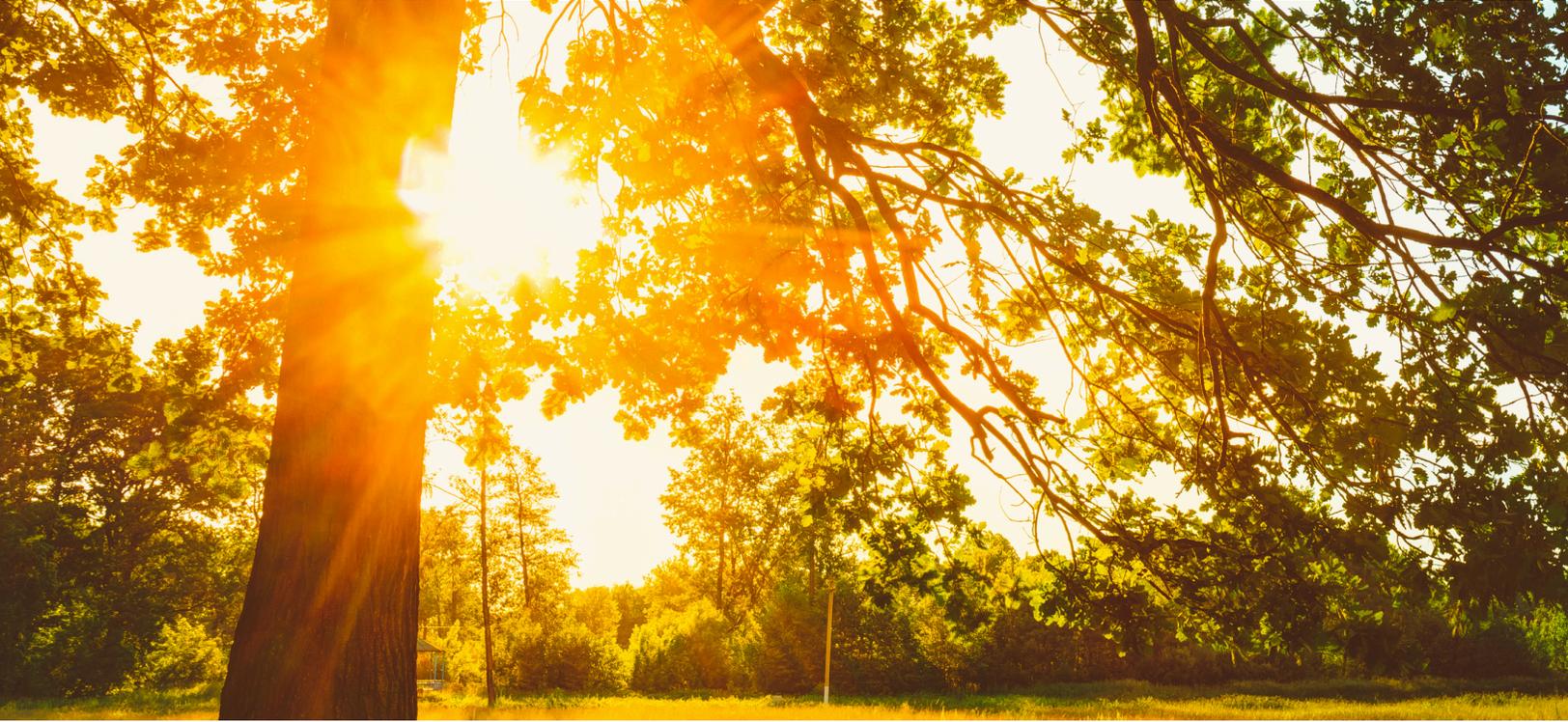


JUNE 2025

COMMUNITY PARTNER MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Jump Into June with GCC!

Hello GCC Friends and Partners,

As we step into summer, I'm filled with gratitude for the energy, collaboration, and commitment each of you brings to our shared mission. June is a season of growth—of gardens, of ideas, and of the community work we do together.

Thank you for being on this journey with us. Let's make this summer one of impact, inspiration, and continued connection!

Thank you!

JoAnn Gieselman
Director



🐾 Double the Paws, Double the Love – A (Fashionably Late) Father’s Day Message from Elly & Winston 🐾

Hi there hoomans!

