



ALPINE THREADS

Community and Family Life in the California Alps

Fall 2020

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Teenagers and Nicotine Use

If there is a time that no one ought to smoke, it is now. Vapes and e-cigarettes are electronic versions of traditional cigarettes and have received recent attention for their harmful effects.

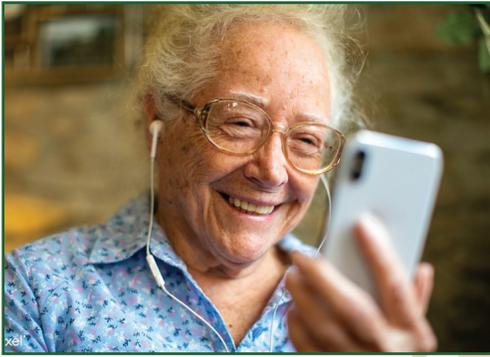


A survey led by a researcher at Stanford University of Medicine revealed that teenagers aged 13-24 who vaped, or vaped and smoked traditional cigarettes even just once in their lives were more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19 than teens who had never vaped or vaped and smoked traditional cigarettes.¹ It may also be true that people who vape are more likely to get tested for COVID-19 than those who don't, influencing the results. The reasons why teens who use these nicotine products are more likely to become infected include weakened lungs, repeated touching of their hands to their mouths, and sharing smoking devices with each other.

Teens in this study who were African American, Hispanic, multi-racial were also more likely to experience symptoms and infection of COVID-19. This is because situations such as lower access to health care, economic stress, and service industry work are associated with underlying health conditions. Awareness of these inequalities shows a need for society to provide support that meets the unique needs of people. Exercise your right to vote!

One action you can take today is talk to kids about vaping and traditional cigarette smoking. Vaping and cigarette use is easy for adolescents to hide from parents with devices that look like computer accessories and do not have a noticeable smell. In 2018, nearly 11% of teens reported vaping in the past 30 days. Start a conversation with kids when you see someone smoking or pass a store that sells nicotine. Ask what they think; don't be discouraged if your comments and questions fall flat and try again a few days or weeks later.

¹<https://www.jahonline.org/action/showPdf?pii=S1054-139X%2820%2930399-2>



together we thrive

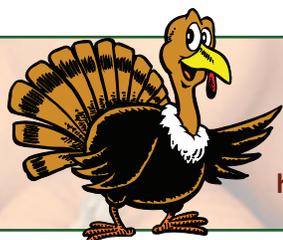
By Crystal Pitts, LMFT

People thrive when they feel socially connected. Humans instinctually seek out others for acceptance, companionship, and comfort when faced with challenges. The ability to lean on one another during difficult times and bond over shared experiences is what gives our lives meaning. While Alpine County can serve as an oasis from the chaos of major cities, its sparse population and remoteness can make it difficult

for people, especially older adults, to stay socially connected. When combined with sheltering in place and social distancing precautions due to COVID-19, people are more isolated than ever. Normal routines, structure that provides psychological safety to most, have been interrupted, and people are struggling to adapt to a new reality full of uncertainty. This upheaval has taken a heavy toll on mental health as people of all ages are overwhelmed by feelings of anxiety- fueled by a multitude of stressors and fears, sadness, loneliness, anger, and boredom. When prolonged, anxiety can lead to disruption in eating and sleeping patterns, exacerbate existing mental conditions like depression, lead to increased substance use, and negatively impact physical health i.e. high blood pressure. Older adults, who are housebound, live alone, and have limited social contact with others, are at serious risk of experiencing chronic loneliness.

Alpine County Behavioral Health wants to reassure you that you are not alone and that we are here to help. Residents can call to schedule an appointment with a clinician to obtain support and gain access to psychotherapy, psychiatry, and alcohol and drug counseling. Wellness programs are available for everyone and include Create the Good on Zoom every Friday 12-1pm and on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 5-6pm. Yoga classes can be accessed on Zoom every Monday and Wednesday from 9-10am and every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30-6:30pm. Please call Alpine County Behavioral Health at 530-694-1816 to schedule an appointment and/or obtain Zoom meeting information for wellness programs.

