




The beginning of Summer was June 21st and the "dog days" of summer are here in early July, signifying hot, humid weather. ☀️

We'll come together and honor UV Safety Month, National Park and Recreation Month, Plastic Free July, International Joke Day, and International Day of Friendship.



UV Safety Month




As we spend more time outdoors in the warmer weather, it's important to remember we can experience skin and eye damage by excessive exposure to the sun's UV rays.

The sun is the best source of vitamin D. UV rays begin the production of vitamin D in our bodies, which strengthens our immune system and helps us absorb calcium.

5 things to know to stay safe in the sun

1. S.P.F. is Sun Protection Factor, and gauges how long the sun's UV rays takes to darken our skin vs the amount of time without sunscreen.
2. Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen, which protects you from UVA and UVB rays. UVA rays cause sunburn and UVB rays cause skin damage (ie. skin aging).
3. Make sure sunglasses block 99% to 100% of UV rays.
4. When covering most of your body, cotton and denim fabrics offer protection from UV rays.
5. Darker colors absorb more UV rays than lighter colors, so they are less likely to reach your skin.



[More information on sun safety](#)

National Parks and Recreation Month

July's Park and Recreation Month has been celebrated since 1985 to promote strong, vibrant and resilient communities. It's also a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge full-time park and recreation professionals (more than 160,000 in the United States), along with hundreds of thousands of part-time and seasonal workers and volunteers, that maintain US local, state and community parks.

This year's theme is "Where Community Grows" to honor the role park and recreation professionals play in bringing people together and fostering communities.

Park and recreation professionals make such a positive impact on the community every day. This is a wonderful time to honor how parks and recreation impact our communities.



Plastic Free July

The intention of Plastic Free July is to increase awareness of the amount of plastic used every day, which is harmful to the environment.



According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 'Only 9% of plastic waste is recycled (15% is collected for recycling but 40% of that is disposed of as residues). Another 19% is incinerated, 50% ends up in landfill and 22% evades waste management systems and goes into uncontrolled dumpsites, is burned in open pits or ends up in terrestrial or aquatic environments.'



Every minute the equivalent of 1 garbage truck of plastic is dumped into the ocean. To Beat Plastic Pollution and mitigate its impacts, we must reduce the production of plastic. Change starts with each of us

~ Secretary-General Antonio Guterres,
10 April 2023

Why is plastic bad for the environment?

How can you limit your plastic use?

- Use a reusable water bottle
- Shop at bulk food stores and use ration containers for dry goods
- Rely on reusable cloth bags
- Bring a durable container with you when you get take-out food or need a to-go container at a restaurant
- Wash with bar soap vs liquid soap

International Joke Day: July 1

Laughter IS the best medicine! Laughter can relieve stress, strengthen relationships, increase oxygen to the body, increase blood flow, and reduce the risk of heart attack. Laughter benefits us mentally, socially, and physically.

Support live comedy, learn a joke, and/or take a break from the news

More on how laughter is good for you.

Mental Health Benefits of Laughter

1. Adds joy and zest to life
2. Eases anxiety and tension
3. Relieves stress
4. Improves mood
5. Strengthens resilience

Social Benefits of Laughter

1. Strengthens relationships
2. Attracts others to us
3. Enhances teamwork
4. Helps defuse conflict
5. Promotes group bonding

Physical Health Benefits of Laughter

1. Boosts immunity
2. Lowers stress hormones
3. Decreases pain
4. Relaxes your muscles
5. Prevents heart disease

International Day of Friendship: July 30

International Day of Friendship was founded by Hallmark in the 1930s and was intended to be a day for people to send their friends' cards. The United Nations designated the International Day of Friendship in 2011, encouraging people around the world to observe and celebrate the day.

Reasons why friendship is important:

- It enhances emotional resilience by sharing good and bad times with a group of friends.
- It boosts brainpower by spending time with others – even if for only 10 minutes, per the University of Michigan.
- It may improve sleep because people are more restless during sleep if they don't socialize, according to a University of Chicago study.
- It improves people's health. In a University of North Carolina study, people without strong connections have higher blood pressure as well as higher abdominal obesity rates.