



NACS NEWS

Volume 27 Issue 3
March 2026

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month | Page 03 |
| National Kidney Month - March 2026 | Page 06 |
| World Tuberculosis Day - March 24, 2026 | Page 08 |
| National LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Week | Page 10 |
| Nutrition for People Over 60 Years | Page 12 |
| UB Storytellers Conference | Page 16 |
| OCC Student Wins Statewide EOP Award for Excellence | Page 18 |
| Welcome New Erie County Clubhouse Youth Leader | Page 18 |
| Clubhouse Corner News | Page 19 |
| Healthy Generations Program | Pages 20 - 21 |
| Parenting Circle | Page 22 |
| ROOTS Program | Page 23 |
| March Haudenosaunee Social | Page 24 |
| Free Haircuts For Those In Need | Page 25 |
| 3rd Annual Comedy For A Cause | Page 26 |
| 2026 Haudenosaunee Summer College Paid Internship | Page 27 |
| Fort Erie Friendship Center Pow Wow | Page 28 |
| Seneca Nation Veteran’s Pow Wow | Pages 29 |
| NACS Employment Opportunities | Pages 30 - 35 |

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM) is observed every March. This month-long observance aims to promote awareness and inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities, such as autism, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

History and Purpose

Established in 1987 by President Ronald Reagan, DDAM seeks to highlight the needs and potential of Americans with disabilities, fostering a spirit of acceptance and community involvement.

Activities and Events

Throughout March, various events, programs, and advocacy campaigns take place nationwide. These initiatives aim to unite communities and promote the message of inclusion.

Inclusion Day

March 2, 2026, will mark Inclusion Day, serving as a kickoff for the month's activities, encouraging community support for individuals of all abilities

(Resources: DaysOfTheYear.com, Remitly.com, AwarenessDays.com, ACL.gov, SummitDD.org)

What Is a Developmental Disability?

A **developmental disability** is a condition that:

- Begins **during the developmental period** (typically before age 22)
- Causes **physical, learning, language, or behavioral differences**
- Affects **day-to-day functioning**
- Is usually **lifelong**

These conditions include autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, intellectual disability, hearing or

vision loss, and many others.

Core Characteristics

1. Early Onset

- Signs appear **before birth**, at birth, or in early childhood.
- Some conditions may appear later in childhood if they are **degenerative** (skills are lost over time).

2. Impact on Development

Developmental disabilities can affect one or more areas:

Physical development

- Motor delays
- Muscle tone differences
- Coordination challenges

Intellectual functioning

- Differences in learning, reasoning, or problem-solving
- Slower pace of acquiring new skills

Communication

- Delays in speech or language
- Difficulty understanding or using language

Behavior and social skills

- Challenges with social interaction
- Differences in emotional regulation
- Repetitive behaviors (in some conditions)

Sensory processing

- Sensitivity to sound, touch, light, or other sensory input

3. Functional Limitations

A developmental disability often affects **daily living skills**, such as:

- Self-care (dressing, feeding, hygiene)
- Communication
- Social participation
- Learning and academic skills

4. Lifelong Course

- Most developmental disabilities are **lifelong**, though early support can improve outcomes.
- Many individuals continue to learn and develop skills

throughout life.

5. Wide Variation

- Developmental disabilities range from **mild to severe**.
- Each person's strengths and challenges are unique.
- Some conditions affect only one area (e.g., hearing loss), while others affect multiple systems (e.g., Down syndrome).

Examples of Developmental Disabilities

These conditions fall under the developmental disability umbrella:

- Autism spectrum disorder
- Intellectual disability
- Cerebral palsy
- Hearing or vision loss
- Down syndrome
- Fragile X syndrome
- Tourette syndrome

(Resources: CDC.gov, MedlinePlus.gov, NIH.gov)

What are Developmental Disabilities?

Developmental disabilities are a group of conditions that emerge during a person's developmental stages, typically before the age of 18, and usually last throughout their lifetime. These disabilities can affect physical, learning, language, or behavioral areas, as well as reasoning, problem-solving, and adaptive behavior, which includes everyday social and life skills.

Developmental disabilities occur across all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. Recent estimates in the United States indicate that about 1 in 6 children aged 3 through 17 years have one or more developmental disabilities due to impairments in physical, learning, language, or behavioral areas.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and non-verbal communication. According to the Centers for Disease Control, autism affects an estimated [1 in 36 children](#) and [1 in 45 adults](#) in the United States today.

We know that there is not one type of autism, but many. Autism looks different for everyone, and each person with autism has a distinct set of strengths and challenges. Some autistic people can speak, while others are nonverbal or minimally verbal and communicate in other ways. Some have intellectual disabilities, while some do not. Some require significant support in their daily lives, while others need less support and, in some cases, live entirely independently.

On average, autism is diagnosed around [age 5 in the U.S.](#), with [signs appearing](#) by age 2 or 3. Current diagnostic guidelines in the DSM-5-TR break down the ASD diagnosis into [three levels](#) based on the amount of support a person might need: level 1, level 2, and level 3. [Learn more about each level.](#)

Intellectual Disability

Intellectual disability (or ID) is a term used when a person has certain limitations in cognitive functioning and skills, including conceptual, social and practical skills, such as language, social and self-care skills. These limitations can cause a person to develop and learn more slowly or differently than a typically developing person. Intellectual disability can happen any time before a person turns 22 years old, even before birth.

Intellectual disability is the most common developmental disability. Intellectual disability—formerly known as mental retardation—can be caused by injury, disease, or a problem in the brain.

For many children, the cause of their intellectual disability is unknown. Some causes of intellectual disability—such as Down syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, birth defects, and infections—can happen before birth. Some happen while a baby is being born or soon after birth.

Other causes of intellectual disability do not occur until a child is older; these might include severe head injury, infections or stroke. [Learn More](#)

Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder

Everybody can have difficulty sitting still, paying attention or controlling impulsive behavior once in a while. For some people, however, the problems are so pervasive and persistent that they interfere with every aspect of their life: home, academic, social and work.

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) affects 11 percent of school-age children. Symptoms continue into adulthood in more than three-quarters of cases. ADHD is characterized by developmentally inappropriate levels of inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity. [Learn More](#)

Down Syndrome

Down syndrome occurs when an individual has a full or partial extra copy of chromosome 21.

This additional genetic material alters the course of development and causes the characteristics associated with Down syndrome.

A few of the common physical traits of Down syndrome are low muscle tone, small stature, an upward slant to the eyes, and a single deep crease across the center of the palm – although each person with Down syndrome is a unique individual and may possess these characteristics to different degrees, or not at all. [Learn More](#)

Learning Disabilities

Learning Disabilities refer to a number of disorders which may affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding or use of verbal or nonverbal information.

These disorders affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate at least average abilities essential for thinking and/or reasoning. As such, learning disabilities are distinct from global intellectual deficiency.

Learning disabilities result from impairments in one or more processes related to perceiving, thinking, remembering or learning. These include but are not limited to language processing; phonological processing; visual spatial processing; processing speed; memory and attention; and executive functions (e.g., planning and decision-making). [Learn More](#)

Sensory Processing Disorder

Kids with sensory processing issues behave in ways that their parents often find confusing. They might react strongly to loud noises or bright lights or complain that their clothes are uncomfortable. They may be clumsy or have trou-

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ble with fine motor skills like fastening buttons. Some kids show extreme behaviors like screaming when their face gets wet.

These behaviors happen because the child is having trouble processing the information they receive from their senses. In addition to the traditional five senses, there are also [two internal senses](#) that give us information about movement and where our body is in space. Hyposensitive kids need more sensory stimulation. They often love to move around and crash into things. Hypersensitive kids avoid strong sensory stimulation and get overwhelmed easily. [Learn More](#)

Tourette Syndrome

Tourette Syndrome is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects children, adolescents and adults. The condition is characterized by sudden, involuntary movements and/or sounds called tics. Tics can range from mild/inconsequential to moderate and severe and are disabling in some cases.

Tourette Syndrome is one type of Tic Disorder. Tics are the primary symptoms of a group of childhood-onset neurological conditions known collectively as Tic Disorders and individually as Tourette Syndrome (TS), Persistent (Chronic) Motor or Vocal Tic Disorder, and Provisional Tic Disorder. These three Tic Disorders are named based on the types of tics present (motor, vocal/phonic, or both) and by the length of time that the tics have been present. [Learn More](#)

Cerebral Palsy (*Cerebral*: of the brain, *Palsy*: lack of muscle control) Cerebral palsy is a physical disability that's an umbrella term referring to a group of disorders affect-

ing a person's ability to move.

Cerebral palsy is due to damage to the developing brain during pregnancy, birth, or shortly after birth. Cerebral palsy affects people in different ways and can affect body movement, muscle control, muscle coordination, muscle tone, reflex, posture, and balance. This disability is a life-long condition, and it's different for everybody. People who have cerebral palsy may also have visual, learning, hearing, speech, epilepsy, and/or intellectual impairments. [Learn More](#)

Language Guide

- People with developmental disabilities should always be referred to as people first.
- Instead of "a Down syndrome child," it should be "a child with Down syndrome."
- Developmental disabilities are conditions or syndromes, not a disease.
- People "have" developmental disabilities, they do not "suffer from" it and are not "afflicted by" it.
- "Typically developing" or "typical" is preferred over "normal."
- "Developmental and Intellectual disability" or "cognitive disability" has replaced "mental retardation" as the appropriate term.
- Do not use the word "retarded" in any derogatory context. Using this word is hurtful and suggests that people with disabilities are not competent.

