



**Newark**  
Board of Education  
Roger León, Superintendent



# Congratulations

## Newark Board of Education



We are honored to be recognized by Aetna, a CVS Health Company, with the 2026 Gold Workplace Well-being Award for Making a Difference, building on our Gold recognition in 2025 and Silver recognition in 2024. This achievement reflects our sustained commitment to advancing employee well-being through comprehensive wellness initiatives, supportive workplace practices, and a culture that empowers employees to live healthier, more balanced lives. We are proud to continue setting a standard for workplace wellness and making a positive impact on the overall health of our workforce.

*"Three years of recognition. One unwavering commitment to employee well-being."*

Welcome!

BACK  
to  
SCHOOL

EVERYDAY  
WELLBEING

September/ October/  
November Are The Months  
for:

Self Improvement Month  
Sexual Health Awareness  
Month

Down Syndrome  
Awareness Month

Dyslexia Awareness Month

National Homeless Youth  
Awareness Month

National Diabetes Month

Universal Human Rights  
Month

Seasonal Affective  
Disorder Awareness Month

SEPTEMBER IS

Self-Improvement  
MONTH

LEARN • GROW • BE A BETTER YOU

"Small Steps.  
A Brighter Tomorrow."

A  
Brighter  
You  
Starts  
Today

PROGRESS  
PURPOSE  
POSSIBILITIES



Every day presents an opportunity  
to learn and grow, whether we  
recognize it or not.

Self-Improvement Month, observed each September,  
encourages us to intentionally focus on becoming  
the best version of ourselves.

A better  
tomorrow  
begins with  
a more intentional  
today.

SELF-IMPROVEMENT LOOKS DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE

But learning is at the heart of every personal growth journey.



MASTER  
A NEW SKILL

Gain knowledge  
and build  
new abilities.



TAKE A CLOSER  
LOOK WITHIN

Deepen  
self-awareness  
and understand  
yourself better.



ADVANCE  
PROFESSIONALLY

Build your skills  
and reach  
new career goals.



STRENGTHEN  
YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Explore what  
brings purpose,  
meaning, and peace  
to your life.



OVERCOME  
CHALLENGES

Learn, adapt,  
and grow through  
life's obstacles.



YOUR PATH IS UNIQUE

The path toward self-improvement is just as unique  
as the goals we pursue, reflecting the diverse aspirations,  
experiences, and motivations that inspire us to evolve.

Different  
Paths.  
Brighter  
Futures.

Learn. Grow. Be a Better You.

DISCOVER | IMPROVE | BELONG | THRIVE

# EVERYDAY WELLBEING



## Sexual Health Awareness Month

September 2026



## Sexual Health Awareness Month

Prioritizing Your Physical, Emotional, and Social Well-Being

### AWARENESS & IMPACT

**26M**

New STIs reported in the U.S.  
annually (CDC).

Sexual health is a comprehensive  
state of physical, mental, and social  
well-being.

Education and open dialogue are  
critical to reducing transmission  
rates and removing stigma.

### 6 Actionable Steps

- 1. Get Tested:** Regular screening & early detection.
- 2. Educate:** Contraception & consent awareness.
- 3. Vaccinate:** Protection for HPV & Hepatitis.
- 4. Practice Safe Sex:** Consistent barrier protection.
- 5. Manage Stress:** Support mental well-being.
- 6. Advocate:** Support community health education.

### Confidential Care

#### STI Testing & Treatment

Accessible and compassionate care  
tailored to you.

#### Preventative Care

Pap smears, vaccines, and routine  
checkups.

#### Wellness & Screening

Integrated physical and mental health  
screenings.

MyAlly Health Community Resources

LEARN MORE



<https://myallyhealth.org/about/blog/the-importance-of-sexual-health-awareness-month/>

# EVERYDAY WELLBEING



## DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH

CELEBRATE • EDUCATE • ADVOCATE • INCLUDE

*'Creating a world where individuals with Down syndrome thrive.'*

— National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS)

### OCTOBER

IS A TIME TO  
RECOGNIZE,  
SUPPORT, AND  
CELEBRATE  
THE INCREDIBLE  
CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF INDIVIDUALS  
WITH DOWN  
SYNDROME.

