

NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

February 2026



Community Health Winter Programming



Naugatuck Valley Health District's community health team is busy this winter providing programming for the Valley community.



At the Ansonia Senior Center, Public Health Nurse, Kristie D'Averso and Health Educator, Lisa Trupp are offering *Chronic Pain Self Management*, from the Self Management Resource Center's suite of programs. This six-week program helps individuals living with chronic pain manage day to day pain using tools like, pacing, appropriate physical activity and movement, proper nutrition, stress management and communication skills.



In addition to these two programs, NVHD's Nurse Kristie will be at several Valley locations throughout February holding blood pressure clinics for the community. For more information on dates, times and locations, please see the attached flyer.



In Shelton, Health Educator, Lisa Trupp and Assistant Director for Community Health, Carissa Caserta are offering Maine Health's *A Matter of Balance Falls Prevention* program. This eight-week program is designed to help seniors prevent falls by overcoming fear of falling, understanding fall hazards in the home and community, and practicing exercises meant to help with balance and flexibility.

For more information about community health programs at NVHD, call 203-881-3255, ext. 104, 107 or 108

Observances in February

- ♥ American Heart Month
- ♥ Black History Month
- ♥ Gallbladder Cancer and Bile Duct Cancer Awareness Month
- ♥ International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month
- ♥ National Cancer Prevention Month
- ♥ National Children's Dental Health Month
- ♥ Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

NVHD will be closed in observance of holidays on February 12th and 16th.

- World Wetlands Day: Feb 2
- Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day: Feb 2
- National Wear Red Day: Feb 6
- National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day: Feb 7
- International Epilepsy Day: Feb 9
- National Donor Day: Feb 14
- World Encephalitis Day: Feb 22
- Rare Disease Day: Feb 28
- National Burn Awareness Week: Feb 1 - 7
- National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week: Feb 8 - 14
- Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week: Feb 7 - 14
- Sepsis Survivor Week: Feb 8 - 14
- National Condom Week: Feb 14 - 21
- National Eating Disorders Awareness Week: Feb 26 - March 3

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Congratulations

NVHD's Overdose Prevention Navigator and Certified Community Health Worker (CCHW), Austin Telford, MPH, was recently certified as a Tobacco Treatment Specialist (TTS)! TTSs are trained to deliver evidence based interventions for nicotine dependence.

The three-day virtual training was hosted by Southern Connecticut State University and was funded by the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund through a contract with CT DPH.

Stay tuned for future programming announcements!



In recognition of January being National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, NVHD hosted Lee Ives, Seymour Ambulance Association, to provide staff important training on the topic.

On January 11, 2026, Naugatuck Valley Health District also joined the **#WearBlueDay** campaign recognizing National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

Call 911 if someone is in immediate danger.

- To report suspected human trafficking to Federal law enforcement call 1-866-347-2423.
- To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline call 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733).
- Para reportar un posible caso de trata de personas llame al 1-866-347-2423.
- Obtenga ayuda de la Línea Nacional de Atención contra la Trata de Personas llamando 1-888-373-7888 o enviando un mensaje de texto con HELP o INFO a BeFree (233733).



For current job postings, please visit <https://www.nvhd.org/category/job-postings/>

For internship opportunities, please email your resume to Director Kristy at jkristy@nvhd.org



February is known as **American Heart Month**, and it's a time designed to raise awareness about cardiovascular health.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the U.S.

To help raise awareness, Nurse Kristie will be in the community performing free blood pressure screenings and sharing free heart health resources. Stop on by!

Feb. 5 th 11-1pm	Trinity Church Blessing Pantry 91 Church St, Ansonia
Feb. 6 th 10-11:30am	Ansonia Senior Center 65 Main St
Feb. 11 th 10-12pm	Shelton Senior Center 81 Wheeler St
Feb. 13 th 10-12pm	Naugatuck Senior Center 300 Meadow St
Feb. 18 th 10-12pm	Beacon Falls Senior Center 57 N Main St
Feb. 19 th 10:30-12:30pm	Shop Rite-Derby 49 Pershing Dr
Feb. 24 th 11:30-1pm	Derby Senior Center 293 Main St
Feb. 26 th 10:30-12:30pm	Shop Rite-Shelton 875 Bridgeport Ave
Feb. 27 th 9:30-11:30am	Seymour Community Center 20 Pine St

TAKE THE HANDS ONLY CPR CHALLENGE!



Learn a life-saving skill in minutes!

In honor of Heart Month, watch one Hands Only CPR video and answer 2 questions to join the challenge. **Scan the QR code above to participate.**

#AmericanHeartMonth | Hands-Only CPR Challenge ❤️

This February, health departments and districts across Connecticut are inviting everyone to join a Hands-Only CPR Challenge! The goal is simple: to see how many people we can get to watch a Hands-Only CPR video—whether it's your first time learning or a quick refresher.

The link below takes you to a short Google Form with embedded CPR videos in English, Spanish, and Mandarin.

You'll be asked just two quick questions:

- Is this your first time learning Hands-Only CPR or a refresher?
- What town do you live in?

