

# GCSSD Coordinated School Health

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This newsletter has been designed to give students, staff, parents, and the community important information and updates regarding the GCSSD Coordinated School Health Office. I hope you find this newsletter helpful.

GCSSD Faculty, Staff, Students, Parents, and Community,

Happy May! It is hard to believe that we are in the last month of school for the year! It has been another busy year, but we have accomplished many things in leading students, staff, parents, and the community in becoming healthier.

Please see inside this month's newsletter for more information on this summer's CSH events, health observances, Here 4 TN – Employee Assistance Program, Nutrition, and Physical activity.

Hope you all have a healthy end to the school year and a great summer! If I can ever be of assistance to you, please let me know.

Thanks,  
Amy Richardson  
GCSSD CSH Coordinator



## Important Dates

**May 7 – CSH End of Year Report Due**

**May 10 – Second Harvest Summer Backpack Program Food Pick up**

**June 1 – CSH District Application Due**

**June 1- Online Professional Development will be available**

**June 11- 13 - TN Teen Institute (TTI) Staff Training Dates**

**June 13 – 17 – TN Teen Institute (TTI) Camp at UTM**

**June 14-18 - "Active Students, Active Learners: Virtual PD Week"**

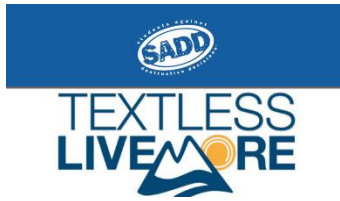
**June 21 - Second Harvest Summer Backpack Program Food Pick up**

**June 23 – TN Health Education & Lifetime Wellness Professional Development**

**July 8 – Health Council Meeting**

# April Highlights

## NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH



GCSSD High School Students were asked to take the pledge to never text, post, stream, or engage in any form of digital distraction behind the wheel. The pledge states “I take this pledge to save lives, prevent tragic crashes, and make the roads safe for everyone. I pledge to step out from behind my screen and Live More every day.”

### When asked for one reason to not drive distracted students responded:

You could kill someone by simply sending a Snapchat.

Because you could end up getting into a crash and harming yourself and/or others, and someone might even end up dying because of your carelessness.

You can seriously injure an animal, another person, or even yourself.

You can answer whoever you're trying to message, or whatever it is you're trying to do on your phone later.

You are greatly decreasing the chance of you having a wreck and hurting yourself and others.

My life is more valuable than any notification.

It will harm not just you but other people on the road.

To keep the roads safe and prevent tragic accidents.

Driving distracted is not only dangerous for you but everyone AROUND you! Just like wearing a mask prevents Covid, staying off your phone in the car prevents crashes!

Because you don't want to be the reason some else loses their life.

To keep yourself and everyone else on or off the road safe.

You are 23 more times likely to wreck driving distracted; causing other people lives to be in harm.

It can harm the driver, passenger, and/or someone else. A few minutes of distraction is not worth the guilt, regret, and consequences it can come with.

It can not only harm yourself but cause harm to others around you and even if you're never in an accident you're taking and unnecessary risk every time you do.

You could endanger others when driving distracted.

Because everyone's life in the car depends on you and driving distracted puts everyone in danger and risks their lives.

## May Special Events

### Screen Free Week – May 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>



Celebrate Screen Free Week 2021 by unplugging for one day, shutting off your phone at dinner time, spending more time outdoors, or taking the whole week to only use screens for work and school. Take time to enjoy some serious offline fun!

## National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

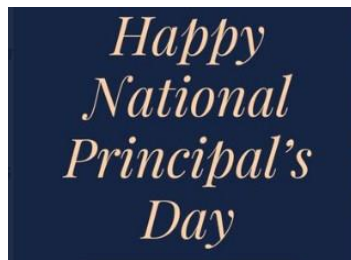


May is National Physical Fitness & Sports Month! The President's Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition is excited to encourage everyone to go play and #MoveInMay. Grab a ball, hit the track, pick up a racket, take a dive, or whatever else inspires you to play. There are so many ways to get active in sports. Choose 1 and have fun!