Services and Supports

Today, support services are provided by government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private sector providers. These services address most

aspects of life for people with developmental disabilities. Numerous non-profit agencies are dedicated to enriching the lives of people living with developmental disabilities and removing the barriers they face to be included in their community.

(From [BehavioralHealthNetworkInc.org](#))

Major Developmental Disability Support Services in the Buffalo Area

Below are some of the most relevant organizations, along with what they offer.

1. NY State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

Western New York DDSO – Buffalo Provides state-supported services including:

- Occupational, physical, and speech therapy
- Psychology and social work
- Nutrition services
- Service coordination
- Website: [Office for People With Developmental Disabilities](#)

2. **Aspire of Western New York**

A major provider supporting children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Services include:

- Education and early intervention
- Health care and therapies
- Day programs and community habilitation
- Employment and life-skills support
- Website: [Aspire of WNY](#)

3. **Beyond Support Network (formerly Cantalician Center)**

Offers a wide range of services for children and adults, including:

- Preschool and school-age programs
- Day habilitation

(Continued on page 6)

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- Employment services
- Daycare and early childhood supports
- Resource: [Beyond Support Network](#)

4. Center for Self-Advocacy (WNY)

Focuses on empowerment, peer support, and advocacy for people

with developmental disabilities.

Programs include:

- Self-advocacy training
- Peer support groups
- Community engagement
- Website: Center4SA.org

5. Western New York Disability Resource Guide

A comprehensive directory cov-

ering:

- Accessible housing
- Adaptive recreation
- Transportation
- Assistive technology
- Advocacy and legal support
- Resource: AccessibleBuffalo.com

National Kidney Month – March 2026

From [American Society of Nephrology](#)

The #850Challenge

850 million people in the world have kidney disease. Yet, few are aware of its dangers.

8,500 steps a day, 8.5 miles of walking, 85 miles of cycling, 8.5 minutes of high-intensity training are all ways to burn ~850 calories. These are some of the efforts that scientists, doctors, patients, relatives and carers will undertake as part of the [#850Challenge](#) to raise awareness of the 850 million people whose kidney function is irreversibly impaired.

On average, kidney disease affects one in nine people with most of them not even being aware that they are ill. This is because patients suffer silently at first because Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is largely asymptomatic at the beginning. This lack of early detection can be fatal as kidney dysfunction that lasts longer than three months most often is irreparable. Thankfully, though, early recognition and appropriate treatment can slow down or even stop the progression of CKD.

We're United 4 Kidney Health

Join the Movement

[We're United 4 Kidney Health](#) is an awareness-building initiative led by the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) to educate nephrologists, other kidney health professionals, and scientists about the dramatic changes and new oppor-

tunities taking place in kidney care, research, and education and enhance their professional development, and training.

The communications initiative was designed after conducting comprehensive qualitative and quantitative studies of kidney health professionals, nephrologists, researchers, industry experts, and people living with kidney diseases. Our research showed that improved treatments to slow or stop the progression of kidney diseases is critically important. And there should also be a focus on repositioning nephrology as part of early detection and treatment, not just in the "failure" and "end-stage" aspects of kidney treatment.

We used the findings from our research to identify four priorities for our community to move from kidney diseases to kidney health:

1. **INTERVENE EARLIER** to prevent, diagnose, coordinate care, and educate.
2. **TRANSFORM TRANSPLANT** and increase access to donor kidneys.
3. **ACCELERATE INNOVATION** and expand patient choice.
4. **ACHIEVE EQUITY** and eliminate disparities.

["We're United 4 Kidney Health"](#)

captures our goal of embracing early intervention and health over end-state treatment and diseases. The "4" references the four priorities that move us towards a world without kidney diseases.

Kidney Care Milestones

A Rich History

Celebrate National Kidney Month by reflecting on some of the historical milestones and advances in kidney care over the years. View the slideshow below for randomly selected milestones from the ASN archives.

National Kidney Month Awareness

From [National Today](#)

March is dedicated to National Kidney Month. The kidneys, two bean-shaped organs located in the back of the abdomen, perform crucial functions to filter out toxins, produce red blood cells, and regulate pH. They filter about half a cup of blood every hour, creating urine from harmful and unnecessary waste.

When kidneys fail to function properly, waste builds up in the blood and leads to a weakened system and a host of problems like anemia, nerve damage, and high blood pressure. Chronic kidney disease (CKD) affects more than 1 in 7 American adults and is the 9th leading cause of death in the U.S.

(Continued on page 7)

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History of National Kidney Month

National Kidney Month, observed every March, brings awareness to kidney health and encourages people to support kidney disease research and take steps to keep their own kidneys safe and healthy.

Kidneys filter blood, make urine, and produce the red blood cells that carry oxygen through your body. These vital organs also control blood pressure and produce vitamin D to keep bones strong.

Malfunctioning kidneys can lead to painful kidney stones and infections that, left untreated, require a transplant. Some pre-existing conditions, like high blood pressure and diabetes, put you at increased risk for kidney disease.

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) affects almost 40 million American adults. In 2016, three-quarters of a million people in the U.S. required dialysis or a kidney transplant. Dialysis and kidney transplants, the only treatment options for severe kidney failure, are difficult, expensive, and not always available. Patients seeking new organs may not always get them in time to survive; in the U.S., twelve people die each day waiting for a kidney.

To prevent kidney disease, the National Kidney Foundation recommends taking proactive steps to keep your kidneys healthy and prevent the onset of CKD. You can protect your kidneys by managing high blood pressure, making healthy food and drink choices, and reducing stress.

The National Kidney Foundation grew out of a mother's determination to further research into treatment for kidney conditions. When her infant son was diagnosed with

nephrosis, Ada DeBold started the Committee for Nephrosis Research to organize efforts to find treatments and connect patients and doctors. DeBold continued crusading for the organization, which eventually became the National Kidney Foundation. The Foundation conducts fundraising to support important research into the treatment and prevention of kidney disease.

National Kidney Month Timeline

1902 - Animal Experiments
The first successful kidney transplants in animals are performed at the Vienna Medical School.

1943 - Dialysis Invented
Dutch doctor Willem Kolff invents the "artificial kidney" to clean the blood of kidney failure patients.

1954 - First Successful Kidney Transplant

The first successful kidney transplant is performed between two identical twins in Boston.

1984 - National Organ Transplant Act Passes

The NOTA establishes the National Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network, which maintains an organ matching registry to address organ shortages and streamline the donation process.

National Kidney Month FAQs

1. What month is National Kidney Month?

National Kidney Month is observed annually during the month of March.

2. Is there a ribbon for kidney disease?

Kidney Disease Awareness is symbolized by the color green. Purchase green ribbons, green wristbands, or green magnets directly from a Kidney Disease Awareness non profit in order to help

raise funds for treatments.

3. What are the symptoms of chronic kidney disease?

Symptoms include difficulty urinating or less urine, swelling in the extremities, shortness of breath, nausea, and feeling cold and tired. If you experience chronic symptoms that you suspect are related to kidney function, consult your physician.

How to Observe National Kidney Month

1. Join the organ donor registry

Most organ donations come from deceased people. Register to be an organ donor when you die and your healthy organs and tissue can save dozens of lives.

2. Donate to a kidney non-profit

Non-profit organizations do the important work of raising awareness about kidney disease, providing resources and assistance to patients, and connecting patients, doctors, and donors.

3. Be good to your kidneys

Are you keeping your kidneys healthy? Aim for a lower intake of sodium and sugars, more whole grains and low-fat dairy, and regular exercise to reduce your risk of kidney disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and other diseases.

5 Fascinating Facts About Kidneys

1. You only need one kidney to live

Although you're born with two kidneys, each of which have about 1.5 million blood-filtering units (nephrons), you only need about 300,000 nephrons to filter your blood properly.

2. Your kidneys are lopsided

The right kidney is slightly

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

smaller and sits lower than the left to make room for another important organ, the liver.

3. You can drink too much water

This can cause a condition called hyponatremia, which, though not common, can damage the kidneys.

4. Sausage casing and orange juice cans

Willem Kolff, who invented the first artificial kidney that led to today's dialysis technology, used sausage casings, orange juice cans, and a washing machine to create a rudimentary blood cleaning mechanism.

5. Climate change may increase kidney disease

As parts of the world get warmer, the dehydration that leads to kidney disease is likely to rise among manual laborers.

Why National Kidney Month is Important

A. It reminds us to be good to our bodies

Make sure you take care of your body and your vital internal organs so they can continue taking care of you.

B. It's a chance to express gratitude for our health

If you have fully functional kidneys, be grateful! Take a minute to feel gratitude for all the internal organs that do the invisible, daily work of keeping us alive.

C. It shows that science is awesome

Just a few decades ago, kidney disease could mean a death sentence. Today, although it's still a serious and frightening illness, we can often fight off kidney failure with dialysis and organ transplants.

Managing Chronic Kidney Disease

From NIDDK.NIH.gov

March is National Kidney Month, a time when communities across the country raise awareness about kidney disease. This year's focus is on taking charge of your health and the many factors that go into managing your kidney disease.

[Chronic kidney disease \(CKD\)](#) is a serious condition affecting around 35.5 million people. Often overlooked until symptoms appear, CKD is progressive and can put you at risk for serious health complications including heart attack, stroke, and kidney failure. Adopting a healthy lifestyle can help you manage CKD and its complications from progressing.

Follow these healthy lifestyle habits to take charge of your kidney health.

✓ [Meet regularly with your](#)

[health care team.](#)

Staying connected with your doctor, whether in-person or using telehealth via phone or computer, can help you maintain your kidney health.