It’s us – Elly (JoAnn’s loyal fluffball) and my buddy Winston (treat connoisseur and belly rub expert)! We’re a little late to the paw-ty, but we couldn’t let Father’s Day pass without giving a big ol’ shoutout to all the amazing dads out there. 🐾💙🐾

Whether you’re a dad, grandpa, bonus dad, or just a champion fetch-thrower and snack-giver – THANK YOU for everything you do. You keep our tails wagging and our hearts full!

We hope your Father’s Day was full of love, laughter, and maybe even a little time to nap (we highly recommend it ^{zZ}).

Sending you slobbery kisses and happy barks,

🐾 Elly & Winston

GCC's Dynamic Duo of Cheer



United Way of Siouxland has analyzed thousands of local data points and involved local leaders, spanning law enforcement, healthcare, education, workforce development and beyond.

Through this collaborative effort, United Way defined 5 goals to enhance the impact of our mission on Siouxland.

United Way Goal # 1: Individuals access mental health and addiction resources.

Local Priorities:

- Improve access to affordable treatment and recovery resources through expanded hours and/or delivery methods, thereby increasing participation.
- Increase access and participation in prevention programming.

United Way FUNDED PROGRAMS within this goal area:



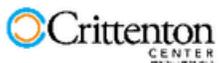
Catholic Charities of Sioux City, IA Behavioral Health Services Program

Expand mental health services, substance use disorder treatment, prevention, and early intervention services.



Heartland Counseling Peer Support Program

Offers comprehensive wraparound services addressing mental health and substance abuse.



Crittenton Center Resource Center Program

Assists families based on individual needs, regardless of income or other factors, helping them access mental health and addiction resources, develop parenting skills, and improve their family's health, safety and wellbeing.



Siouxland Mental Health Serving All That Enter Program

Offers expanded programming in Dakota County, NE including, walk-in crisis services and urgent care for psychiatric care, therapy, substance abuse screenings, and suicide prevention.



At Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Sioux City, play therapy one reflects our mental health services for kids.



At Heartland Counseling Services, the Adult & Youth Peer Support Program offers comprehensive wraparound services addressing mental health & substance abuse.



Crittenton Center hosting Siouxland Digs Kids, an event to raise awareness of Child Abuse Prevention Month (April) and youth homelessness.

Embracing summer without risking your sobriety

Summer is here, bringing warmth, longer days, and outdoor social events.

This season is filled with celebrations, from picnics in the park and lively barbecues to outdoor festivals. People are enjoying everything summer has to offer, including festive holidays like the Fourth of July. Streets come alive with laughter, music, and often drinks in hand. However, for those on a journey of recovery or anyone choosing to embrace sobriety, these joyful gatherings can present unique challenges.

The good news is that you don't have to miss out on the fun. With some planning and a positive mindset, you can fully enjoy summer celebrations while staying true to your goals.

Tips for maintaining sobriety during summer celebrations and holidays. As summer gatherings come alive, it's important to stay grounded in your sobriety. Here are some engaging strategies to help you enjoy those social events without the temptation of alcohol or substances:

Create a support network. Before you head out, rally some friends who share your commitment to sobriety. Having a buddy by your side can make all the difference in staying true to your goals.

Embrace festive alternatives. Treat yourself to delicious non-alcoholic beverages. There are so many refreshing mocktails and sparkling waters available that can keep the festive spirit alive without the buzz.

Plan your exit. Having an exit strategy can ease your mind. Whether it's a predetermined time to leave or a trusted friend to call for a ride, knowing you can step away if things get overwhelming is key.

Stay busy. Dive into activities! Help with the grill, play lawn games, or engage in conversations. Keeping busy can distract from the urge to drink and help you enjoy the moment.

Set boundaries. It's OK to say no to offers of alcohol or other substances. You can politely decline without feeling awkward. Your commitment to yourself should always come first!

Reflect on your journey. Before social events, take a moment to remind yourself why sobriety is important to you. Reflecting on your progress can bolster your resolve and inspire confidence.

Remember, summer is a time for fun and connection, and you can still enjoy it to the fullest while keeping your sobriety intact. By preparing mentally and practically, you'll feel empowered and ready to enjoy the festivities on your own terms!



Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Alzheimer's is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills, and it is not a normal part of aging. If you notice any of the ten warning signs in yourself or a family member, don't ignore them. Speak up, and encourage your loved one to schedule a visit with their doctor. To learn more about these signs in detail, please visit alz.org/10signs or call our helpline at 800-272-3900.

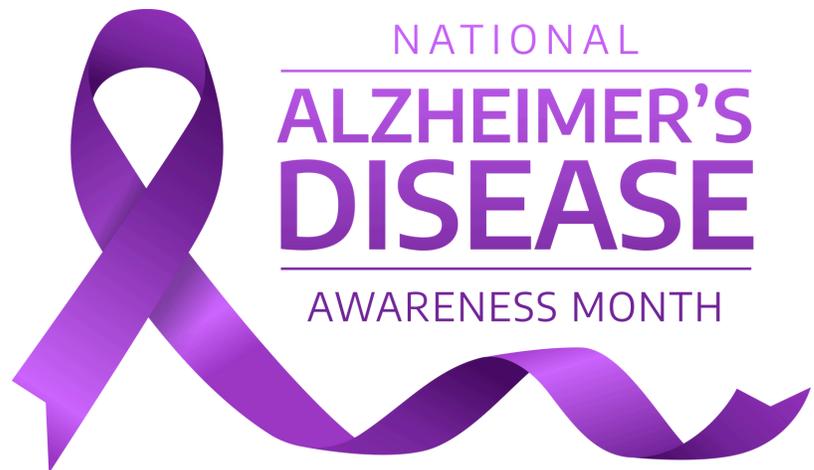
The 10 Warning Signs are; 1- Memory loss that disrupts daily life. 2- Challenges in planning or solving problems. 3- Difficulty completing familiar tasks. 4- Confusion with time or place. 5- Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relations. 6- New problems with words in speaking or writing. 7- Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps. 8- Decreased or poor judgement. 9- Withdrawal from work or social activities. 10- Changes in mood and personality.

Please also join us at the Siouxland Walk to End Alzheimer's on September 27th! Sign up today at alz.org/walk!

Thank you very much!



Sean Hoelsing
Regional Data Manager
Alzheimer's Association



Substance Use Recovery Resources

Explore RecoveryIowa.org: A Statewide Hub for Substance Use Recovery Resources: Looking for ways to better support individuals on the path to recovery? RecoveryIowa.org is a comprehensive online resource designed to connect Iowans with tools, services, and community supports for substance use recovery.

Developed by Iowa State University's Public Science Collaborative in partnership with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, RecoveryIowa.org offers:

- A statewide recovery support group finder
- County, district, and community-level recovery resource reports
- Access to recovery coaches and local support services
- News, events, and real stories from across Iowa

Whether you're a provider, community leader, or advocate, RecoveryIowa.org makes it easier to find and share the resources that matter. Visit RecoveryIowa.org or reach out to Kelsey Van Selous at kvansel@iastate.edu to learn more and share ideas!



Kelsey Van Selous, Ph.D., MSW, LCSW
Program Manager & Data Analyst, Public Science Collaborative
Iowa State University: Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice

Summer Activity Fair at Southern Hills Mall Connects Families to Opportunities: Hosted in Partnership with Growing Community Connections

On Saturday, June 7, the Southern Hills Mall was buzzing with energy as families gathered for the Summer Activity Fair, a vibrant event designed to help parents and caregivers connect their children with summer camps, programs, and activities across the community.

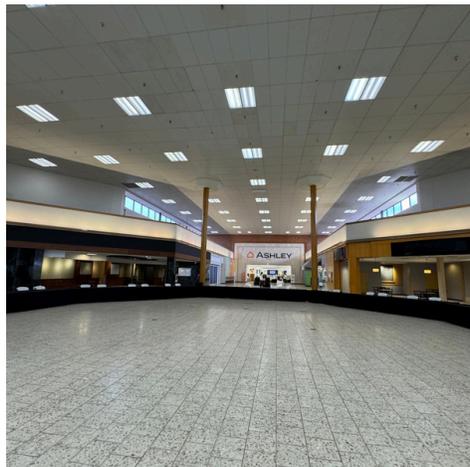
Supported by Growing Community Connections (GCC), the fair brought together 12 local agencies and organizations, each hosting a table to share information, answer questions, and offer on-the-spot sign-ups for a wide variety of summer opportunities.