Once you submit the survey, you'll be able to view the live results and see how many people from your town, region, and overall have participated. Every view counts, and could help save a life. 💪

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSemJ7aDEXoaOrKWOCbOT7pXRogd_x8mXBdfAialeVEV3-ngJaw/viewform?usp=header

HANDS-ONLY CPR VS. CPR WITH BREATHS

HANDS-ONLY CPR

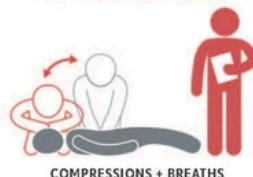


CALL 911



PUSH HARD AND FAST IN THE CENTER OF THE CHEST

CPR TRAINING



Offered through online or in-person classes. Provides more in-depth training with an instructor, including CPR with breaths and choking relief.

Often necessary for people who need CPR training for work.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Chest compressions are good for the first few minutes someone is in cardiac arrest pushing remaining oxygen through body to keep vital organs alive. Buys time until someone with more skills can provide help.

CPR with breaths combines chest compressions and breaths, providing additional oxygen to circulate throughout the body.

WHO CAN I USE IT ON?

Adult and teens.

Anyone who is in **cardiac arrest**, including: adults and teens, infants and children, pregnant women and any victims of drowning, drug overdose, collapse due to breathing problems or prolonged cardiac arrest.

HOW DO I LEARN?

Go to heart.org/handsonlycpr to learn the steps of Hands-Only CPR.

Go to heart.org/cpr and click on FIND A COURSE to find a class online or near you.

DID YOU KNOW?



2 DOSES OF THE MMR VACCINE ARE:
97% EFFECTIVE AT PREVENTING MEASLES.

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEASLES

WHAT IS MEASLES?

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease that can result in severe, sometimes permanent complications including:

- PNEUMONIA
- HOSPITALIZATION
- BRAIN SWELLING
- DEATH

HOW IS MEASLES SPREAD?

Measles is highly contagious, and spreads easily when an infected person breathes or coughs.

The measles virus can live for up to **2 HOURS** on a surface or in the air where the infected person coughed or sneezed. When measles particles are on a surface, anyone who touches the infected surface and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth, they can become infected.

Measles is so contagious, that if an individual has measles, up to 9 out of 10 of their close contacts who are not immune will also become infected.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?



About 1 in 5 people in the US who get measles will be hospitalized.



As many as 1 in 20 children with measles gets pneumonia.



1 out of every 1,000 people with measles will develop brain swelling, which could lead to brain damage.



As many as 3 out of 1,000 people with measles will die, even with the best care.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF & MY FAMILY AGAINST MEASLES?

GET VACCINATED!

2 DOSES of measles vaccine are recommended to provide protection against measles

WHO CANNOT BE VACCINATED?

Some people cannot be vaccinated and depend on others getting vaccinated to help protect them

PREGNANT WOMEN

PEOPLE WITH WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEMS



CHILDREN TOO YOUNG TO BE VACCINATED

#GetVaccinated to #PreventMeasles



LEARN MORE AT www.nfid.org/measles



Call Nurse Kristie to schedule a vaccine appointment at 203-881-3255 x 107

Environmental Health Services

National Burn Awareness Week, February 1 - 7, 2026, is an initiative of the American Burn Association, bringing together fire, life safety, and healthcare professionals to educate the public on burn injury prevention. This annual campaign emphasizes the importance of proactive safety measures and community collaboration to reduce the risk of burn injuries. "Burn prevention starts with education and small, actionable changes in our daily lives," said Jessica Kristy, Director of Health. "By participating in National Burn Awareness Week, we can work together to reduce burn injuries and create safer communities."



Prevent burn injuries where they happen most—at work.

Use this checklist from the ABA to strengthen burn prevention in your workplace:

Identify Hazards in Your Space

Spot burn risks where they happen, hot equipment, electrical panels, fuel storage, chemicals, and cooking areas. Address issues early.

Review Safety Gear & PPE

Check that personal protective equipment is available, in good condition, and appropriate for the tasks at hand. Replace damaged gear promptly.

Practice Emergency Procedures

Ensure exits are clear, alarms are working, and staff know what to do in the event of fires, chemical exposures, or equipment failures.

Train Regularly

Conduct safety refreshers throughout the year so new and long-time team members understand burn risks and prevention steps.

Maintain Equipment & Work Areas

Service vehicles, tools, kitchen appliances, machinery, and heating devices regularly to prevent fires, overheating, or malfunctions.

Stay Alert Around Heat Sources

Watch for hot surfaces, open flames, steam, engines, batteries, and high-temperature equipment. Simple awareness prevents accidents.

Store Hazardous Materials Safely

Keep fuels, chemicals, gases, and flammables in approved containers with proper ventilation.

Promote a Safety Culture

Encourage teams to speak up about hazards, report issues promptly, and model good burn-prevention habits.

Safety tips for the restaurant / service industry from ABA:

General Safety

- Keep cooking surfaces clear and free of clutter; keep floors dry.
- Use microwave-safe cookware and avoid placing metal in microwaves.
- Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as aprons, close-fitting sleeves, long pants, sturdy shoes, and oven mitts.
- Remove grease and oil buildup from surfaces; know the location of fire extinguishers and the hood fire suppression pull station.
- Keep first aid kits and fire extinguishers easily accessible.

Ovens & Stoves

- Use dry potholders or oven mitts.
- Turn pot and pan handles inward and keep them off other burners.
- Keep flames under pan bases; turn off burners when not in use.

Fryers

- Monitor hot oil at all times and keep the area clear.
- Handle oil only at room temperature and store it safely.
- Remove ice or moisture before adding food, fill baskets no more than halfway
- Raise and lower baskets gently to avoid splashes.