## WHAT IS DOWN SYNDROME?



Down syndrome is a genetic condition caused by the presence of an extra copy of chromosome 21.

Every person with Down syndrome is unique, with their own strengths, personalities, talents, interests, and goals.

## FOCUS ON ABILITIES

People with Down syndrome:



Attend school



Work in diverse careers



Build meaningful relationships



Participate in sports, arts, and community activities

*Lead independent and fulfilling lives.*

## HOW YOU CAN BE AN ALLY



Use respectful, person-first language.



Promote inclusion at school and work.



Challenge stereotypes and misconceptions.



Support equal opportunities for all.



Celebrate achievements and talents.



Advocate for accessible communities.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) advances opportunities for people with Down syndrome through:



Resources & Education



Advocacy & Policy Change



Health & Wellness Initiatives



Employment Support



Inclusive Education Programs



Community Engagement

These efforts help empower individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

*See the Person.  
Celebrate the Potential.*

Every individual deserves:

- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Inclusion
- ✓ Opportunity
- ✓ Belonging
- ✓ The chance to thrive.



Stronger  
Together

LEARN MORE

national down syndrome society  
**ndss**

ndss.org  
800-221-4602

#DownSyndromeAwarenessMonth  
#InclusionMatters #CelebrateAbility #NDSS



SCAN TO  
LEARN MORE



INCLUSION TODAY. A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.

# EVERYDAY WELLBEING



## DYSLEXIA



Dyslexia is a brain-based issue, affecting how the brain processes language.

People with dyslexia struggle with accurate and fluent word recognition, often experiencing difficulties with spelling, writing, and reading comprehension.



Dyslexia does not indicate low intelligence or a lack of motivation.



There's a strong hereditary component to dyslexia, meaning it often runs in families.



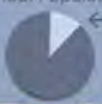
1 in 5 people will have reading challenges  
With dyslexia being the most common learning difficulty

Early identification and intervention can lead to positive outcomes, though it's never too late to seek support.

#DyslexiaAwareness

## How widespread is dyslexia?

School Population  
← SPED



About **13-14%** of the school population nationwide are identified as having a handicapping condition that qualifies for Special Education (SPED) services.

SPED Students  
LD Students



One **half** of all students who are identified for special education are classified as having a learning disability (LD). About **85%** of those students have a primary learning disability in reading and language processing.

Population as a whole



Up to **15-20%** of the population as a whole may have symptoms of dyslexia, including slow or inaccurate reading, weak spelling, and poor writing. Not all will qualify for Special Education, but most benefit from systematic, explicit instruction in reading, writing, and language (AKA, Structured Literacy Instruction).



Find solutions at the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) • [ida.org](http://ida.org)  
Source: IDA Fact Sheet, "Dyslexia Basics" • Moats & Dakin (© 2016 Cowen For IDA)



<https://dyslexiaida.org/>

# EVERYDAY WELLBEING

## NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH

RAISING AWARENESS • INSPIRING ACTION • SUPPORTING YOUTH

*Every Young Person Deserves  
Safety, Stability & Hope*

YOUNG  
PEOPLE  
MATTER.

STRONGER  
YOUTH.  
BRIGHTER  
TOMORROWS.



### DID YOU KNOW?

As many as **2.5 million** youth experience homelessness each year in the United States.

Youth experiencing homelessness often face the loss of housing, community, friends, routines, and a sense of safety and stability.



### UNDERSTANDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Many young people experiencing homelessness have also experienced:

- Family instability
- Violence or abuse
- Neglect
- Multiple traumatic experiences

EVERY STORY  
MATTERS.

Research suggests that many homeless youth have experienced early and repeated trauma, which can significantly affect their well-being and development.



### THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA

Youth experiencing homelessness may face increased risks for:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Attachment challenges
- Substance use disorders
- Suicidal thoughts

HEALING  
IS POSSIBLE.

Many youth are re-traumatized while experiencing homelessness, making recovery even more difficult.