From day camps and sports programs to arts and learning experiences, the event provided something for every interest and age group. Families appreciated the convenience of having so many options in one central location, while agencies valued the chance to meet families face-to-face and expand awareness about their services.

Held from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the heart of the Southern Hills Mall, the fair created a welcoming and accessible environment where community connection was front and center.

GCC was proud to support this event as part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening families and building a more connected Siouxland. We thank all participating organizations for making the day such a success—and for helping ensure that every child has a chance to grow, explore, and thrive this summer.

Stay connected with GCC for more upcoming events that bring families and resources together!



20 Wellness Tips for Employees

WebMD

If you have a workplace well-being program, you may already have access to a whole toolbox of solutions you can tap into to help employees. Here are some ideas that focus on mental, physical, financial and social well-being

- **Get outside during the work day.** Just 10 minutes of fresh air and sunlight can do wonders for our energy and mood.
- **Have lunch with coworkers.** Encourage employees to make an effort to set aside at least 20 to 30 minutes to eat with a colleague if in person. If they are remote, suggest they FaceTime a colleague and eat lunch away from their desk.
- **Move closer to the light.** While not every employee can sit by a window, there are likely spaces in the office – like common areas – where employees could bring their laptop and work for a few hours to get more light exposure. If all else fails, invest in some light therapy boxes that mimic outdoor light.
- **Lean into flexible hours.** Many workplaces have become much more open to flexibility, so if starting later improves people’s moods, allow it! A shortened or compressed workweek may also give employees the chance to get more outdoor recreation on their off days.
- **Host a wellness challenge.** Wellness challenges offer double the benefits: they get employees moving and boost social connections in the workplace. We’ve got some great [workplace wellness challenge ideas](#) that work in any weather.
- **Plan workplace events.** Organize some fun activities like restorative yoga classes, healthy cooking demonstrations or contests, or awards for the best “hygge” workspace.
- **Focus on good sleep hygiene.** Offer employees tips for a wind-down routine, optimal sleeping temperature, and when to nix the screens. Many well-being programs have a sleep program you can promote.
- **Spotlight wellness in your corporate communications.** Include relevant and timely content in your newsletters and town halls. Give managers employee wellness tips they can include at the start of team meetings.
- **Remind employees about the EAP’s services.** Most EAPs offer a number of free counseling sessions that can help employees, depending on their unique needs.
- **Encourage exercise.** Let employees know it’s OK to weave in exercise throughout the work day. Lunchtime workouts, walking meetings, and quick stretch or jumping jack breaks can boost energy.

20 Wellness Tips for Employees Continued...

WebMD

- **Help with nutrition.** Health coaches, weight management programs, and digital tools all provide nutritional support based on an individual's needs and interests.
- **Promote mindfulness and meditation.** Give employees access to apps or host a group mindfulness webinar or in-person event.
- **Enlist the help of health coaches.** If your well-being program includes access to health coaches, program coordinators or program managers, ask them to deliver a webinar or lunch-and-learn on a specific topic. This is also a good time to promote the 1:1 support [corporate health coaching](#) provides.
- **Foster social connections.** Set aside time for intentional connection with coworkers via in person or virtual water cooler chats, BINGO, or trivia games.
- **Rethink the afternoon coffee break.** While caffeine can help counteract the sleepiness we sometimes feel, too much can disrupt sleep patterns. Make sure the break room offers herbal tea and energizing snacks to get past that mid-afternoon slump.
- **Offer financial coaching.** Sessions could be in-person, over the phone, or via video with a financial professional. If you have a 401(k) program, ask if they have a resource for these kinds of sessions.
- **Examine leadership culture.** Urge leaders to examine workplace practices that might be contributing to poor employee well-being. Examples include the expectation to be always "on," lack of support for taking time off, and not getting to know employees on a more personal level.
- **Volunteer together.** Plan an event that gives the team a chance to bond while doing good. Organize activities that match your company's mission or sustainability goals or find a local organization you can develop an ongoing relationship with.
- **Carve out time during meetings to connect.** Urge managers to spend time getting to know the non-work side of team members. Devote the first five minutes of group meetings to a quick catch-up.
- **Got extra budget?** Embrace each season with creature comforts. For example, in the winter, send employees a "welcome winter" kit with a special mug, tea, cozy throw, or woolly socks.