

Osage Health Newsletter

LATEST HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWS, ACTIVITIES, AND HAPPENINGS

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Health & Wellness Topics

The very latest of a variety of Health & Wellness topics happening today.

Oklahoma's Infant Sleep Deaths Account for Over Half the National Average



Photo: @istock / Credit: Love portrait and love the world

Protecting Our Little Ones: Safe Sleep for Native Families

October is National Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month — a time to come together as families, caregivers, and communities to protect our most precious lives.

Across the United States, families still lose babies unexpectedly to Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) — which includes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and accidental suffocation during sleep.

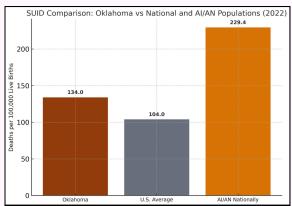
But here in Oklahoma, the reality is especially alarming: our state accounts for more than half of all SIDS-related infant deaths nationwide.

For Native American and Alaska Native families, the risk is even higher. Nationally, Native infants die from SUID at a rate of about 229 deaths per 100,000 births — nearly three times higher than white infants. These losses ripple through families and tribal communities, leaving deep emotional scars that remind us why awareness and prevention are so critical.

Why Native Families Are Affected More

There's no single cause, but several factors can increase risk, including:

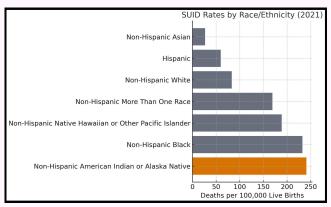
- Crowded or shared sleeping spaces
- Limited access to cribs or bassinets
- Less access to prenatal and postpartum education
- Cultural practices like co-sleeping, rooted in love and closeness, that may not align with modern safety guidelines



2022 Oklahoma SIDS related deaths made up over half of SIDS related deaths Nationwide (Source: CDC)

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Oklahoma's Infant Sleep Deaths Account for Over Half the National Average



SIDS related deaths nationwide for 2021 demonstrate higher rate for Native Americans (Source: CDC)

These challenges do not mean parents are doing something wrong. They highlight the need for more support, education, and culturally sensitive resources to help families make safe choices.

The ABCs of Safe Sleep

Health experts and tribal health programs recommend remembering the ABCs:

A - Alone: Baby sleeps alone in a crib or bassinet.

B - Back: Always place baby on their back to sleep.

C - Crib: Use a firm, flat mattress with no pillows, blankets, or toys.

If your family practices co-sleeping, talk with your healthcare provider or tribal nurse about safer options like bedside sleepers, baby boxes, or mesh bassinets. Simple Ways to Keep Baby Safe

 Keep baby smoke-free. Avoid smoking or vaping during pregnancy and near your baby.

 Share your room, not your bed. Roomsharing helps you respond quickly while

keeping baby safe.

 Breastfeed if possible. Breastfeeding lowers the risk of SIDS and supports healthy development.

 Dress baby lightly. Avoid overheating or heavy blankets.

• Use a firm, flat sleep surface. No soft mattresses, pillows, or couches.

 Keep up with well-baby visits and immunizations. These protect against illness and help doctors monitor development.

 Ask for help. Many tribal health programs offer free cribs, sleep sacks, and safe-

sleep education for families.

A Promise to Protect Our Future Generations

In our Native teachings, children are sacred — gifts that connect us to our ancestors and our future. Protecting them starts with simple choices, shared knowledge, and community support.

When we practice safe sleep and share these lessons, we honor that sacred responsibility. Together, we can stop preventable infant deaths and ensure every baby in Oklahoma — and across Indian Country — has a safe, peaceful place to rest.





Osage Nation Diabetes Program Hosts Record-Breaking Buffalo Run

By: Katie Weigant, RN - Diabetes Department



Runners take off from the starting line at the Buffalo Run 5K at Osage Hills State Park in Pawhuska, OK on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025. Photo Credit: Osage News

The Osage Nation Diabetes Program held its annual 5K Buffalo Run on Saturday, October 11, at Osage Hills State Park, drawing an impressive 108 runners — more than double last year's turnout of 48 participants!

This year's event brought together community members, families, and health advocates to celebrate wellness and physical activity in a beautiful fall setting.

Top finishers included:

- Female Winners: 1st Rachael Coulter (Glenpool, OK) - 21:29; 2nd - Heather Southward (Cleveland, OK) - 22:07; 3rd -Maddy McKinney (Bartlesville, OK) - 23:52.
- Male Winners: 1st Trey Turner (Ponca City, OK) - 17:43; 2nd - Kasey Perry (Tulsa, OK) -18:09; 3rd - Elijah Burchett (Bartlesville, OK) - 20:06.

