

October 2025

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska | PUBLIC POLICY
CENTER



POLICYTALK

The Latest in Public Policy
Center News and Events

Featured News

Memorial Stadium Event Helps Southeast Nebraska Organizations Prepare for Threats and Hazards



At UNL's Memorial Stadium, the Lincoln-Lancaster County Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) workshop brought together Lincoln, Lancaster County, and other southeast Nebraska organizations to work through emergency scenarios to prepare for potential threats and hazards before they occur. University of Nebraska Public Policy Center research staff Research Director Denise Bulling, Research Managers Quinn Lewandowski and Kurt Mantonya, and Research Specialists Ashley Miller and Jason Shoner facilitated breakout groups throughout the day for participants to prepare for specific threats or hazards and plan what they would need to do in response, thereby building a foundation for focused planning, resource allocation, and a common understanding of preparedness for each scenario presented. [Read](#)

more.

Events

Psychotherapeutic Approaches, Psychosocial Education, and Family Support for Patients with Brain Injury (Part 3 of 4)

Drs. Matthew Peters & Durga Roy

Free Via Zoom

Nov. 6, 11AM–1PM (CT)

This four-part seminar series will focus on supporting behavioral, emotional, and cognitive health of patients with traumatic brain injury. This session focuses on common psychotherapeutic approaches for patients with brain injury, how psychosocial education is used to improve outcomes, and approaches to support families of those with brain injury.



**Register
Today**

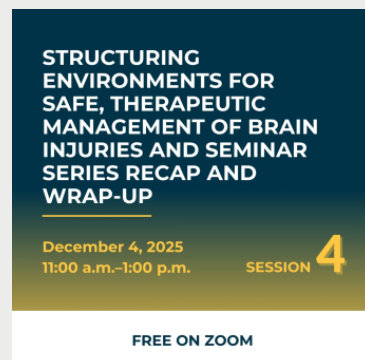
Structuring Environments for Safe, Therapeutic Management of Brain Injuries and Series Wrap-Up (Part 4 of 4)

Drs. Matthew Peters & Durga Roy

Free Via Zoom

Dec. 4, 11AM–1PM (CT)

This four-part seminar series will focus on supporting behavioral, emotional, and cognitive health of patients with traumatic brain injury. This session focuses on approaches to create a safe and therapeutic environment for those with brain injury, elements used to change clinical practice, and challenges encountered in the care of patients with brain injury.



**Register
Today**

Center News

Preparing Nebraska Agencies to Build Resilience and for Disaster Behavioral Health Response

Stacey Hoffman, Senior Research Manager,

presented on the behavioral health response to April 2024 tornadoes, and on building a resilient organization, at the Nebraska DHHS Preparedness Seminar held October 7 and 8. This seminar brings together agencies from around Nebraska to share experiences and lessons learned from public health responses to natural disasters and other public health emergencies.



Suicide Prevention Can Include Simple Caring Contacts

On Oct. 13, Research Manager Quinn Lewandowski presented at the 14th Annual National LOSS Team Conference in Omaha. He spoke on an intervention method called Caring Contacts, which are brief supportive messages sent to individuals at risk of suicide (through text, email, mail, or postcards) without requiring a response, which have been shown to help prevent deaths by suicide.

Nebraska Clinicians Learn Violence Risk Assessment

On Oct. 21 in Kearney, Director Mario J. Scalora trained Nebraska clinicians on assessing violence risk. This training is regularly held and covers the principles, key concepts, roles, risk and protective factors, and strategies for risk and threat assessment.

UNMC Students Learn How They Can Help Suicide Prevention

On Oct. 29 in Lincoln, Quinn Lewandowski leads a **Question, Persuade, Refer** (QPR) training session with University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) students. This is a regularly held training which trains between 40-100 students each semester on how to refer someone who may be contemplating suicide. Medical professionals are often the first point of contact for those in crisis. Therefore, they are uniquely positioned to identify and refer patients, coworkers, and others who are in distress.

In-Person Meetings Improve Risk Management Education Effectiveness for Livestock Producers

A new paper examines the 'Efficacy of Livestock Producer Educational Risk Management In-Person Meetings' by analyzing long-term impacts through a set of 20 meetings over eight years. Using structured interviews with 32 participants, it explores the retention of information, adoption of risk management tools, and implementation challenges. Authors include

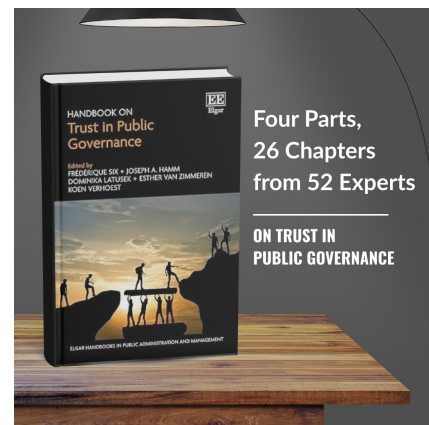
Elliott Dennis and Jay Parsons from University of Nebraska-Lincoln UNL Agricultural Economics and University of Nebraska Public Policy Center researchers Ashley Miller, Jennifer Meek, & Brian Hanson.

Read the full paper.



Three Potential Pathways for Impacting Public Trust in Institutions

Drs. Lisa PytlikZillig (University of Nebraska Public Policy Center) and Mariska Kappmeier (University of Otago) led an insightful conversation on Oct. 22 with webinar participants. They presented ideas from their recent chapter, "Participatory Engagement: Three Potential Pathways for Impacting Public Trust in Institutions," featured in the Edward Elgar Handbook on Trust in Public Governance. Watch the **recording** or read the **book**.



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