Additional tips to maintain physical and mental wellness include good nutrition, daily physical activity, quality sleep, meditation, the practice of gratitude, leaning into spiritual beliefs for comfort, engaging in fun hobbies, spending time in nature and with animals, helping others and socializing safely with loved ones on a regular basis. Weekly coffee dates or game nights with friends and family over Zoom is a great way to have fun and stay connected. While traveling for many is on hold, people can access virtual tours of museums and national parks all over the world. For older adults who are not connected to the internet, youth can make an elder's day by calling them on the phone or sending a postcard. Older adults can also call the Friendship Line at 888-760-1360 to connect with a caring person for a friendly chat who can also conduct check-in calls throughout the week when requested. Alone, we are vulnerable to slipping into despair, but together we will stay strong and well.



Alpine County Public Health is now on Facebook & Twitter

Like us and follow us for up to date information and tips about healthy living and emergency preparedness in beautiful Alpine County!



Can EXERCISE Help Fight COVID-19?

By Tim Streeper, MS
Alpine County Public Health Program
Manager, Exercise Physiologist



Exercise helps fight COVID-19



What two things do Type 2 Diabetes, Obesity (Body Mass Index greater than 30), Chronic Kidney Disease, Cardiovascular Disease, and various forms of cancer have in common?

The first commonality is that they are all something health professionals call **comorbidities** with respect to COVID-19. Comorbidities greatly increase the risk that a person who becomes infected with COVID-19 will develop serious illness that could result in hospitalization and potentially- death.

The second thing they have in common is that these comorbidities can all be made less severe- or in some cases even cured by exercise. Regular physical activity- and particularly cardiovascular exercise such as walking, hiking, bicycle riding, cross country skiing, jogging, or swimming has been proven to reduce the risks of illness and death associated with the comorbidities listed above. So, now more than ever, it is critical that people do everything possible to prevent comorbidities such as Type 2 Diabetes, obesity, hypertension (high blood pressure), and cardiovascular disease.

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends that all individuals should engage **in at least 20–60 minutes of aerobic physical activity of at least a moderate intensity on at least 5 days per week**. Additional health and fitness benefits can be achieved by adding more time in moderate-intensity activity or by substituting more vigorous activity.

Further, it is highly probable that regular exercise **improves your body's immune response** to COVID-19. Regular exercise has been proven to boost many of the body's natural defenses to various types of infection and to reduce chronic inflammation.

Additionally, regular exercise has been proven to **improve people's mental health** and general well-being. In these uncertain times and with increased periods of isolation - we are much more susceptible to becoming depressed and struggling with our mental health. Exercise can help.

Exercise should be done outside whenever possible. COVID-19 does not spread as easily outdoors as it does indoors. Outdoor exercise also makes it easier to maintain appropriate social distancing when exercising with friends or family.

So, get out there and get some fresh air and exercise and help put COVID-19 where it belongs- in the history books!



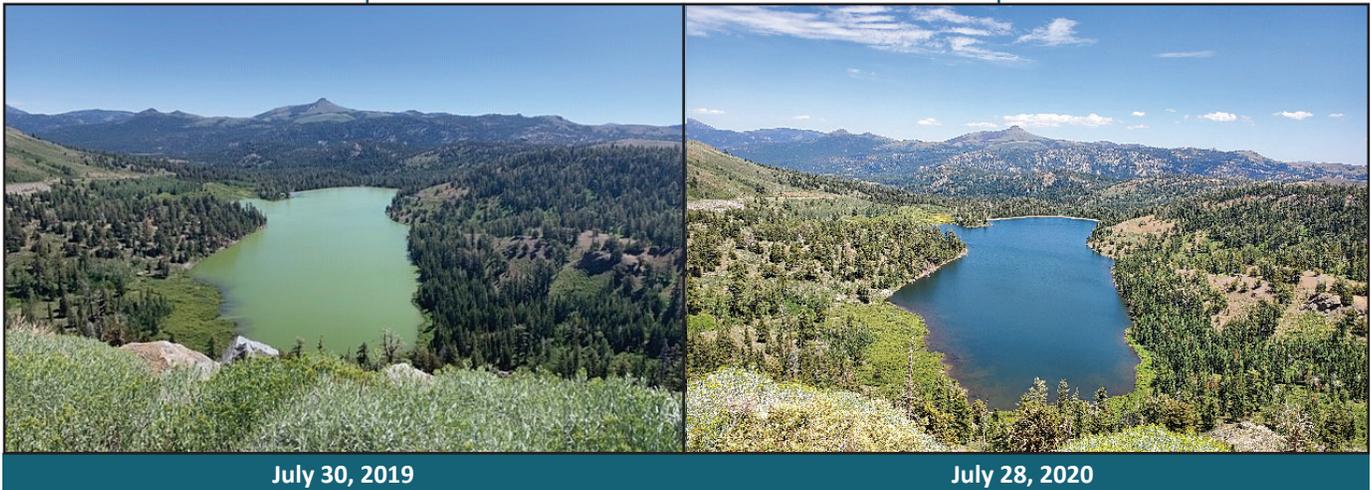
To Bloom, or Not to Bloom: That is the Question