Where You Work: Restaurant

Avoid overcrowded surfaces.
Keep floors clean & dry.



Water & Steam

- Avoid overfilling pots and don't lean over boiling liquids.
- Use tongs and open lids away from your face.
- Release steam safely and keep lids nearby to prevent spills.

**World
Wetlands Day**
2 February 2026



Wetlands and traditional knowledge: Celebrating cultural heritage

First celebrated in 1997 and a United Nations International Day since 2022, every February 2, the **World Wetlands Day** campaign joins people everywhere in recognizing the critical importance of our planet's wetlands. These life-sustaining ecosystems bridge past and future and are essential to the continuity of life on Earth.

World Wetlands Day 2026 explores the deep-rooted connections between wetlands and cultural practices, traditions and knowledge systems of communities across the world. This year's theme is "Wetlands and traditional knowledge: Celebrating cultural heritage." The global campaign spotlights the timeless role of traditional knowledge in sustaining wetland ecosystems and preserving cultural identity. Unfortunately, wetlands are constantly under threat from human-made factors – from pollution to unsustainable land use to poorly planned infrastructure to climate change.

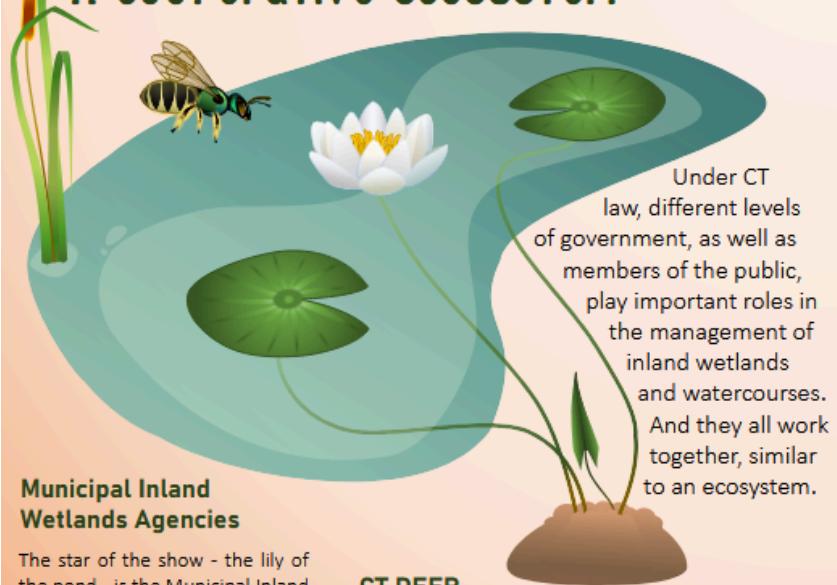
Take a moment to read these 3 fundamental messages which guide this year's awareness campaign.

Wetlands are essential ecosystems that sustain rich biodiversity and also serve as cradles of cultural heritage and living traditions, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Integrating traditional knowledge into conservation strategies enhances wetland protection and fosters inclusive, community-based approaches that recognize and respect longstanding ecological wisdom.

The degradation of wetlands undermines human wellbeing, impacts human rights, and erodes traditional knowledge systems. Immediate and scaled-up action is critical to safeguard cultural heritage and to sustain the traditional knowledge systems that have long protected these highly productive ecosystems.

CT INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES: A COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM



Municipal Inland Wetlands Agencies

The star of the show - the lily of the pond - is the Municipal Inland Wetlands Agency which regulates activities within inland wetlands, watercourses, and, sometimes, in nearby upland review areas. They review applications, grant permits, make jurisdictional rulings, and have the power to take enforcement actions against violations.

CT DEEP

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) can be thought of as the stalks and leaves that support municipal inland wetlands agencies. DEEP provides training, develops guidance documents, and can advise municipalities in need of assistance on inland wetlands issues. State agency activities or activities that occur within wetlands or watercourses on state property are under the jurisdiction of the DEEP and require a DEEP permit.

The Public

Like bees gathering pollen from a flower, the Public can go to their municipal inland wetlands agency to collect a variety of information, including what activities are regulated or to determine a jurisdictional ruling. The Public should do their homework, by reading their municipality's regulations and DEEP's Citizen's Guide to Inland Wetlands, to be properly prepared before meeting with their local agency.

For more information, visit us at:
www.ct.gov/deep/inlandwetlands



Connecticut
Department of Energy &
Environmental Protection
LAND & WATER RESOURCES

World
Wetlands Day
2 February 2026

WETLANDS AND CLIMATE REGULATION

WETLANDS ARE VITAL ALLIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK.

- Different types of wetlands act in different ways before, during and after disasters to help lessen their impact and enable communities to bounce back.
- Blue carbon ecosystems – specifically coastal wetlands such as mangroves, seagrasses and salt marshes – continuously take up atmospheric carbon dioxide and store large amounts in soils and sediments. They also buffer coastlines from rising sea levels and storm surges.
- Traditional burning techniques, seasonal migrations and land-use patterns are examples of climate-smart practices deeply embedded in cultural knowledge.
- Practices such as pruning, weeding, reseeding and traditional burning have helped maintain wetlands, secure access to culturally important plant species, and prevent large-scale fires.
- The restoration gap for peatlands and mangroves alone has been estimated at \$316 billion by 2050 and for coastal wetlands, between \$27 and \$37 billion annually.
- Restoring and protecting blue carbon ecosystems is a powerful, nature-based way to mitigate and adapt to climate change.