## May Health Observances Cont.

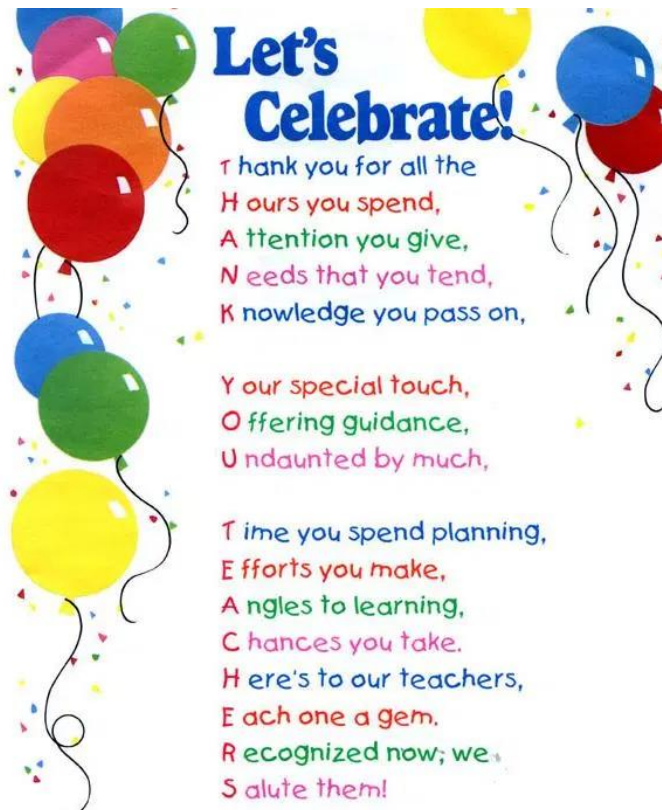
GCSSD CSH thanks School Principals and Teachers for being healthy role models.

### SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' DAY – May 1



On May 1, remember to take the time to thank the educational leaders of the school on School Principals' Day. Throughout the school year, these educators assume the commitment to lead our young people to a prosperous future. They support and guide quality teachers and staff resulting in productive learning environments for our children.

### TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK – May 2-8



Teachers change the lives of millions of children every day, and their work and impact extend far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. They play a pivotal role in our children's lives, inspiring a lifelong love of learning and discovery and making a difference in their well-being and long-term success.

## **NATIONAL SCHOOL NURSE DAY**



School nurses are one of the first lines of medical professionals to ensure the health and mental well-being of school going children and young adults. They are also responsible for monitoring that children in schools are achieving their developmental milestones as well as ensuring that their lives outside the school are safe and healthy.

School Nurses within GCSSD have a high return to class ratio which helps our students to be able to learn academically while having their physical needs met. They also assist with yearly health screenings and immunization clinics among other day to day activities of helping students stay healthy.

This year more than ever, GCSSD CSH is very thankful for School Nurses who help to accomplish CSH goals and bridge the gap between health and academics.

# May Health Observances Cont.

## Mental Health Month



Starting in the 2020-2021 school year, GCSSD saw the need for a Mental Health Coordinator and Alicia Ladd was chosen to fill this position. The responsibilities of this include providing a full range of services to students who need additional mental health support. The Coordinator partners with school administrators, school counselors, educators, and community resources to help develop and implement support plans for identified students throughout the year. Responsibilities focus on developing and organizing the GCSSD's MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) framework to align with the State of Tennessee's overarching goal of providing mental health supports to students.

Here is information Alicia Ladd compiled and wanted to share on the importance of mental health for students:

The effects of COVID continue to dominate the headlines. It is inevitable that the global pandemic, compounded by financial crisis, will have a substantial impact on the mental health of our community. These challenging situations are causing more adults and youth to report increased levels of anxiety, stress, and overall mental discomfort.

For students, going to school is not just about education, it is also about developing the social and emotional skills critical to succeeding in life. School closures and restricted on-campus activities eliminated some of these critically important aspects of school beyond academic instruction, such as the development that occurred through personal relationships among students and between students and teachers. Suddenly, some students no longer had [in-person](#) access to school counselors or programs that supported their mental and emotional well-being and skills development. Research has long shown the need and benefit of social-emotional learning in the curriculum, but the pandemic sharpened that focus. The sudden need for young people of all ages to adapt to uncertain and rapidly changing circumstances made it all the more urgent to address this disparity among what [all of us](#) could understand about the breadth of skills critical to child development. For example, resilience—the ability to adapt to and thrive in different situations—along with persistence and self-control have gained new recognition as important life skills during the past year.