✓ [Manage blood pressure and monitor blood glucose levels.](#)

Work with your doctor to develop a plan to meet your blood pressure goals and check your blood glucose level regularly if you have diabetes.

✓ [Take medicine as prescribed and avoid NSAIDs like ibuprofen and naproxen.](#)

Your pharmacist and doctor need to know about all the medicines you take.

✓ [Aim for a healthy weight.](#)

Create a healthy meal plan and consider working with your doctor to develop a weight-loss plan that works for you.

✓ [Reduce stress and make physical activity part of your routine.](#)

Consider healthy stress-reducing activities and get at least 30 minutes or more of physical activity each day.

✓ [Make time for sleep.](#)

Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night.

✓ [Quit smoking.](#)

If you smoke, take steps to quit.

It may seem difficult, but small changes can go a long way to keeping your kidneys and you healthier for longer.

World Tuberculosis Day - March 24, 2026

Submitted by Bonnie LaForme, IHAWP Facilitation Assistant

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that usually infects the lungs but can attack almost any part of the body. It is spread from person to person through the air. When a person with TB in their lungs or throat coughs, laughs, sneezes, sings, or even talks, the germs that cause TB may spread

through the air. On World Tuberculosis Day, learn how the American Lung Association and the CDC are committed to fighting this serious lung disease.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a serious infectious disease caused by My-

cobacterium tuberculosis bacteria, primarily affecting the lungs but capable of attacking any part of the body. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks. Symptoms include a persistent cough (sometimes with blood), chest

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

pain, fever, fatigue, and night sweats. While often treatable with a 6- to 9-month course of antibiotics, active TB can be fatal if not properly treated.

Key Aspects of Tuberculosis

- **Causes:** The bacteria Mycobacterium tuberculosis causes the infection. While it typically attacks the lungs, it can spread to other areas like the brain, kidneys, or spine.
- **Transmission:** TB is airborne. It is transmitted when an infected person coughs or sneezes, releasing droplets containing the bacteria, usually requiring close, prolonged contact with an infectious person.
- **Symptoms:** Common signs of active TB include a cough lasting more than two weeks, chest pain, coughing up blood or mucus, weakness, fatigue, weight loss, fever, and night sweats.
- **Risk Factors:** Individuals with

weakened immune systems, particularly those with HIV/AIDS, are at higher risk, as are those living in crowded conditions or in close contact with someone with active TB.

- **Treatment:** TB is treated with a combination of antibiotic medications (such as isoniazid, rifampin, ethambutol) for a period of 6 to 12 months. It is critical to finish the entire course to prevent drug-resistant TB.

There are two forms: latent TB (bacteria are inactive, not contagious) and active TB (bacteria are active, causing illness and contagious).

- **Tuberculosis Overview - Occupational Safety and Health Administration**
Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that can affect people and animals. It's caused by a bacterium called Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (.gov)

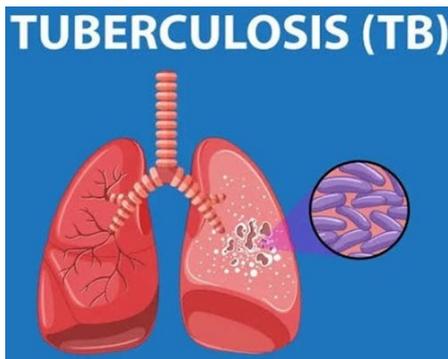
- **Clinical Overview of Tuberculosis - CDC**
Background. Tuberculosis (TB) is an airborne disease caused by the bacterium Mycobacterium tuberculosis (M. tuberculosis).

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - CDC.gov)

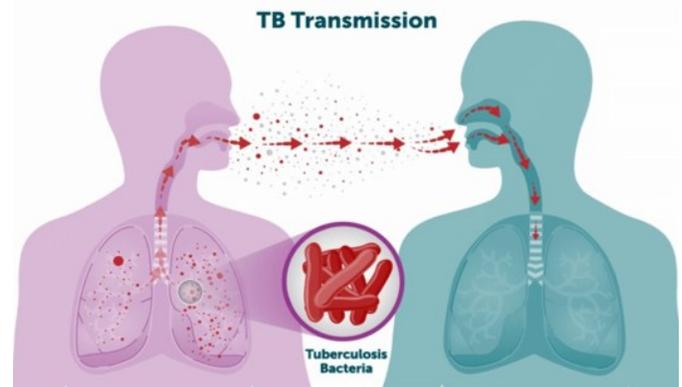
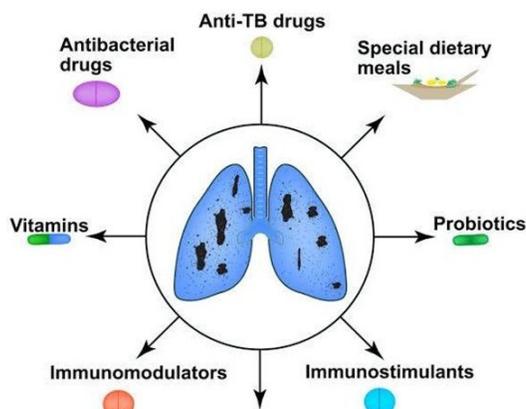
Social: @CDC_TB, @CDCTB, @LungAssociation, @americanlungassociation #WorldTBDay

For more information, contact: American Lung Association | Raven Wells — raven.wells@lung.org Erin Meyer — erin.meyer@lung.org / 800-586-4872

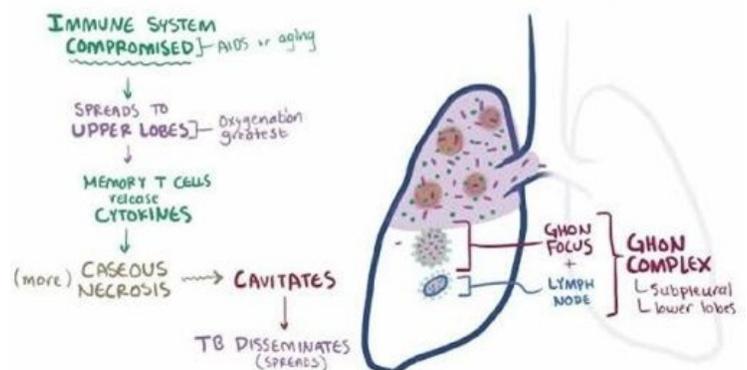
For more information, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/world-tb-day/about/index.html>



Treatment of Tuberculosis



MYCOBACTERIUM TUBERCULOSIS (TB)



National LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Week

National LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Week in 2026 will take place from March 16 to March 20. This observance aims to raise awareness about the health disparities faced by LGBTQ+ individuals and to promote health equity within this community. The theme for 2026 is "Health Equity NOW!", emphasizing the urgent need for equitable health solutions and access to care for LGBTQ+ populations.

Purpose and Goals

- **Awareness:** Highlight mental health challenges and other health issues prevalent in the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Advocacy:** Encourage policy changes to improve health outcomes and reduce discrimination.
- **Community Engagement:** Foster collaboration among healthcare providers, community organizations, and allies to address barriers to health.

Related Events

- Various events and activities will be organized throughout the week to engage the community and promote health resources.
- Organizations like Transhealth and BetterHelp will provide resources and support during this week.

(From [TransHealth.org](https://www.transhealth.org), [BetterHelp.com](https://www.betterhelp.com))

National Coalition for LGBTQ Health

The National Coalition for LGBTQ Health announces that the theme for this year's National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week, being held March 16 – 20, 2026, is "**Organize to OUTlast.**" The theme calls on the LGBTQ community and those who provide healthcare

for LGBTQ communities to organize for LGBTQ health against regressive forces in policy and culture. The Coalition created the National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week 24 years ago to raise awareness about timely and relevant issues impacting LGBTQ healthcare.



*We urge healthcare professionals, advocates, and community leaders to collaborate on building strategies, skills, resources, and support structures that continue to foster health equity amid divestment and fragmentation of the broader healthcare system. By organizing within and across communities to protect advances in LGBTQ health, we will outlast the attempts to erase our progress. **Organize to OUTlast** assures us that together, the LGBTQ community and LGBTQ health services will **survive, thrive, and persevere** through these challenging times and beyond.*

The Coalition celebrates and draws inspiration from the ongoing resilience of LGBTQ communities in our work to meet the current need for all of us to **unite, organize, and mobilize** to address LGBTQ healthcare and health equity. To **OUTlast** means remaining rooted when pressure keeps returning.

Think of a tree that's been cut down to the stump. For years it looks gone, until one spring when new shoots push up from

the roots, because the roots were deeper than the damage. LGBTQ health has always been about **de-termination and endurance**. Policies shift. Funding ebbs and flows. Language and data are stripped away. Care systems fracture, strain and reform. What matters is staying present long enough to be seen, to witness again, to rebuild what was interrupted, to organize and to outlast.

SYNChronicity National Conference For HIV, HCV, STIs, Harm Reduction, LGBTQ Health

SYNC 2026 offers unparalleled opportunities to connect, engage with thought leaders, explore groundbreaking research, and collaborate on solutions that drive real impact. Whether you're looking to expand your knowledge, strengthen professional networks, or contribute your voice to shaping the future of healthcare, SYNC is where progress happens together.

[Learn More](#)

Celebrate National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week & Support LGBTQ Health

Updated January 31st, 2026 by [BetterHelp Editorial Team](#) | Medically reviewed by [April Justice, LICSW](#)

Content warning: Please be advised, the article below might mention trauma-related topics that include suicide which could be triggering to the reader. If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Text or call the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) at **988** or chat at 988lifeline.org. Support is available 24/7. Please also see our [Get Help Now](#) page for more immediate resources.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

Each year in the United States, National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week takes place in March. This observance aims to drive awareness of the millions of LGBTQ+ people who experience mental health challenges, which are often linked to lived experiences of discrimination. Below, learn more about National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week, the health challenges facing many LGBTQ+ individuals today, and ways to support this diverse community.