"WITHOUT URGENT INVESTMENT IN THESE SYSTEMS, CLIMATE GOALS WILL REMAIN OUT OF REACH."

– Convention on Wetlands

ADDICTION IS HARD. STIGMA MAKES IT HARDER.

EndStigmaCT.com

Your Community Guide to Ending Opioid Addiction Stigma

Why is it important to end stigma? When communities come together to reduce stigma around addiction, the results are profound:

- **43% higher treatment success rates** in stigma-free communities³
- **Community members are often the first** to notice when someone needs help²
- **Your attitudes can directly impact** whether neighbors seek life-saving treatment¹

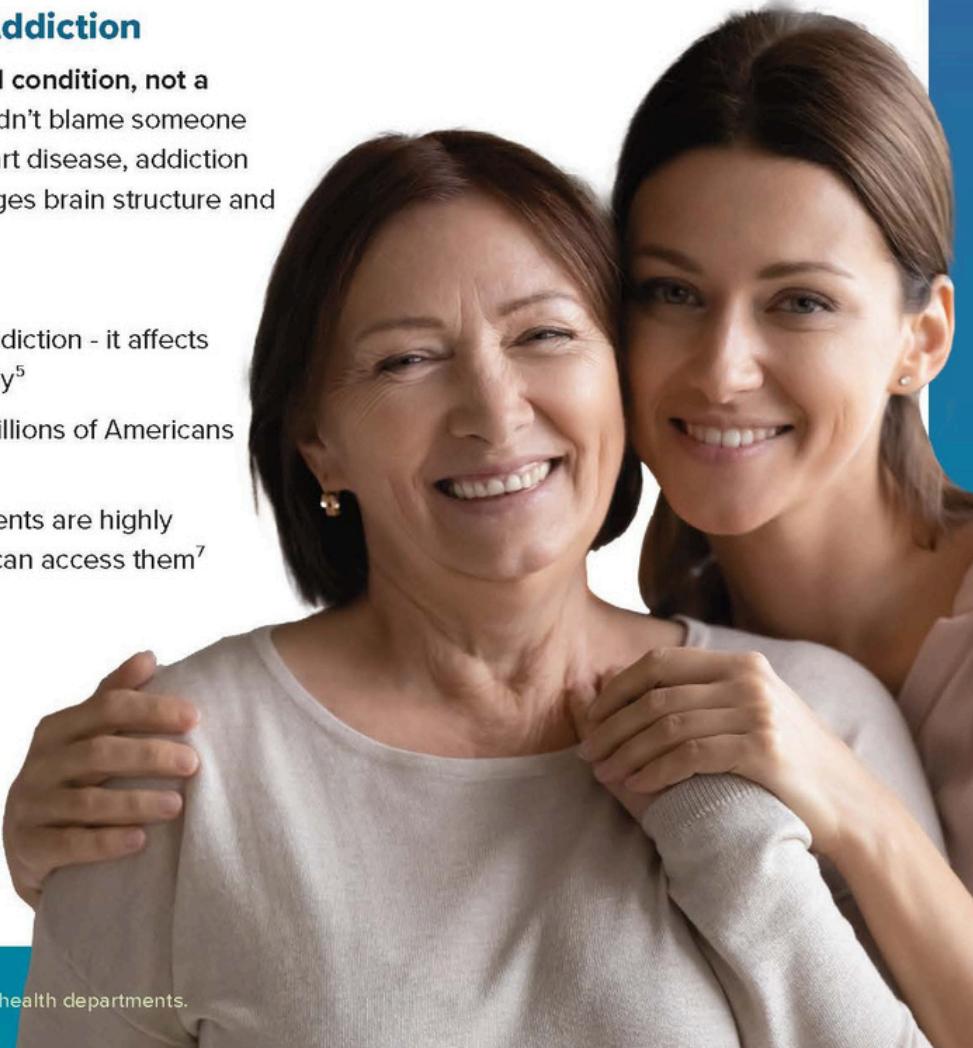
Your voice has the power to save lives. Here are some ways.

Understand What is Addiction

Addiction is a chronic medical condition, not a moral failing⁴ Just as we wouldn't blame someone for developing diabetes or heart disease, addiction is a health condition that changes brain structure and function.

Key truths about addiction:

- Anyone can develop addiction - it affects all demographics equally⁵
- Recovery is possible, millions of Americans are living proof⁶
- Evidence-based treatments are highly effective when people can access them⁷



Understand the Impact of Stigma

We all want a healthy community, and for that to happen, people facing addiction need to feel comfortable seeking support and treatment. When our community stigmatizes addiction, the consequences ripple through every family and neighborhood:

- **8-year delay** in seeking treatment due to shame and fear⁸
- **Increased overdose risk** as people hide their struggles in dangerous isolation⁹
- **Devestate families and social networks** when stigma divides communities¹⁰
- **\$4 trillion** in economic costs nationwide due to opioid use disorder¹¹

Every judgmental comment, every closed door, every turned back pushes someone further from the help they desperately need.

Four Actions You Can Take Today

1. Language Matters

The words we use matter. Research shows that changing language alone reduces stigma by 23% in community surveys.¹²

Instead of	Say This
Addict, Junkie, User, Substance abuser	Person with substance use disorder or Person who uses drugs
Recovering addict, former addict	Person in recovery
Substance abuse	Substance use for illicit drugs and substance misuse for prescription medications
Drug habit	Substance use disorder, opioid use disorder, addiction

2. Become a Source of Accurate Information¹³

Combat common myths with the facts.