By Mo Loden, Alpine Watershed Group Watershed Program Manager



If you were not familiar with Red Lake's history, I could imagine a new visitor to Alpine County driving by paying the actual reservoir very little attention, enthralled by the exquisite beauty of Red Lake and its surroundings. Well, that's the case this year, but not so much last year or some other recent years. Last year as you drove past Red Lake, the green opaque water caught most people's eye and maybe their imagination, wondering what could cause this slimy looking phenomenon.

Photos of Red Lake almost exactly a year apart.



Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) in coordination with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board spent a great deal of time attempting to better understand this water quality issue at Red Lake last year. While we know cyanobacteria causes these problematic harmful algal blooms, we still don't know exactly why or how.

Harmful algal blooms, also referred to as HABs, occur when cyanobacteria multiply at an excessive rate. What are cyanobacteria, you ask? Cyanobacteria are microscopic organisms that you cannot see with your eyes, but when they overpopulate they form visible colonies referred to as blooms. "Cyano" means blue, and even though cyanobacteria have formerly been referred to as blue-green algae, their cell makeup is more closely related to a prokaryotic bacteria. It is important to note that cyanobacteria are naturally present in waterbodies and are an integral part of our ecosystems. However, when provided the right conditions, cyanobacteria can develop into a HAB from excessive growth. Blooms, if stimulated enough, can decrease water quality but are only considered an immediate threat to human and animal health if emitting toxins.

We don't know the exact formula that causes HABs, but we do understand that slow and stagnant water, warmer air and water temperatures, nutrient-rich water, and longer days can contribute to HABs. How these factors come together to create a bloom is not well understood. In fact, learning just how elusive these HABs can be was one of my biggest takeaways from last year's monitoring program. I was surprised to sometimes measure low levels of cyanotoxins in dark green waters and other times to measure moderately high cyanotoxin levels in barely tinted green waters. I simply could not predict how dangerous a waterbody is based on visual appearances. Being surprised is becoming my norm in the HAB Monitoring Program, and is why I'm surprised, but not really, that Red Lake is looking and measuring so much healthier this year.

(continued)

Surprised or not, I'm quite happy the reservoir's water quality is doing better this year. As of the end of July, we have had no reservoir samples measure above the State Water Board's established trigger levels (see Table 1). By this time last year, we had measured our highest cyanotoxin concentration recorded at Red Lake; so far this year, we have only detected cyanotoxins of concerning levels at the Red Lake Creek outlet site, right below the dam. The Red Creek site measured at 3.85 ug/L on our sampling event on July 28, 2020, falling within the Caution

State Water Board's HAB Trigger Levels

Table 1: Trigger Levels for Human and Animal Health

	Caution Action Trigger	Warning TIER I	Danger TIER II
Primary Triggers			
Total Microcystins*	0.8 µg/L	6 µg/L	20 µg/L
Anatoxin-a	Detection*	20 µg/L	90 µg/L
Cylindrospermopsin	1 µg/L	4 µg/L	17 µg/L

Level Advisory range. California Department of Fish and Wildlife posted warning signs at the lake soon after to alert lake users of the potential risk. The creek's measurement leads me to believe the reservoir must be experiencing more HAB activity than what our shoreline samples captured. Blooms are not homogeneous in a waterbody. They can be isolated and may not impact the entire lake, again, making them very hard to track.

AWG plans to continue monthly HAB monitoring at Red Lake through October this year. We are eager to compare last year's data to this year's in an attempt to better understand why the reservoir has had such different water quality characteristics.

What to do if you think you've observed a HAB?

If you see signs of a HAB, do not enter the waterbody or allow your pets to enter or drink the water. If the suspected HAB is in California and if possible, log into the State Water Board's California Harmful Algal Blooms Portal (<https://mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/index.html>) to report a bloom. Take photos of the bloom and record the location information so that AWG or Water Board staff can provide follow-up, if needed. I would further encourage you to inform other lake users who may not be aware.

