

## February is:

- American Heart Month
- International Boost

## CONFIDENCE

- Self-Esteem Month
- National Children's Dental Health Month
- Teen Dating



- Violence Awareness & Prevention Month
- National Eating Disorders Awareness Week



- (Feb. 23-March 1) National School Counseling Week



## Governor Wolf Ramps Up Opioid Battle

On January 10, Governor Wolf signed a disaster emergency declaration (usually for severe weather events) decreeing the state's opioid epidemic a public health emergency. The 90-day declaration widens access to the state's prescription drug monitoring program, applies more resources to the crisis, and makes it easier and quicker for medical professionals to get people into drug treatment programs.

proclaim opioids as a disaster that the state lost 5,260 people to almost 15 percent over 2016. Pennsylvania and the fourth more than twice the national av-



waived 13 regulations, including permitting first responders to leave behind extra doses of the anti-overdose drug Naloxone after responding to a call. Over the past three years, the police have revived 5,700 people using the treatment. Also lifted is the requirement that physicians must have a face-to-face with patients before approving addiction treatment. The declaration also establishes an Opioid Operational Command Center that will coordinate forces with state police and nine other state departments. Wolf said that these efforts were not a "silver bullet," but will "open additional avenues" to contain and try to eradicate the opioid problem.

(Sources: "Gov. Wolf Declares a Disaster Emergency Over Opioid Crisis in PA." *6abc.com*. January 11, 2018; "Wolf

Pennsylvania is the eighth state to emergency. Preliminary data shows overdoses in 2017, an increase of This marks the highest death total for highest overdose rate in the country--

erage. With his signature, Wolf

## Tide Pod Challenge

In the latest social media craze, teens are popping brightly-colored plastic laundry detergent pods in their mouths, biting them, and posting videos online. Some are even cooking them before ingestion. The pods contain a highly-toxic mix of ingredients—ethanol, hydrogen peroxide and polymers—that can cause diarrhea and vomiting. The detergent also can burn the respiratory tract and if some gets into the lungs, it could cause breathing difficulties. Dr. Alfred Aleguas Jr., managing director of the Florida Poison Information Center in Tampa, noted that teens could end up in a "life-threatening" situation. (Sources: "Teens are Eating Laundry Detergent for the Tide Pod Challenge." *www.cbsnews.com*. January 12, 2018. "Tide Pod Challenge: Teens are Putting Detergent Pods in Their Mouth and Posting Videos Online." *www.usatoday.com*. January 11, 2018. Joyce, Kathleen. "Doctors Warn Against Eating Tide Pods in Latest Social Media Challenge." *www.foxnews.com*. January 12, 2018.)



## School Counseling Through The Years

For more than 100 years, schools have had counselors and the role has been evolving ever since. In the beginning, vocational teachers were assigned an "extra" duty in response to the Industrial Revolution. They followed a rigid, career-centric plan—get the students out the door and into manufacturing jobs. During the 1900s, the role and responsibilities expanded to identifying and assisting failing students, teaching socially appropriate behaviors, developing positive character traits, tracking attendance, and helping graduates transition into the workforce. With the Cold War in full swing, counselors were asked to "guide" talented students towards science and technology careers and the "guidance counselor" was born. In the late '60s, the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* funded counseling in primary and secondary schools and paid for professional development, instructional materials, and supplemental programs. The Act also helped to promote parental involvement in the education and wellbeing of their children. Along the way, the educational requirements for counselors changed and the word "guidance" was dropped as duties incorporated individual and group counseling, student planning, career and college preparation, character building, social skills, study skills, crisis intervention, and preventive and/or proactive program implementation. What started out as a role with limited capacity now extends beyond the academic realm to include wellbeing and mental health.