Chronic stress changes the chemical and physical structures of the brain, impairing cognitive skills like attention, concentration, memory, and creativity. It is necessary that [we as](#) educators recognize the stress and trauma that students are experiencing. [We can accomplish](#) this by focusing on relationships before academic content. Teachers [and counselors](#) can act as a powerful buffer against the adverse effects of trauma by helping to create safe and supportive learning environments for all their students. By making the investment of support, commitment, and care for our students right now, we will be building the foundation for a hopeful and viable future.

### References

Challenge Success (2020). Challenge Success-Stanford Survey of Adolescent School Experiences.

Kaiser Family Foundation (2021). How COVID-19 pandemic is affecting people's mental health and substance use.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), (2017). Eighth-grade reading sample microdata from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. Chart adapted from Figure D in García, Weiss, and Engdahl, 2020

# May Health Observances Cont.

## Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month



Megan Sanford – GCSSD Prevention Specialist

**The Gibson County Special School District has successfully operated a State of Tennessee Abstinence Education Grant since 2011. The goal of our abstinence education program was to provide comprehensive, evidence-based, and medically accurate services to students in grades 6-12. In order to accomplish this goal several objectives were established: deliver the state approved Real Essentials curriculum to student in all five middle schools and two high schools; reinforce abstinence decisions by building relationships between participants/staff in small group settings; provide service learning opportunities; and lastly, encourage the participation of parents through parent information sessions and/or workshops.**

As a result of this program we are improving the previous statistics of **Teen Pregnancy Rate** of **15.2** per 1000 Females, aged 15-17, in 2014 to a rate of **13** per 1000 Females, aged 15-17 in 2019. **That is a decrease of 2.2 in 5 years.**

**This improvement will help with the following:**

Giving birth during the teen years has been linked with increased medical risks as well as emotional, social, and financial struggles costs to the mother and her children.

Becoming a teen mom affects whether the mother finishes high school, goes to college, and the type of job she will get, especially for younger teens ages 15 to 17.

Only about 50% of teen mothers receive a high school diploma by 22 years of age, whereas approximately 90% of women who do not give birth during adolescence graduate from high school.

## Second Harvest/Enterprise Summer Backpack Feeding Program Grant



GCSSD is happy to report that we have been selected to participate in the Second Harvest Summer Backpack Feeding Program.

This grant is funded by the “Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation” and will provide food for 100 students in our district this summer.

Food will be sent home with eligible students attending the Summer Learning Camp or may be picked up with food from the cafeteria at Dyer School or South Gibson County Elementary School (SGCES).

Priority will be given to students who participate in the Backpack Program during the school year but if you know of a student who could use this food let us know.

# Action for Happiness Calendar: Meaningful May

**This month's theme is all about reflecting on what gives our life meaning.** Being a part of something bigger than ourselves or focusing on things that we value is key to our wellbeing. Take time to reflect on what you care about this month.

Meaningful May 2021

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 Make a list of what matters most to you and why	2 Do something kind for someone you really care about	3 Focus on what you can do rather than what you can't do	4 Take a step towards an important goal, however small	5 Send your friend a photo from a time you enjoyed together	6 Look for people doing good and reasons to be cheerful	7 Let someone know how much they mean to you and why
8 Set yourself a kindness mission to help others today	9 Notice the beauty in nature, even if you're stuck indoors	10 What values are important to you? Find ways to use them today	11 Be grateful for the little things, even in difficult times	12 Listen to a favourite piece of music and remember what it means to you	13 Look around for things that bring you a sense of awe and wonder	14 Find out about the values or traditions of another culture
15 Do something to contribute to your local community	16 Look up at the sky. Remember we are all part of something bigger	17 Show your gratitude to people who are helping to make things better	18 Find a way to make what you do today meaningful	19 Send a hand-written note to someone you care about	20 Reflect on what makes you feel valued and purposeful	21 Share photos of 3 things you find meaningful or memorable
22 Find a way to help a project or charity you care about	23 Share a quote you find inspiring to give others a boost	24 Recall three things you've done that you are proud of	25 Make choices that have a positive impact for others today	26 Ask someone else what matters most to them and why	27 Remember an event in your life that was really meaningful	28 Focus on how your actions make a difference for others
29 Do something special and revisit it in your memory tonight	30 Today do something to care for the natural world	31 Find three reasons to be hopeful about the future				