We have so much to learn on this subject to arrive at management decisions. A huge thank you is owed to the State Water Board who supported this project's lab analyses and shipping costs in 2019 and 2020. Further thanks and gratitude go to The Strong Foundation for Environmental Values and the California Alpine Club Foundation for helping to support AWG's staff time to collect samples and share information with Alpine County residents and visitors.



Please join us

for the next virtual bimonthly
Alpine Watershed Group meeting!

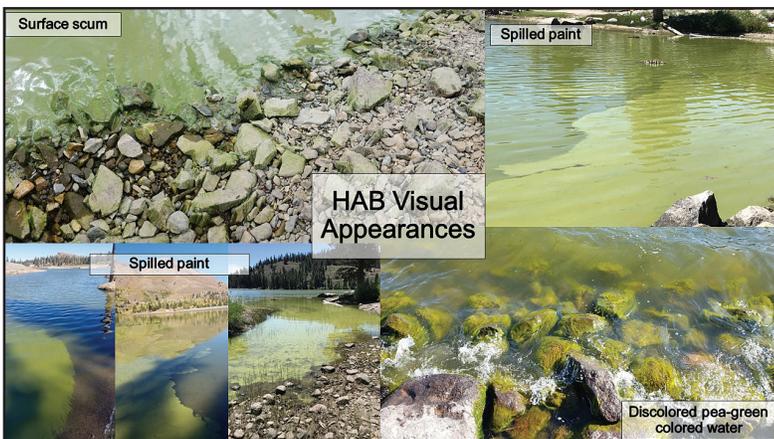
**How Roads Impact
Water Quality**

**Tuesday, September 8th,
5:30 p.m.**

Visit www.alpinewatershedgroup.org to register so you can receive webinar details.

This meeting is part of the West Fork Carson River Vision Project process led by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. You can find more information on this innovative framework for improving water quality at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/programs/tmdl/west_fork_carson_river.html



If you are interested in reading more, contact me at awg.mo.loden@gmail.com for a list of journal articles.

Autumn Health and Safety Tips

Follow these tips to help you and your family stay safe and healthy this autumn!

Keep your kids safe and healthy.

Get involved with your kids' activities at home and at school to help ensure they are safe and healthy.

Take steps to prevent the flu.

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year in the fall. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Wash your hands often. Stay home if you get sick.

Get smart about antibiotics.

Antibiotics can cure bacterial infections, but not viral infections. The common cold and the flu are viral infections, so avoid using antibiotics if you have one of these. Using antibiotics when they are not needed causes some bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic, and therefore stronger and harder to kill. See your doctor or nurse to find out if your illness is bacterial or viral.

Have a safe and healthy Halloween.

Make Halloween festivities fun, safe, and healthy for trick-or-treaters and party guests.

Test and replace batteries.

Check or replace carbon monoxide batteries twice a year when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall. Replace smoke alarm alkaline batteries at least once a year. Test alarms every month to ensure they work properly.

Keep food safe.

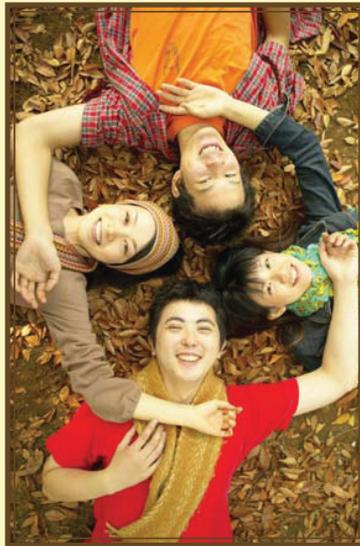
Food is center stage during the holidays. Be sure to keep it safe by following basic food safety steps. Clean hands and surfaces often. Separate foods to avoid cross-contamination. Cook to proper temperatures. Chill promptly.

Learn your family history.

National Family History Day is observed on Thanksgiving Day. Over the holiday or at another family gathering, talk about and write down the health conditions that run in your family. Learning about your family's health history can help you take steps to ensure a longer, healthier future together.

Be prepared for cold weather.

Exposure to cold temperatures can cause serious health problems. Infants and the elderly are particularly at risk, but anyone can be affected. Know how to prevent health problems and what to do if a cold-weather emergency arises. Remember that using space heaters and fireplaces can increase the risk of household fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.



Don't drink and drive.

