

# NEWSLETTER



[www.senecanativeconnections.org](http://www.senecanativeconnections.org)

## January Recap!



*The parking lot outside of the Prevention Offices, taken any day since November 2024...*

I would love be sitting here preparing this month's Newsletter by telling everyone that the picture above was just a couple of days of wild weather for us here at the Prevention Department, during some random week of winter, and we all came together and toughed it out; wrapping our hands around our morning coffee, leaving home a little early to ensure a safe drive, or throwing some hand warmers in our gloves. Unfortunately, however, the picture (actually taken on January 20th, 2025) could have been taken on any random day since November of 2024. Welcome back winter, its been years...



The month of January found the Prevention Department dodging snow days at school and even snow days at the office! Luckily, after being saved time and time again by All-Wheel-Drive, we were still able to maintain bi-monthly presentations at the Lakeshore High School. This month's topics included human trafficking awareness in recognition of the "Blue Campaign" (see below), as well as check-ins with attendees in regards to coping skills they are utilizing with the isolating impacts of the weather. Students also engaged in open conversations about the issues they are facing as the school year reached its half-way point as well as the activities in which students are engaging that give them the positive distractions that are so important to overall wellness. Students openly talked about basketball season, cheerleading, as well as taking advantage of the weather through outdoor activities such as snowmobiling and snowboarding.



The Cattaraugus Prevention Department would like to send out a thank you to Carrie Brown, Prevention Specialist from the Allegany Reservation, for coordinating the ASIST training (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) held on Thursday, January 23rd and Friday, January 24th, at which a number of Seneca Nation departments were in attendance to learn important skills in suicide first-aid interventions. The training offers attendees skills that will allow them to provide a consistent approach to interactions with those experiencing suicidal ideation from the point of first contact through any follow-up that may be required to get individuals on a better path.



# Gwa:dëh

"To Learn"

## This Month's Topic:

### The "Blue Campaign"

The "Blue Campaign" is a national campaign designed to create public awareness and education about the growing concern of human trafficking to those outside of the agencies created specifically to address this issue. The goal is to teach community members how to recognize the potential indicators of human trafficking and how to respond appropriately in possible cases.

January 11th is recognized each year as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. The Blue Campaign hosts a social media event called #WearBlueDay, where people are asked to take pictures of themselves wearing blue and post them to social media to raise awareness of the issue of human trafficking.

The Blue Campaign utilizes partnerships created through the Department of Homeland Security (DHO) in the implementation of a comprehensive approach modeled around the "5 P's:" Prevention, Protection, Provision, Prosecution and Participation, in order to combat the issue.

The President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (PITF) was established to bring together federal departments and agencies, such as the Department of Labor, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Child and Family Services, as well as Federal and local Human Services agencies and programs. The goal in developing these collaborations is to make resources throughout the community aware of the signs that human trafficking may be taking place so that the necessary interventions can be utilized as early as possible. The more agencies and individuals that become a part of this process, the more eyes and ears we have in the communities that will allow for trafficking to be identified and, with all hope, eliminated.

One of the major myths of human trafficking is the false belief that individuals who are being "trafficked" are being moved from one place to another. However, human trafficking does not require transportation to be considered a crime. Human trafficking can take place in the victims own home. As well, trafficking victims are not always female, and if signs are present, trafficking should be considered for both males and females.

Here are some basic signs that we can all look for in those whom we may suspect are a victim of human trafficking

- Appearing malnourished
- Signs of physical injuries or physical abuse
- Individual avoids eye contact and social interaction
- Actively avoids interaction with law enforcement or emergency services, such as EMT's or medical care
- Individual is seemingly adhering to a scripted or rehearsed response in their social interaction
- Individual appears destitute and lacking personal possessions or basic items of care

The Prevention Department encourages everyone to take the time to review some of the resources that are available that can provide a more comprehensive explanation of the risk factors, signs and symptoms, the "5 P's," and programs that are available to help end human trafficking. Some of these resources can be found at: [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov) (Department of Homeland Security) [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org) (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) as well as [www.nationalhumantraffickinghotline.org](http://www.nationalhumantraffickinghotline.org)



Mary Mohawk-Jensen (shown left) from the Prevention Department taking part in her semi-monthly "girls group" with participants from the Lakeshore High School. Attendees participated in painting self-portraits wearing blue, in recognition of the "Blue Campaign." The students shown in this group, as well as other groups held during the day, were shown a short video creating awareness of the issue of human trafficking, while also offering insight into the myths and facts regarding the topic.

Ray Woodin (shown right) from the Prevention Department taking part in his semi-monthly "boys group," with students from Lakeshore High School. These students also participated in a discussion which assisted them in identifying the potential signs that human trafficking is taking place, as well as some of the myths surrounding human trafficking. Participants were able to ask and have questions answered about what they can do as individuals to help in the campaign, and how their efforts have a positive impact on their community.



## Culture IS Prevention

CULTURAL PRACTICES ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT REDUCE THE RISK OF YOUTH ENGAGING IN SUBSTANCE MISUSE. LEARNING, PRACTICING AND KNOWING OUR CULTURE HAS POSITIVE EFFECTS OF MENTAL HEALTH, SELF ESTEEM AND LOWERING THE RISK OF UTILIZING MIND CHANGERS AND OTHER HARMFUL SUBSTANCES



**SELF-CARE EVENT FOR**  
*Mental Health*  
*Friday, February 21, 2025*  
*9:00 am - 1:00 pm*

Community Health and Wellness Center  
36 Thomas Indian School Dr.  
Irving, N.Y.14081

Learn tips to improve and maintain mental health and wellness through three interactive presentations.

Explore and share ideas with other participants and sample products that are beneficial for our minds and spirits.

Culture Is Prevention

Cultural practices are protective factors that reduce the risk of youth engaging in substance misuse. Learning, practicing, and knowing our culture has positive affects on mental health and self-esteem, lowering the risk of using mind changers and other harmful substances.



Presentations by

Hayden Haynes  
Andrea Spako  
Kayli Abrams

Lunch will be provided.  
Door Prizes and Giveaways too!

Call 716-532-8223 ext. 5688 or 5076  
to reserve your spot!



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