Fight the Flu!
By: Janelle Olberding

Many people might shrug off influenza – “the flu” – as a minor illness that is really nothing to worry about. While for some influenza may be mild, for others, it can be very serious, sometimes leading to hospitalization, medical complications, and even death. During the 2016-2017 flu season, in Montana there were 829 hospitalizations and 56 deaths related to influenza. Dawson County has already had its first flu case of the 2017-2018 season.

Getting a flu shot is the best way for everyone, ages six months and older, to prevent the flu. Flu season typically lasts from about October through March or April, and each year, the composition of the flu vaccine is reviewed and updated to better match circulating viruses. The best time to get vaccinated is before the end of October, but you can receive your flu vaccine at any time after that as well – it will protect you through the entire flu season. It’s important to note that the flu vaccine takes about two weeks to provide protection against the flu, but it can reduce flu illness, doctor visits, and missed work or school and can prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths.

There are a number of choices when it comes to flu vaccine. A quadrivalent vaccine provides protection from four different strains of flu. In comparison, trivalent vaccines, only provide protection from three different strains. There is a high-dose vaccine, which is designed to create a stronger immune response. The high-dose vaccine is designed for adults age 65 and older, as they are usually at greater risk for severe illness and complications from influenza.

Dawson County Health Department is offering quadrivalent vaccine this year. Flu shots are available at the Health Department during regular immunization hours – Thursdays from 9am to 12pm and 1pm to 5pm. Additionally, DCHD will have the BlueCross BlueShield CareVan in Glendive on October 18, time and location to be announced. Flu shots cost $38, and insurance is accepted.

For more information, call DCHD at 377-5213.
DCDV Launches Up-Standing Youth Campaign
By: Debbie Mahn

The Dawson County Domestic Violence Program (DCDV) is excited to announce our first annual Up-Standing Youth campaign beginning September 1st. This campaign will encourage young people to know the power they have—whether it be at home, in their schools, or around the community—to make a difference by being an Up-Stander.

In the past, this concept was referred to as being a bystander, but by definition a bystander is someone who is present when something is happening to someone but does nothing to intervene. So what is an Up-Stander? An Up-Stander is a person who knows what’s happening is wrong and does something to make things right.

It takes courage to speak up on someone’s behalf. But by doing so, that individual is becoming a person of character while helping someone else. In showing our youth how to be Up-Standers rather than bystanders, we are making our schools, our community and even the world a better place. It will make our community stronger, safer and more supportive. A place where every person is valued for who they are.

During the month of September, as well as throughout the school year, there will be information on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/dcdvprogram, on being an Up-Stander and how to KNOW YOUR POWER to make a difference. Posters, Up-Stander campaign information and DCDV Program information will be distributed to schools and public libraries in Glendive, Terry, Wibaux, Lindsay, and Richey.

DCDV will also be facilitating for the first time Power Up, Speak Out, a comprehensive and interactive 5 lesson program geared towards grades 6-8 in Dawson, Prairie and Wibaux counties. The lessons teach critical thinking skills for healthy relationships to prevent bullying, teen dating violence and harassment. Lessons are positive and interactive while addressing both peer and dating relationships. The heart of the program is four simple statements; “I get to be myself”, “I treat others well”, “I can say no”, and “I have fun”. These statements are used throughout the course to examine uses of personal power, boundaries and consent.

Parents and interested community members are encouraged to stop by our office at 122 West Bell Street or call 377-6477 to speak with Debbie Mahn, Advocate/Prevention Coordinator, if they have any questions or want more information regarding the Power Up, Speak Out curriculum or Up-Standing Youth Campaign.

Red Ribbon Week
By: Lindsay Sadorf

The Red Ribbon Campaign is now the oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation reaching millions of young people.

Red Ribbon week is October 23rd- October 27th. Red Ribbon Week is an alcohol, tobacco, and other drug and violence prevention awareness campaign observed annually in October in the United States.

