that can harm a child's health, especially children under 6 years of age. Children can be exposed to lead by breathing or swallowing lead or lead dust.

Exposure can cause:

- Brain and nervous system damage.
- Learning and behavior problems.
- Slowed growth and development.
- Hearing and speech issues.



Melissa Haas, MS
Environmental Health
Coordinator
mhaas@pphd.ne.gov

**Lead poisoning is
100% preventable.**

**PPHD can test your home
for lead. Contact us
today to learn more.**

Testing Your In-Home Childcare

Children can spend a good amount of time away from home at childcare facilities. Lead-based paint and lead dust is the most common source of lead poisoning in children. High touch areas such as window frames, door frames, and floors can all contain lead dust that is within reach of small children. Hands and toys can become contaminated from household dust or exterior soil.

In-home childcares can test their homes for FREE, if built before 1978. Testing for lead hazards in the home can help you identify if some fixtures or items need to be updated or replaced. Testing is damage-free to paint, and results are instant.

Wash hands, toys, and clean often:

- Regularly wash children's hands and toys.
- Use wet paper towels to clean up lead dust and be sure to clean around windows, play areas, and floors.
- Wet-mop floors and wet-wipe horizontal surfaces every 2-3 weeks. Windowsills and wells can contain high levels of lead dust. When feasible, windows should be shut to prevent disturbing painted surfaces.

When to test your child:

Children should be tested at 12 months and again at 24 months of age. Test any child 2-5 years of age at least once if not previously tested. Talk to your health care provider about getting your child tested.

PPHD offers capillary testing at their Scottsbluff office location. If you are interested in scheduling an appointment contact:

Kendra Lauruhn
klauruhn@pphd.ne.gov
308-633-2866 ext. 206.

You **do not** have to be covered by insurance to receive this test, if you are covered please remember your insurance card.

PPHD will provide a \$200 incentive to the first 15 in-home childcare providers to have their homes tested.

Drinking Water & Your Health

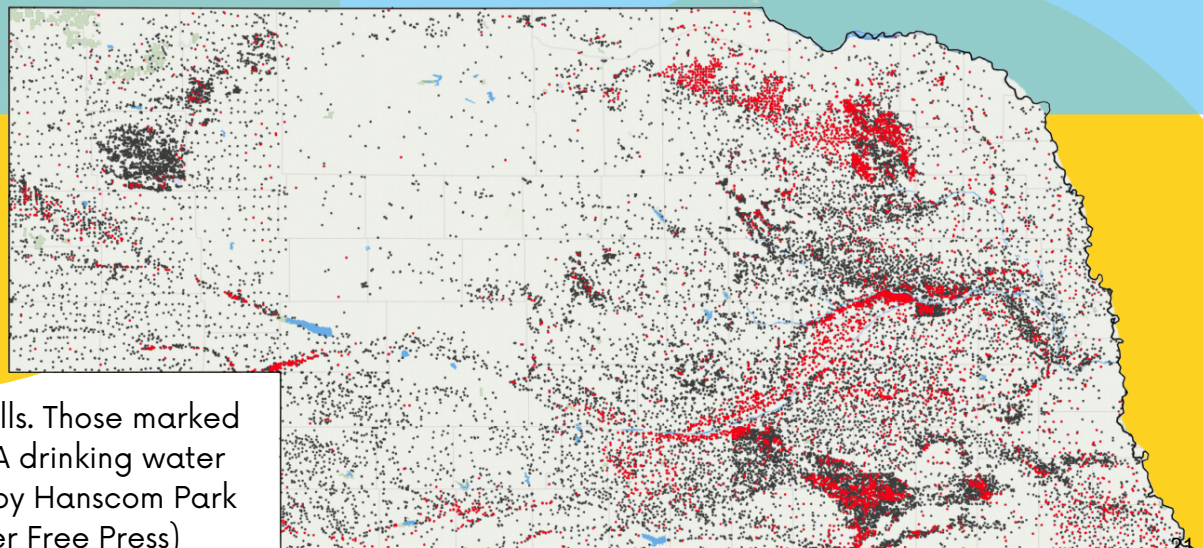
Most water quality in private domestic wells is **not** regulated by the Safe Drinking Act. It's up to private well owners to ensure the safety of their household drinking water.

Potential Contamination

- Microorganisms: Include viruses and parasites, usually found in human sewage and animal waste which can contaminate water from run-off from rainfall or snow-melt.
- Nitrate and Nitrite: Found in chemical fertilizers, human sewage, and animal waste and fertilizers, contaminate groundwater through surface water seepage and run-off.
- Heavy Metals; Leach into water from household plumbing and service lines or heavy industrial areas.
- Organic Chemicals: Found in household products, can enter groundwater through waste disposal, spills or water run-off.

