



# Pennington & Red Lake Counties Wellness Newsletter September 2023

## BACK TO SCHOOL

### TIPS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Teaching is an incredibly rewarding, yet stressful job. Taking care of your mental health is essential not only for your well-being but also for your effectiveness as an educator.

#### ADDRESS STRESSORS

Don't wait to communicate concerns with administrators or seek additional resources to get to the root of the problem.

#### BUILD A SUPPORT SYSTEM

Cultivate a network of colleagues, friends, or family members with whom you can share experiences, vent, or seek advice.



#### GIVE YOURSELF GRACE

You can prioritize tasks and create to-do lists, but there are only so many hours in a day and you are only one person. You can't be perfect all the time, and it's okay to have challenging days. Set realistic expectations for yourself and try to show yourself the same compassion you show your students and colleagues.

Find more mental health resources for teachers at [mhanational.org/youth/school](https://mhanational.org/youth/school).



#### SET BOUNDARIES

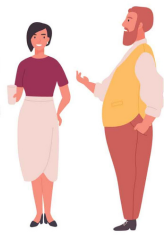
Avoid taking work-related calls or emails during off-hours and make time for personal hobbies and activities that bring joy and relaxation.

#### PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Incorporate techniques like meditation or deep breathing exercises to reduce stress and increase focus.

#### TAKE BREAKS

During the school day, make sure to take short breaks to rest and recharge, even if it's just a few moments to step outside or sit quietly. Use your PTO when you need a little extra time.



#### CELEBRATE YOURSELF

Take time to reflect on and keep track of your successes. Celebrate accomplishments, no matter how small.

#### USE SUPPORT SERVICES

Access any mental health support services provided by the school or district, such as counseling or employee assistance programs, when your normal coping mechanisms aren't working.



#### KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If you're struggling, take a free, confidential, anonymous mental health screen at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org).



SCAN ME

Once you get the results, MHA will provide you with more information and help you to figure out next steps.



Let's come together to raise awareness about suicide prevention.



COMMUNITY STRONG

We are a coalition of local organizations that want to reshape thinking and awareness around mental well-being and suicide prevention. Join us as we empower a healthy community and support one another.

Follow us



To learn more about us or how to become involved, contact:

Sarah Lefebvre  
218-683-4307

[Sarah.lefebvre@sanfordhealth.org](mailto:Sarah.lefebvre@sanfordhealth.org)

*"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it." William Arthur Ward*

Spread kindness and appreciation for those around you.



## Urgent realities

The United States is experiencing a suicidal, mental health, and substance use crisis:

- In 2021, a person died by suicide every 11 minutes.
- Suicide was the second-leading cause of death for people ages 10–14 and 25–34.
- Suicide rates increased significantly among non-Hispanic Black, American Indian & Alaska Native people.
- Nearly 900,000 youth ages 12–17 and 1.7 million adults attempted suicide.
- 46.3 million people ages 12 or older had a substance use disorder in the past year.
- In 2021, nearly 107,000 people died from a drug overdose.



## Easier access

988 is an easy-to-remember number that is providing greater access to life-saving services.



## There is hope

Whether you're experiencing thoughts of suicide, a mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress, there is compassionate support available through the 988 Lifeline.

**Whatever time:** Day. Night. Weekend.

**Whatever the reason:** Mental health distress.

Substance use crisis. Thoughts of suicide.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is here for you.

**Text 988 | Call 988 | Chat 988lifeline.org**



## Parenting Tips

### BACK TO SCHOOL: 5 THINGS EVERY PARENT NEEDS TO KNOW



There is an alarming statistic: Every day 44 kids are hit by a car while walking in the United States. That's 16,000 kids hurt every year.

Parents know to teach young children to look left, right, left before crossing the street, but that's really just the beginning." Older kids are walking on their own, crossing unfamiliar streets and are walking when it's dark, so they need to know how to take extra precautions.

Here are 5 tips every parent needs to know, and needs to teach their children to help keep them safe while walking.

- Teach kids at an early age to look left, right and left again before crossing the street. Then remind them to continue looking until safely across.
- Teach kids to put phones, headphones and devices down when crossing the street. It is particularly important to reinforce this message with teenagers.
- It's always best to walk on sidewalks or paths and cross at street corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.
- Children under 10 need to cross the street with an adult. Every child is different, but developmentally, most kids are unable to judge the speed and distance of oncoming cars until age 10.
- If kids are walking when it's dark out, teach them to be especially alert and make sure they are visible to drivers. Have them wear light- or brightly-colored clothing and reflective gear.



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