Red Ribbon Week began after the kidnapping, torture and brutal murder of Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena in 1985. Agent Camarena had been working undercover in Guadalajara, Mexico for over four years. His efforts led to the tip that resulted in the discovery of a multimillion dollar narcotics manufacturing operation in Chihuahua, Mexico. The successful eradication of this and other drug production operations angered leaders of several drug cartels who sought revenge. As a result, they murdered key informants and then, on February 7, 1985, they kidnapped Agent Camarena and his pilot Captain Alfredo Zavala-Avelar (taken separately on the same day).

Today, the Red Ribbon Celebration brings millions of people together to raise awareness regarding the need for alcohol, tobacco and other drug and violence prevention, early intervention, and treatment services. It is the largest, most visible prevention awareness campaign observed annually in the United States.

Since its beginning in 1985, the Red Ribbon has touched the lives of millions of people around the world. In response to the murder of DEA Agent Enrique Camarena, angered parents and youth in communities across the country began wearing red ribbons. The red ribbon symbolizes their commitment to raise awareness of the killing and destruction cause by drugs in America. Today, the Red Ribbon Campaign serves as a catalyst to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities.

Source: redribbon.org
The tobacco industry spends nearly $9.6 billion a year to market its products throughout the United States, and 95 percent ($9.1 billion) of that is spent at the point of sale (POS). POS advertising and promotions refer to a variety of marketing practices, including signs on the interior and exterior of retail stores, functional items like counter mats and change cups, shelving displays, and coupons and other price discounts that reduce the price for the consumer. POS advertising also includes promotional payments to retailers by tobacco companies to have their products placed in specific store locations, making it more likely that consumers will see them.

Point-of-sale marketing reaches children

- 70 percent of children visit convenience stores weekly. Many of these stores are near schools and playgrounds.
- Tobacco products, signs and branding are placed at children’s eye level, on the counter and near candy.
- The cigarette industry spends $726 million/year on product placement, while the smokeless tobacco industry spends $64 million.
- The bright packaging on cigarillos and e-cigarettes makes them look like candy.
- Cigarillos and e-juice come in candy flavors, such as strawberry milkshake, banana split and chocolate ice cream.
- Discounts and coupons make tobacco products more attractive to young people.

Point-of-sale marketing works

A 2007 study in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine found that the more cigarette marketing teens are exposed to, the more likely they are to smoke.

A 2010 study in Pediatrics found that the odds of smoking more than doubled for teens who visited a store with point-of-sale tobacco ads at least twice a week.

Each day:

- 3,300 kids try smoking
- 700 become regular smokers.
If you’re like most Americans, you probably start your day with a hot shower, a cup of coffee—and a handful of pills.

More than half of us now regularly take a prescription medication—four, on average—according to a new nationally representative Consumer Reports survey of 1,947 adults. Many in that group also take over-the-counter drugs as well as vitamins and other dietary supplements.

It turns out Americans take more pills today than at any other time in recent history and far more than people in any other country. In fact the total number of prescriptions filled by all Americans, both young and old, has increased 85% over the past two decades while the population has only increased by 21%.

The amount of harm stemming from inappropriate prescription medication is staggering. According to estimates based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration, almost 1.3 million people went to U.S. emergency rooms due to adverse drug effects in 2014, and about 124,000 died from those events. Other research suggests that up to half of those events were preventable. Additionally, an estimated $200 billion per year is spent in the U.S. on the unnecessary and improper use of medication, for the drugs themselves and related medical costs, according to the market research firm IMS Institute for Healthcare Informatics.

Due to these concerns, a brand new wellness holiday, National Check Your Meds Day, is rolling out on October 21st. On this day consumers are encouraged to bring their medications and supplements to their local pharmacies for “brown bag” medication reviews. Local pharmacies participating in this event are Albertsons, F & G Drug and Gabert Clinic Pharmacy. These pharmacies are also available all year for assistance with questions or concerns regarding your medication.

Everyone should also perform a "Medicine Cabinet Check-Up" at least once a year. This is a time to go through your medicine cabinets to get rid of old or expired medicines. Besides your prescription medications you need to include all over-the-counter medicines, such as pain relievers, antacids, cold medicines, and laxatives. And don’t forget to include eye drops, dietary supplements, vitamins, herbals, and topical medicines, such as creams and ointments.