Protecting Your Water

- Test your water annually for coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids, and pH levels.
- Test more frequently if small children or elderly adults live in the home.
- Test immediately if:
 - There are known problems with ground water in your area.
 - Conditions near your well have changed, such as flooding or new construction.
 - You replace or repair any part of your well system.
 - You notice a change in your water quality such as odor, or taste.



A map of Nebraska wells. Those marked red are above the EPA drinking water limit for nitrate. (Map by Hanscom Park Studio via Flatwater Free Press)

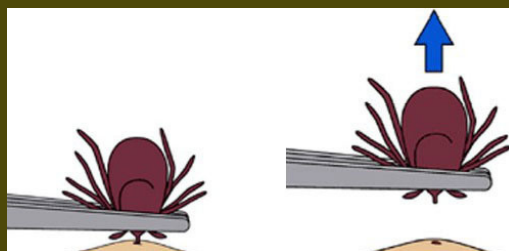
Mosquito & Tick Bite Prevention

Mosquitoes and ticks can carry different diseases that they pass on to people. Prevention is the easiest way to protect yourself.

- Apply insect repellent that contains DEET.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants when out hiking in areas of tall grass or wooded spots.
- Check for ticks daily after being outdoors.
- Drain standing water around your property. Mosquitoes breed in pools of water.

Black-legged ticks (or deer ticks) can carry the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. Be on the lookout for ticks that have a dark upper body and legs, and a lighter lower body.

If you find a tick on your body, make sure to remove immediately. Using tweezers, grab the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull up with even pressure.



www.cdc.gov/ticks

Nebraska Stats

- 142 Clinical Positives (WNV)
- 9 deaths
- 1,568 mosquito pools collected - 224 positive for West Nile virus
- 35 tickborne disease cases reported
- 17 cases hospitalized
- 1 death
- 4,300 ticks collected

Air Quality

Clean air is critical to good health. The air you breathe indoors and outdoors can have several threats that can harm your health.

Indoor Air Pollutants

- Mold
- Radon
- Asbestos
- Carbon Monoxide
- Lead

Outdoor Air Pollutants

- Wildfire Smoke
- Ozone
- Dust
- Particle Pollution

Monitoring Air Quality

Air quality can be monitored through meters that check for ground-level ozone, particle pollution, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. The EPA's AirNow site can help you determine the air quality in your area with a series of colors to indicate health. AQI stands for Air Quality Index; the higher the AQI value, the greater the level of air pollution and the more significant the health concern.

AQI Basics for Ozone and Particle Pollution

Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

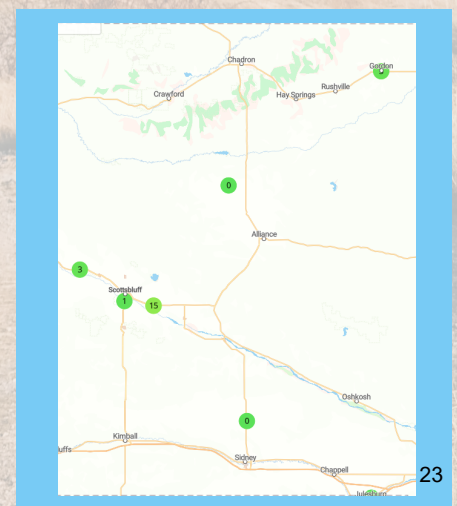
Source: <https://www.airnow.gov/aqi/aqi-basics/>

PurpleAir

PPHD has provided several PurpleAir monitors to area schools to help expand the testing range for outdoor air quality in the Panhandle. These monitors measure real-time PM2.5 concentrations.

Visit <https://map.purpleair.com> or click on the QR code to see what the monitors in the Panhandle are reading in real-time.

Sources: www.epa.gov/air-quality
www.cdc.gov/air/default.htm



Radon

The results of more than half of radon tests in the state of Nebraska are above the action level of 4.0 pCi/L.

<p>Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas.</p>	<p>It can enter your home through the ground and affect indoor air quality.</p>	<p>When inhaled, the radioactive particles can damage DNA and cause lung cancer.</p>	<p>The only way to know if your home has high levels of radon is to test.</p>
			

Test. Fix. Save a life. Learn more at epa.gov/radon.



PPHD offers **free** radon test kits for Panhandle residents. To receive a kit, please mail the coupon below or complete the request at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9d97pn> or scan the QR code.



