

# The Noble County Health Monitor

A monthly publication sponsored by the Noble County Health Department

## Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

In the United States, up to 19% of teens experience sexual or physical dating violence, about half face stalking or harassment, and as many as 65% report being psychologically abused (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, 2022). When adolescents start to explore dating, romance, and sex, a troubling number fall victim to violence. In many cases, violence can happen when young people don't yet have the skills to manage conflict, cope with feelings of jealousy, and navigate rejection. Those challenges have intensified with the rise of social media.

### Short- and long-term harm

Violence in teen relationships can take several forms. It can involve stalking or harassment, such as spying on a partner or monitoring private online activity without permission, or emotional aggression, such as threats, insults, or attempts to control. In cases of physical and sexual violence, one partner may physically harm another, force them to engage in sex acts against their will, or share intimate photos without consent. Gender differences exist in both victimization and perpetration, with males more likely to enact sexual violence and females more likely to enact mental and emotional violence. Research increasingly indicates that much of the violence in teen relationships is mutual, or perpetrated by both partners, though girls face a higher risk of sexual violence than do boys. In the long run, involvement with dating violence in adolescence predicts other high-risk behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use.

### The roots of violence

Psychologists have traditionally studied teen dating violence separately from other risks that affect adolescents, such as bullying, unprotected sex, and sexual harassment and violence that occur outside of relationships. But increasingly, research shows that those experiences are often linked, including studies of exposure to multiple forms of violence. Those various forms of violence share similar risk factors, including family violence and other adverse childhood experiences, as well as similar protective factors.

Psychologists are shining a light on the issue with research insights on risk and protective factors, as well as new approaches to prevention that prioritize skills and strengths. Promising interventions include training on emotion regulation and communication skills, bystander intervention and peer-led programs, and digital monitoring that can help predict teens' risk for real-world violence. Those efforts not only protect teens during a critical period of development but can reduce their risk for intimate partner violence later in life.

February 2024

February 14-  
Valentine's Day

February 19-  
President's Day

February 29-  
Leap Day

*Strive not  
to be of  
success, but  
rather to be  
of value.  
-Albert Einstein*

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For more health  
information  
contact:

Noble County  
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[www.noblecohd.org](http://www.noblecohd.org)

## Interesting Fact

Without leap day, our calendar would be off by about 24 days every century, or every 100 years! **The first leap year was introduced in 46 BCE by Julius Caesar of Rome.** People born on a Leap Day are sometimes called leaplings. More than 4 million people around the world are leaplings.

## Children's Dental Health

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. Cavities, also known as caries or tooth decay, are the most common chronic disease of childhood, yet cavities are preventable. Learn how you can protect your child's teeth from cavities with these resources. Untreated cavities can cause pain, infections, and can lead to problems eating, speaking, and learning. More than 1 in 5 children aged 2 to 5 years has at least one cavity in their baby teeth. Children from low-income families are more than twice as likely to have untreated cavities, compared with children from higher-income households. However, cavities are preventable. You can protect and maintain your child's teeth by following these P-E-A-R-L-S of wisdom steps below:



**Protect** tiny teeth by caring for your mouth when you're pregnant. Your child's future oral health starts with you.

**Ensure** to wipe your baby's gums after each meal.

**Avoid** putting babies to bed with a bottle.

**Remember** to brush your child's teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste. For children younger than 2 years, consult with your dentist or doctor about when to start using fluoride toothpaste.

**Limit** drinks and food with added sugars for children. Encourage your child to eat more fruits and vegetables and have fewer fruit drinks, cookies, and candies. This gives your child the best possible start to good oral health.

**Schedule** your child's first dental visit by their first birthday or after their first tooth appears. Their tiny teeth matter!

## Kindness Matters

Celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Week from February 11 to February 17. It's a celebration of all the ways we can become a positive influence in each other's lives. Even one small act of kindness can mean a great deal to somebody. The world can be selfish and cruel sometimes and not everyone receives the same kind of support they need. In such a world, it is important for us to constantly be reminded to be kind to one another and to give others hope whenever we can. A small and random gesture of kindness can go a long way.

### Practice a random act of kindness

Your kindness might make a world of difference to somebody. This is the best week for you to show your support for the cause and help out someone in need.

### Read a wholesome story

Anne Herbert's children's book "Random Kindness and Senseless Acts of Beauty" is the book that started it all. Read her beautiful stories about how a single being can help change others' lives.