Winners received \$100, \$75, and \$50 gift cards courtesy of the Osage Nation Health System, and Dr. Melissa McIntosh (CMO), Cindra Shangreau (Health Authority Board Chair), and Michael Bristow (Vice Chair)

presented medals to all top finishers.

A big thank-you goes out to the many Osage Nation Health System staff who volunteered their Saturday morning to help make the event a success. Team members from registration, pharmacy, diagnostic imaging, nursing, case management, medical providers, facilities management, IT, the business office, and the office all pitched in to support the runners and the community.

Through strong community partnerships, this event was a success. The Osage Nation Police

Department provided traffic control, and Daposka Ahnkodapi Elementary loaned their bus to transport runners to the start line. Community Health Representatives staffed a mid-way water station, while the Osage Nation Prevention Program donated medication lock boxes and overdose prevention kits along with education and resources. Blue Sky Bank generously provided water for participants.

The Buffalo Run continues to grow each year, bringing the community together in the spirit of health and wellness. Mark your calendars — the run is held every year on the second Saturday in October.



Osage Nation Buffalo Run Photo Courtesy of Osage Nation News



The Osage Nation Health team take a photo at the Buffalo Run 5K at Osage Hills State Park in Pawhuska, OK on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025.



A group photo of several participants at the Buffalo Run 5K at Osage Hills State Park in Pawhuska, OK on Saturday, Oct. 11.



Michael Bristow, ONHS Health Board Vice-Chairman, places a medal on a runner



The top 3 overall female runners in the Osage Nation Health System's 5K Buffalo Run on October 11, 2025 at the Osage Hills State Park.

L-R:

3rd: Maddy McKinney 23:52 1st: Rachael Coulter 21:29 2nd: Heather Southward 22:07



The top 3 overall male runners in the Osage Nation Health System's 5K Buffalo Run on October 11, 2025 at the Osage Hills State Park. L-R:

3rd: Elijah Burchett 20:06 2nd: Kasey Perry 18:09 1st: Trey Turner 17:43



Cindra Shangreau, ONHS Health Board Chairwoman places a medal on a runner.

Osage Nation Health System 2nd Annual Health Fair Held

















Osage Nation Health System Supports Local Schools for Red Ribbon Week 2025

Promoting Drug-Free Living Across Osage County

By: Daisy Spicer, ONHS Prevention Department

In recognition of Red Ribbon Week, celebrated nationally from October 23–31, 2025, the Osage Nation Health System Prevention Department is proud to support every school district in Osage County with resources that promote healthy, drug-free lifestyles.

This year, the department provided Red Ribbon Week supplies to all schools across the county — including red ribbons, posters, activity guides, and educational materials to help students take the pledge to live drug-free. The Prevention team encourages schools to use these materials to spark conversations about positive choices, resilience, and wellness.

In addition to Red Ribbon materials, the Prevention Department also distributed Overdose Prevention Kits to school faculty and staff. These kits, which include (Narcan) naloxone and educational resources, are part of a broader effort to community strengthen safetv awareness around overdose prevention. kits are provided as personal preparedness tools for adults, empowering them with knowledge and life-saving resources that can make a difference in an emergency.

"Red Ribbon Week gives us an opportunity to engage students in prevention from an early age while also supporting the adults who care for them," said Anthony Shackelford, Director for the Osage Nation Health System Prevention Department. "By providing both educational materials and overdose prevention resources, we're addressing substance misuse across the

lifespan — from early prevention to immediate response."

These initiatives reflect the goals of the Osage Nation Health System Prevention Department — to empower youth and families, strengthen community capacity, and expand behavioral health supports through culturally grounded, evidence-based strategies.

The Prevention Department extends its gratitude to local educators and school leaders for their partnership in making Red Ribbon Week a success. Together, we're building a safer, healthier future for Osage County youth.

For more information about prevention programming, school partnerships, or overdose response training, contact:

prevention@osagehealth.org or 539.212.2521





COME DRESSED AS A ZOMBIE FOR A CHANCE TO WIN AWESOME PRIZES

FREE T-SHIRTS (S-4XL), CUPS, SWAG

TOP 3 RACERS IN EACH CATEGORY RECEIVE MEDALS

TRUNK-OR-TREAT FOR KIDS (IF ENOUGH PARTICIPANTS SIGN UP)



For any questions please call 539.257.0736 or email Publichealthnursing@osagehealth.org

Osage Nation Health System 2nd Annual Health Fair Held



Raffle winner Marty Hutton of Joe Don Brave Painting, thanks to sponsor Sanofi.