**ACTION FOR HAPPINESS**
**Happier · Kinder · Together**

[https://www.actionforhappiness.org/media/1008648/may\\_2021.jpg](https://www.actionforhappiness.org/media/1008648/may_2021.jpg)

## Physical Activity Resources

### Active Students, Active Learners



<https://www.tn.gov/education/active-academics.html>

### Move to Learn



<https://movetolearnms.org/for-the-classroom/>

### Go Noodle



<https://www.gonoodle.com/>

## ***Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025***

<https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>



The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025* provides advice on what to eat and drink to meet nutrient needs, promote health, and help prevent chronic disease. This edition of the *Dietary Guidelines* is the first to provide guidance for healthy dietary patterns by life stage, from birth through older adulthood.

### **Top 10 Things You Need to Know About the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025***

**1** The *Dietary Guidelines* is developed to help all Americans. The *Dietary Guidelines* is based on scientific evidence on health-promoting diets in people who represent the general U.S. population, including those who are healthy, those at risk for diet-related diseases, and those living with these diseases.

**2** There are 4 overarching Guidelines in the 2020-2025 edition:

- Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage.
- Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense food and beverage choices to reflect personal preferences, cultural traditions, and budgetary considerations.
- Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods and beverages, and stay within calorie limits.
- Limit foods and beverages higher in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium, and limit alcoholic beverages.

**3** There are Key Recommendations supporting the 4 Guidelines, including quantitative recommendations on limits that are based on the body of science reviewed. The Guidelines recommend:

- Limiting added sugars\* to less than 10% of calories per day for ages 2 and older and to avoid added sugars for infants and toddlers;
- Limiting saturated fat to less than 10% of calories per day starting at age 2;
- Limiting sodium intake to less than 2,300mg per day (or even less if younger than 14);
- Limiting alcoholic beverages\* (if consumed) to 2 drinks or less a day for men and 1 drink or less a day for women.

\* The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025* recommend limiting intakes of added sugars and alcoholic beverages, but do not include changes to quantitative recommendations from the 2015-2020 *Dietary Guidelines* for these two topics, because the new evidence reviewed since the 2015-2020 edition is [not substantial enough to support changes](#) to the quantitative recommendations for either added sugars or alcohol.

**4** This is the first time the *Dietary Guidelines* has provided guidance by stage of life, from birth to older adulthood, including pregnancy and lactation. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025* provides guidance across all the life stages and is organized by chapters for each life stage. The edition also emphasizes that it is never too early or too late to eat healthy!

**5** This edition has a call to action: “Make Every Bite Count with the *Dietary Guidelines*.” The *Dietary Guidelines, 2020-2025* focuses on choosing healthy foods and beverages rich in nutrients and staying within your calorie limit. Which is why the *Dietary Guidelines* calls on every American to Make Every Bite Count!

**6** Making choices rich in nutrients should be the first choice. There is very little leeway for extra calories from added sugars, saturated fats, and if consumed, alcohol. Most of the calories a person eats each day (~85%) are needed for foods rich in nutrients that help the person meet food group recommendations. Only a small amount of calories (~15%) are left over for added sugars, saturated fat, and, (if consumed) alcohol.

**7** It’s about the pattern of eating, not just healthy choices here and there. The *Dietary Guidelines* focuses on the combination of foods and beverages that make up an individual’s whole diet over time, and not single foods or eating occasions in isolation. Research shows that the ongoing pattern of an individual’s eating habits has the greatest impact on their health.

**8** Most Americans still do not follow the *Dietary Guidelines*. The average American diet scores a 59 out of 100 on the Healthy Eating Index (HEI), which measures how closely a diet aligns with the *Dietary Guidelines*. Research shows that higher HEI scores can improve Americans health.

**9** There are 3 Key Dietary Principles that can help people achieve the *Dietary Guidelines*. To help improve Americans’ eating patterns, the *Dietary Guidelines* suggests:

- Meet nutritional needs primarily from foods and beverages.
- Choose a variety of options from each food group.
- Pay attention to portion size.

**10** The *Dietary Guidelines* is meant to be adaptable to personal preferences, cultural foodways and budgetary considerations. The *Dietary Guidelines* framework purposely provides recommendations by food groups and subgroups—not specific foods and beverages—to avoid being prescriptive. This framework approach ensures that people can “make it their own” by selecting healthy foods, beverages, meals, and snacks specific to their needs and preferences.