(Source: "'Guidance' to 'School' Counselor: The Transition and Expansion of School Counseling." *onlineschoolcounselingprograms.com*. February 7, 2017)

# Teen Dating Violence

Each year, approximately 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner. Violent behavior typically begins between the ages of 12 and 18; 94% of the victims are 16-19-year-old females. Teen dating violence (TDV) is defined as a pattern of abuse or threat of abuse against adolescent dating partners. This abuse takes many forms—verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, and digital (sexting and texting) and takes place across diverse groups and cultures.

A National Institute of Justice-funded study examined the prevalence of dating violence among 5,647 teens (51.8% female, 74.6% Caucasian) from 10 middle schools and high schools (representing grades 7-12) throughout New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The following percentages of dating teens reported experiencing forms of abuse:

- ◆ Cyber dating abuse: 26.3%
- ◆ Physical dating violence: 29.9%
- ◆ Psychological dating abuse: 47.2%
- ◆ Sexual coercion: 13.0%

Despite these statistics, only 1 in 4 parents discuss domestic violence with their children and Pennsylvania law does not require that schools address this issue. Many families may find a conversation on this subject formidable so the NO MORE campaign (a coalition committed to ending domestic violence, sexual assault and abuse) created a toolkit called “*How to Start a Conversation: Talking About Dating and Healthy Relationships Step-by-Step.*” This resource provides parents with an easy-to-follow guide with sample open-ended questions to start a conversation about TDV. Click on this link to download a copy:

<http://www.itstimetotalkday.org/sites/default/files/How-To-Start-A-Conversation-Guide.pdf>

# Eating Disorders in the Very Young

Although most eating disorders are found in adolescents, prepubescent children can and do develop them. Kids as young as six have been diagnosed with Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia, or Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (lack of interest in food, limited diet due to sensory issues, or food refusal related to fears of choking or vomiting). While more girls are identified, boys also fall victim to eating disorders (5:1).

If children are not eating enough while growing, they could develop issues with height or weight. Additionally, they may experience nutritional deficiencies, delayed growth, decreased bone density, and structural and functional brain changes. Parents may see their youngsters struggle with school, have trouble participating in social activities, and have difficulties maintaining relationships with others. School personnel may see the following behaviors:

- Severe tantrums/outbursts
- Physical aggression
- Screaming
- Excess movement
- Increased anxiety or depression
- Suicidal thoughts

Family-centered interventions and parent-involved therapy are most effective in treating younger children, with parents taking charge, supervising, and managing nutritional decisions. Medical monitoring by a pediatrician is critical and often requires involvement from the children’s school-based support systems—teachers, counselors, and administrators.

(Sources: Farrar, Tabitha. “Eating Disorders in Children.” *Mirror-Mirror.org*, April 2014. Solomon, PhD, Mindy; Hagman MD, Jennifer; Kroon Van Diest, MS, Ashley. “Eating Disorders in Children 12 and Under Consequences.” *eatingdisorderhope.com*. December, 11 2014; *The Emily Program Foundation*. 2015. Roias, Laura. “5 Ways Pediatric Eating Disorder Treatment Differs From Adolescent Treatment.” [www.waldeneatingdisorders.com](http://www.waldeneatingdisorders.com). Selner, Marissa. “Avoidant/

## Food for Thought

- 42% of 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade girls want to be thinner
- 81% of 10 year olds are afraid of being fat
- Most common form of bullying in schools—body size/appearance

(Source: The Emily Program Foundation, 2015)

## Parent Resource Corner

Is that book age-appropriate? Are there positive messages in this movie? What’s the song really about? These questions cross the minds of many parents and it’s difficult to find the answers...until now. Thanks to Common Sense Media, parents and guardians can find this information in one place.

<https://www.common sense media.org/>

The site provides users with information, advice, and tools to navigate the rapidly changing world of media and technology. Common Sense rates and reviews movies, games, apps, TV shows, websites, books, and music. It posts parental concerns, news articles, and research—in English and Spanish. Common Sense is a nonprofit organi-

"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child."  
~ Dr. Seuss

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