



# SCHOOL NURSE *Newsletter*



## Welcome Back to School!

As we head into the 2025–2026 school year, we recognize that both students and staff may face various challenges. Please remember that the Chautauqua County Health Department is here to support our community. Don't hesitate to reach out—we're here to help!

We look forward to another great school year and our continued support and partnership with our schools and community!

## School Vaccines

We can help students stay up to date on routine vaccines! Appointments can be made for our office here in Mayville, or for our Mobile Health Clinic, by calling 716-753-4491. For Mobile Health Clinic dates and locations, visit our website! We can also help record student immunizations into NYSIS. **Just email us!**

## School Resources

Past newsletters and other resources we have shared with you can be accessed online on our **school nurse resource page**. We also have a variety of posters such as handwashing, and vaping available upon request. Specific topic you would like more information on? Let us know!

## CCHD Programs

Don't forget about all the other programs and services the **Chautauqua County Health Department** has to offer! Early Intervention, Preschool Special Education, Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs, Chronic Disease Prevention, Opioid Overdose Prevention, Public Health Emergency Preparedness, and much more!

## Back to School Tips & Tools



Whether you are seasoned school nurse or in your first year on the job, NASN's back-to-school tips & tools highlight the resources you need to promote the well-being of students and help them develop lifelong habits that support optimal health and wellness.



These tips & tools will help you, working closely with school staff, students, and administration, to develop a healthy environment where students can thrive. The NASN offers resources, and their support as an organization, to help you and your students be healthy, safe, and ready to learn in the coming year.

- ☒ Guiding Principles
- ☒ Evidence-Based Guidance

- ☒ Toolkits
- ☒ E-Learning
- ☒ Community

- ☒ Data



## National Immunization Awareness Month

**National Immunization Awareness Month in August** aims to raise awareness about the importance of vaccination across the lifespan to help protect communities from serious diseases.

Immunizations play an important role in keeping families and communities healthy and safe. Vaccinations are important because they not only protect the person who is receiving the vaccine, but they also help to keep diseases from spreading to others such as family, neighbors, classmates, coworkers, and other members of the community. Immunizations help protect those who are the most vulnerable to illness, such as infants, elders, and those with weakened immune systems.



Different vaccines work in different ways, but every vaccine helps the body's immune system learn how to fight germs. Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. In the United States, vaccines have greatly reduced infectious diseases that once routinely caused severe illness and death.

Click [here](#) for more information on Vaccines & Immunizations

# YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

## How To Help Students

SCHOOLS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING THROUGH EDUCATION, PREVENTION, AND EARLY INTERVENTION. RACHEL LUDWIG, PROGRAM COORDINATOR AT CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY MENTAL HYGIENE (CCMH) AND PROJECT DIRECTOR OF THE CHAUTAUQUA TAPESTRY SYSTEM OF CARE, WORKS DIRECTLY WITH STUDENTS IN CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY SCHOOLS. BELOW, SHE ADDRESSES A FEW OF THE COMMON QUESTIONS RAISED BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL REGARDING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH.

### How can schools support students' mental health and overall well-being?

"Nurses are very helpful in promoting and responding to student well-being! Some suggestions are to know the prevalence and know the resources: Be familiar with the school's counseling services, referral procedures for the community/services, and emergency protocols. Provide access to safe and appropriate information. Let students be curious and have reliable sources of information. Work together to support students. Treat and support the whole child. Engage with community partners. The school should not feel alone. Reach out for help!"



"If you are concerned about a student, consider who is best to talk to the student privately. Express concerns in a supportive and empathetic manner, focusing on what you have observed (behaviors) without judgment. Take time to listen and allow the student to share their feelings and perspective.

Offer support and options: Suggest seeking professional help, such as school counseling services or outside behavioral health professionals."

help and ideas. You can provide information that does not identify the student and get ideas of programs and strategies that could help. For complex situations, the county Single Point of Access (SPOA) can be helpful. SPOA is a committee of local service providers that work together to create individual plans for challenging situations.

Also, if a student is in crisis, please reach out for help! Parental consent is not required for a minor to be assessed by a mental health practitioner without prior parental consent to determine if they meet the criteria for emergency services.

There are circumstances, as outlined [here](#), in which a minor can consent for treatment, all related documents and forms required for consent can be signed by the minor."



### What are signs that a student may need support?

"Some things to look for and link to support are – Any self-harm threats or threats to harm others. Also consider changes in behavior, such as; social isolation, irritability, sleeping, eating. Unexplained physical concerns – frequent headaches, stomachaches. Persistent sadness, negativity. Substance use, changes in appearance/self-care and/or academic decline can also be signs that support is needed."

### Parent involvement?

"Involve parents/guardians: Especially with younger students, communication and collaboration with parents or guardians are important for ensuring the student receives appropriate support.