Are you experiencing healthcare challenges?
[Talk to a therapist for support](#)

About National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week

In March 2025, the United States celebrated its 23rd annual National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week. The National Coalition for LGBTQ Health began this observance in the early 2000s to call attention to the health needs of the diverse LGBTQ+ community. The coalition is committed to representing LGBTQ+ individuals as well as advocates and healthcare providers. The theme of the week in 2025 was “Health Equity NOW!”, an urgent call to action around improving the availability of quality healthcare for queer individuals.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, individuals from the LGBTQ+ community are [more than twice as likely](#) as non-queer individuals to experience a mental illness at some point in their lifetime—with transgender people and queer people of color at even higher risk. LGBTQ+ individuals also tend to experience more physical health challenges, which can affect mental health and vice versa.

It’s important to note that these health challenges stem primarily from lived experiences of discrimination and barriers to receiving quality healthcare rather than being inherent to any queer identity.

Understanding overall health disparities for LGBTQ+ individuals

According to the National Coalition for LGBTQ Health, individuals in the diverse LGBTQ+ community are [more likely than the general population](#) to report having poor mental and physical health, including greater risk of infections, chronic fatigue, and long-term conditions like arthritis. Harvard Medical School states that LGBTQ+ people - particularly gender non-conforming people, people of color, and youth - have a higher [risk of dying by suicide](#).

These health disparities likely persist due to issues with healthcare availability. In addition to systemic barriers such as cost, anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination still occurs in the healthcare field. According to some sources, one in eight LGBTQ+ people have experienced discrimination in a healthcare setting, with [seven in 10 transgender people having experienced transphobia](#) in a healthcare setting and trans people of color even more likely to have such experiences. Such experiences can make LGBTQ+ individuals less likely to seek care at all.

Understanding mental health disparities for LGBTQ+ individuals

In addition to overall health and healthcare disparities, it can be important to point out the mental health-specific disparities

queer people often experience as well. Research suggests that LGBTQ+ individuals experience a higher prevalence of [depression, suicidal ideation, and substance use](#)—which can often be linked to family rejection, peer bullying, social exclusion, harassment, violence, and other systemic experiences of prejudice.

In addition, discrimination in healthcare and a lack of LGBTQ+ mental health care providers can make seeking support more difficult, which may exacerbate symptoms. Additional barriers to receiving quality care often exist for people from marginalized racial and ethnic backgrounds, immigrants who may not have documentation or insurance, disabled individuals, and those in other marginalized groups.

Efforts to reduce healthcare disparities

Reducing health disparities is understood to require a multi-pronged approach. In addition to promoting systemic change to eliminate identity-based discrimination of any kind, advocacy efforts to increase the availability of [culturally sensitive](#) and [LGBTQ+-affirming](#) care for medical and mental health care providers may be necessary.

How to celebrate this National LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Week

A core part of National LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Week is about encouraging organizations to provide queer-informed training for healthcare providers and engage in large-scale advocacy work to reduce healthcare disparities. However, individuals can also play a role in these efforts. Each year, the National Coalition for LGBTQ+ Health puts on [informational](#)

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

[webinars](#) on topics related to queer health to raise awareness. They also share social media graphics that they encourage individuals to repost to inform their circles about these topics.

LGBTQ+-friendly and LGBTQ+-affirming mental health care

Queer-friendly mental health care providers are accepting of queer identities. Queer-affirming mental health care providers are typically specifically trained to validate and welcome all queer identities and experiences through a perspective that takes into account queer history as well as the modern challenges LGBTQ+ people face. Culturally competent providers are specifically trained to be aware of and sensitive to the diverse experiences of people of diverse backgrounds. Being able to connect with these types of providers can be crucial for the well-being of queer people of diverse identities.

A wealth of research indicates that having a strong and trusting [therapist-client relationship](#) can be key to providing effective care. Thera-

pists who are trained in how to make LGBTQ+ people—especially gender non-conforming people and people of color—feel safe, accepted, and understood are likelier to be able to form this type of relationship with queer clients, therefore improving treatment outcomes.

Finding an informed therapy provider near you

There are several different options for locating a queer-informed therapist in your area. Seeking a referral from a queer community center or health clinic, asking queer friends how they found their therapist, or using [an online directory](#) are a few examples.

Other therapy options for LGBTQ+ individuals

Many people live in areas with few mental health providers in general or few queer-friendly practitioners. Others don't feel comfortable attending in-person therapy for a variety of reasons. In such cases, LGBTQ+ clients seeking mental health care might consider exploring online

therapy instead.

The effectiveness of online therapy

A growing body of research points to the effectiveness of online therapy in many cases. For example, consider one study which suggests that [internet-based cognitive behavioral therapy \(CBT\)](#)—a common, evidence-based practice—can be effective for treating depression, generalized anxiety disorder, social anxiety, panic disorder, and substance use disorders, which research suggests can be prevalent among the LGBTQ+ community.

Takeaway

National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week can serve as an opportunity to raise awareness about the health disparities often faced by those in the LGBTQ+ community. Education and advocacy efforts associated with this observance aim to reduce these disparities and improve the availability of both medical and mental health care for queer people—especially transgender and BIPOC queer individuals. If you're experiencing mental health challenges, support is available.

Nutrition for People Over 60 Years

Nutrition is crucial for individuals over 60 to maintain health and vitality. As the body ages, nutritional needs change, making it essential to focus on specific food groups and nutrients.

Key Nutritional Focus Areas

- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, they help reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Aim for a variety of colors to maximize nutrient intake.
- **Whole Grains:** Foods like brown rice, quinoa, and whole wheat bread provide fiber, which aids digestion and helps

manage weight.

- **Lean Proteins:** Sources such as fish, poultry, beans, and legumes support muscle health and repair. Protein intake becomes increasingly important to counteract muscle loss with age.
- **Healthy Fats:** Incorporate sources like avocados, nuts, and olive oil, which are beneficial for heart health and cognitive function.

Hydration

Staying hydrated is vital, as the sense of thirst may diminish with age. Aim for adequate fluid

intake throughout the day, focusing on water and hydrating foods.

Supplementation

Consider discussing with a healthcare provider about potential supplements, especially for vitamin D and calcium, which are important for bone health as one ages.

(From [Healthline.com](#), [National Institute on Aging](#))

What are the best diets for seniors?

As people age, nutritional needs shift — metabolism slows, muscle mass declines, and the body re-

(Continued on page 13)

quires **more nutrients per calorie**. Several eating patterns consistently rise to the top for supporting healthy aging, energy, and disease prevention.

Below are the most widely recommended options, supported by credible health sources.

1. Mediterranean Diet

Why it's great for seniors

- Emphasizes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and olive oil
- Includes moderate fish and poultry
- Linked to better heart health, brain health, and longevity
- Naturally rich in antioxidants and healthy fats

This pattern is highlighted by the **National Institute on Aging** as a strong option for older adults.

2. Healthy U.S.-Style Eating Pattern

Why it works

- Balanced mix of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy
- Flexible and familiar for most Americans
- Helps reduce risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease

This pattern is part of the USDA's recommended food models for seniors.

3. Vegetarian Eating Pattern

Why it's beneficial

- High in fiber, antioxidants, and plant-based proteins
- Lower in saturated fat
- Can support heart health and weight management

The USDA notes this pattern can meet senior nutrition needs when well-planned.

4. Superfood-Focused Eating

Not a formal "diet," but a powerful approach emphasizing nutrient-dense foods such as:

- Dark leafy greens
- Cruciferous vegetables

- Blueberries
- Nuts and seeds
- Eggs
- Salmon
- Greek yogurt
- Avocados

These foods support bone strength, cognition, heart health, and immune function.

5. DASH Diet

Ideal for seniors with high blood pressure

- Focuses on potassium, magnesium, and calcium
- Limits sodium, added sugars, and saturated fats
- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins

While not in the search results above, DASH is widely recommended by clinicians and aligns closely with the patterns described in the NIA guidance.

What Seniors Should Prioritize in Any Diet

Key nutrients

- **Protein** (to maintain muscle mass)
- **Calcium & Vitamin D** (for bone health)
- **Vitamin B12** (absorption decreases with age)
- **Fiber** (for digestion and heart health)
- **Hydration** (thirst cues weaken with age)

The National Institute on Aging emphasizes these needs for older adults.

Foods Seniors Should Limit

- **High-sodium foods** (raise blood pressure)
- **Ultra-processed foods** (linked to chronic disease)
- **Sugary drinks**
- **Excess alcohol** (affects medications and balance)

These concerns are echoed in senior nutrition guidance.

(From [National Institute on Aging](#), [National Council on Aging](#), [Health Partners](#))

Vitamins and Minerals for Older Adults

From [National Institute on Aging](#)

Vitamins and minerals are two of the main types of nutrients that your body needs to survive and stay healthy. Find information on some of the essential vitamins recommended for older adults and how to get the recommended amount within your diet.

Vitamins help your body grow and work the way it should. There are 13 essential vitamins — vitamins A, C, D, E, K, and the B vitamins (thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin, B₆, B₁₂, and folate).

Vitamins have different jobs to help keep the body working properly. Some vitamins help you resist infections and keep your nerves healthy, while others may help your body get energy from food or help your blood clot properly. By following the [Dietary Guidelines](#), you will get enough of most of these vitamins from food.