Myth	Fact
Addiction is a choice	Addiction changes brain structure and function
People can just stop	Addiction requires medical treatment, like other chronic diseases
Recovery rarely works	Most people who receive treatment recover successfully

3. Champion Support Over Isolation

Social support increases recovery success by 67%¹⁴ Here's how to provide it:

- Include people in recovery in social activities and community events
- Support recovery-friendly businesses and organizations
- Advocate for recovery housing in your neighborhood
- Learn about local treatment resources to share with others

4. Advocate for Treatment, Not Punishment

Help your community treat addiction as the health issue it is:

- Support treatment funding in local budgets
- Advocate for drug courts and diversion programs
- Push back against "NIMBY" attitudes toward treatment facilities
- Vote for policies that prioritize health over punishment

Your Daily Action Plan: Being a Recovery Ally

In Conversations

- **Listen without judgment** when someone shares their struggles. Ask "How can I help?" instead of giving unsolicited advice. Share resources rather than trying to fix the problem yourself, and always respect privacy - never share someone's recovery status without permission.

In Your Neighborhood

- **Welcome recovery housing** rather than opposing it. Support local treatment centers through volunteering or donations. Host educational events in your home or community space, and model inclusive behavior for children and other family members.

Online and on Social Media

- **Share positive recovery stories** (with permission). Correct misinformation about addiction when you see it. Use respectful language in all posts about addiction, and amplify voices of people in recovery.

Recognizing When Someone Needs Help

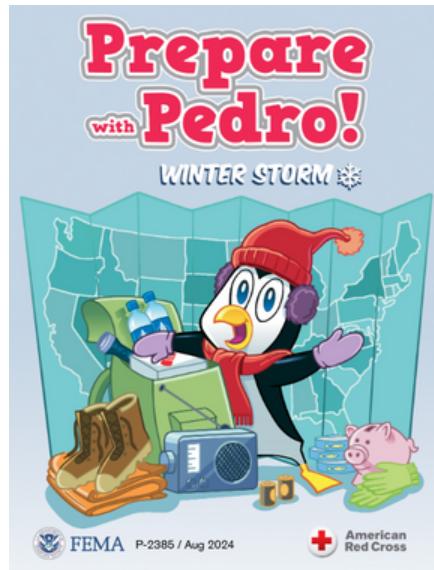
Watch for these behavioral changes:

- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Declining work or school performance
- Changes in appearance or hygiene
- Financial problems or frequent borrowing
- Health problems or frequent illnesses

How to help:

- Express concern without judgment
- Provide specific resources and phone numbers
- Offer to help make appointments or provide transportation
- Continue to show love and support regardless of their response

Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response



The image shows the cover of the 'Prepare with Pedro! Winter Storm' activity book. It features a cartoon penguin named Pedro wearing a red winter hat and scarf, standing next to a green chair with a blue backpack and a blue radio. Pedro is pointing towards a map of the United States. The background is a light blue with a map of the US. The title 'Prepare with Pedro!' is at the top in large, colorful letters, with 'WINTER STORM' below it. The American Red Cross and FEMA logos are at the bottom.

Prepare with Pedro is a free youth preparedness program created by the American Red Cross, and Ready.gov partners with them to offer the Prepare with Pedro: Disaster Preparedness Activity Book series. Pedro is a penguin who loves learning about how he can be prepared and take action during an emergency to help stay safe. He visits friends all over the United States and learns about hazards local to their area like earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, and many others!

This resource is designed to teach young children and their families how to stay safe during disasters and emergencies through fun activities such as crosswords, coloring pages, matching games, and more!

The activity book is available for digital download in six different languages. Visit <https://www.ready.gov/kids/prepare-pedro> for free downloads and interactive Prepare with Pedro kid-friendly games!

PREPAREDNESS STARTS IN THE PANTRY

USE NATIONAL CANNED FOOD MONTH TO STOCK UP AND STAY PREPARED



TIPS:

- Keep 3–4 days of nonperishable food and inspect it regularly.
- Store in cool, dry, dark places and rotate regularly.
- Choose easy-to-prepare or no-cook meals.
- Check alerts and refresh supplies seasonally.



WHY IT MATTERS

Following a disaster there may be power outages that could last for several days. Stock canned foods, dry mixes and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, water or special preparation. Be sure to include a manual can opener and eating utensils.

SUGGESTED EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLIES:

- Canned vegetables, beans & soup
- Rice, pasta & cereal
- Shelf-stable milk & baby formula
- Peanut butter & canned protein
- Cooking oil & spices



LEARN MORE:

www.ready.gov/food





NAUGATUCK VALLEY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

WHAT IS THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS (MRC)?

The MRC is a national network of volunteers that began in 2002. MRC units are community based and function as a way to locally organize and utilize volunteers who want to donate their time and expertise to prepare for and respond to emergencies, while promoting safety among their communities. All active members are protected from liability while working or training with the NVMRC.

WHO CAN JOIN THE NVMRC?

Anyone 18+! We are seeking volunteers with medical and non-medical backgrounds. No experience required! We will provide you with all the tools and resources that may be required!