And, please, DO NOT flush your meds down the toilet. Instead, contact the Dawson County Sheriff’s Office. If you place your meds in a plastic or paper bag and take them to the Sheriff’s Office, they will assist you in the PROPER DISPOSAL of your outdated meds or medication that have been discontinued.

Seniors:

- Talk with your health care team about your medical conditions and keep all your doctor appointments.
- Taking a friend or family member to the appointment can be beneficial.
- Learn about your medicines including possible side effects.
- Be sure to take your medications as prescribed.
- Use a calendar, pill box or whatever helps remind you to take you pills.
- Always keep all medicines out of the sight and reach of children.

The main goal for every consumer should be, do your best to become MEDICATION WISE.

“Let’s talk…” These are two very simple words, but for many parents, they are not so simple when the rest of the sentence is “… about sex.”

While it may be uncomfortable, especially at first, research continues to show that children and teens want to receive their information about sexual health from their parents and caregivers. And the simple fact is that parents have an enormous influence on their children’s decisions about sex and other risk-taking behaviors—more than friends, the media or teachers.

Each year the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy commissions an independent survey of adults and teens nationwide. Many of these questions focus on parents and their role in preventing teen pregnancy. Collected here is a sampling of polling results that parents may find of interest:

- Who adults believe most influence teens’ decisions about sex: teens’ friends
- Percentage of teens who say it would be easier for them to postpone sexual activity and avoid teen pregnancy if they were able to have more open, honest conversations with their parents: 87%
- Percentage of teens who say they haven’t had a single such conversation with their parents: 37%
- Percentage of parents of teens who believe they should talk to their kids about sex but often don’t know what to say, how to say it, or when to start: 90%

So if the kids want to talk, how does a parent get started? Initiating conversations about the facts of life may be difficult for some parents because they did not grow up in an environment where the subject was discussed. Some parents may be afraid they do not know the right answers or feel confused about the proper amount of information to offer. To help, here are 10 tips from the experts at Advocates for Youth:

### Ten Tips

1. First, encourage communication by reassuring kids that they can talk to you about anything.
2. Take advantage of teachable moments. A friend’s pregnancy, news article, or a TV show can help start a conversation.
3. Listen more than you talk. Think about what you’re being asked. Confirm with your child that what you heard is in fact what he or she meant to ask.
4. Don’t jump to conclusions. The fact that a teen asks about sex does not mean they are having or thinking about having sex.
5. Answer questions simply and directly. Give factual, honest, short, and simple answers.
6. Respect your child’s views. Share your thoughts and values and help your child express theirs.
7. Reassure young people that they are normal—as are their questions and thoughts.
8. Teach your children ways to make good decisions about sex and coach them on how to get out of risky situations.
9. Admit when you don’t know the answer to a question. Suggest the two of you find the answer together on the Internet or in the library.
10. Discuss that at times your teen may feel more comfortable talking with someone other than you. Together, think of other trusted adults with whom they can talk.

October is Let’s Talk Month, a community campaign conducted nationally that supports parents in making stronger connections with their children and in talking honestly and openly about sexual health and relationships. For more resources about how to be your children’s primary sexual health educator, visit the following sites: www.advocatesforyouth.org or www.teenpregnancy.org or call DCFP at 377-2935.
Frequently Asked Questions – Influenza and Flu Shots
By: Janelle Olberding

What is Influenza?
Influenza (the flu) is a contagious illness caused by the influenza virus. Those some refer to stomach illnesses with nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea as the flu, influenza is really a respiratory illness. It can cause a mild illness or be very severe and lead to hospitalization and/or complications. Influenza is spread mainly by droplets when people with the flu cough, sneeze, or talk.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Influenza?
The flu usually comes on suddenly and may include the following symptoms:

♦ Fever
♦ Fatigue
♦ Headache
♦ Muscle aches
♦ Cough
♦ Sore throat
♦ Runny or stuffy nose

Is it a cold or the flu? Click here to compare symptoms.

