

Preventing disease, promoting wellness, increasing access, and improving quality.

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## Your Monthly News & Updates - April 2017

Dear Colleagues:

You will see from this month's newsletter that there is a lot happening in April around infants, children, and youth in our own Maine communities as well as regionally and nationally. There are a variety of efforts you can help support, from getting a healthy start ([Infant Immunization Week](#)), to assuring safety through [alcohol awareness](#), to finding out how the children in your County or Public Health District rank compared to others in Maine on health-related behaviors and attitudes (alcohol use, tobacco use, youth bullying, nutrition, healthy behaviors, mental health, and more - [MIYHS](#)).

We also had the opportunity to present and network with colleagues at the [New England Genetics Collaborative \(NEGC\) Annual Meeting](#) earlier this month. Participants included regional leaders in clinical genetics and counseling, many of which provide vital planning, diagnostic and treatment services for expecting mothers, infants and children. In the photos below Danielle shares key considerations and model telegenetics programs, as well as networking with Dr. Daren Anderson from Community Health Center, Inc., who shared their innovative efforts around e-consultation and [Project ECHO](#). Our NETRC team ([Northeast Telehealth Resource Center](#)) looks forward to continuing to work with colleagues at the NEGC and Genetics leaders throughout the region as they look to incorporate telehealth applications as a tool to increase access to genetic services and resources.



Best Regards,  
Elizabeth Foley and Danielle Louder  
Co-Directors

# Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey

The Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey ([MIYHS](#)) is the result of collaboration between the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and the Maine Department of Education. Its purpose is to quantify the health of Kindergarten and Grade 3 students through parent interviews and the health-related behaviors and attitudes of 5th through 12th graders by direct student survey. Preliminary data indicates that over 350+ schools participated in the 2017 MIYHS through at least one of the four modules (Kindergarten and Third Grade Parent Survey, 5th and 6th Grade Student Survey, Middle School Student Survey (7th-8th grade), and High School Student Survey (9th-12th)! The importance of this fantastic participation cannot be understated. Preliminary reporting estimates show us breaking our record for participation counts again this year, which should result in more data being available at the County and Public Health District levels. All of this while battling through our most snow filled administration period yet! A huge thank you from the entire MIYHS team to participating schools, school staff, and students for the patience and willingness to still participate despite Mother Nature's best attempts to slow us down.



This data provides an in-depth look of the key issues that impact the health of school-aged students and should assist schools, communities, and state agencies as they engage in strategies to improve health and address important social issues within their community. To go along with that, the information gained from the MIYHS allows youth and adults a starting block for conversations by properly portraying the habits and risks of other youth in Maine. The data reports and a more complete participation will be released sometime in the fall, and more information will be announced closer to release!

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## Familiar Face - New Position



Some of you may recognize Ashley Lauze, MCD Public Health's new Quality Assurance Coordinator working with the Maine CDC's Immunization Program at the Key Bank Plaza in Augusta. Previously, Ashley was the Hypertension & Diabetes Specialist with the Maine CDC's Diabetes Unit and Cardiovascular Unit and was housed at MCD Public Health. In her new position, Ashley will be conducting compliance visits across the state to ensure that provider sites are complying with Federal regulations for vaccine storage and handling. She will also be providing educational support to providers and the public as needed. When asked about her new position, Ashley responded, "Immunization is something I am truly

interested in and passionate about, so it's really exciting for me."

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## April is Alcohol Awareness Month



Spring is finally here, and with it warmer weather. School sporting events and proms are taking place and graduation activities are being planned for the not so distant future. Now is a good time to address alcohol awareness with your kids. Make sure they know the dangers and consequences of underage drinking such as: more likely to use drugs, get bad grades, make bad decisions, engage in risky sexual activity, and suffer injury or death. You can make a difference in their lives, just start a

conversation. There are a number of National and State resources that can assist you in finding information on how to talk to your kids. Following are just a few:

<http://www.maineparents.net>

<http://healthylincolncounty.org/substance.html>

[https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/makeadiff\\_html/makediff.htm](https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/makeadiff_html/makediff.htm)

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# National Infant Immunization Week (April 22-29, 2017)

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is an annual observance to highlight the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and celebrate the achievements of immunization programs and their partners in promoting healthy communities. Since 1994, NIIW has been a way to focus attention on the benefits of maintaining high immunization rates in the community, state, and nationally. Hundreds of communities across the United States have joined together to celebrate the critical role vaccination plays in protecting our children, communities, and public health.



NIIW will be celebrated as part of World Immunization Week (WIW), an initiative of the World Health Organization (WHO). During WIW, all six WHO regions, including more than 180 Member States, territories, and areas, will simultaneously promote immunization, advance equity in the use of vaccines and universal access to vaccination services, and enable cooperation on cross-border immunization activities.

Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. They not only help protect vaccinated individuals, but also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious diseases. Among children born during 1994-2013, vaccination will prevent an estimated 322 million illnesses, 21 million hospitalizations, and 732,000 deaths over the course of their lifetimes.

Immunization is a shared responsibility. Families, healthcare professionals, and public health officials must work together to help protect the entire community. Healthcare professionals remain parents' most trusted source of information about vaccines for their children. They play a critical role in supporting parents in understanding and choosing vaccinations.

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## Mark Your Calendars!

**Taking Telehealth Mainstream (NETRC Regional Conference) - May 23 & 24, 2017**, Amherst, MA. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

**Community Cholesterol Screenings and Blood Pressure Measurement Trainings (2 Trainings Offered on the Same Day!) - June 15, 2017**, Medical Care Development, Augusta, ME. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

**New England Public Health Conference - Capturing the Emerging Issues of Community and Public Health - June 15 & 16, 2017**, The Colony Hotel, Kennebunkport, ME. Click here for more [information](#) and to [register](#).

**SAVE THE DATE - APHA's 2017 Annual Meeting & Expo - [Creating the Healthiest Nation: Climate Changes Health](#), November 4-8, 2017**, Atlanta, Georgia.

**SAVE THE DATE - Maine Cardiovascular Health Council's Annual Summit - [The Advancing Science in Cardiovascular Care](#), November 9, 2017**, Samoset Resort, Rockport, ME.

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