If a parent does not consent to a referral for treatment, the school staff can still reach out for



*Rachel Ludwig is a licensed clinical social worker with over 25 years of experience. She brings a strong background in clinical practice, training, and education to her work supporting youth mental health in the region.*

**For more information, including contact numbers and service guides, visit [CCMH's website](#).**



## Epilepsy & Seizure Safety

### What is Epilepsy in children?

Epilepsy is a brain condition that causes a child to have recurring seizures over time. A seizure occurs when 1 or more parts of the brain has a burst of abnormal electrical signals that interrupts normal brain signals. Anything that interrupts the normal connections between nerve cells in the brain can cause a seizure. This includes a high fever, high or low blood sugar, alcohol or drug withdrawal, or a brain concussion. But when a child has two or more seizures with no known cause, this is diagnosed as epilepsy.

### What causes a seizure in a child?

Seizures in children can be caused by many things including: An imbalance of nerve-signaling brain chemicals (neurotransmitters), genetics, brain tumor, stroke, brain damage from illness, infection, or injury, medicines or illegal drugs. A seizure may be caused by a combination of these. In most cases, the cause of a seizure cannot be found.

### What are the symptoms of a seizure in a child?

The child's symptoms depend on the type of seizure. General symptoms or warning signs of a seizure can include:

- Staring
  - Jerking movements of the arms and legs
  - Stiffening of the body
  - Loss of consciousness
  - Breathing problems or stopped breathing
  - Loss of bowel or bladder control
  - Falling suddenly for no apparent reason, especially when associated with loss of consciousness
  - Not responding to noise or words for brief periods
  - Appearing confused or in a haze
  - Nodding head rhythmically, when associated with loss of awareness or consciousness
  - Periods of rapid eye blinking and staring
- During the seizure, the child's lips may become tinted blue and their breathing may not be normal. After the seizure, the child may be sleepy or confused.

### Triggers for seizures

Some children's seizures happen in response to triggers such as stress, excitement, boredom, missed medication, or lack of sleep. Keeping a diary of their seizures can help to see if there are any patterns to when seizures happen. If you recognize triggers, avoiding them as much as possible may help reduce the number of seizures your child has. Getting enough sleep, and consuming well-balanced meals, will help keep your child healthy and may help to reduce their seizures.



**More resources for educators, nurses, and parents!**



POWERED BY EPILEPSY FOUNDATION

## Tattoo Safety

Tattoos are more popular than ever. Polling and data from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration suggest that about 30% of all Americans, and 40% of those aged 18-34 years old, have at least one tattoo. Before getting a tattoo, it is important to know what's involved and understand the risks.

### THINK BEFORE YOU INK

#### Tattoo risks include:

- Infections and serious illness from unclean tattoo tools, practices, or products. Ex- Staph infections, Hepatitis, HIV
- Allergic reactions to the inks or stains can cause skin problems, such as rashes.
- Other skin problems, like increased chance of sunburn, rashes, redness, or scarring.
- Swelling and burning of some permanent tattoos when you get an MRI test.

Click [here](#) for more information on Tattoo Safety

**NYS Law requires tattoo operators to obtain a permit in order to operate a tattoo studio and for all tattoo artists to obtain an individual permit.**

All Body Art Establishments in Chautauqua County require inspection before a Certificate of Sanitation is issued by the Health Department. Once certified, each establishment is inspected annually to ensure compliance with Article XIII of the Sanitary Code.

#### If you get a tattoo, make sure that the tattooist:

- Washes their hands before tattooing and uses single-use gloves
- Cleans the skin to be tattooed
- Uses a single-use, disposable razor to shave the skin to be tattooed, if needed
- Uses single-use sterile needles and tubes and single-use inks
- Covers the tattooed skin with a bandage and provides aftercare information

**Tattooing of any person under 18 years of age is prohibited by NYS Penal Law.**

## Pedestrian Safety

As fall approaches and daylight hours grow shorter, it is important to keep pedestrian safety in mind.

New York State averages about 300 pedestrian fatalities annually. Here are some pedestrian safety tips from NYS's *See! Be Seen!* campaign.

### See!



- Pedestrians must always walk against traffic.
- Walk as close to the left side of the road as possible using the shoulder or sidewalk, if available.
- When attempting to cross, always look left, right, and left again.
- Use crosswalks and obey crossing signals.
- Don't text while crossing.

- Pedestrians should never assume that a driver has seen them.
- Establish eye contact or adjust your activity to make sure drivers are aware of your presence.
- Wear light-colored clothing and add reflective material to increase visibility- especially when walking at night.

**Be Seen!**



Keep children and teens safe as a pedestrian. All children and teens learn by watching adults. Be a positive role model by following the rules and seeking opportunities to teach youth about pedestrian safety.



To learn more and view Pedestrian PSAs, visit [NYSDOH's injury prevention website](#).

## Measles Update

As of July 22nd, 2025, a total of **1319** confirmed measles cases have been reported by 40 jurisdictions in the United States. 13% of confirmed cases were hospitalized, with 3 confirmed deaths.