How Can I Prevent Influenza?
The best way to prevent the flu is to get an annual flu vaccine. The flu shot is approved for everyone ages 6 months and older. It's important to get a flu shot each year, as the vaccine is produced each year to best match the influenza viruses that scientists believe are most likely to circulate in that flu season. The flu vaccine is especially important for older adults, ages 65 and older, and pregnant women.

Is the Flu Shot Safe?
Like any medicine, the flu shot may cause problems, like allergic reactions. However, these are rare, and almost all people who receive the flu vaccine have no serious problems from it. Some may experience minor side effects like soreness or redness at the injection site, low grade fever, or aches. These should only last a day or two.

Can the Flu Shot Give Me the Flu?
No, you cannot get the flu from the flu shot. The flu vaccine is made from inactivated flu viruses; these are “dead” and cannot cause infection. Mild side effects from the vaccine may be mistaken for the flu. Also note that it can take up to two weeks for the flu shot to be effective. Anyone exposed to influenza shortly before or after getting a flu shot may get the flu before the vaccine has time to take full effect.

How is Influenza Treated?
If you do get the flu, prescription antivirals can help shorten its severity and duration. For maximum efficacy, antiviral treatment should be started within two days of getting sick. Antibiotics DO NOT work to treat the flu; they are only effective against bacterial illnesses.

Dawson County Health Department offers flu shots during regular immunization hours: Thursdays from 9am-12pm and 1pm-5pm. Call 377-5213 with questions or concerns.
## Services Provided by the Health Department

**Immunizations:** Adults and children, Thursdays: 9:00 am-noon and 1:00-5:00. Walk-ins are welcome. To schedule an appointment call 377-5213.

**Insurance Billing:** Yes, the Dawson County Health Department does bill insurance for children’s immunizations.

**WIC (Women, Infants and Children):** Thursdays 8:00-12:00 and 1:00-5:00. Appointments may be made by calling 377-5213.

**Family Planning:** Walk in hours are Monday—Tuesday: 1-5 pm, Wednesday: 8 am-noon and 1-5 pm, Thursday: No Clinic, Friday: 10 am-noon and 1-3 pm. Services are based on a sliding fee scale. To schedule an appointment call 377-2935.

**Blood Pressure Clinics:** Wednesday-Thursdays: 8:00-noon—no charge.

**Labs:** Wednesday 8:00-noon. Some labs require 12 hour fast.

**Home Health Services:** In home services including skilled nursing, Certified Nurse Assistant, Homemaker and Meals on Wheels. Call 377-5213 for more information or to make a referral.

**Public Health Home Visiting:** Home visiting program for pregnant women, infants and children. Services help to build parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete supports in times of need and social and emotional competence of children.

**Tobacco Prevention:** Preventing tobacco use among youth and promote quitting among adult users. Free signs for CIAA compliance.

**Public Health Emergency Preparedness:** Planning and coordination of community resources to prepare for public health emergencies.

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**Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

By: Lacy McCullough

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and for 2017, our campaign’s slogan is, “Domestic Violence: It’s Closer To Home Than You Think.” Remember that domestic violence can affect anyone. Show your support this October by being a positive bystander and showing love to the people in your lives that may be affected by abuse! Look for posters, message cards, pins, and information on our exciting give-away. Please check the DCDV Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/dcdvprogram](http://www.facebook.com/dcdvprogram), for updates about this campaign. If you or someone you know has been affected by domestic violence, please call the Dawson County Domestic Violence program at 406-377-6477.

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**WIC’s Healthy Halloween Treats!**

Make these cute witchy snacks with pretzel rods, string cheese and chives.

Use apple slices, mini marshmallows & peanut or soy butter to hold everything together.

Add a few chocolate chips to bananas and put a celery stick in the center of a mandarin orange.

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If you would like to be on the mailing list for this monthly publication or submit an article for the next month, please e-mail Laureen Murphree at murphreel@dawsoncountymontana.com
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Watch for the CareVan, Wednesday October 18th. Drive through the EPEC parking lot for your annual flu shot! 7:30 AM - 12:30 PM