





Did you know that self-care helps strengthen public health teams?

The winter holiday season can be a mix of joy, stress, disrupted schedules, and higher demands both personally and professionally. For public health workers in particular, this time of year can lead to burnout if self-care isn't prioritized.

Research shows that taking even a few intentional self-care steps — like setting personal boundaries, maintaining sleep habits, practicing gratitude, and staying physically active — improves mental well-being and supports resilience through busy or emotionally demanding seasons.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers a free “Support During the Holidays” toolkit with downloadable guidance, tips, and graphics to share with your team or clients.

 **Holiday Tip:** Block a 10-minute “pause break” on your calendar twice a week this month where you shut down email, grab water or a warm drink, and take some deep breaths. Encourage your team to join you!

 Find SAMHSA’s holiday support tools here: <https://www.samhsa.gov/about/digital-toolkits/support-during-holidays>



Ready-to-Go Holiday Engagement Ideas for Your MCH Population

Whether you’re working with limited time or looking for a fun new way to connect with families in your community, we’ve gathered a few easy-to-implement ideas for your MCH priorities this December:

1) **Launch a “12 Days of Wellness” Social Media Countdown**

Share one wellness tip per day on Facebook or Instagram from December 13–24.

Ideas include:

- Safe sleep in cold weather
- Teen driver safety during winter break
- Supporting maternal mental health during holidays
- Shelf-stable, nutritious holiday meal ideas for families

2) **Host a “Warm-Up Winter Open House”**

Open your clinic or lobby for a come-and-go event featuring:

- Hot cocoa or herbal tea
- Quick car seat checks
- “Safe holiday home” tips using the [Missouri Poison Center Seasonal Tips](#)
- Teen winter driving reminders

- Resource table on postpartum mental health and safe sleep
- 3) **Share a “Give the Gift of Early Care” Provider Kit**
Send local prenatal or pediatric providers a fun email template they can forward to patients. Include topics like:
 - Benefits of scheduling early prenatal care
 - Safe holiday travel and childproofing for visitors
 - Free CDC “Hear Her” materials on preventing maternal mortality: <https://www.cdc.gov/hearher/campaign-resources/index.html>



- **When is the focused local MCH needs assessment due?**
 - There is not a due date for the focused local MCH needs assessment, rather, a rough draft of the proposed five-year work plan is due March 31, 2026, by email to your MCH DNC.
- **How will I get a proposed work-plan template specific to my selected priority health issue?**
 - Please email your MCH DNC once you have completed your focused local MCH needs assessment and determined the priority health issue you will move forward with. She will email you the template and resource packet for the specific priority health issue.
- **I feel overwhelmed and do not have the time/capacity to do research to determine a priority. What am I going to do?**
 - Please email your MCH DNC and let her know you need help pulling the MOPHIMS and MCH Risk Level data as well as analyzing it and engaging the community. She will work with our data teams to collect this data and share it with you as well as some ideas for next steps moving forward.
- **I don't know anything about the new MCH priorities, how can I possibly write a work plan around one?**
 - Please join us for the priority health issue meetings in December and January. If you did not receive a calendar invite, please let your MCH DNC know, and she will forward it to you. You can attend one and/or all. These will be recorded and a link to the recording will be shared with you after.
- **What do I do once my proposed rough draft is submitted to my MCH DNC? How will I know if it will be approved for use?**
 - Your MCH DNC will be reviewing your rough draft with you at your site visit in the spring/early summer (she will reach out to schedule these visits in March, 2026) and help develop a polished, finalized version by July 30, 2026, as the finalized version will become part of your contract documents that are reviewed and signed by your LPHA designee to execute the contract for FFY2027.

If you were not able to attend the contract opening meeting and building the work plan meeting, please find the recordings on our MCH Playlist here:

[MCH Services Playlist](#)

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have additional questions/concerns or any of these resources do not provide clarification.



Reminders

- December 2025 (FFY26) Invoicing tool and request for payment form due January 15, 2026
During these meetings, we will be discussing the specific PHIs and will help with any ideas or questions:
 - **January 8th, 2026**- Medical Home, Family-Centered Care, Child, Proposed Work Plan Meeting, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., virtual
 - **January 15th, 2026**- Preventive Dental Visit, Child, Proposed Work Plan Meeting, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., virtual
 - **January 22nd, 2026**- Adult Mentor, Adult Transition, Proposed Work Plan Meeting, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., virtual
 - **January 29th, 2026**- Family Strengthening, Proposed Work Plan Meeting, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., virtual

Upcoming Conferences that may be of interest:

- **33rd Annual Missouri Coordinated School Health Conference: Roots of Resilience: Growing Healthier Schools and Communities**
Save the Date: February 25-27, 2026, Lodge of Four Seasons, Lake Ozark, MO
<https://healthykidsmo.com/#reg>
- **2026 Conference on the Young Years: Ignite Curiosity & Inspire Possibilities**
March 5-7, 2026, Osage Beach, MO
<https://dese.mo.gov/childhood/prof-dev/conference-young-years>
- **2026 Missouri Oral Health Policy Conference**
March 5-6, 2026, Jefferson City, MO
<https://www.oralhealthmissouri.org/2026-conference-information>
- **AMCHP 2026 Annual Conference, Save the Date**
March 7-10, 2026, Washington, DC
Sign up for the newsletter here for conference updates:
<https://amchp.org/amchp-conference/#conference-subscribe>
- **Disaster Behavioral Health Conference, The Road to Resilience**
Save the Date: March 16-18, 2026, Wyndham Executive Center, Columbia, MO
<https://web.cvent.com/event/68a3e1c3-4e85-4958-9d2c-a0355a731e2b/summary>
- **Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) 2026 Annual Conference, Save the Date**

April 22-24, 2026, Portland, OR

https://www.sophe.org/conferences_events/annual-conference/2026-annual-conference/