Mail this coupon to Panhandle Public Health District, PO Box 337, Hemingford, NE 69348, call (308) 487-3600, or e-mail mhaas@pphd.ne.gov to get your free kit.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ Age: _____

By accepting this free kit, I give my permission for results to be reported to myself and PPHD.

Signature: _____

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE SUPPORTS

PPHD offers programs to help support your healthy lifestyle outside the clinical setting so you can stay healthy and live the life you want with those who matter most to you.

LIVING WELL

PPHD offers the proven Living Well Chronic Disease Self-Management Program in person or virtually by Zoom to best meet your needs. Living Well 6-week workshops teach creative ways to feel better, communicate better, and manage stress. It empowers people to take charge of their health and other areas of life using proven techniques.

Living Well with Chronic Conditions, Living Well with Chronic Pain, and Living Well with Diabetes workshops are available virtually and in person in some communities.

DIABETES PREVENTION

PPHD offers the award-winning National Diabetes Prevention Program in two ways to support your healthy lifestyle: in-person and virtually on Zoom. In this yearlong program, you'll get a coach to support you in your journey to be the healthiest version of yourself.

LIVING WELL WORKSHOPS
BE EMPOWERED TO LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE!

2 hours ▶ 1x per week ▶ 6 weeks

Do you have a chronic condition, diabetes, chronic pain, or care for someone who does?
Get Support. Join Living Well

“ I feel more powerful and in control of my health knowing there are things I can do. ”
Jan, Panhandle participant

Living Well
Panhandle Public Health District
Take Control of Your Health

Healthy for Life!
Get support for the results you want!

- 16 Weekly Sessions
- A personal session to set your unique goals
- Monthly support for the first year

Learn skills and strategies to:

- look and feel great now
- get healthier your way
- reach your goals
- reduce your risk for diabetes & other illness

NATIONAL DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

HEALTH



For more information, contact:
Cheri Farris, MPH, CHES
Community Health Educator
308.220.8020
cfarris@pphd.ne.gov

COLON CANCER PREVENTION

Cancer does not discriminate. Every year, there are 950 new cases of colorectal cancer diagnosed in Nebraska. PPHD offers no-cost at-home test kits to Panhandle residents aged 45-74. Get peace of mind today. Register for your free stool test at <https://tinyurl.com/nrfqfbav> or use the QR code below.

What's your poo telling you?

Find out today! Register for your free at-home colon cancer test kit
<https://tinyurl.com/nrfqfbav>

Preparedness Is Key

Public Health Preparedness

Through planning, exercise, and partnerships, PPHD works to advance six main areas of Preparedness so state and local public health systems are better prepared for emergencies that impact the public's health.

- ✓ **Community Resilience**
Preparing for and recovering from emergencies
- ✓ **Information Management**
Making sure people have information to take action
- ✓ **Surge Management**
Expanding medical services to handle large events
- ✓ **Countermeasures and Mitigation**
Getting medicines and supplies where they are needed
- ✓ **Biosurveillance**
Investigating and identifying health threats
- ✓ **Incident Management**
Coordinating an effective response



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Deputy Director of Health Promotions and Preparedness
tprochazka@pphd.ne.gov



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Program Support Specialist
mpeterson@pphd.ne.gov



JOIN TODAY!



"WHY ME?"
WHY NOT YOU?
Help us be PREPARED!

Register Now



WE NEED
KIND PEOPLE
TO BE

VOLUNTEERS



We need VOLUNTEERS to fill non-medical and medical roles.

Panhandle Regional Medical Response System

Mission:

To create and maintain a system for responding to public health emergencies by enhancing existing local planning efforts for resources, expertise, communication and personnel, in order to increase the capabilities to manage a large number of casualties and/or disruption of service.

Plan | Exercise | Train

2023 Priorities:

- Continued Collaboration to prepare for surge
- Radiological Annex Complete, exercised and detection devices purchased
- Homeland Cybersecurity Informative Meetings Held
- First Responder Addiction and Mental Health Training

Community Health Assessment

The Purpose

The Panhandle completes a regional community health assessment (CHA) every three years in collaboration with area hospitals, community organizations, businesses, and residents. The purpose of the CHA process is to describe the current health status of the community, identify and prioritize health issues, better understand the range of factors that can impact health, and identify assets and resources that can be mobilized to improve the health of the community. The Panhandle Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) aligns with national and community plans.

Community Engagement

The Panhandle Community Health Survey was distributed to Panhandle residents in November - December 2022 by paper copy and electronic survey. We had stellar participation this year.