MEDICAL AND NON-MEDICAL VOLUNTEERS TRAIN AND ACTIVATE TO SUPPORT:

- Vaccination & Mass Dispensing Clinics
- Community Event Support
- Until Help Arrives/ Stop the Bleed
- CPR / First Aid/ Bloodborne Pathogens
- Overdose Prevention & Narcan Training
- Psychological First Aid
- Suicide Prevention Training
- Mental Health First Aid
- ...and more!



WHAT IS EXPECTED OF OUR MEMBERS?

Participation in trainings, drills/exercises, and response to real-life experiences.

- Trainings in-person and online
- Response during emergency events
- Involvement in community events
- Other MRC related activities



Want to know more?

Contact: Emilia Griceviciute
Email: egriceviciute@nvhd.org
Phone: 203-881-3255 ext. 122



To sign up scan the QR Code or visit:
CTResponds.ct.gov

FLU RATES IN THE VALLEY ARE HIGH!

The **single best way** to reduce the risk of seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get vaccinated every year.

CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for **everyone 6 months and older**, with rare exceptions.

All flu vaccines for the 2025-2026 season are **trivalent**, which means they are formulated to protect against **three main seasonal influenza Type A and B viruses**.

Addressing misconceptions about the flu:

Myth: Flu vaccines cause flu illness.

Fact: Flu vaccines **cannot cause flu illness** because they contain a weakened or killed flu virus. If you feel sick after vaccination, you are likely experiencing common side effects which should stop after **1-2 days**.

Myth: Flu is not a serious illness.

Fact: Flu can be a **serious disease**, particularly for young children, older adults, and immunocompromised people. Any infection can carry a risk of serious **complications, hospitalization, or death**.

Myth: If you get the flu vaccine, you can't get sick with flu.

Fact: You can get vaccinated **but still get sick with flu** because vaccines vary in how well they work; however, flu vaccination has been shown to reduce severity of illness **if you do get sick**. There are also **many different influenza viruses**, and the yearly vaccine attempts to match the ones causing the most illness.

It's not too late to get your flu shot!

Regular and high dose flu vaccines for adults and children's flu vaccines are available at NVHD. To schedule an appointment with Nurse Kristie D'Averso, call (203) 881-3255, ext. 107.



FREE RADON TEST KITS AVAILABLE NOW FOR NAUGATUCK VALLEY RESIDENTS

Pick up at:

Community Health Division
98 Bank Street
Seymour, CT 06483

Hours:

Mon-Thurs 8:00am-4:00pm
Fri 8:00am-1:00pm

LIMITED SUPPLY!

Call 203-881-3255 x126

or stop by today!

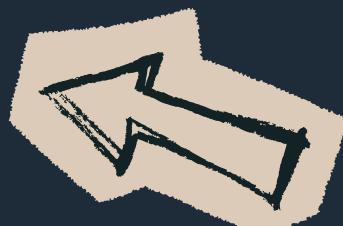
**Scan QR code for more
information on radon!**



*Return your kit by February 28th to
be entered into an NVHD raffle*



**Please use the rear
Community Health
entrance (upper
parking lot)**





'It's Your Life...Live it Well'

Take
Control



Feel
Better



Energize



Live



Enjoy

FREE Diabetes Self-Management Virtual Workshop

Small group sessions designed to learn about diabetes & pre-diabetes including:

• **Healthy eating • Foot care • Low and high blood sugar • Guidelines for when you're sick • Tips for dealing with stress • How to set small and achievable goals**

Meetings are one hour in duration, for six-weeks beginning:

**Wednesdays,
February 18th through March 25th, 2026
6:00 to 7:00 pm**

Virtual Program Access details provided at registration.

Register via Zoom. Click or enter the link below:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/nQhVY6EfTHWN5bwcQONIA>

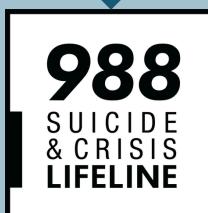


\$20 gift cards for participants who complete four of the six sessions!
Space is limited, so sign up today!



The Naugatuck Valley Health District understands that mental health is an important part of the health of an individual as a whole.

If in crisis, please text or call



Mental health matters

Upcoming Suicide Prevention Training Opportunities

QPR (Question, Persuade Refer)

NVHD Health Educator Lisa Trupp will offer a free, virtual QPR Suicide Prevention training on February 19th at 6:00pm. QPR is a nationally recognized, evidence-based suicide prevention program designed to provide participants with the ability to recognize the signs of a potential crisis, open dialogue with the individual and help to be a bridge to the professional help needed.

For more information, please click or enter the link below:

<https://qprinstitute.com/>

To register for the training, please see the attached flyer.

L.E.T.S. Save Lives

Please see this additional suicide prevention training opportunity, offered by our partners at the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness

L.E.T.S. Save Lives

An Introduction to Suicide Prevention for Black and African American Communities

Alliance 
for Prevention & Wellness
A program of BHCare



Thursday, February 19, 2026
12 PM - 1:30 PM via Teams



Click on the flyer to register!

[**Register here**](#) or visit: apw-ct.org/events

After attending, you will have:

- ✓ Recognized the scope of suicide and racial & systemic factors that impact suicide in the Black and African American communities
- ✓ Described suicide risk factors, protective factors and warning signs of suicide
- ✓ Reviewed how to get help for someone in a suicidal crisis and gain confidence in talking about suicide

Please email Taylor Gainey, tgainey@bhcare.org with any questions.