Flatscreen 50" TV Winner







Joe Don Brave, Osage/Cherokee Artist painting for our raffle item sponsor by Sanofi.



Flatscreen 40" TV Winners







A PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

Dr. McIntosh currently serves as the Chief Medical Officer of the Osage Nation Health System. She graduated from the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Kansas City in 1998, then completed an internship and residency in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at the University of Oklahoma in Tulsa, where she also served as Chief Resident for the Med/Peds program.

Following her training, Dr. McIntosh entered private practice, caring for both adult and pediatric patients while also working in the emergency department, managing hospitalized patients, and attending in the newborn nursery. She later joined the Cherokee Nation Health Services before returning to private practice, where she has spent the past six years.

Throughout her career, Dr. McIntosh has been dedicated to providing comprehensive care in rural communities, serving patients across clinic, hospital, and emergency settings. She is board certified in both Internal Medicine and Pediatrics.

Dr. McIntosh lives with her husband, Kelly, in rural southeast Kansas, where they enjoy spending time with their grandchildren, caring for their family farm, and managing what they affectionately describe as "too many cows and dogs."







316 E. Main Street, Pawhuska, OK. 74056 918.287.9300

Bullying: What Parents Need to Know

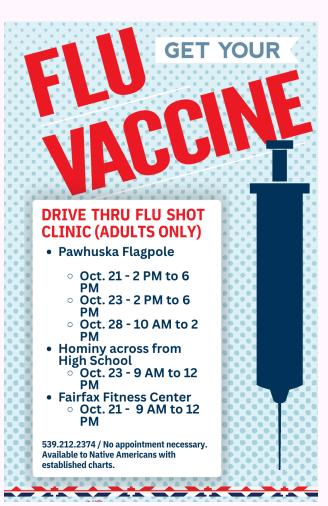
By: Parentcenterhub.org



Photo: @istock / Credit: FatCamera

Bullying continues to be a significant problem for youth, parents, school counselors, and many others. This paper provides general information about bullying, and specific information about bullying of Native youth and those with disabilities. It also offers action steps for parents to take. We hope Parent Centers will share this resource in trainings with Native parents and in information booths at Native community events. What is Bullying? The U. S. Department of Education defines bullying as "unwanted, aggressive behavior among schoolaged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time."1 The term power imbalance means that one young person has or seems to have more physical strength, popularity, or access to embarrassing information than the person being bullied. Examples of bullying behaviors include intentionally making threats, teasing, name-calling, pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, stealing or damaging another's property, spreading rumors or others' secrets, and excluding someone from a group. Nationally, between 25-33% of students report being bullied in one or more of these ways at school. 2 Bullying is different from normal childhood conflict or everyday rough-housing. It's about control. We cannot shrug it off as "kids will be

kids." Those who bully: - select a target who is smaller, younger, or less able to cope socially (power imbalance); - pick on the target day after day (repetition); and - enjoy seeing their target afraid and (intention). Who are Common Bullying Targets? In general, youth who are targeted and bullied are seen as being different from their peers in some way. They may be bullied based on their weight, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, race, and/or disability. Targets may be loners, new students, or new immigrants.3 What are the Impacts of Bullving? Children who are bullied can become increasingly withdrawn, sad, frustrated, and aggressive. Most begin to avoid peers, social events, and school. Truancy and poor school performance can



Celebrating Healthy Smiles and the Importance of Daily Care

By: Miranda Scholz, DDS, ONHS Dental Director



Photo Credit: FatCamera

Every October, we celebrate National Dental Hygiene Month, a time dedicated to recognizing the vital role good oral health plays in our overall well-being. It's also a great reminder to check in with your own dental habits and make sure your smile is getting the care it deserves. Good oral hygiene isn't just about having fresh breath or a bright smile, it's about protecting your health. Poor dental hygiene can lead to cavities, gum disease, and tooth loss, but it can also impact other parts of the body. Research shows that oral health is closely linked to heart disease, diabetes, and even respiratory conditions. Maintaining a clean, healthy mouth helps protect your entire body.

The American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) promotes the "Daily 4" rou-

tine for optimal oral hygiene:

- 1. Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- 2. Floss daily to remove plaque and food particles between teeth.
- 3. Rinse with an antibacterial mouthwash to reduce bacteria.
- 4. Chew sugar-free gum after meals to help stimulate saliva and neutralize acids. Establishing strong dental hygiene habits early, and keeping them consistent, can prevent most common oral health problems. Regular dental checkups (every six months) allow professionals to detect issues before they become serious, saving you discomfort, time, and money in the long run.

