

October 2022

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska** | PUBLIC POLICY  
CENTER



# POLICYTALK

The Latest in Public Policy  
Center News and Events

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## Featured News

### 2022 Great Plains Association of Threat Assessment Professionals Conference Features National Experts to Discuss Preventing Mass Casualty Events



The 2022 **Great Plains Association of Threat Assessment Professionals Conference** met in Lincoln this month and focused on the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach in the prevention of targeted violence, particularly mass casualty events. Nationally known presenters discussed how threat assessment and management practices can be scaled operationally in a variety of environments. Speakers included Mark Follman, author of *Trigger Points: Inside the Mission to Stop Mass Shootings in America*; Andre Simons, former FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit; Gene Deisinger, Co-Author of *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and*

*Management Teams*; Bryan Flannery, a corporate and judicial security expert; Mario Scalora, a national threat assessment expert; and Denise Bulling, a licensed independent mental health practitioner and certified threat manager.

Sponsors of the event include the **University of Nebraska Public Policy Center**, the **Association of Threat Assessment Professionals Great Plains Chapter**, and the **Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health**. Learn more at **KLKN-TV News**.

## Nebraska Department of Education Creates School Safety Task Force to Address School Safety



The Nebraska Department of Education announced that it has created a comprehensive School Safety Task Force in an effort to improve school safety. The group met for the first time earlier this month to begin a review of current school safety, security, and preparedness practices and to identify evidence-based

strategies and solutions to ensure Nebraska's schools remain safe. The task force is co-chaired by Nebraska Commissioner of Education Matthew Blomstedt and Senator Lynne Walz. Joe Wright, Director of Security at Lincoln Public Schools and Dr. Denise Bulling, Sr. Research Director at the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center are serving as task force facilitators. Learn more at the **Nebraska Department of Education & KMTV News Omaha**.

## Events

### Policy Scholars Program for Spring 2023

**Apply or submit a nomination by November 21.**

The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center is pleased to call for applications for undergraduates interested in an experiential learning opportunity focused on the various ways in which different stakeholders influence public policy and careers in the field. This paid, part-time

*Policy Scholars Applications*

**NOW  
OPEN!**

Nominations & applications  
due Nov. 21

opportunity will allow students to experience various aspects of policy research and evaluation, one-on-one mentorship, and offer training sessions in professional development and career or graduate/professional school readiness. **Learn more.**

## Partner Spotlight

### Lincoln Littles and Lincoln Police Department Partner on Emergency Alert System for Childcare Centers



Over the last year, **Lincoln Littles** has served 223 children with tuition assistance, with \$510,720 in total funding towards access to early childhood education. As part of the **Prosper Lincoln** initiatives, Lincoln Littles aims to ensure that affordable high-quality early care education is available to all

children. Lincoln Littles recently worked with Lincoln Police Department Communications to set up a new emergency alert system with childcare centers. "This is trailblazing for early childcare," said Suzanne Schneider, Associate Director for Lincoln Littles. "We haven't found any other systems like this in the nation." The system relays a police notification through a mass text to childcare centers in the area when there is a community emergency. This system can help providers take action to keep children safe during an emergency. In the future, Lincoln Littles plans to expand the service to include the Lincoln Community Learning Centers. Find out more at **LincolnLittles.org** or **ProsperLincoln.org**.

## Center News

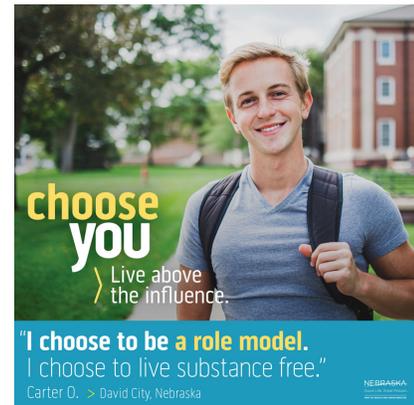
### New Grant Focuses on Building a Suicide-Safe Campus

With the help of a new \$102,000 grant and matching university funds, the PPC is partnering with Big Red Resilience and Well-Being at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to boost efforts towards building a suicide-safe campus. The effort aims to pick up activities interrupted by

the COVID pandemic while also bringing new areas—such as the role of substance abuse in suicide—into focus by creating events and opportunities for students in substance abuse recovery. The new grant also aims to develop a UNL-specific training program to teach warning signs of suicide and how to intervene, which can be adapted for a virtual setting to reach more Nebraskans. [Learn more.](#)

## National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month Opens 'Choose You' Campaign with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Behavioral Health's 'Choose You' Campaign launched in October as part of the National Youth Substance Use Prevention Month. The Center has been collaborating with DHHS on their substance use prevention efforts through training and promotional activities. Learn more at [dhhs.ne.gov/chooseyou](https://dhhs.ne.gov/chooseyou).



## Honorable Mentions

- Three staff members celebrated for their years of service at the University of Nebraska: senior research managers **Lisa PytlikZillig** (20 years) and **Stacey Hoffman** (15 years); and research specialist **Ashley Miller** (5 years).
- **Aiden Quinn** was honored as a UNMC College of Public Health Student Research Conference award winner for their research on the "Prevalence and Predictors of Chronic Health Diagnoses Among Transgender and Gender Diverse Nebraskan Adults."
- The Center hosted a crisis response workshop with **Dr. Mario Scalora** aimed to fortify first responders and mental health experts risk assessment skills. [Learn more.](#)
- **Dr. Denise Bulling** and **Quinn Lewandowski** joined the Rural Family and Wellness team which consists of individuals focusing on identifying effective strategies and resources to reduce family stress and promote wellness in rural communities. This team shares resources and identifies ways to collaborate and enact positive change in rural communities; particularly communities adversely impacted by stress. [Meet the team.](#)

## Community Resources

[Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention](#)

[National Suicide](#)

**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.



[Visit Our Website](#)

**Prevention Lifeline  
Call or Text 988**

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

**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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