Naugatuck Valley Health District

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Naugatuck Valley
Health District

Save a Life with...

**Question
Persuade
Refer**
A Suicide Prevention Program

Become a certified
QPR Gatekeeper

QPR is a nationally
recognized, evidence-based
suicide prevention
program.

QPR is like CPR for mental
health emergencies,
providing hope and
assistance until help is
available.

Questions? Contact Lisa Trupp at
ltrupp@nvhc.org or 203-881-3255 x 108



**Virtual Community Training Session
Thursday, February 19th, 2026, 6:00pm**

As a QPR Gatekeeper you will learn to:

- Recognize the warning signs of suicide.
- Know how to offer hope.
- Know how to get help and save a life.

**Those who complete the training will receive a one-year QPR Gatekeeper certification*

Click to Register

<http://bit.ly/4ottNQ7>



SCAN HERE

**MERIDEN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND
NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT**

Virtual Adult Mental Health First Aid

Wednesday, February 25 and Thursday, February 26, 2026
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM both days (must attend both days)

Virtual via Zoom

Join us for a FREE Adult Mental Health First Aid training where participants will learn how to respond to a mental health crisis using the **Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE):**

- **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- **L**isten nonjudgmentally.
- **G**ive reassurance and information.
- **E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.

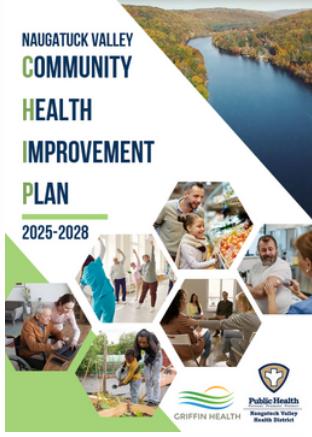
Participants will be required to complete a **2-hour, self-paced online course** before attending the virtual instructor-led sessions. Participants will receive certification from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing valid for 3 years.

Questions? Contact instructors:

Elizabeth DeMerchant, edemerchant@meridenct.gov
Lisa Trupp, ltrupp@nvhd.org

To register please visit:

<https://forms.gle/eJrD8wJ8ZbmPfYui6>



You're invited! Join one of our committees!

Here are some examples of what is included in our proposed work plan

Improve Access to Care and Other Social Needs

- Expand access to primary & specialty care
- Explore Mobile Integrated Healthcare with local EMS providers and other community based organizations
- Reduce transportation barriers
- Strengthen referral pathways between healthcare and social service providers via the Valley Council for Health & Human Services Community Care Hub & UniteUs participation

Interested in learning more? Contact Co-Chair Myra Odenwaelder at MOdenwaelder@Griffinhealth.org

Enhance Mental and Behavioral Health

- Increase awareness and access to mental and behavioral health programs
- Develop a Regional Suicide Postvention Plan
- Improve mental and behavioral health referrals and tracking
- Improve local mental and behavioral health data sharing

Interested in learning more? Contact Co-Chair Lisa Trupp at ltrupp@nvhd.org

Improve Awareness, Access to, and Uptake of Healthy Food and Nutrition Programming and Services

- Promote coordination and system-level support for food and nutrition equity
- Ensure that nutrition assistance eligible households in the Valley are aware of and participating in state and community-driven nutrition programs to reduce food insecurity
- Utilize Griffin Hospital's Center for Healthy Living and Teaching Kitchen to increase community nutrition education programs, events, and offerings
- Reduce food waste in public cafeterias and promote sustainable food habits
- Conduct a feasibility study of establishing a food co-op or hub designed to increase access to healthy and affordable foods for all Valley residents while supporting the local agricultural community

Interested in learning more? Contact Co-Chair Jessica Kristy at jkristy@nvhd.org

No experience is needed!

To maximize resources, reduce redundant work, and to set meaningful goals and realistic work plan objectives over the next three years, we need help from the whole community! Whether you live, work, or play in the Valley, your voice matters. With ongoing open recruitment, we encourage you to participate from the beginning stages of finalizing our work plan through the implementation phase!

The committees are led by members of the Valley CHIP Steering Committee and representatives of Naugatuck Valley Health District, Griffin Health, and the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center. We will provide you the data and background information you need!

FOOD RESOURCES IN THE VALLEY

ANSONIA

Christ Episcopal Church

Kathleen Samela Memorial Food Pantry

56 South Cliff Street
203-734-2715
samelafoodbank@sbcglobal.net
Tues, Wed, & Thur 9am-1pm
Doors Close at 12:30pm

Effective 01/01/2025 we will be operating by appointment, with the exception of Emergencies (3 emergencies per year, per family).

To be eligible you must have a photo ID. We are servicing anyone who walks through the door, however out of area clients will be referred to neighboring food banks.

Salvation Army

26 Lester Street
203-736-0707
Cheryl.McCollum@use.salvationarmy.org
Mon & Fri 9am-12pm
Proof of income below 150% of federal poverty level needed

DERBY

St. Vincent De Paul

237 Roosevelt Drive
203-734-7577
stvincentshoppe@sbc.global.net
Mon to Fri 9:30am-12:30pm

Serving residents of Ansonia, Derby, Seymour, Shelton, & Oxford.

To be eligible you must have proof of income and expenses.

