

Hello ACEs community and guests.

As Arizona moves from winter into the early signs of spring, this season invites both reflection and renewal. February and March offer a powerful opportunity to recommit to connection, healing, and resilience within ourselves, our organizations, and our communities.

At AZ ACES, we continue to center trauma-informed, strengths-based approaches that support children, families, and the professionals who serve them. In this issue, you'll find upcoming trainings, new resources, and ways to stay engaged as we work together to build safer, more supportive environments across our state.

Thank you for the work you do every day to foster hope, resilience, and belonging. Together, we are planting seeds that will continue to grow well beyond this season.

With Gratitude,

The AZ ACES Communications Committee



Awareness Observations Days/Months

February

- National Heart Month
- Random Acts of Kindness Day, February 17
- National Eating Disorders Awareness Week, February 23 – March 1

March

- Self-Injury Awareness Day, March 1
- World Sleep Day, March 13
- Brain Awareness Week, March 16-22, 2026
- Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Mark your Calendar

Quarterly Meetings

Click [here](#) to register.

- Feb 19, 2026, 09:00 AM
- May 21, 2026, 09:00 AM
- Aug 20, 2026, 09:00 AM
- Nov 19, 2026, 09:00 AM

Interfaith Breakfast Saturday, February 21st

Weave & Cleave Conference, April 22nd

Email Sanghoon for more information -- thefaithfulcity@gmail.com

AZCEC and AZCASE

2026 Annual Conference, Reaching New Heights Together

March 27th | Glendale Community College | <https://azcec.org>

School Social Work Association of Arizona

SSWAAZ celebrates the commitment, competence, and leadership of School Social Workers and Educators in Arizona.

Bridging Gaps: Building Futures | February 19th | 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

[2026 Conference - School Social Work Association of Arizona](#)

Brain Awareness Week (BAW)

This year's BAW will be March 16-22, 2026. You can find ideas for your BAW program on the DANA Foundation web site. Click [here](#) to learn more.

This year the Dana Foundation and the International Brain Research Organization have teamed up to provide grants up to \$1,250 that might fund your BAW program.

To learn more about funding click [here](#).



Mission in Motion

What is AZRx? AZRx is a state initiative in Arizona that helps residents save money on prescription drugs. It offers a free **ArrayRx Discount Card** that can save up to **80%** on medications.

Key Features of ArrayRx Discount Card:

- **Free for all Arizona residents:** No membership fees, age, or income restrictions.
- **Wide acceptance:** Use at over **64,000 pharmacies nationwide**, including mail-order and specialty pharmacies.
- **Covers many medications:** Discounts on all FDA-approved drugs, select over-the-counter products, and diabetes supplies.
- **Privacy-protected:** Your data is never sold.
- **Easy to use:** Sign up online or via the ArrayRx mobile app, download your card instantly, and show it at the pharmacy to save.

How to Get the Card:

1. Visit **ArrayRxCARD.com** to sign up for free.
2. Download or print your digital card.
3. Use it at participating pharmacies to save on prescriptions.

Additional Information:

- Marketing materials (flyers and QR code cards) are available in English and Spanish. Request them at **PIO@azdhs.gov**.

For questions, call **800-913-4146**.

Did you know?!

Did you know that chronic stress floods the developing brain with cortisol, which can change the size and function of key regions? Specifically, the amygdala, prefrontal cortex, and the hippocampus are most affected.

What happens when someone is experiencing chronic stress?

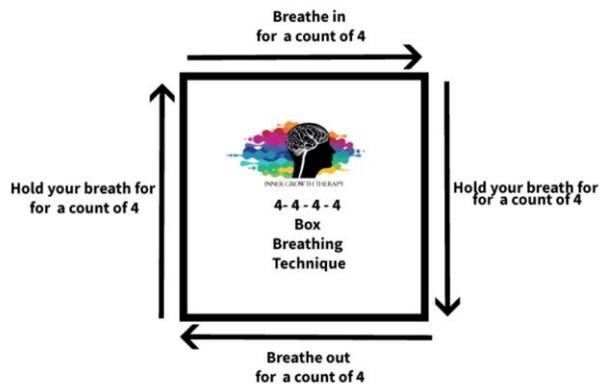
- **Amygdala:** becomes overactive → stronger fear responses, emotional reactivity
- **Prefrontal Cortex:** develops less efficiently → difficulty with planning, focus, decision-making
- **Hippocampus:** can shrink over time → affects memory and learning

Here is a quick activity to help lower chronic stress: **Box Breathing Materials per 'box':** 4 pipe cleaners, 16 beads

Steps:

1. **Shape the Box:** Twist the 4 pipe cleaners together to form a square (a "box").
2. **Add Beads:** Slide four beads onto each side of the square. Each bead represents one step of the breathing cycle.
3. **Explain the Breath:**
 - Inhale for 4 counts (move beads)
 - Hold for 4 counts (move next set of beads)
 - Exhale for 4 counts (move next set of beads)
 - Hold for 4 counts (move next set of beads)
4. **Practice Together:** Slowly trace the box with your finger or move each bead as you complete each breathing step.
5. **Repeat:** Continue for 3–5 rounds, encouraging slow, steady breathing.

Tip: Invite participants to decorate or color-code beads to personalize their breathing tool.



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