



POLICYTALK

The Latest in Public Policy
Center News and Events

June 2022

Featured News

Organizations Around Nebraska Gathered for Zero Suicide Academy

"We want the question about your mental health to be as common as getting your height and weight when you're going to see a doctor." - **Quinn Lewandowski**

This month, **Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention** hosted a Zero Suicide Academy for the second time in three years with senior leaders of Nebraskan health and behavioral health organizations. This two-day virtual event, held June 15-16, helped organizations learn the evidenced-based Zero Suicide Framework and how it can be implemented to better identify those who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. Organizations could improve care, wraparound services, and outcomes for those individuals. **Learn more.**



Events

20th Annual Great Plains Disaster Behavioral Health Conference

The **2022 Great Plains Disaster Behavioral Health Conference** is planned for July 29 in Omaha, Nebraska. This year's conference focuses on post-disaster recovery and offers a special pre-conference workshop for clinicians with Dr. Jessica Hamblen. Planned speakers include Dr. Jessica Hamblen (National Center for PTSD and Dartmouth Geisel School of



Medicine), Dr. Rebecca Wysoske (UNMC), Christian Burgess (Vibrant Emotional Health and Disaster Distress Helpline), and Crayton Jirovsky (Mental Health and Substance Abuse Therapist).

[Learn More.](#)

THE PPC IS HIRING!

The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center is now hiring a **training and outreach specialist** to assist with current and future funded projects. Accepted applicants will join a diverse, interdisciplinary research team within the PPC that engages in a variety of research and consultation activities involving private and public sector partners.

Interested applicants should apply for the training and outreach specialist position on or before **July 8. [Apply here.](#)**



Community Foundation CEO on Podcast



KidGlov podcast hosted Lincoln Community Foundation CEO, **Alec Gorynski**, to discuss how the Lincoln Community Foundation helps donors accomplish their goals, supports organizations that improve Lincoln's quality of life, and fosters community collaboration. Their recent coordination of Give to Lincoln Day resulted in raising more than \$8 million for local nonprofits.

[Learn more.](#)

Center News

Mental Health Emergency Hotline Set to Launch in July

Similar to 911, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is moving towards an easy-access approach, eventually replacing 800-273-TALK with the **988 number for mental health crises**. The Public Policy Center has been collaborating with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services on the preparations need for 988's integration in

Nebraska. [Learn more.](#)

PPC Director Helps Nebraska Schools Assess Concerning Behavior

"Prevention isn't the only solution. But it's a safe solution, and it gives people who have problems a dignified off ramp so that they can get help, and it keeps people safe." **Dr. Mario Scalora** (PPC's Director and a nationally known profiler) spoke to KETV Omaha on how Nebraska addresses the issue of school safety. The **Safe2Help** hotline and app is available for students, staff, and the public to anonymously report safety concerns in Nebraska. [Read more.](#)

At the end of May, **Dr. Mario Scalora** and **Dr. Denise Bulling** were proactively training multiple Nebraska schools on behavioral health assessment in collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Education School Safety team.

Publicly Informed Fountain Restoration Completed

On June 2, Lincoln's Cascade Fountain turned on for the first time since its restoration began. The PPC's **Dr. Janell Walther** and **Megan Allen** helped conduct the survey to collect public feedback, which informed the fountain's redesign. [Learn more.](#)

Honorable Mentions

- **Dr. Lisa PytlikZillig** (PPC), **Dr. Ashley Votruba** (UNL College of Arts & Sciences), and **Kristen Blankley** (UNL College of Law) spoke at the Association for Conflict Resolution for the Greater New York Region 2022 Annual Conference. Their talk focused on family estrangement and conflict resolution.

Community Resources

Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention

Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention is working to decrease the suicide rate among young people by sharing resources on their website for people currently dealing with anxiety and worry. During difficult or challenging times, mental health is especially important.



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

Free 24/7 confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

Visit Our
Website

Nebraska Family Helpline

1-888-866-8660

Free 24/7 confidential support
for all Nebraskans.

Rural Response Hotline

1-800-464-0258

(M-F from 8AM-5PM)

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