### Confirmed Measle Cases

U.S.	N.Y.S.	Chaut. Co.
1319	14	0

**More info on the CDC's [measles page](#)**

## MOBILE HEALTH

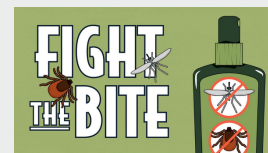
**The Mobile Health Clinics will continue through the end of October! These walk-in clinics are held throughout the county!**

View our **Mobile Clinic calendar** [HERE](#)



## Tularemia & Other Vector-Borne Diseases

**Tularemia** is a bacterial disease associated with animals such as rodents and rabbits and may be transmitted to humans by tick and deer fly bites. It can also be transmitted to humans by direct contact with infected animals and through contaminated water or food. Tularemia can be treated effectively with antibiotics when diagnosed early.



#### CCHD recommends residents take steps to prevent exposure:

- Wear protective clothing such as pants, long sleeves, and high socks to keep ticks and deer flies off your skin. Use an EPA-registered insect repellent during outdoor activity.
- Avoid contact with wildlife, especially rodents and rabbits.
- Do not feed or entice rodents or rabbits into your yard or patio.
- Eliminate piles of lumber, trash, and weeds which can attract wildlife.
- Avoid touching sick or dead animals. If you must move an animal, use a shovel or wear thick gloves.
- Do not mow over dead animals or known rabbit nesting sites.
- Do not drink untreated surface water (lakes, ponds, rivers).
- Cook all meat thoroughly before eating, especially wild game meat.
- Keep pets on a leash while in areas where contact with wildlife is possible.
- Consult a veterinarian if you are concerned about your pet and provide veterinary care for sick pets.

**In June, the Health Department confirmed two beavers in the Sherman area tested positive for tularemia. Cases of tularemia in animals are rarely detected in WNY; the last confirmed case in the region was a beaver identified in Cattaraugus County in 2004.**

Click for a closer look at **Tularemia**





## Suicide Prevention Month

September is Suicide Prevention Month — a time to raise awareness, spread hope and vital information, and ensure that everyone has access to the resources they need to discuss suicide prevention and to seek help.

The Suicide Prevention Alliance of Chautauqua County is dedicated to protecting and promoting life by fostering shared responsibility through raising awareness and community supports while embracing hopefulness and resiliency in the Chautauqua region.



Find out more about:

[Getting Help](#)

[Facts vs. Myths](#)

[Ways to Help](#)

[Local Resources](#)

[Events & Trainings](#)

[and More!](#)

Call the 24/7 Chautauqua County Crisis Hotline:

1-800-724-0461

When You Contact  
**988**

You don't have to say  
**Who you are or Where you are.**

**National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**

Help Available 24/7

24/7 Spanish/English Speaking Counselors



Dial 988



Text 988

You will get support from a trained **Crisis Counselor.**

There is Hope.

Call or text 988, or chat  
**988Lifeline.org**

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

## Syphilis cases are on the rise in Chautauqua County



### Signs & Symptoms

The disease starts as a sore that's often painless and typically appears on the genitals, rectum, or mouth. Syphilis develops in stages, with symptoms varying at each stage.

### Treatment

Syphilis can be treated and cured with antibiotics. If you are diagnosed with and treated for syphilis, your doctor should do follow-up testing for at least one year to make sure your treatment is working.

[Learn more](#)



Here's what you should know.

### What is Syphilis?

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection or STI caused by bacteria and is spread through skin-to-skin contact with a syphilis sore, typically during sex. If left untreated, syphilis can cause permanent damage to organs.

## CLICK TO SUBMIT TOPICS

Please tell us what topics or emerging issues you would like to see covered in future newsletters.



We are excited to continue our work with you! Please contact us with questions or ideas on how we can effectively assist you in your very important role serving our community as a school nurse.

## Bullying Prevention Month



October is

**National Bullying Prevention Month**

Together we can create a world without bullying

National Bullying Prevention Month is a month long event to prevent childhood bullying and promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. The month aims to educate people about the different forms of bullying, which can include physical, verbal, and social or cyberbullying.

### How does bullying impact a student's health?

Bullying can impact children both mentally and physically. Verbal and emotional bullying, such as teasing and social exclusion, as well as physical bullying, have the potential to negatively impact a student's overall health, along with their sense of well-being.

### Areas of concern regarding a student's emotional and physical health can include:

- headaches and stomachaches (that may be an excuse to miss school or a very real physical result of bullying)
- sleeping problems
- low self-esteem
- loss of self-confidence
- depression
- anxiety
- post-traumatic stress



As a parent or educator, recognizing changes in the child's behavior or habits could be a sign they are experiencing bullying. Being bullied hurts, often both physically and emotionally.

### PREVENTION RESOURCES

The National Bullying Prevention Center has free educational and interactive bullying prevention resources that are designed for K-12 learners, as well as the parents and educators who support them. They can be used in classrooms, at home, in workshops, or during special events.

## PLEASE SHARE THE:

## QUICK TIPS for parents

In this issue, parents will receive tips on pedestrian safety, information on how to stay up-to-date on required immunizations, and back to school mental health advice for themselves and their children.

[Download and Share](#)



[LHDSchoolSupport@chqgov.com](mailto:LHDSchoolSupport@chqgov.com)



[716-753-4491](tel:716-753-4491)