Like vitamins, minerals also help your body function. Minerals are elements that our bodies need to function that can be found on the earth and in foods. Some minerals, like iodine and fluoride, are only needed in very small quantities. Others, such as calcium, magnesium, and potassium, are needed in larger amounts. As with vitamins, if you [eat a varied diet](#), you will probably get enough of most minerals.

How can I get the vitamins and minerals I need?

It is usually better to get the nutri-

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

ents you need from food, rather than a pill. That's because nutrient-dense foods contain other things that are good for you, like fiber.

Most older adults can get all the nutrients they need from foods. But if you aren't sure, always [talk with your doctor](#) or a registered dietitian to find out if you are missing any important vitamins or minerals. Your doctor or dietitian may recommend a vitamin or [dietary supplement](#).

It's important to be aware that some supplements can have side effects, such as increasing the risk of bleeding after an injury or changing your response to anesthesia during surgery. Supplements can also interact with some medicines in ways that might cause problems. For example, vitamin K can reduce the ability of the common blood thinner warfarin to prevent blood from clotting. If you do need to supplement your diet, your doctor or pharmacist can tell you what supplements and doses are safe for you.

When looking for supplements to buy, you may feel overwhelmed by the number of choices at the pharmacy or grocery store. Look for a supplement that contains the vitamin or mineral you need without a lot of other unnecessary ingredients. Read the label to make sure the dose is not too large. Avoid supplements with megadoses. Too much of some vitamins and minerals can be harmful, and you might be paying for supplements you don't need. Your doctor or pharmacist can recommend brands that fit your needs.

Here's a tip

Different foods in each food group have different nutrients. Picking an

assortment within every [food group](#) throughout the week will help you get many nutrients. For example, choose seafood instead of meat twice a week. The variety of foods will make your meals more interesting, too.

Measurements for vitamins and minerals

Vitamins and minerals are measured in a variety of ways. The most common are:

- ◇ **mg** – milligram (a milligram is one thousandth of a gram)
- ◇ **mcg** – microgram (a microgram is one millionth of a gram. 1,000 micrograms is equal to one milligram)
- ◇ **IU** – international unit (the conversion of milligrams and micrograms into IU depends on the type of vitamin or drug)

Recommended sodium intake for older adults

Sodium is another important mineral. In most Americans' diets, sodium primarily comes from salt (sodium chloride). Whenever you add salt to your food, you're adding sodium. But the [Dietary Guidelines](#) shows that most of the sodium we eat doesn't come from our saltshakers — it's added to many foods during processing or preparation. We all need some sodium, but too much over time can lead to [high blood pressure](#), which can raise your risk of having a [heart attack](#) or [stroke](#).

How much sodium is okay? People 51 and older should reduce their sodium intake to 2,300 mg each day. That is about one teaspoon of salt and includes sodium added during manufacturing or cooking as well as at the table when eating. If you have high blood pressure or prehyperten-

sion, limiting sodium intake to 1,500 mg per day, about 2/3 teaspoon of salt, may be helpful. Preparing your own meals at home without using a lot of processed foods or salt will allow you to control how much sodium you get. Try using less salt when cooking, and don't add salt before you take the first bite. If you make this change slowly, you will get used to the difference in taste. Also look for grocery products marked "low sodium," "unsalted," "no salt added," "sodium free," or "salt free." Also check the [Nutrition Facts Label](#) to see how much sodium is in a serving.

Eating more fresh [vegetables](#) and [fruit](#) also helps — they are naturally low in sodium and provide more potassium. Get your sauce and dressing on the side and use only as much as you need for taste.

Key vitamins and minerals for people over age 51

Explore details about the following vitamins and minerals and recommended amounts for older adults:

Vitamin A. *Food Sources:* Vitamin A can be found in products such as eggs and milk. It can also be found in vegetables and fruits, like carrots and mangoes.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men 51 and older should aim for 900 mcg RAE*.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women 51 and older should aim for 700 mcg RAE each day.

Vitamin B1 (Thiamin). *Food Sources:* You can find vitamin B1 in meat — especially pork — and fish. It's also in whole grains and some fortified breads, cereals, and pastas.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men 51 and older should aim for 1.2 mg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

51 and older should aim for 1.1 mg each day.

Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin). *Food Sources:*

You can find vitamin B2 in eggs and organ meat, such as liver and kidneys, and lean meat. You can also find it in green vegetables, like asparagus and broccoli.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men 51 and older should aim for 1.3 mg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women 51 and older should aim for 1.1 mg each day.

Vitamin B3 (Niacin). *Food Sources:*

Vitamin B3 can be found in some types of nuts, legumes, and grains. It can also be found in poultry, beef, and fish.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men 51 and older should aim for 16 mg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women 51 and older should aim for 14 mg each day.

Vitamin B6. *Food Sources:*

Vitamin B6 is found in a wide variety of foods. The richest sources of vitamin B6 include fish, beef liver, potatoes and other starchy vegetables, and fruit (other than citrus).

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men 51 and older should aim for 1.7 mg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women 51 and older should aim for 1.5 mg each day.

Vitamin B12. *Food Sources:*

You can get this vitamin from meat, fish, poultry, milk, and fortified breakfast cereals. Some people over age 50 have trouble absorbing the vitamin B12 found naturally in foods. They may need to take vitamin B12 supplements and eat foods fortified with this vitamin.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** 2.4 mcg every day

♥ **Women Age 51+:** 2.4 mcg every day

Vitamin C. *Food Sources:*

Fruits and vegetables are some of the best sources of vitamin C. Citrus fruits,

tomatoes, and potatoes can be a large source of vitamin C.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men 51 and older should aim for 90 mg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women 51 and older should aim for 75 mg each day.

Calcium. *Food Sources:* Calcium is a mineral that is important for strong bones and teeth, so there are special recommendations for older people who are at risk for bone loss. You can get calcium from milk and other dairy, some forms of tofu, dark-green leafy vegetables, soybeans, canned sardines and salmon with bones, and calcium-fortified foods.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Men age 51-70 need 1,000 mg each day. Men age 71 need 1,200 mg each day. Don't consume more than 2,000 mg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** 1,200 mg each day. Don't consume more than 2,000 mg each day.

Vitamin D. *Food Sources:* You can get vitamin D from fatty fish, fish liver oils, fortified milk and milk products, and fortified cereals.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** If you are age 51-70, you need at least 15 mcg (600 IU) each day, but not more than 100 mcg (4,000 IU). If you are over age 70, you need at least 20 mcg (800 IU), but not more than 100 mcg (4,000 IU).

♥ **Women Age 51+:** If you are age 51-70, you need at least 15 mcg (600 IU) each day, but not more than 100 mcg (4,000 IU). If you are over age 70, you need at least 20 mcg (800 IU), but not more than 100 mcg (4,000 IU).

Vitamin E. *Food Sources:* Vitamin E can be found in nuts like peanuts and almonds and can be found in vegetable oils, too. It

can also be found in green vegetables, like broccoli and spinach.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men age 51 and older should aim for 15 mg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women age 51 and older should aim for 15 mg each day.

Folate. *Food Sources:* Folate can be found in vegetables and fruit, such as broccoli, brussel sprouts, spinach, and oranges. It can also be found in nuts, beans, and peas.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men age 51 and older should aim for 400 mcg DFE** each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women age 51 and older should aim for 400 mcg DFE each day.

Vitamin K. *Food Sources:* Vitamin K can be found in many foods including green leafy vegetables, like spinach and kale and in some fruits, such as blueberries and figs. It can also be found in cheese, eggs, and different meats.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** Most men 51 and older should aim for 120 mcg each day.

♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women should aim for 90 mcg each day.

Magnesium. *Food Sources:* This mineral, generally, is found in foods containing dietary fiber, such as green leafy vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and nuts and seeds. Breakfast cereals and other fortified foods often have added magnesium. Magnesium is also present in tap, mineral, or bottled drinking water.

♥ **Men Age 51+:** 420 mg each day

♥ **Women Age 51+:** 320 mg each day

Potassium. *Food Sources:* Many different fruits, vegetables, meats, and dairy foods contain potassium. Foods high in potassium include dried apricots, lentils, and potatoes. Adults get a lot of their potassium from milk, coffee, tea,

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

and other nonalcoholic beverages.

- ♥ **Men Age 51+:** Men need 3,400 mg each day.
- ♥ **Women Age 51+:** Most women age 51 and older need 2,600 mg each day

Sodium. Food Sources: Preparing your own meals at home without using a lot of processed foods or salt will allow you to control how much sodium you get.

- ♥ **Men Age 51+:** Men 51 and older should reduce their sodium

intake to 2,300 mg each day. That is about 1 teaspoon of salt and includes sodium added during manufacturing or cooking as well as at the table when eating. If you have high blood pressure or prehypertension, limiting sodium intake to 1,500 mg per day, about 2/3 teaspoon of salt, may be helpful.

- ♥ **Women Age 51+:** Women 51 and older should reduce their sodium intake to 2,300

mg each day. That is about 1 teaspoon of salt and includes sodium added during manufacturing or cooking as well as at the table when eating. If you have high blood pressure or prehypertension, limiting sodium intake to 1,500 mg per day, about 2/3 teaspoon of salt, may be helpful.

(*[Retinol Activity Equivalent](#),
**[Dietary Folate Equivalent](#),

Language, Nationhood, and Future Justice to be Discussed at the Next UB Storytellers Conference

By Marc Isaacs, Marketing & Development Specialist

When the Department of Indigenous Studies at University at Buffalo hosts its 16th annual Storytellers Conference, members of the Native American Community Services staff will be among its featured presenters. As our Marketing & Development Specialist and a Tyendinaga Mohawk, I am delighted to be able to share a presentation entitled “Life Breath as Sovereignty: Language, Nationhood, and Future Justice in *The Nativist*.” I chose the topic to align with the conference’s overall theme of “Life Breath: Justice for Our Future.”

