



Texas Department of State
Health Services

Friday Beat

January 28, 2022, Edition

The newsletter that takes a [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child](#) approach.

Announcements

Apply to be a Texas School Health Advisory Committee Member

If you are interested in issues surrounding school health, you might be interested in joining the Texas School Health Advisory Committee. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is currently accepting applications for membership on the committee for parents, nutrition services representatives from a school setting, medical professionals, school professionals, and organization representatives involved with the health of school children. [See more information and access the application.](#) All applications are due March 7, 2022.

Professional Development

Texas Action for Healthy Kids Annual Summit

Join Texas Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) for two days of information, networking, and discussions that can help your district and/or school prepare students to be healthy and successful. A variety of topics will be presented including family/school partnerships, SHACs, coordinated school health, and more. The annual summit will occur on February 15-16, 2022. [Register for the AFHK virtual event.](#)

Funding Opportunities

Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators

The Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators recognizes outstanding kindergarten through grade 12 teachers who apply innovative approaches to environmental education and use the environment as a context for learning. Up to two teachers from each of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 10 regions, from different states, will be selected to receive this award. [View more information and instructions on how to apply.](#) Complete applications must be submitted by February 18, 2022.

Grant Aims to Increase Youth Gardens, Green Spaces

KidsGardening and the Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation will award grants to eligible organizations interested in creating or expanding youth gardens or green spaces. The "Gro More Grassroots Grant" application deadline is February 4, 2022. [View the application and other grant information.](#)

Physical Education and Physical Activity

Active Classrooms Month Resources

Check out the [resources from Active Schools](#) for integrating physical activity into learning. Classroom physical activity helps students feel better, work together as a team, reduce anxiety, and maintain focus all while helping them learn and retain academic content. In addition, movement can be a great classroom and virtual learning management tool for teachers and caregivers by energizing tired or distracted students and calming students to prepare for learning and testing.

TEA Physical Fitness Assessment

Texas Education Code, §38.101 and §38.103, require the fitness levels of all public-school students to be assessed at least once annually. This applies to those who are in grade 3 or higher and those who are enrolled in a physical education course or any physical education substitute course or activity. Stay current with information about the [TEA's Physical Fitness Assessment Initiative](#) and access the Quick Start Guide. All fitness data must be submitted through the Texas Education Agency Login on or before 5:00 pm (CDT) on June 10, 2022.

Nutrition Environment and Services

Farm to School Introduction for Schools

The Farm Fresh Training is intended for school nutrition program team members and others who are interested in bringing farm to school to their districts or campuses. Information presented during this training is an introduction to the program. Future training and discussion about farm to school activities will stem from this training. [Access the Farm Fresh Training.](#)

Health Services

Communicating with and Supporting Youth Diagnosed with COVID-19: A Trauma-Informed Care Approach

COVID-19 is still being transmitted in youth. In addition to transmission, young people have also experienced an increase in exposure to potentially traumatic events such as a COVID-19 diagnosis, hospitalization, death of a loved one, loss of important life events, and others. Mental health challenges have also increased during the pandemic. This commentary from the [Journal of Adolescent Health](#) gives trauma-informed messaging tools to use with young people who have a positive diagnosis for COVID-19.

Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

National School Counseling Week: February 7-11

National School Counseling Week 2022 is February 7-11, 2022. The aim of the awareness week is to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within U.S. school systems. National School Counseling Week highlights the impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career. View the [American School Counselor Association's resources](#) and tools to celebrate school counselors.

Register for Texas Annual Professional School Counselor Conference

The 17th Annual Professional School Counselor Conference will be held on February 13-15, 2022, in Round Rock, Texas. This annual conference is designed for professional counselors providing services in educational settings from elementary to secondary environments. Program topics will focus on ethics, counseling, development, and more. This conference is hosted by Texas School Counselor Association and can be attended in person or virtually. [Register for the Professional School Counselor Conference.](#)

Family Engagement

Tools for Supporting Emotional Wellbeing in Children and Youth

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the lives of children and youth. Though typically resilient to everyday stressors, children and youth are dealing with new challenges due to COVID-19. Social distancing, changes to their routines, and a lost sense of security and safety, make young people especially vulnerable to feeling stressed, anxious, or depressed. [View tools from the National Academies](#) created to teach skills that can help children and youth cope with some of the challenges associated with the pandemic.

Community Involvement

Start a Family Nature Club

It is important, healthy, and fun for children to have frequent and varied opportunities to play outdoors as a part of their everyday lives. The Children & Nature Network works to create opportunities for accessible, easy, and family-oriented activities outdoors. Creating a Nature Club for Families is a great way to get involved and get the benefits of time in nature. Nature Clubs for Families can be created in any neighborhood — whether inner city, suburban, or rural — and in any economic setting. Draw inspiration on how to form your own Nature Club for Families by using the [Nature Clubs for Families Tool Kit](#) and Texas Children in Nature's supplemental Took Kit for Texans.

Quote to Note

"Life is a progress, and not a station." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

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