

RiverStone Health Connections



April is here, bringing longer days, fresh energy and the start of a busy season in our community. As spring settles in and event season begins, it's a powerful reminder that none of this work happens alone. Strong partnerships are at the heart of everything we do: connecting organizations, neighbors and resources to create a healthier, safer community for all.

This month, we're celebrating the relationships that make our work possible and looking ahead to the opportunities that come with gathering, collaborating, and showing up for one another.

RiverStone Health Service Spotlight: Lead Poisoning Prevention

Lead is a naturally occurring metal that, when breathed in or ingested, is harmful. Children's bodies become more damaged by lead poisoning than adults as they are still young and growing. Not only are they more vulnerable to the effects, but children have lead poisoning at higher rates compared to adults in the same environment. This is because they are more likely to put lead-contaminated items in their mouths like toys, paint chips or even their hands. Childhood lead poisoning is linked to mental illness and depression in adulthood. In children it can cause:

- Lower IQ
- Reduced math and reading scores
- Problems with working memory
- Difficulty with attention and focus
- Hearing difficulties, speech and language difficulties
- Reduced growth, delays in puberty
- Anemia
- Gut pain
- Kidney issues

However, the effects of lead are not always obvious, this is why it is important to get your child tested! So, who should get tested?

Children Around Older Homes

Children can get lead poisoning from living or being around older homes. In the past, paint, water pipes and gasoline were made with lead. While this practice is now banned, the lead in them does go away and can cause your water, soil, air and objects in your home to be contaminated with lead. If any of the following applies to your child, they should get tested.

- Your child spends time in a home built before 1978
- Your home is older than in 1986 and you suspect there may be lead pipes
- Your child plays in soil that is near a busy road or old house

Parents with Certain Jobs & Hobbies

Parents can get tiny particles of lead on them if they are involved in certain jobs or hobbies. These particles can expose others to lead. If any of the following applies to you, please get your child tested:

- Welding, mining or working around metal
- Making or working around ammunition or fishing lures
- Construction, demolition or working around industrial paint
- Ceramic and Stained glass making

See our program summary

Luckily, an easy way to find out if you or your child has been poisoned is a simple blood test. Children on Medicaid should get tested during their 12- and 24-month Well-Child Visits at no cost to parents. If your kid on Medicaid has not been tested, don't worry! They can get tested for free until they are 6 years old! If your child is not on Medicaid, you can talk to your insurance about options or all RiverStone Health at [406.247.3305](tel:406.247.3305).

Testing for lead is simple and protects the health of your child! Don't hesitate to ask your provider about it during your next Well-Child Visit. If you are interested in learning more about lead poisoning and testing, or lead in consumer products click the button below.

[Click to learn more](#)

National Public Health Week, observed April 6–12, 2026, recognizes more than 150 years of public health efforts that have shaped how people live, work, and thrive in our nation. Whether it's reducing child mortality, improving food safety, responding to emerging threats that impact communities, or understanding and providing opportunities for connection, public health has been there.

[Check out the full health matters here](#)



CONFLUENCE 2026 PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE STUDENT EVENT

Billings area students, Your city is welcoming public health professionals from across the state for a public health conference.

You're invited to join us for a sneak peek into their careers as we dive into the roles they play promoting health in their communities!

Discover more about careers in public health directly from the professionals!

FEATURING PANELISTS FROM:

- State Health Department
- Local Health Departments
- Post-Secondary Programs
- Environmental Health

FREE
FOOD!

WED
APRIL 15
6:30-
8:00PM

BILLINGS HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT ANNA KILEY@MSSO.DMT.EDU



RSVP

We are seeking community feedback on kratom use in Yellowstone County through our brief survey to better understand community experiences, including perspectives from individuals who currently use or have previously used kratom.

Your input will help inform education, outreach and public health efforts in our community.

Participation is voluntary and anonymous, and responses will help us better understand community needs and concerns.

To learn more about kratom, visit RiverStoneHealth.org/Kratom, otherwise click the button to take our survey.

[Take our survey](#)

JOIN US FOR ALLIES IN AGING'S ALL-NEW FUNDRAISER!

THE Party **DANCING through the DECADES**

Fri., May 8, 2026 • 7PM - 10PM
Northern Hotel • 19 North Broadway, Billings (2nd Floor) **FREE PARKING!**

DRESS IN THE DECADE OF YOUR CHOICE
and enjoy a night of music, dancing, celebration, and an exciting auction.

CASH BARS and HEAVY HORS D'OEUVRES

SKETCHES BY JOHN KENNEDY

TICKETS ON SALE
alliesinaging.org/the-party



PRESENTED BY **First Interstate Bank**

ALLIES in AGING

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Contact Emily at 406-294-1588 or development@alliesinaging.org

Partner Spotlight: Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch



Getting a child the right mental health support shouldn't feel out of reach.

Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch (YBGR) partners with families, schools, and communities across Montana to ensure youth receive the right care, at the right time, in the right setting.

They deliver children's mental health services in nearly every county—partnering with 28 school districts, operating 18 community offices, providing therapeutic group home support in Billings, Boulder, Helena, and Great Falls, and residential treatment at their historic ranch between Laurel and Billings.

Additionally, YBGR delivers outpatient substance use services through its Chemical Dependency Program in several areas, including Yellowstone County.

From the care they deliver in homes, schools, and communities to more structured treatment available when needed, YBGR meets youth where they are and adjusts care as needs change—strengthening families, building stability, and helping youth stay connected to their communities whenever possible.

Partner Spotlight Opportunity

We love highlighting the great work happening across our community. If your organization has a program, event or service you'd like to feature during the year, let us know! Fill out

our quick form and a member of the RiverStone Health Communications team will reach out to learn more about your work and how we can help share it.

[Sign up!](#)

At RiverStone Health, you are at the center of everything we do with a focus on improving life, health and safety of our community. Serving the Yellowstone County community and south-central Montana for 50 years, we are an essential provider of personal and public health services. Health, Education, Leadership and Protection – HELP is what we do.

We offer medical, dental and behavioral health; home health and hospice; public health services like immunizations, WIC, health promotion and restaurant inspections; and educate the next generation of health professionals. Our expertise spans all ages and stages of life.

If you would like to be a future partner spotlight, or learn more about RiverStone Health's work in the community please reach out to our Communications team at Communications@RiverStoneHealth.org or 406.247.3387.



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