

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Family & Community Health “Connections” in Taylor County



September is National Suicide Prevention Month

Stronger Together: Connect. Support. Prevent.

Suicide prevention is not one moment or one person's job. It lives in the relationships we build, the support we offer, and the communities we create together. This article highlights the importance of:

Strengthening connections that protect people before a crisis occurs
Making sure everyone knows where to turn and knows it before they need it
Building communities where people feel safe reaching out for help
Supporting recovery and healing long after a crisis has ended

Suicide prevention touches every part of life – from families and schools to workplaces, faith communities, and health care systems. When people feel connected, valued, and supported, they are more likely to seek help. And when communities come together around a shared commitment to prevention, lives are saved.

September 1-6: Cultivating Connection Nationwide: Strengthen Suicide Prevention Together

- The people in our lives can be a lifeline. Strong relationships and trusted connections help protect people when life gets hard.
- Suicide prevention starts long before a crisis. Open conversations, shared resources, and visible awareness make a real difference.
- Knowing the warning signs of suicide, in adults and in children and teens, means being able to recognize when someone needs support and connect them to help sooner.
- Communities that talk openly about mental health and suicide help reduce the stigma that keeps people from asking for help.
- Prevention is everyone's responsibility, not just one organization's. Families, schools, workplaces, faith communities, health systems, and individuals all have a role to play.
- Small acts of connection, such as a check-in, a shared resource, a moment of genuine attention, are how communities take care of each other.

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September 7- 13: Support Saves Lives: Connecting People to Crisis Support and Resources

- 988 is there for anyone who is struggling, not only for people in a full crisis. Feeling overwhelmed or in emotional pain is reason enough to reach out.
- A real person answers every call, text, and chat to 988. The support is free, confidential, and available any time of day or night.
- 988 is available in Spanish, for Veterans, for deaf and hard of hearing callers via ASL Videophone and chat, and in more than 150 languages. Help is there for everyone.
- Knowing about 988 before you need it, and sharing it with the people in your life, is one of the most important things any of us can do.
- Crisis care goes beyond 988. Mobile crisis teams, stabilization centers, and community behavioral health clinics are part of a network that helps people through their hardest moments.
- Reaching out early, to a trusted person, a provider, or 988, before things reach a breaking point leads to better outcomes and more paths forward.

September 14-20: Building Communities of Care Through Connection

- Treatment works. People who receive timely, compassionate care for suicidal thoughts or behaviors can and do heal.
- A safety plan gives people something to hold onto in their hardest moments: warning signs to watch for, coping strategies, people to call, and 988.
- Suicide prevention should be part of everyday health care, not only a crisis response. Screening, planning, and follow-ups belong in routine care.
- The days after someone leaves a hospital or emergency room are among the most difficult. Follow-up care and a call within 72 hours can change everything. Suicide prevention is possible.
- Getting care early, before a crisis escalates, is one of the most powerful things health care can do for someone who is struggling.
- Connection, planning, and follow-up care make a real difference. When these pieces work together, they save lives.

September 21 - 30: Healing Together: Supporting Recovery, Families, and Communities

- People come through crisis. They survive loss. They find their way back. Healing is possible.
- Those who have lived through suicidal crisis or a suicide loss carry something that matters – insight, resilience, and stories that make prevention more human and more hopeful.
- Being there for someone after a loss or an attempt isn't just an act of kindness. It is a form of prevention.
- Real change starts with real voices. Peer support, and connection with others who have been through something similar, is part of how recovery happens.
- Schools, workplaces, and communities with a plan in place after a suicide loss can respond with care, support healing, and help prevent further harm.
- Dignity starts with being heard. When people feel respected and valued, they are more likely to seek help and stay connected to care.
- September is one month. The commitment to connection, support, and healing is for all year long.

Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov>

Family Mealtime

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service celebrates September as Family Mealtime to encourage gathering around the table for better health and family connection.



Benefits of Family Mealtime

- **Better Nutrition:** Children who share regular meals with their families consume more fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods.
- **Social and Emotional Growth:** Eating together is linked to higher grades, better self-esteem, and stronger communication skills.
- **Healthy Habits:** Cooking and eating at home helps everyone make more balanced food choices.

Week 1: Family Dinner Week Challenge! Commit to having dinner together as a family at least 4 times this week.

Week 2: Tech-Free Table Challenge! This week, make dinner a screen-free zone. Turn off the phones, TVs, and tablets, and focus on each other.

Week 3: Dinner Conversation Challenge! Spice up your family meals with fun conversation starters. Ask your kids about their day, favorite hobbies, or dreams for the future.