National Dental Hygiene Month is the perfect time to schedule your next cleaning, replace that old toothbrush, or teach your kids the importance of brushing and flossing. Remember: a healthy mouth supports a healthy body, and taking care of your smile is one of the simplest ways to invest in your long-term health. Call the Wahzhazhe Dental Department today at (918) 287-9300 to schedule your next dental hygiene visit with one of our wonderful hygienists, Rebecca Jones or Ciera Moses.



The Gifts Hidden in the Whirlwind: Honoring ADHD Awareness Month

By: By Joshua Steward, LMFT



Photo: @istock / Credit: Maria Garcia

October is National ADHD Awareness Month, let's take time to look past the jokes and misunderstandings. Many people use "ADHD" as a punchline, "I'm so ADHD today!" but for those living with it, it's not about being distracted or uncaring it's about seeing and feeling the world differently.

For someone with ADHD, life can feel like trying to hold onto the wind. Thoughts rush in, excitement takes off, and then, just as quickly, the focus drifts away. Starting things is easy; finishing them can be hard thus forgetfulness and disorganization can bring guilt or shame, not because they don't care, but because they care deeply.

Yet inside that whirlwind is something sacred. ADHD often carries unique gifts; such as creativity, energy, passion, and an ability to see connections others miss. Many artists, healers, and leaders have learned to work with their ADHD, turning what once felt like chaos into a source of strength and beauty.

Within the Osage Nation and beyond, there are children and adults walking this road carrying painful labels like "lazy," "unmotivated," or "difficult." but ADHD isn't a flaw to fix; it's a difference to understand. When given patience, structure, and

encouragement, these minds thrive in powerful ways.

In Celebrate Recovery, we often say that God doesn't waste a single hurt, habit, or hangup. ADHD can be part of that redemptive story. What feels like disorder can become a new way of seeing the world; a reminder that not every beautiful thing fits neatly in a straight line.

So this month, let's do more than raise awareness. Let's celebrate the unique hearts and creative minds in our community. Let's honor the parents walking patiently with their restless child, and the adults discovering that their "messy mind" might just be a masterpiece in motion.

We are all created with purpose; even when our paths zigzag more than they march.

Real Talk. Real Change. Real Hope.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. 1 in 8 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in American women. Screening and early detection have significantly increased breast cancer survival rates. Approximately 15% of women diagnosed have a family history of breast cancer. Those with a first degree relative (mother, sister, daughter) with breast cancer are nearly twice as likely to develop breast cancer themselves. Call Today to schedule your screening mammogram appointment: 918.287.9325 **OSAGE NATION HEALTH SYSTEM** A Culture of Caring https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-cancer-facts/

Every Life Tells a Story Worth Hearing

By: By Joshua Steward, LMFT

October is National Down Syndrome Awareness Month, a time to celebrate the incredible value of every life and the unique stories God is telling through His children. For those of us blessed to work with individuals with Down Syndrome, every day becomes a reminder that joy, purpose, and connection aren't measured by ability, but by love.

Not long ago, I sat with one of the adults I serve, a man who greets everyone with a hug that could melt the hardest heart and when I asked him how his day was going, he grinned and said, "It's good because God woke me up!" There's so much wisdom and celebration in that one sentence. Gratitude, simple and pure, straight from a heart unclouded by the distractions so many of us wrestle with.

People with Down Syndrome often teach us

more than we could ever teach them. They remind us to slow down, listen deeply, and value people for who they are, not for what they can do. In therapy and ministry alike, I see how community changes when we stop trying to "fix" and start learning to see. When we see every smile, every small victory then every act of inclusion becomes holy ground. During this month, I encourage our Osage community and everyone to take a moment to engage with someone who has Down Syndrome. Ask about their dreams, laugh with them, worship beside them and

celebrate with them too. You might discover

that what we call "disability" can actually reveal remarkable ability; the ability to love without judgment, to forgive without hesitation, and to live each day with wonder.

As we celebrate National Down Syndrome Awareness Month, let's be reminded of a truth that shines brighter than any diagnosis: we are all fearfully and wonderfully made. And in God's story, every life has a beautiful and necessary place.

Real Talk. Real Change. Real Hope.

DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH





JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

Learn about Osage Health Watch's mission to empower listeners with valuable information, resources, and inspiring stories—promoting health advocacy and positive change within Indigenous communities.





Follow OHW on Facebook, Instagram, X, Spotify, and YouTube to stay connected and informed!



Let us share our Culture of Caring. Now Accepting New Patients.