It will be my third consecutive year of presenting at the conference and the first time I will be presenting on a weekday. The past events took place on a Saturday, and this one’s been scheduled for Friday, April 10, 2026, at the Niagara Falls Convention Center. Conference organizers structure the day’s topics and speakers into larger themes, running in concurrent sessions. For example, the day’s first session (9:30-10:30 am) gives guests a choice of these six topics:

- ♦ Community Action Through Film
- ♦ Seneca Environmental Justice
- ♦ Indigenous Belonging and Wellness

- ♦ Community Building Through Workshops
- ♦ Indigenous Erasure, Pretendians, and Mascots
- ♦ One Hundredth Annual Border Crossing: A Historical Review

My presentation will be part of the second session of the day (10:45 – 11:45 am) with six new topics.

- ♦ Indigenous Filmmaking
- ♦ Museums, Archives and Repatriation
- ♦ Digitally Rematriating Indigenous Voices From Ontario Newspapers, 1964-1974
- ♦ **Language Futures (my session)**
- ♦ Indigenous Art Practices
- ♦ Edwadya'dadadhni:dat “When We Gather, We Strengthen Our Convictions/Beliefs”

Within the hour-long Language Futures session, to be held in the Red Jacket room, I’ll share a preview of my latest film, *The Nativist*, and discuss how the original short story was adapted to employ the use of authentic Mohawk language and land back references as ways to provoke audiences to reflect on the lasting impacts of colonial logics on both Native and

non-Native peoples. I plan to share, with slides, each section of original American English dialogue that was translated into Mohawk by language specialist Cecelia King at Akwesasne. I’ll also provide a QR code for guests to scan to stay updated about the film’s progress and eventual premieres, including in Buffalo once it’s scheduled. In the same time slot in Red Jacket, Alexander Jimerson and Nicole Hill will present “Discussing a Skill Set for Seneca Language Documentation: Through the Work of Deadiwënöhsnye’s Gëjohgwa’.” It sounds like a fascinating topic, and I’m honored to share the time and space with them.

Immediately following lunch, Tom Porter (Mohawk, Bear Clan) will provide the keynote address about traditional teachings. NACS Special Initiatives Coordinator Pete Hill (Cayuga, Heron Clan) will present “Getting Out of Our Silos - Incorporating Traditional Native Concepts into More Culturally Appropriate Program Design” as part of a session about Indigenous Community Health at 4 pm, and a legacy address entitled “Life Breath: Language Revitalization & Pedagogy” is scheduled for 5:15 pm. A buffet-style dinner

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16)

ner brings everyone together at the end of the day to eat, connect, and begin to process the whole experience in a shared way.

I encourage our whole community to consider devoting a Friday to participating in the Storytellers Conference, even if you're only

available for a portion of the day. You can register for the event at: tinyurl.com/2026Storytellers.



FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026

CONFERENCE:

NIAGARA FALLS CONVENTION CENTER
101 OLD FALLS ST. NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14303

TIME: 8:30 AM - 8:00 PM



University at Buffalo
Department of Indigenous Studies
College of Arts and Sciences

OCC Student Wins Statewide EOP Award for Excellence

Submitted by Rebecca Waterman, Workforce Development Specialist, Syracuse Office

When [Kierra Yager](#) opened the letter telling her she had been selected for a statewide award, she was overwhelmed.

“I couldn’t believe it. I cried,” she said. “Growing up, education wasn’t something that was a priority, especially going off to college. In high school, I didn’t get the best grades. When I came here, I finally felt like what I was doing meant something.”

Yager has been chosen to receive the prestigious Norman R. McConney, Jr. Award for EOP Student Excellence, which honors outstanding students in New York’s Educational Opportunity Program. McConney devoted his life to expanding access to higher education for underserved populations and helped author the original legislation that established EOP across New York State.

Yager’s journey reflects that mission. A member of the Onondaga Nation’s Beaver Clan, she left high school before later earning her GED. College had rarely been discussed at home, but she decided to take a chance on herself.

In 2024, she enrolled in Onondaga Community College’s EOP Residential Pre-Freshman Summer Institute. For five and a half weeks, she lived on campus, took classes, shared meals in the dining hall, and experi-

enced the rhythm of college life



Pictured here: Kierra Yager

before the fall semester began.

The program proved transformational. “It was fundamental to everything I did,” Yager said. “I came in very shy. EOP helped me break out of my bubble. I didn’t know anything about college - how to make a schedule, how to communicate with a professor. It really helped me step out of my comfort zone.”

With that foundation, Yager flourished. Now pursuing a degree in Humanities & Social Sciences, she became an engaged and confident presence in the classroom. “College turned out to be so much different from high school,” she said. “Here, it’s okay to speak up and participate. I get kind of chat-ty in class, and it actually helps me

retain the information better.”

Her impact extends well beyond academics. Yager has worked at the Counseling & Community Care Hub, served as a resident assistant in the residence hall, and led the Native Club as president. She also values the College’s opening of the Indigenous Student Center in Mawhinney Hall. “I felt distant from my heritage for a long time,” she said. “I’ve always wanted to know more about who I am and where I come from.”

This May, Yager will become the first member of her family to earn a college degree. It’s an achievement she views not as a finish line, but as a beginning. Her long-term goal is to earn a Ph.D. and become a pediatric clinical psychologist.

Before that milestone, however, she will be honored March 9 at a statewide ceremony in Troy, where she will officially receive the McConney Award. For Yager, the recognition represents more than personal achievement. It affirms resilience, growth, and the courage to pursue a path once thought out of reach. “I’ve been trying really hard here. That letter reminded me that all of the hard work matters.”

Congratulations to Ms. Yager from all of us here at NACS! ❤️

Welcome Our New Erie County Clubhouse Youth Leader

[Nolie Anna Thompson](#), originally from Akwesasne, a member of the Saint Regis Mohawk nation, Bear Clan. She received a Bachelor’s of Science degree, class of 2024 in Environmental Science from Paul Smith’s College in the Adirondack State Park.

While attending college, the opportunity arose to take on many different roles in the realm of being a leader. These included Resident Assistant, Orientation Leader, Mentor, Program Assistant as well as a DEI intern. This resulted in working with people from many different areas of the world from all different backgrounds. In the process, she landed an opportunity to work with Roswell Park Department of Indigenous Cancer Health in Buffalo, NY. She enjoyed time being in the city and eventually moved to Buffalo as of October 2025. Her goal is to be a great role model for our youth and to improve the health of the environment.

Hobbies and fun facts include arts and crafts of all kinds, being an avid bookworm and spending time with a small orange cat named Hazel.



Clubhouse Corner

FEBRUARY 2026



This month, the Clubhouse Youth ventured out on two field trips! At the beginning of the month, we visited the **Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art** and the **K Art Gallery**. Later in the month during school break, we hit the road and spent an afternoon exploring the **Rochester Museum & Science Center**.

Follow us on Instagram!



If interested or to get more information, please contact us:

NACS Clubhouse (Erie County)
Supervisor, Jes: 716-449-6405

NACS Clubhouse (Niagara County)
Hotline: 716-983-1251



Native American Community Services

In Development: Healthy Generations

A Culturally-Based Home Visiting Program for Native American Families

Through personalized home visits, families will receive:

- A program culturally grounded in family traditions and values, offering trauma-informed care that supports healthy beginnings.
- Prenatal and maternal support to promote healthy pregnancies
- Early childhood support for growth, learning, and development
- Health and wellness guidance for parents and children
- Connections to community resources that strengthen family well-being

Healthy Generations is a new, culturally-based home visiting program supporting families with children ages 0-5. Home visitors will work directly with families to provide guidance, resources, and support that honor culture and help families thrive at home, in the community, and for generations to come.



For more information, contact:

Sherrie Kechego
Healthy Generations Coordinator
716-574-3378
skechego@nacswny.org

~From Our Traditions, Healthy Generations Rise~



Healthy Generations

A tribal home visiting program for Native American families from pregnancy to age five.



What is Healthy Generations?

Healthy Generations is a home visiting program being developed by Native American Community Services (NACS) to support Native American families during pregnancy and early childhood (birth to age 5).

The program focuses on maternal health, infant wellbeing, parenting support, and early childhood development through culturally grounded, family-centered services.



Who Can Participate?

Healthy Generations is for:

- Native American families with children, birth to age five
- Expecting parents
- Parents, caregivers, and extended family members

Participation is voluntary and family-driven.



Community-Led & Culturally Grounded

This program is built with:

 Guidance from Native leaders and Elders

 A Community Advisory Committee

 Respect for traditional knowledge and healing

 Collaboration with local partners and service providers

 Honoring culture, strengths, and lived experience

Program Status

Healthy Generations is currently in the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA) phase.

This means we are:

- Listening to Native families and community members
- Learning what is working well and what is needed
- Gathering information before launching services

Community voices are guiding how this program will look.

Get Involved

Your voice matters. Community input helps shape this program

Contact

Sherrie Kechego
Healthy Generations Coordinator
Native American Community Services
Phone: 716-574-3378
Email: skechego@nacswny.org
Website: www.nacswny.org

Healthy Generations is supported by Tribal MIECHV funding through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).



Together, we are supporting families today and strengthening generations to come.



PARENTING *Circle*

This Native American Family Research program is aimed at enhancing family dynamics to reduce your child's risky behaviors and to learn about family health preparedness.