SEYMORE/OXFORD

Seymour Oxford Food Bank

20 Pine Street, Seymour
203-888-7826
SOFBInc.1@gmail.com
Mon to Thur 9am- 11am
Appointment Needed

SHELTON

Spooner House

30 Todd Road
203-225-0453 ext 100
eholcombeactsspooner.org
Mon to Thur 9am-2pm

To be eligible, must be resident of Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour or Shelton & provide proof of income & expenses.

LITTLE FREE PANTRIES

24/7 ACCESS

Take what you need, Give what you can

Blessing Pantry

91 Church Street, Seymour

Little Free Pantry on Skokorat

58 Skokorat Street, Seymour

Neighbor-to-Neighbor Pantry

130 Bee Mountain Road, Oxford

VALLEY UNITED WAY FOOD RESOURCE GUIDE

Need food support in the Valley?

 **Christ Episcopal Church**

Kathleen Samela Memorial Food Bank

56 South Cliff Street, Ansonia, CT 06401

 203-734-2715

 **Salvation Army**

26 Lester Street, Ansonia, CT 06401

 203-736-0707

 **St. Vincent De Paul**

237 Roosevelt Drive, Derby, CT 06418

 203-734-7577

 **Seymour Oxford Food Bank**

20 Pine Street, Seymour, CT 06478

 203-888-7826

 **Spooner House**

30 Todd Road, Shelton, CT 06484

 203-225-0453

 **More food resources:**

 <https://mobilefoodpantry.ctfoodshare.org/>

 **Want to make a difference?**

Support local hunger relief efforts by donating to

Harvest House:

 <https://valleyunitedway.org/harvest-house/>

CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH



The Origins of Black History Month

THE STORY OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH BEGINS IN CHICAGO IN 1915.

An alumnus of the University of Chicago with many friends in the city, Carter G. Woodson traveled from Washington, D.C. to participate in a national celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of emancipation sponsored by the state of Illinois.

Thousands of African Americans travelled from across the country to see exhibits highlighting the progress their people had made since the destruction of slavery. Awarded a doctorate in Harvard three years earlier, Woodson joined the other exhibitors with a black history display. Despite being held at the Coliseum, the site of the 1912 Republican convention, an overflow crowd of six to twelve thousand waited outside for their turn to view the exhibits. Inspired by the three-week celebration, Woodson decided to form an organization to promote the scientific study of black life and history before leaving town.

SEPTEMBER 9, 1915

On September 9th, Woodson met at the Wabash YMCA with A. L. Jackson and three others and formed the **Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH)**.

CARTER G. WOODSON

A. S. N. L. H.

Click image above to learn more

National Cancer Prevention Month



Four Decades of Progress in Diet & Lifestyle Cancer Research



2020s

Survivorship
and quality
of life



2000s

Strong
evidence-based
Recommendations



1980s

Low acceptance
that diet
influenced
cancer risk

MAINSTREAM PUBLIC HEALTH

LOW ACCEPTANCE



2010s

Demonstrated
benefits of
adherence to AICR
Recommendations



1990s

First cancer
prevention
guidelines

Cancer typically takes two to three decades to develop. AICR pioneered the research that is reducing cancer risk and improving survivorship **TODAY**.

American Institute for Cancer Research | 1560 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1000 | Arlington, VA 22209 | (800) 843-8114



American Institute for
Cancer Research



Putting AICR's Cancer Prevention Recommendations into *Action*

Be a Healthy Weight

Manage weight with healthier food choices. Experiment with AICR's healthy recipes that include a variety of plant-based meals.

Eat a Diet Rich in Whole Grains, Vegetables, Fruits and Beans

Use the New American Plate Model for your meals. Fill 2/3 (or more) of your plate with vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans. Fill 1/3 (or less) of your plate with animal protein.

Limit Consumption of Red and Processed Meat

Swap red meat for chicken, fish or turkey. Use hummus or bean dip on a sandwich instead of processed meat.

Limit Alcohol Consumption

Choose sparkling water or 100% fruit juice. If you do choose to drink, try putting a splash of wine into soda water for a light spritzer.

For Mothers: Breastfeed Your Baby, If You Can

Evidence suggests breastfeeding can help protect mothers by lowering risk for breast cancer.

Be Physically Active

Start small. Take a 15-minute walk in the morning and in the evening to get 30 minutes of activity each day.

Limit Consumption of "Fast Foods" and Other Processed Foods That Are High in Fat, Starches or Sugars

Choose healthy snacks. Limit chips, cookies and sugary cereals and swap with nutrient packed veggies and hummus or fresh fruit and reduced-fat yogurt.

Limit Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Drinks

Drink mostly water. Make a pitcher of fruit-infused water to add extra flavor.

Do Not Use Supplements for Cancer Prevention

Build your meals around plant foods to meet nutritional needs through diet alone.

After a Cancer Diagnosis: Follow Our Recommendations, If You Can

Check with your health professional about what is right for you. AICR's Recommendations are a blueprint for not only lowering cancer risk, but also other chronic diseases and cancer recurrence.

Not smoking and avoiding other exposure to tobacco and excess sun are also important in reducing cancer risk. Following these Recommendations is likely to reduce intakes of salt, saturated and trans fats, which together will help prevent other non-communicable diseases. For more information and resources on practicing healthy habits to reduce cancer risk, take the Healthy10 Challenge at www.healthy10challenge.org.

PO Box 97167, Washington, DC 20090 | 800-842-8114 | www.aicr.org

Click here for more information from the American Institute for Cancer Research