We have a variety of

- verifies:

 Primary Care

 Dental

 Optometry

 Behavioral Health

 Diabetes &
- Wellness
 Growing Specialty
- Services
 and More!

at the OSAGE NATION HEALTH SYSTEM



· Communicate directly with your provider Request an appointment And more!

Install the app on iphone or Android for real-time access to your health

















NUTRITION MONTH COOKING CLASS

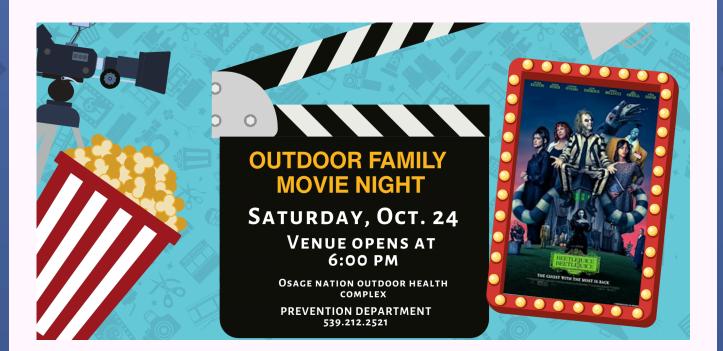
November 6th at 10:30 AM

At the new Wahzhazhe Health Center, 2nd floor cooking demonstration kitchen

Participants will receive a Meal Prep cookbook. Healthy snacks will be provided.

316 E. Main Street, Pawhuska

539.212.2373



Observances for October and November

October:

- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Eye Injury Prevention Month
- Health Literacy Month
- Healthy Lung Month
- Home Eye Safety Month
- Medical Ultrasound Awareness Month
- National ADHD Awareness Month
- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- National Bullying Prevention Month
- National Dental Hygiene Month
- National Down Syndrome Awareness Month
- National Physical Therapy Month
- Prenatal-onset GBS Disease Recognition Month
- · Spina Bifida Awareness Month
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Month
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month Awareness Weeks
- Mental Illness Awareness Week October 5–11
- National Primary Care Week October 5–11
- National PA Week October 6-12
- Bone and Joint Health Action Week October 12-20
- International Infection Prevention Week October 15–21
- National Healthcare Quality Week October 19–25
- Respiratory Care Week October 19–25
- National Health Education Week October 19–25
- National Pharmacy Week October 21–27
- Red Ribbon Week October 23-31

Davs to Note:

- World Meningitis Day October 5
- World Cerebral Palsy Day October 6
- National Depression Screening Day October 7
- World Mental Health Day October 10
- World Sight Day October 10
- International Day of the Girl October 11
- Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day -October 13
- Global Handwashing Day October 15
- National Latino AIDS Awareness Day October
- World Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day - October 15
- World Food Day October 16
- National Mammography Day October 17
- World Pediatric Bone and Joint Day October 19
- World Osteoporosis Day October 20
- National Check Your Meds Day October 21
- International Stuttering Awareness Day October 22
- National Prescription Drug Take Back Day -October 26
- World Psoriasis Day October 29
- World Hypophosphatasia Day October 30

November:

- American Diabetes Month
- Bladder Health Month
- COPD Awareness Month
- Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month
- Lung Cancer Awareness Month
- National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month
- National Epilepsy Awareness Month
- National Family Caregivers Month
- · National Healthy Skin Month
- National Home Care & Hospice Month
- National Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month
- Prematurity Awareness Month
- Pumlonary Hypertension Awareness Month
- Stomach Cancer Awareness Month

Awareness Weeks:

- National Diabetes Education Week: Nov. 2-8
- National Radiologic Technology Week: Nov. 2-8
- National Nurse Practitioner Week: Nov. 9-15
- Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) Awareness Week: Nov. 23-29

Days to Note:

- National Diabetes Heart Connection Day- Nov. 9
- World Pneumonia Day Nov. 12
- CTEPH Awareness Day Nov. 12
- World Diabetes Day Nov. 14
- World Prematurity Day Nov. 14
- Great American Smokeout Nov. 20
- National Family Health History Day Nov. 27



MPORTANT NUMBERS

Wahzhazhe Health Center 918.287.9300

Title VI 539.212.2510 Prevention 539.212.2521 ONHS Security 539.212.2559

Family Violence Prevention (FVP) 539.212.2506 **FVP 24/7 Crisis Hotline** 866.897.4747

24/7 Suicide Crisis Lifeline: 988

ONHS Counseling Center M-F 8a-4:30p 539.212.2499

SUICIDE & CRISIS **&** LIFELINE