Below is a summary of our engagement.

live, learn, work, and play



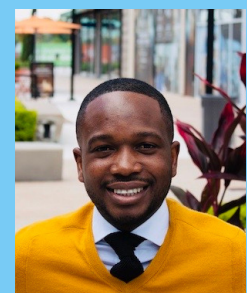
For a Healthier Panhandle

"The data collection process helps to know whether we are serving the community's most urgent health concerns. We are so grateful for your ongoing participation and for sharing your experiences with us."
Megan Barhafer,
Community Health Planner



Megan Barhafer
Community Health Planner
Quality Improvement/
Performance Management
Coordinator
mbarhafer@pphd.ne.gov

- **1,183 Panhandle community members from a variety of backgrounds responded to the community health survey - These responses are weighed heavily in determining our priorities**
- **26 Community organizations helped us to understand the strengths of our collaboration**
- **47 community stakeholders helped create the vision and define the community realities**
- **26 community stakeholders helped narrow down and choose priority areas**



Emmanuel Osemota
Epidemiologist, MPH 27

2024 - 2026 Community Health Improvement Priority Areas

Community Education

Educating the community in a way that builds community capacity and readiness for health improving activities

Childcare

Quality and accessible early childcare and programs for older children

Affordable Housing

Increase the availability of affordable housing that would easily fit in family income at all levels

Cultural Awareness & Support

Create a culture of belonging, trust, and engagement

Access to Mental Health

Making mental health & substance use disorder treatment available and accessible by increasing ease, timeliness, accessibility to mental health resources and providers



THE VISION

When we align our resources, a safer and healthier Panhandle will be one where wellness and mental well-being are incentivized, there is access to safe and affordable housing, there is increased social connectedness, we have a sustainable workforce with development opportunities, the health system collaborations are optimized, there are robust systems to address behavioral health, our community is equitable, we advocate to address access to care, we have resources available, we have safe-built environments, and we prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Interested in helping us make sure we implement these priorities effectively?
Email mbarhafer@ppha.ne.gov to participate in focus groups in 2024.

MINORITY HEALTH INITIATIVE

Tools for Becoming Inclusive

The toolkit was developed as a result of data collected during the minority health assessment in 2021. During this assessment, it was found that many individuals of minority populations in the Panhandle noted strained relationships based on race at some point in their lives. This toolkit is an attempt to create more culturally inclusive and considerate workplaces. Readers will find best practices for implementing these initiatives within their workplace, suggested policies and procedures, available training, and measurement tools to gauge continued progress, among many other beneficial tools and resources. We hope that potential users wishing to implement diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values within their organization can utilize this resource as a starting point in doing so.



Please contact Kelsy Sasse for an emailed PDF copy of the toolkit.

Kelsy Sasse, MHA
Community Health Planner
ksasse@pphd.ne.gov

In June, PPHD helped to bring Dr. Helen Fagan out to the Panhandle as the Keynote Speaker for the Welcoming Communities Conference held in Gering. Dr. Fagan is a Leadership, Diversity, and Inclusion scholar and practitioner. She is the founder of Helen Fagan and Associates which provides coaching to organizations, communities, and executives in the field of Diversity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competence and becoming an inclusive leader.



Three facilities in the Panhandle will experience the benefits of Dr. Fagan's Inclusive leadership coaching program throughout the next calendar year. These organizations will learn valuable skills in recognizing and tapping in to human differences



Toolkit

Digital Copy



Celia Galvan of Alliance was awarded a scholarship from PPHD to pursue a training in medical interpretation. She completed her training through ALTA Language Services and earned her certificate of qualification for medical interpretation.

If you are interested in pursuing your certification in medical interpretation, please contact Kelsy Sasse to learn about scholarship opportunities