### WHAT HELPS YOUTH THRIVE?

Trauma-Informed Support:

- ✓ Safe and welcoming environments
- ✓ Trusting adult relationships
- ✓ Access to mental health care
- ✓ Educational opportunities
- ✓ Housing stability
- ✓ Community connections
- ✓ Youth-centered services

SUPPORT  
TODAY.  
BRIGHTER  
TOMORROW.

Organizations serving youth can promote healing by understanding the role trauma plays in a young person's life and responding with empathy, consistency, and support.



### HOW YOU CAN HELP

- ✓ Learn about youth homelessness
- ✓ Support school-based resources
- ✓ Reduce stigma through awareness
- ✓ Advocate for affordable housing
- ✓ Volunteer with local youth-serving organizations
- ✓ Promote trauma-informed practices in your community



### RESOURCES & SUPPORT

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) provides:

- ✓ Educational resources
- ✓ Trauma-informed care tools
- ✓ Family & youth support materials
- ✓ Professional training resources
- ✓ Guidance for service providers

NCTSN's mission is to improve care and outcomes for children and youth who have experienced trauma.

*Every Youth Deserves  
a Safe Place to Call Home.*

**SUPPORT. STABILITY.  
OPPORTUNITY. HOPE.**

Together, we can help ensure that all young people have the resources and support they need to thrive.



# EVERYDAY WELLBEING

## NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH — NOVEMBER —

Take Charge of Tomorrow:  
Preventing Diabetes Health Problems

AWARENESS • PREVENTION • HEALTHIER LIVES • STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Small  
Steps Today.  
Healthier  
Tomorrows.

HEALTHIER  
— PEOPLE —  
BRIGHTER  
TOMORROWS

PREVENT.  
MANAGE.  
THRIVE.

November is National Diabetes Month, a time to raise awareness about diabetes and encourage action to prevent diabetes-related health problems.



**38 MILLION**

Americans have diabetes, including adults and youth.



### KNOW YOUR RISK

You may be at higher risk for type 2 diabetes if you:



Have overweight or obesity



Are age 35 or older



Have a family history of diabetes



Are not physically active



Have prediabetes



### MANAGE YOUR DIABETES ABCs



**A1C**  
Measures your average blood glucose levels.



**Blood Pressure**  
Keep blood pressure within recommended ranges.



**Cholesterol**  
Manage cholesterol to protect your heart health.

Talk with your health care team about your ABCs goals.



### SMALL STEPS, BIG IMPACT

Healthy habits can help prevent or manage diabetes.



Choose healthy meals



Be physically active



Get enough sleep



Avoid smoking

You don't have to do it all at once. Start slow and build healthier habits from there.



### STAY ON TRACK

Take an active role in your care.



Take your medicines as prescribed



Monitor your blood glucose when recommended



Follow your treatment plan



Talk with your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions or need support.



### ACHIEVE A HEALTHY WEIGHT

If you have overweight or obesity, losing **5% to 7%** of your starting weight may help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.



Healthy Eating



Physical Activity



Weight Management



### CARE FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Managing diabetes can be challenging. It's important to take care of your mental health.



Find healthy ways to cope with stress



Talk with a mental health counselor or join a support group



Reach out for help if you feel down, sad, or overwhelmed.



### BUILD YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM

Managing diabetes takes a team. Your health care team may include:



Primary Care Provider



Diabetes Specialist



Registered Dietitian



Certified Diabetes Educator

Diabetes medicines, devices, and office visits can be expensive. A social worker or a member of your health care team may be able to help you find community resources or financial help for diabetes care.

Know Your Risk.  
Take Action.  
Protect Your Health.



HEALTHIER  
INDIVIDUALS



STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES



BRIGHTER  
TOMORROWS



National Institute of  
Diabetes and Digestive  
and Kidney Diseases

Health Information. A Healthier You.

niddk.nih.gov

IN CASE YOU  
MISSED IT...



We introduced a new program on 7/1/26 called Utopia WellCare which provides free virtual nutrition counseling with a registered dietitian. Check out page for more details!