STUDY REQUIREMENTS

- 10 weekly classes
- Participation in a parenting and health research study
- Families will be randomly selected to participate in Parenting in 2 Worlds or Healthy Families in 2 Worlds

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

- ✓ Self-Identify as Native American
- ✓ Live in urban area of Erie & Niagara County
- ✓ Are a primary caregiver of Native American youth 12-17 years old

HIGHLIGHTS

- Childcare services provided for enrolled participants
- Healthy food provided
- **Your Family could be eligible to receive up to \$300 in gift cards**

✉ pjacobs@nacswny.org
jrose@nacswny.org

Participation is voluntary

☎ 716-339-1831 (Peter)
 716-574-3041 (Justine)

ASU IRB IRB # STUDY00016808 | Approval Period 3/17/2023 – 2/20/2026



**REDISCOVERING OUR
ONKWEHON:WE TRADITIONS**

ABOUT US

ROOTS is here to increase the availability of cultural education programs and resources for the urban Haudenosaunee people. We aim to implement opportunities to learn about Haudenosaunee traditions and practices through an increased number of Haudenosaunee cultural programs

CLASSES

arts/cooking classes
cultural speaker series
elder and youth information exchange
community socials
singing and dancing classes
yearly marketplace

GOAL

The long-term community goal would be that all Native Americans have access to opportunity, knowledge, and the ability to incorporate traditional concepts and teachings within their families and communities

Arriana Smith
ROOTS Project Specialist
asmith@nacswny.org

Colleen Casali
ROOTS Project Coordinator
cacasali@nacswny.org

Dakota Jonathan
ROOTS Project Specialist
djonathan@nacswny.org

FUNDED BY: THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES-
ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS



NATIVE AMERICAN RESOURCE PROGRAM
HAUDENOSAUNEE
SOCIAL

MARCH 13TH, 2026
5:30 - 8:30 PM



McKinley High School
1500 Elmwood Ave, Buffalo, NY, 14207.

SINGING | DANCING |
TRADITIONAL FOODS | VENDORS

Questions or Concerns Email:
Nsosa@buffaloschools.org

FREE HAIR CARE

NOW OFFERING BASIC PROTECTIVE STYLES (SIMPLE BRAIDS)

Provided by:

Haircuts For Those In Need

Schedule:



Monday 11/10 ~ Resource Council of WNY ~ 6:30-8:30pm
347 E Ferry St, Buffalo, NY 14208

Monday 11/24 ~ Niagara Falls Community Missions 12-3pm
1570 Buffalo Ave, Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Wednesday 12/3 ~ Best Self Recovery Center ~ 3-7pm
69 Linwood Ave. Buffalo, NY 14209

Monday 12/15~ Buffalo City Mission ~ 3-6pm
100 E Tupper St, Buffalo, NY 14203

Sunday 12/21 ~ St. James Church ~ 3-6pm
4661 Porter Rd, Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Monday 1/12 ~ Friends of Night People ~ 3-7pm
394 Hudson St. Buffalo, NY 14201

Wednesday 1/21 ~ Resource Council of WNY ~ 3-7pm
347 E Ferry St, Buffalo, NY 14208

Monday 2/9 ~ Genesis Center / St. Simon's Church~ 4-7pm
200 Cazenovia St, Buffalo, NY 14210

Monday 2/23~ Buffalo City Mission ~ 3-6pm
100 E Tupper St, Buffalo, NY 14203

Wednesday 3/18 ~ Best Self Recovery Center ~ 3-7pm
69 Linwood Ave. Buffalo, NY 14209

Monday 3/30 ~ Niagara Falls Community Missions 12-3pm
1570 Buffalo Ave, Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Wednesday 4/8 ~ Resource Council of WNY ~ 3-7pm
347 E Ferry St, Buffalo, NY 14208

Monday 4/13 ~ Friends of Night People ~ 3-7pm
394 Hudson St. Buffalo, NY 14201

Sunday 5/10 ~ Central Library ~ 11:45a -2pm
Ellicott Street Underpass Buffalo, NY 14203

All haircuts provided use disposable supplies and disinfected tools.

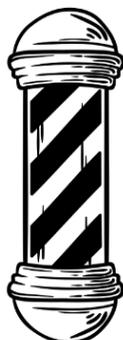
Follow us on social media @haircutsforthoseinneed

To volunteer or for more information reach out below:

www.haircutsforthoseinneed.org ~ 716-201-0287 - info@haircutsforthoseinneed.org

Hiarcuts For Those In Need, Inc.

P.O. Box 153 Tonawanda, NY 14151



For More Info
or To Donate
Scan Here



**PRESALE
TICKETS \$30**



**SATURDAY
APRIL 25, 2026**



**3RD ANNUAL
COMEDY
FOR A CAUSE**

**FEATURING
THE CROWS
@AMURDEROFCROWS**



**WITH
HOST
CHRISTINA L.
@CHRISLCOMEDY**



**\$40 Entry Ticket, VIP Sponsorship-Tickets Available
Food, Pop, Wine, & Beer Included
Comedy, Music, & Raffles**

**DOORS OPEN AT 6PM, COMEDY SHOW AT 7 PM
Knights of Columbus 1530 Kenmore Ave Buffalo NY 14216**

**PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE AT
WWW.HAIRCUTSFORTHOSEINNEED.ORG**



ALL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT HAIRCUTS FOR THOSE IN NEED



DEPARTMENT OF INDIGENOUS
CANCER HEALTH



WE ARE SEEKING CANDIDATES FOR THE 2026 HAUDENOSAUNEE SUMMER COLLEGE PAID INTERNSHIP



**Applicant must be a rising Junior or Senior,
enrolled in an accredited college or university**

DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 2026

Housing and stipend provided.

Travel to and from Buffalo, NY is not included.

FOR QUESTIONS AND MORE INFO, CONTACT:

Email: indigenouiscancerhealth@roswellpark.org

Phone: 716-845-5814

Scan QR Code to Apply



SAVE THE DATE

**Fort Erie
Native
Friendship
Centre
Pow Wow**

March 7th, 2026
Grand entry @ 12 pm





SAVE THE DATE

Celebrating 35 Years!

Seneca Nation Veterans Powwow



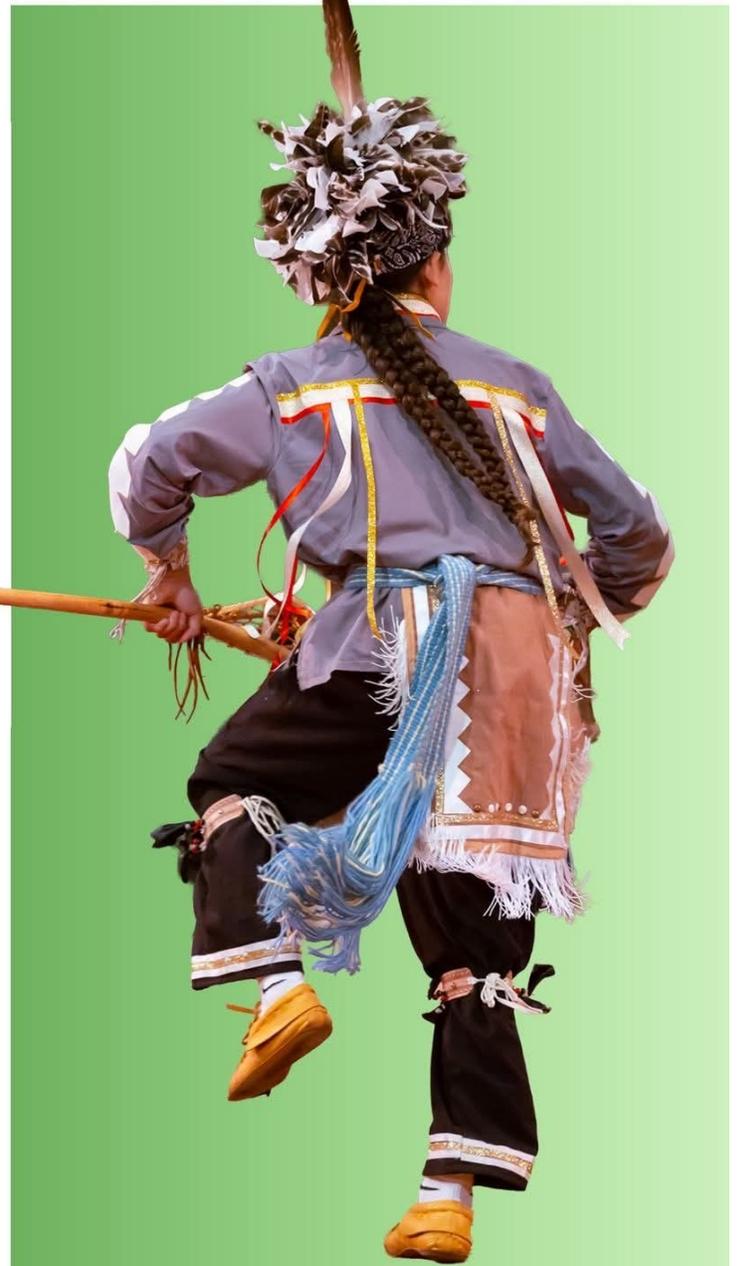
July 17-19, 2026



Seneca Allegany
Resort & Casino
777 Seneca Allegany Blvd,
Salamanca, NY 14779



MJCPowwow



Employment Opportunity



www.nacswny.org

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.

MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1005 Grant St. Buffalo, NY 14207 • Phone: 716-874-4460 • Fax: 716-874-1874

1522 Main St. Niagara Falls, NY 14305 • Phone: 716-299-0914 • Fax: 716-299-0903

76 West Ave. Lockport, NY 14094 • Phone: 716-302-3035 • Fax: 716-302-3037

100 College Ave. Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14607 • Phone: 585-514-3984 • Fax: TBD

960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Healthy Generations Home Visitor

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary Range: \$19.00-\$21.00 / hour

Office: Niagara Falls/ Buffalo (1) Rochester/Syracuse (1)

SUMMARY:

The Healthy Generations Home Visitor will be responsible for supporting the development and delivery of family-centered, evidence-based services to expectant mothers and families with young children within NACS service areas. During the first year of program, the focus will be on completing the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA), strengthening community partnerships, conducting outreach and interviews, developing an Implementation Plan and preparing for direct service delivery to begin in February 2027. The Healthy Generations project provides services to 17 counties. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Participates in the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA) for maternal, infant, and early childhood health home visiting.
- Conducts community outreach, and engagement, to gather input from families, community partners, and stakeholders.
- Participates in planning meetings, training, and implementation activities to prepare for service launch.
- Provides home visits, assessments, and case management services to families enrolled in the Healthy Generations program.
- Delivers effective parenting practices using program-approved, evidence-based models.
- Completes all necessary paperwork related to the provision of Home Visitor Services within two business days of the completed home visit/contact.
- Consults with the Deputy Director of Services, Manager of Family Services, and Healthy Generations Coordinator on a regular basis and for all decisions involving mandated Child Protected Services reporting.
- Refers families/children to community resources and/or other programs at NACS or other organizations.
- Maintains a positive relationship with support networks and community-based organizations for provision of referrals and other support for clients.
- Ensures the program remains compliant with all contractual obligations and requirements.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in a human services or related field of study. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Lived experience as a parent, caregiver, or in supporting families and children is preferred.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, conflict resolution and communication skills.
- Interpersonal skills to work cooperatively and effectively with individuals, groups, and diverse populations.
- Intermediate computer skills: ability to use Microsoft Office Suite.
- Knowledge of local Native communities and culturally responsive or trauma-informed practices is strongly preferred.
- Ability to become certified in CPR & First Aid. Must be able to do medium lifting.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

Employment Opportunity

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health & Dental Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program
- 403 (b) Retirement Plan

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

Employment Opportunity



www.nacswny.org

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 100 College Ave. Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14607 • Phone: 585-514-3984 • Fax: TBD
 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Family Preservation & Strengthening Caseworker- Erie County

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary/Range: \$19.00- \$21.00 / hour

Office: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

SUMMARY:

The Family Preservation & Strengthening Caseworker works in conjunction with the Local County Department of Social Services (LCDSS/DSS) and is responsible for providing prevention services to families referred from DSS. Incumbent helps children remain safely in their homes and prevent placement outside of their home. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide effective and efficient case management for assigned families.
- Make use of appropriate counseling, parent training, home management, support and advocacy services.
- Work collaboratively with referral sources, community service providers, and family members to meet goals.
- Produce accurate, thorough, and timely progress notes in CONNECTIONS.
- Ensure all court mandated or recommended services are applied and supported.
- Provide transportation for meetings, services, and appointments in a safe, reliable vehicle as necessary.
- Maintain strong communication with the family working toward stabilizing and strengthening the family unit, with regular face-to-face contact.
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in human services or related field of study required with experience in child welfare.
- Knowledge of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Federal and State regulations, as well as mandated reporting requirements.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must have a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Paid Time Off (PTO) | • 403 (B) Retirement Plan |
| • Employee Assistance Program | • Life Insurance |
| • Flexible Spending Account (FSA) | • Health and Dental Insurance |

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 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Program Secretary
Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt
Salary/Range: \$17.00-\$18.00 / hour
Office: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

SUMMARY:

The Program Secretary is responsible for greeting and guiding all NACS' visitors to the appropriate staff/component, understanding all NACS' services and responding to general questions. Incumbent will provide clerical assistance in support of NACS' staff, programs, and other NACS' business. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Greet and guide all visitors in a friendly and professional manner.
- Liaison between building personnel and NACS' staff and inform them of events, mail, packages, and building issues.
- Maintain a clean and well-maintained reception area with relevant and up-to-date information.
- Answer phone calls in a friendly and professional manner and provide basic information to callers, directing them to the appropriate staff.
- Refer non-routine or sensitive requests to the appropriate staff.
- Facilitate effective communication between various components of the organization.
- Manage office machines and ensure an adequate stock of office supplies.
- Process incoming and outgoing mail, maintaining confidentiality of sensitive information.
- Monitor staff sign-in/out and keep accurate records.
- Coordinate room requests and calendar schedules for staff and community room use.
- Assist in the planning and execution of meetings, including room setup and recording meeting minutes.
- Assist in the usage of the language and cultural resources library and enforce circulation protocols.
- Order office supplies, food, equipment, and any other needs for programs.
- Maintain necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary reports and recordkeeping, including the utilization of database systems.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Associate degree in an appropriate field of study or 2 years of related experience in a similar position.
- Experience working with community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge of local Native American communities.
- Computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Interpersonal skills to work cooperatively and effectively with individuals and groups
- Excellent organizational skills with strong attention to detail. Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health & Dental Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program
- 403 (b) Retirement Plan

For consideration send resume to humanresources@nacswny.org

Employment Opportunity



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 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Niagara County Youth Clubhouse Site Supervisor

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary/Range: \$20.00- \$21.00 / hour

Office: 1522 Main St, Niagara Falls, NY 14305

SUMMARY:

Under the guidance of the Health & Wellness Coordinator, the Youth Clubhouse Supervisor is responsible for assisting and leading in the performance of day-to-day duties in delivering and providing a safe, supportive, culturally appropriate, alcohol and drug free environment for all Native American youth (ages 12-17 years old) clubhouse members. This position will lead in the oversight of activities, cultural programming, and supervise youth leaders. Incumbent must be available for non-traditional hours (evenings and weekends). The Clubhouses are open 25 hours per week. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Implement, plan, and lead program activities, field trips, and workshops in accordance with contractual obligations both virtually and in-person.
- Have knowledge and understanding of substance use and ensure youth programming utilizes a percentage of research and evidence-based and best practices prevention models.
- Serve as a facilitator and member of the Youth Advisory Council.
- Coordinates scheduling of the Clubhouse Youth Leaders.
- Organize, supervise, and provide safe transportation for youth clubhouse members.
- Ensures Clubhouse maintenance, cleanliness, and safety is maintained.
- Recruit participants for the clubhouse program through outreach events and materials.
- Maintain necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping, including the utilization of database systems.
- Ensures the program remains compliant with all contractual obligations and requirements.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree from accredited institution with supervisory experience or relevant role.
- Experience working with at-risk youth, community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge and understanding of substance use.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Computer skills: ability to use Microsoft Office Suite.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health & Dental Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program
- 403 (b) Retirement Plan

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

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 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Prevention Specialist

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary/Range: \$19.00-\$20.00 / hour

Office: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207 – travel required

SUMMARY:

Incumbent provides and presents evidence-based prevention curricula to youth and community as part of an overall strategy that addresses alcohol and substance-use and prevention and other at-risk topics. Key roles include outreach, recruitment, and engagement of participants. Must be comfortable speaking in front of an audience. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Plans, coordinates, and delivers prevention presentations comfortably and accurately to both youth and adults.
- Performs effectively within a classroom setting and through video conferencing platforms.
- Delivers comprehensive, evidence-based, medically accurate, age and stage appropriate education workshops/sessions.
- Delivers and collects pre/post surveys to participants for monthly reports.
- Connects participants with appropriate services and develops referral resources and linkages.
- Collaborates with local community resources and conducts regular outreach.
- Attends and participates in weekly component staff and other required meetings.
- Accurately collects and maintains necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping per regulatory requirements.
- Maintains confidentiality of sensitive information and handles it with utmost discretion

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in health or human services or related field of study preferred, with two (2) years' experience with at risk youth.
- Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Competency in issues regarding alcohol/substance abuse, family planning, and reproductive health.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Paid Time Off (PTO) | • Health & Dental Insurance |
| • Life Insurance | • Employee Assistance Program |
| • Flexible Spending Account (FSA) | • 403 (b) Retirement Plan |

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

Nya:wëh, Thanks for reading!

Please share this newsletter with family, friends, and coworkers. If you know of anyone who would like to receive the month NACS News by email, please have them send their first name, last name, and current email address to: gghosen@nacswny.org

You can also look for our newsletter on our [website](#).

FUNDED BY: Erie County Department of Social Services; New York State Office of Children & Family Services; New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo; National Urban Indian Family Coalition; Niagara County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Office of the Aging; United Way of Niagara, US Department of Labor; Administration for Native Americans (ANA); Indigenous Justice Circle; Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation; Erie County Department of Mental Health; NYS Research Foundation for Mental Health; NYS Medicaid Program 29-I; Western New York Foundation; New York State Department of Health/AIDS Institute, Tribal Home Visiting Program, Administration for Children and Families, Health and Human Services as well as businesses, foundations and caring individuals.

I'd like to help NACS continue it's Tradition of Caring...

PLEASE ACCEPT MY CONTRIBUTION OF: \$5 \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 OTHER:

I'D LIKE TO VOLUNTEER MY TIME. I CAN...

PLEASE ADD ME TO YOUR MAILING LIST!

NAME PHONE NUMBER EMAIL ADDRESS

STREET ADDRESS CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN TO:
NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICES OF ERIE & NIAGARA COUNTIES, INC.
1005 GRANT STREET, BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14207