Financial Statement



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Coordinator
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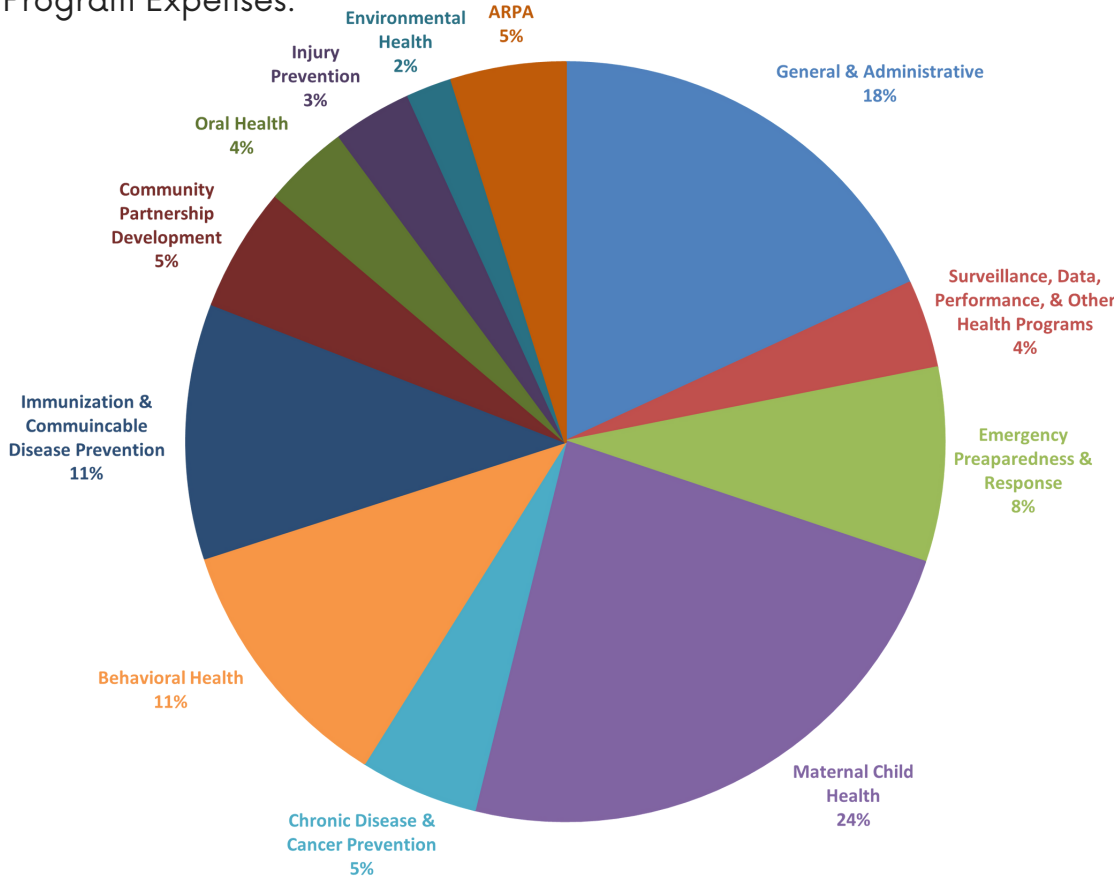


Amanda McClaren
Finance Assistant
amclaren@pphd.ne.gov

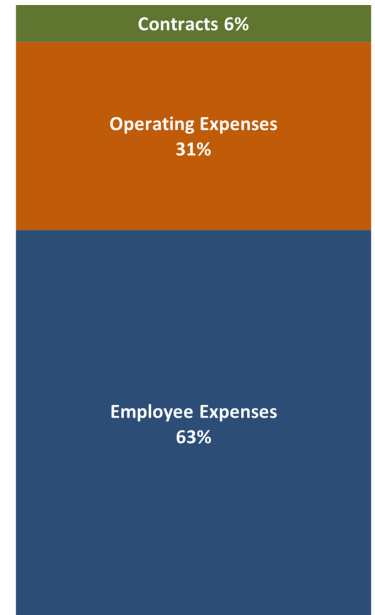
Total Operating Revenue \$3,530,272
Total Operating Expenses \$3,328,883

Where does the money go?

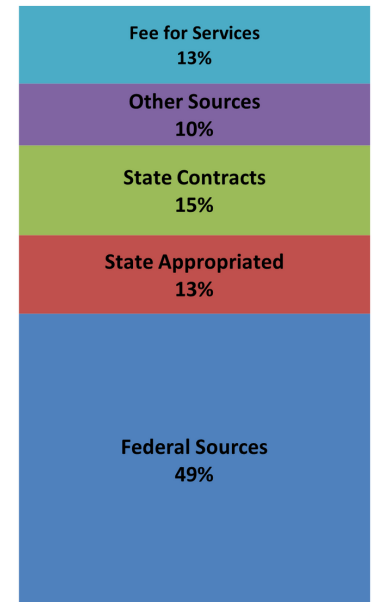
Program Expenses:



Expenses by Type:



Revenues by Source:



Thank you to our funders

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Buckle up!
Slow Down,
Be Patient,
Stay a Safe
Distance
Away.



Office Locations

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Hemingford, NE 69348

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Scottsbluff NE 69361

(308)633-2866 Office | (877)218-2490 Toll Free

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