# EVERYDAY WELLBEING

DECEMBER  
IS

## UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

EQUALITY • JUSTICE • DIGNITY • FOR ALL

*Different  
People  
Stronger  
Together*

All human beings  
are born free and  
equal in dignity  
and rights.

A more just,  
inclusive, and  
compassionate  
world is possible.



### ABOUT UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

Universal Human Rights Month is observed every December. It is a time for people around the world to come together and stand up for equality, justice, and the dignity of all humans.



### A HISTORIC MILESTONE

In 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, an international document that outlines the basic rights and fundamental freedoms to which all human beings are entitled.

### HUMAN RIGHTS INCLUDE:



Freedom  
from  
discrimination



The right  
to equality



The right  
to be considered  
innocent until  
proven guilty



Dignity  
and respect  
for all



### TAKE ACTION

- ✓ Find common ground with people from different backgrounds.
- ✓ Learn about other cultures and their history.
- ✓ Challenge misinformation and discrimination.
- ✓ Support human rights in your community.
- ✓ Be a voice for a more inclusive and fair world.

### HOW TO OBSERVE



Read a book about human rights or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Spread the word on social media.



Treat everyone with respect, kindness, and equality.



Teach others about why human rights for everyone are so important.



Use #UniversalHumanRights, #HumanRights, and #StandUp4HumanRights to post on social media.

*“When we respect the rights of others, we build a stronger, more united world.”*



HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
HAPPEN  
EVERY DAY

*Stand Up for Human Rights.  
Today. Tomorrow. Always.*



STRONGER  
PEOPLE



STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES



BRIGHTER  
TOMORROWS

EQUALITY  
BELONGS TO  
EVERYONE

# EVERYDAY WELLBEING

## DECEMBER IS SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD) AWARENESS MONTH

SAME  
STRENGTH.  
DIFFERENT  
SEASON.  
BRIGHTER  
TOMORROWS.



UNDERSTANDING • FINDING SUPPORT • BRINGING LIGHT  
TO MENTAL HEALTH

Brighter  
Days  
Are Ahead  
♥



### WHAT IS SAD?

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that follows a seasonal pattern. Symptoms often begin in late fall or early winter and improve during spring and summer, although some people experience symptoms during the warmer months.

### WHO CAN BE AFFECTED?



- Millions of Americans are affected.
- Often begins in young adulthood.
- More common in women than men.
- More common in people living farther north, where there are shorter daylight hours in the winter.
- Can occur in people with depression or bipolar disorder.

### COMMON SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Persistent sadness or low mood
- Low energy and fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed

Winter-pattern SAD may also include oversleeping, carbohydrate cravings, weight gain, and social withdrawal. Summer-pattern SAD may include trouble sleeping, poor appetite, restlessness, and anxiety.

### WHAT CAUSES SAD?

- Reduced sunlight exposure
- Changes in serotonin levels
- Altered melatonin production
- Vitamin D deficiency
- Disruptions to the body's internal clock and seasonal rhythms

### EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS

- Light therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Antidepressant medications
- Vitamin D (when recommended by a healthcare provider)

Treatment plans should be discussed with a qualified healthcare professional.

### SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

- Stay physically active
- Get natural daylight exposure
- Stay connected with friends and family
- Eat nutritious meals
- Maintain healthy sleep habits
- Keep a consistent daily routine

### WHEN TO SEEK HELP



If seasonal changes significantly affect your mood, behavior, work, school, or relationships, speak with a healthcare provider or mental health professional. Early support can make a difference.

### CRISIS SUPPORT

**988**  
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

If you or someone you know is experiencing emotional distress or thoughts of suicide, call or text 988 or visit [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org).

*There Is Hope  
Through Every Season.*

SUPPORT • UNDERSTANDING  
TREATMENT • RECOVERY



**NEW PROGRAM  
AVAILABLE!**

## FALL WELLNESS

**KNOW MORE.  
CHOOSE BETTER.  
LIVE WELL!**

UtopiaWellCare 

### Your New Benefit with Utopia WellCare

Utopia WellCare is your **new free**, virtual nutrition preventive benefit for all employees and dependents on the NBOE health plan!