Alcohol use impairs skills needed to drive a car safely. It slows reaction time and impairs judgment and coordination. Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill someone every 31 minutes and non-fatally injure someone every two minutes. Don't drink and drive, and don't let others drink and drive.

Wash your hands.

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. It's best to wash your hands with soap and clean running water for 20 seconds. If that's not possible, use alcohol-based hand rubs.

For more information, visit:

www.cdc.gov/family/autumn/index.htm

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of Women's Health

CS207441



LIVE VIOLENCE FREE

The #OneConversation Campaign is Coming Soon!

We are committed to promoting a violence-free community through education and advocacy to address domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and basic needs.

We are pleased to announce our latest effort to support the Alpine County community. The #OneConversation campaign is launching soon. During the COVID-19 crisis, people needing help are more isolated than ever. Schools, workplaces, and community engagement are crucial tools in identifying and connecting people in crisis to the best services available. With the closing of schools and workplaces, those who are experiencing abuse and violence need support from our community. Live Violence Free has created a new campaign that will help our community to understand the signs of abuse and how to approach that person who may need help. #OneConversation Can Change a Life!

We need your help to connect friends, family members, and coworkers who may be experiencing abuse or violence to the Live Violence Free support services. Most incidents of domestic violence and sexual assault are under-reported to authorities which is why victim support services like Live Violence Free are so important.

1 IN 4 PEOPLE RECEIVE SERVICES EVERY YEAR!

The #OneConversation campaign will provide valuable information through community outreach posters, a dedicated webpage, and social media posts. We hope that by featuring the stories of survivors and educating our community, we can all help support the victims who are still out there. Check out www.oneconversationtahoe.org after October 1st. In the meantime, please visit www.liveviolencefree.org for more information. Live Violence Free firmly stands by the belief that a future free of violence begins with you!

#OneConversation Could Change the Life of Someone You Care About Today!

To Become A #OneConversation Champion for Yourself or Your Business, Please Contact:
 Briana Vallejo, Alpine Coordinator at alpine@liveviolencefree.org or (530) 694-1853.

CALL 530-694-9301 
DIAL-A-RIDE

A curb-to-curb service for the
 General Public and
 Persons Needing
 Transportation Assistance



Service hours:
 Monday through Friday 8 to 5
 Closed on County Holidays

**Markleeville, Woodfords
 And Hung-A-Lel-ti:** \$2.00 one way
**Minden, Gardnerville, Dresslerville,
 and South Lake Tahoe:** \$4.00 one way
Carson City: \$5.00 one way



For COVID-19 questions please call the Warm Line at (530) 694-1011

If you would like to receive all of Dr. Johnson's Public Health Briefs email him at rjohnson@alpinecountycalifornia.gov to be added to his distribution list.

Alpine Threads Editorial Board

First 5 Alpine

100 Foothill Rd.
PH: 530-830-2845
www.first5alpine.com

Alpine County Health and Human Services

75 B Diamond Valley Rd.
PH: 530-694-2146
FAX: 530-694-2252

The Learning Center and Local Child Care Planning Council

100 Foothill Rd.
PH: 530-694-1148

Website Links

- www.alpinecountyca.gov/calendar
- www.first5alpine.com
- www.alpinecounty.com
- www.alpinewatershedgroup.org
- www.alpinebiomasscommittee.wordpress.com
- www.spnawareness.org/

ATTENTION LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS & AGENCIES

If you'd like to share your website link send it to Gina at gina@originalmatteoni.com and we'll add it to our column.

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Disclaimer: This wellness-focused publication is not intended to provide timely news and/or personal, political or discriminatory statements. Alpine Threads Editorial Board reviews all content.



ALPINE THREADS

75 B Diamond Valley Rd.
Markleeville, CA 96120
Phone: (530) 694-2146

Addressing the needs of the
Alpine County Community

Healthy Eating, in a SNAP!



SPICED TRAIL MIX

Serves 12 - Preparation time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 cup peanuts or other nuts
- 1 cup raisins or other dried fruit
- 1 cup sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup bite-sized pretzels, dry cereal, or crackers
- 1 tablespoon paprika or cinnamon
- Salt to taste
- 1 cup dried shredded coconut, chocolate chips, or additional dried fruit optional



Directions

Toss all ingredients well and enjoy!

*For more recipes,
borrow SNAP-Ed
cookbooks from
the Library and the
Woodfords Indian
Education Center.*



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