## **COVID-19 Emotional Support Line for Tennessee Educators Adds Text Message Capability**



Tennessee’s Emotional Support Line for Pandemic Stress is adding a new method for people to reach out for help. The free and confidential line now has the capability to offer assistance via text message.

Tennessee healthcare workers, first responders, and all Tennesseans working in education, including educators and district and school administrators and staff, dealing with feelings of stress, anxiety, sadness, or depression related to work can now call or text the Emotional Support Line at 888-642-7886 from 6 a.m.- 10 p.m. CT daily.

Specially trained mental health professionals who answer calls or respond to texts through the line can provide emotional support through active listening, help identify and address basic needs, and reference tools for managing stress and planning for self-care.

“Throughout this pandemic, we’ve seen self-reported symptoms of anxiety and depression at double the rate we’d expect in normal times, and we know this crisis has been much harder on our essential workers. We’re hopeful that this new text message capability will remove some of the stigma of asking for help and encourage more people to reach out,” said Marie Williams, LCSW, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

“District and school leaders, staff, and educators continue to face significant challenges due to COVID-19, and this new feature provides the opportunity for easier access to much-needed mental health resources,” said Tennessee Education Commissioner Penny Schwinn. “We are grateful to our state partners for continuing this critical support and providing additional access to free and confidential mental health services for our front-line workers, including the classroom heroes who are educating our children.”

For more information on the Emotional Support Line for Pandemic Stress, visit this link on TN.gov: [TN.gov: TN.gov/behavioral-health/emotional-support](https://tn.gov/behavioral-health/emotional-support)

# Staff Wellness



## Here 4 TN – Employee Assistance Program

Some days we can all use a little help. Wouldn't it be nice to have a personal assistant to help you with your busy life? Good news! You have one with Here4TN.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here to help you, and your family, get the most out of life. We're ready to help with the small questions and the big problems, and everything in-between, such as:

- Managing stress
- Improving relationships at home or work
- Addressing legal and financial concerns
- Getting the most out of your career
- Finding child development, childcare or elder care resources
- Getting past emotional issues or grief
- Addressing depression, anxiety or substance use issues

This service is confidential and our EAP Specialists are available 24/7. They can provide you immediate help or direct you to one of our network for providers for a no-cost, face-to-face consultation.

Speak with the advisors at Here4TN privately, on the phone or online. They will search and verify services for you, giving you answers to questions big and small.

Call anytime, day or night

855-Here4TN

(855-437-3486)

<https://www.here4tn.com/>

### GCSSD Wellness Plan Updated

The GCSSD Wellness Plan was recently updated and contains pertinent information on the topics of nutrition and physical activity. It can be found on the GCSSD CSH website. As part of this we are asking students, families, and school staff to help in these areas.

#### SMART SNACK IDEAS

Fresh vegetables (sacks of carrot/celery sticks, broccoli, cauliflower)

Fresh fruits (sacks of apples, bananas, grapes, oranges, strawberries)

Apple sauce

Raisins

Fruit roll ups

Twizzlers

Fruit gummies

Crackers

String cheese

Cubed cheese

Go-Gurt yogurt

Rice Krispie Treats

Reduced Fat Chips

Jello or Pudding

All foods should meet the Smart Snacks guidelines and this can be verified using the Smart Snacks Calculator at

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>

**Please note most of our schools sell snacks and those that do make sure these snacks meet the health requirements.**

**Also, we do not sell and ask you not to send any products containing nuts.** Please check the labels on ALL foods (even the ones listed above). Manufacturing practices change, sometimes daily. If an item contains peanuts, peanut oil, nuts, or nut oil, or has a statement as "May contain traces of ...." or "Made on equipment that manufactures or processes ...." or "Made in a facility that manufactures it is not considered safe.

#### CELEBRATIONS AND PARTIES

For celebrations and parties to ensure that all foods served to children are safe and sanitary, all items served at school parties must be purchased rather than homemade and individually wrapped or from a secured sealed package with nutrition label included. Therefore, we will not accept cupcakes, donuts, etc. from Walmart and/or local bakeries.

**Healthy School Teams have updated the Wellness Plan Assessments for each school. These can be found on the GCSSD website.**

<https://www.gcssd.org/page/coordinated-school-health>

**We are also working on the District Level Wellness Plan Assessment and this will be available on the website as well.**