#### Know More

Learn how nutrition impacts your energy, digestion, weight, heart health, and overall wellness.

#### Choose Better

Work one-on-one with our Registered Dietitians to create a personalized plan that fits your lifestyle and goals.

#### Live Well

Feel your best today while building nutrition practices and habits that support lifelong health.

### Food as Medicine

We believe **food is medicine**. Our Registered Dietitians use a Functional Nutrition approach to help you improve your health through **personalized nutrition strategies** that address the **root causes** of symptoms and support **lasting wellness**.

- General Nutrition Support
- Weight Loss (up to 35 lbs lost on average)
- Bloating & Digestive Health and more!



#### Try Utopia WellCare Today!

Discover the power of food as medicine with **free appointments** and guidance from our expert Registered Dietitians.  
**Scan the QR code to book your first free appointment!**





**NBOEwell**  
Employee Wellness & Benefits  
PEOPLE ■ PURPOSE ■ POSSIBILITY

*Investing in You*

OPTIONAL BENEFITS.  
REAL IMPACT.

## VOLUNTARY BENEFITS

ADDITIONAL PROTECTION. GREATER PEACE OF MIND.

Enhance your benefits. Protect what matters most. Choose the coverage that fits your life.



### WHAT ARE VOLUNTARY BENEFITS?

Voluntary benefits are optional insurance plans you can elect to supplement your core benefits. They are payroll-deducted, convenient, and designed to provide added financial protection for you and your family.

### VOLUNTARY BENEFIT OPTIONS

Flexible coverage for life's what-ifs.



#### VOLUNTARY LIFE INSURANCE

Help protect your loved ones with additional life insurance coverage beyond the District-provided benefit.

ADDED SECURITY  
FOR TOMORROW



#### VOLUNTARY DISABILITY INSURANCE

Gain financial protection in the event you're unable to work due to a covered illness or injury.

INCOME PROTECTION  
WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST



#### TAX-SHELTERED ANNUITY (TSA)

Save for your future with pre-tax contributions through a 403(b) tax-sheltered annuity program.

PLAN TODAY  
FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW



#### ADDITIONAL COVERAGE OPTIONS

Depending on eligibility, other voluntary benefits may be available to meet your personal and family needs.

MORE CHOICES.  
A STRONGER TOMORROW.



### WHY CONSIDER VOLUNTARY BENEFITS?

- ✓ Extra protection for you and your family
- ✓ Convenient payroll deductions
- ✓ Competitive group rates
- ✓ A simple way to plan for life's unexpected events
- ✓ Helps you build a more secure financial future

*Your Well-Being Matters*

VISIT NOW



<https://nboehrs.com/voluntary-and-fringe-benefits/>

# 2027 FSA OPEN ENROLLMENT IS COMING!

NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> – NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>



Your FSA dollars can help you save on eligible healthcare & dependent care expense but you have to take action!

 ACTIVE ENROLLMENT IS REQUIRED! 

Your current FSA election will NOT automatically roll over into 2027. Whether you're enrolling for the first time or continuing your FSA benefits, make sure you complete your election between November 4 and November 19.

 Webinars are forthcoming

 FSA TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND

- ✓ Review your expenses. Think about your anticipated healthcare and dependent care expenses for 2027.
- ✓ Plan your contribution. Choose an amount that works for your expected eligible expenses.
- ✓ Don't assume you're automatically enrolled. Even if you had an FSA this year, you must actively re-enroll for 2027.
- ✓ Mark your calendar! FSA Open Enrollment is only available November 4–November 19.

 DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!

Your FSA won't renew itself—your action is required!

 TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR FSA!

Review your needs, make your election, and take advantage of the opportunity to set aside money for eligible expenses in 2027.

SAVE THE DATE • TAKE ACTION • DON'T MISS OUT!

Click here for more info: <https://nboehrs.com/eligibility/#enrollment>





# LOOKING AHEAD

Here's a sneak  
peak at what's to  
come in the next  
issue:

- Everyday Wellbeing: January, February, and March
- New Programs
- Spotlight on Enhanced Medical Programs
- Important Announcements