IN A  
WORLD  
WHERE  
YOU CAN  
BE  
ANYTHING

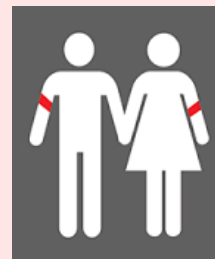
be  
kind

### Inspire others

Encourage others to spread kindness by talking about this week on social media or in their circle of friends. The more people who get behind the kindness cause, the more we can do to change the world.

## Blood Drive

The American Red Cross Bloodmobile will be at the Noble County Community Center on Thursday, March 27 from 10 am to 4pm. There is also a scheduled blood drive March 14 from 8am to 2pm at the Summerfield VFD.



**Help save a life.**  
Schedule your  
blood donation  
appointment today.

## Come Join Us

Living with Cancer, is a free support group for residents of Noble County and surrounding communities who are currently in treatment for any type of cancer or who have completed treatment.



Join us every third Thursday of the month at 6pm at the Noble County Health Department, 44069 Marietta Road, park behind the building. A licensed social worker from Cancer Support Community Central Ohio will lead each of the one-hour sessions.

Register at: [Cancersupportohio.org/NCHD](http://Cancersupportohio.org/NCHD).

## Take Action for Your Heart

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, but it can often be prevented. Adopting a heart-healthy lifestyle can help you reduce the risk of heart disease and its risk factors. Take action to protect your heart by following these tips.

**Get Enough Quality Sleep** Lack of sleep or getting poor-quality sleep increases the risk of having high blood pressure, heart disease, and other medical conditions. Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day and try to aim for 7-9 hours of sleep a night.

**Eat Better** A flexible and balanced eating plan can help lower your high blood pressure and improve your cholesterol. Follow the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan, which can help you create a heart healthy eating style for life. Read nutrition labels to pick the food lowest in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars. Try a mix of lean cuts of meat, eat fish once or twice a week, and eat two or more meatless meals each week.

**Maintain a Healthy Weight** Maintaining a healthy weight is important for overall health and can help you prevent and control many diseases and conditions. Choose healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables, yogurt, or nuts, instead of sugary or high-calorie snacks. Stay hydrated with water as your primary beverage.

**Be More Active** Getting enough physical activity helps to lower your risk of heart disease and stroke. Adults should spend at least 150 minutes each week doing physical activity. Try muscle-strengthening activities like lifting weights, working with resistance bands, doing sit-ups and pushups, or some forms of yoga—whatever works for you.

**Stop Smoking** Any amount of smoking, even light or occasional smoking, damages your heart and blood vessels. Talk with your healthcare provider about programs and products that can help you quit. Join a support group. Many hospitals, workplaces, and community groups offer classes to help people quit smoking. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW and visit [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov) to get additional support.

**Control Cholesterol** Unhealthy levels of cholesterol can lead to high cholesterol, which increases the risk of developing heart disease. Eat a heart-healthy diet that is low in saturated fats, as these can raise LDL cholesterol levels. Limit alcohol consumption. Drinking too much alcohol—more than two drinks a day for men or one drink a day for women—can raise your total cholesterol level.

**Manage Stress** Learning how to manage stress with healthy coping strategies helps improve your emotional and physical health. Use relaxation techniques that combine breathing and focused attention on pleasing thoughts and images to calm the mind and body. Consider meditation, as it can help to lower stress.

**Manage Blood Sugar** Maintaining stable blood sugar levels is crucial for heart health, especially for people with diabetes or those at risk of developing diabetes. Eat a diet rich in whole foods, including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Monitor your carbohydrate intake and choose complex carbohydrates, like whole grains and legumes, to help control blood sugar levels. Talk to your healthcare provider about how often you should check your blood sugar levels, especially if you have diabetes.

**Control Blood Pressure** Keep your blood pressure in a healthy range and keep track of your numbers. Have your blood pressure checked each time you visit the doctor. Use a blood pressure monitor to measure your blood pressure at home and learn how to measure it correctly. If you're pregnant or planning to be, it's especially important to keep your blood pressure in a healthy range.

**Practice Self-Care & Find Social Support** Daily acts of self-care can benefit your heart because self-care is heart care. Studies show that having positive social support, close relationships, and feeling connected to others makes it easier to stick to heart-healthy habits. Try to do at least one positive action for your heart health each day.



### *Have an upcoming event?*

If you would like it in the monthly health monitor please contact Samantha Hesson at 740-732-4958 or [Samantha.Hesson@noblecohd.org](mailto:Samantha.Hesson@noblecohd.org).

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