Week 4: Kid Cooks Week Challenge! Let your kids take the lead in planning and preparing one meal this week. Whether they help with the chopping or the cooking, get them involved in the kitchen.

Week 5: Clean-Up Crew Challenge! Make cleaning up after dinner a family affair! Assign each family member a task—whether it's clearing the table or washing the dishes.

Source: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Family Mealtime



September is Library Card Sign-Up Month

No matter what your tastes are, a library card hits all the right notes!

Check out a classic story or hit shuffle and try something new.

Find harmony at your library's book clubs, movie nights, crafting classes, and author talks. A headphone kind of day? Find your focus in a study room or vibe out in a cozy nook. Compose your future with new skills in your library's makerspace or check out instruments and tools at your local library. No matter what rhythm you find yourself in, there's a seat in the front row at the library for you. Libraries offer so much for our communities, but they need our support to stay strong and provide the services many of us rely on every day. Library Card Sign-up Month is a great time to get involved with and support your local library and libraries everywhere. Here are some ways you can help:

Get a Library Card

A library card gives a front row seat to all that today's libraries offer, including free access to books (including e-books and audiobooks), music, movies, computers, homework help, assistance with resumes and job searches, adult education courses, programs, and much more.

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Join Your Friends of the Library Group

Calling all library lovers! Make a bigger impact for your library by joining your Friends of the Library group. These dedicated volunteers advocate for libraries, raise funds, sponsor events, and host used book sales. Friends can literally make the difference between a budget increase or cut for their libraries. If you haven't joined a Friends group, contact your local library and find out how to join. If your library doesn't have one, consider starting one!

Attend a Library Program

From author talks and crafting classes to book clubs, storytimes, nature walks, and so much more, libraries offer free and engaging programs that enrich the lives of everyone in their communities. Check out your library's event calendar to see what's coming up near you!

Become a Supporter of ALA

The American Library Association is the largest non-partisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to America's libraries. ALA empowers and advocates for all libraries and library workers to ensure equitable access to information for all.

Source: <https://ilovelibraries.org/librarycard/>

Sourdough September

The Real Bread Campaign's annual, celebration of genuine sourdough bread and people who make it.

The ninth month of the year is when we go on a mission to help everyone discover that: life's sweeter with sourdough! Launched in 2013, the main aims of #SourdoughSeptember are encouraging people to:

- Bake genuine sourdough bread.
- Buy genuine sourdough bread from small, independent bakeries.
- Boost the Real Bread Campaign, run by the charity behind Sourdough September.

For 12 months of the year, the Campaign promotes Real Bread in general, with September being a focal point for sourdough in particular.

Sourdough September is run as an opportunity for genuine sourdough bakers and baking teachers to showcase what they do.

Genuine sourdough bread is made to rise using only a starter culture of yeasts and 'friendly' lactic acid bacteria. These live all around us, including on the surface of cereal grains, so they end up in flour. Here's how to nurture them to become your very own living, burping, breadmaking buddy.

Ingredients: Flour and tap water. That's all. You might get better results with wholemeal flour as on the bran is where more microbes hang out. Rye flour tends to work really well. A plastic container with a press-on lid makes a good lair for your dough monster.



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Days one to five(ish): Each day, drop equal weights flour and water (say 30g of each) into your container, mix, and pop the lid on and leave at room temperature for 24 hours. Some bakers call this feeding or refreshing.

Day six(ish): Keep up the daily feeds until your dough monster is burping and bubbling nicely. This usually takes from about four to seven days. You can then use some of it to make sourdough bread according to your chosen recipe.

Caring for your dough monster: It's a living thing but unlike pets or members of your household, it can be left to its own devices in the fridge. You just need to take it out and refresh it on the day before a sourdough session. Don't worry if the flour settles, leaving a layer of brownish liquid on the top - it's just gravity doing it's thing. If you leave your monster out at room temperature, it will need refreshing at least once a day, so best not to unless you're baking every day or so.

Virtual bread: You can find free recipes, information about sourdough, sourfaux, and a load more stuff on the Real Bread Campaign website. That includes the Real Bread Map of places to buy bread when you're not making your own!

Source: www.realbreadcampaign.org

Taylor County News



REMINDER!

**4-H ENROLLMENT
IS STILL OPEN!**

YOUTH ENROLLMENT

\$25 BY OCTOBER 31

\$30 AFTER OCTOBER 31

ADULT VOLUNTEERS

\$10

➡ **Enroll Online Today!**

 <https://tx4h.tamu.edu/>

LEARN BY DOING • LEAD BY EXAMPLE • MAKE THE BEST BETTER

**Family & Community Health "Connections" is provided
by the following Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service**

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