



NEWSLETTER

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JULY 2025

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS, RESILIENCE, AND BRAIN HEALTH

YOU'RE INVITED: BACK-TO-SCHOOL EVENT!

Join us for our **Back-to-School Event** on **July 10, 2025, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM** at **Colby Community College** (1255 S Range Ave, Colby, KS 67701).

You make our schools run — whether you're in the classroom, kitchen, front office, or behind the scenes. If you work with or for students, you're invited!

This **free** event includes:

- Engaging sessions
- Vendor booths
- Provided lunch
- Time to connect and collaborate with colleagues

Register Here:

<https://forms.gle/6TATv5FK7Btd1qRB9>

We'd love to see you there
as we kick off a great
school year together!

BACK TO SCHOOL

By centering relationships in these spaces, we're not just helping students succeed academically—we're building the social and emotional foundation and safety net they need to manage stress, overcome adversity, and navigate life's challenges with confidence.

Welcome to JULY! As this month unfolds, many of us are already preparing for the back-to-school season—a time of new beginnings and the chance to strengthen the relationships that shape our schools, workplaces, and communities. In this month's newsletter we're exploring how connection is at the heart of it all—helping students thrive, supporting grieving families, rebuilding after disasters, as well as promoting lifelong brain health. In big and small ways, showing up for each other makes all the difference.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL: RELATIONSHIPS AS THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

The back-to-school transition is about much more than school supplies and schedules—it's about creating environments where students feel safe, supported, and connected. Research consistently shows that positive relationships with teachers, peers, and family are key drivers of student success, resilience, and emotional well-being. Here's how we can prioritize relationships:

In Classrooms:

- **Start with intentional relationship-building:** Use icebreakers, team-building games, and classroom circles that encourage students to share their stories and interests.
- **Practice daily check-ins:** Simple tools like "mood meters" or one-word check-ins at the start of class can help students feel seen and heard.
- **Partner with families:** Invite parents and caregivers to participate in classroom events or virtual updates to strengthen school-home connections.

At Home:

- **Establish a daily connection ritual:** Whether it's a shared breakfast, a quick after-school walk, or a bedtime conversation, small consistent moments of connection make a big difference.
- **Talk openly about feelings and challenges:** Encourage children to express their worries, frustrations, and excitement about the new school year without fear of judgment.
- **Create a calm transition routine:** Help kids ease into the school mindset with predictable morning and evening routines that promote stability.

In the Community:

- **Host community-building events:** Back-to-school events, school supply drives, or "meet your neighbor" events foster connection across families and local organizations.
- **Promote safe, inclusive spaces:** Ensure after-school programs, parks, and community centers are welcoming to all children, regardless of background or ability.



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BEREAVED PARENTS AWARENESS MONTH: HONORING GRIEF, FOSTERING COMPASSION



July is Bereaved Parents Awareness Month, a time to bring visibility to the unique and lifelong journey of parents who have lost a child. Grief of this magnitude often isolates people, but compassionate communities can make a profound difference.

There are several ways to support bereaved parents:

- **Ongoing Support:** Check in long after the initial loss. Grief doesn't follow a timeline, and continued gestures of care matter deeply.
- **Create Safe Spaces:** In schools, workplaces, and social settings, we can make room for honest conversations about grief without stigma.
- **Provide Tangible Support:** Offer practical help, like meals, childcare, transportation, or assistance with daily tasks—small acts that can ease the weight of grief in everyday life.

When we acknowledge the depth of this pain and offer patient, unconditional support, we help bereaved parents feel seen, heard, and less alone.

JULY 22 - WORLD BRAIN HEALTH DAY

World Brain Health Day, observed on July 22, focuses this year on the theme "Brain Health for All Ages." Our brains are the center of everything—learning, memory, emotions, and daily functioning. Prioritizing brain health is vital from childhood to older adulthood.

Tips to Support Brain Health Throughout Life:

- **For Children and Teens:** Prioritize sleep, limit screen time, encourage physical activity, and provide emotional support.
- **For Adults:** Engage in continuous learning, maintain social connections, manage stress, and watch for signs of burnout.
- **For Older Adults:** Stay mentally active through reading, puzzles, and social involvement. Seek regular medical care to monitor cognitive health.

Brain health is not just an individual pursuit—it thrives in supportive families, schools, and communities where mental well-being is openly prioritized.

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TRAUMA & EMERGENCY AWARENESS: COMMUNITIES RALLY FOR GRINNELL

SUPPORT GRINNELL CLASSROOMS

Our friends in Grinnell are working hard to rebuild their classrooms and community after the devastating tornado in May. If you would like to lend a hand, you can support them in two great ways:

- Help replace classroom supplies by purchasing directly from their [Amazon Wishlist](#).
- Make a monetary donation through the [Grinnell Community Fund](#) to support broader recovery efforts.

Every contribution makes a meaningful difference as they rebuild and recover. Thank you for your generosity!

July is Trauma and Emergency Awareness Month, and this year our attention is especially drawn to the incredible response to the Grinnell, Kansas, tornado on May 18, 2025. When a devastating EF3 tornado tore through this small town, it left behind damaged homes, shattered power lines, a heavily impacted school, and deep emotional scars. Yet what quickly emerged from the rubble was something powerful—a surge of community spirit.

Neighbors helping neighbors. Surrounding towns stepping in. Total strangers offering support.

- Volunteers from nearby counties rushed in to help with cleanup and supply distribution.
- Local businesses and churches organized donation drives, meals, and temporary shelters.
- First responders, utility crews, and everyday citizens worked side by side to restore safety, power, and hope.

In moments like these, we're reminded that trauma isn't something a community faces alone—it's something we heal from together. As we reflect this month, let's celebrate the resilience of towns like Grinnell and continue to build the kind of connections that prepare us to step up when it matters most.

Grinnell Grade School Teachers Wish list		
Title	Comments	Price
Classroom Calendar Pocket Chart No Cards - White Monthly Pocket Chart for Kid Learning for Home Teacher/School supplies and Classroom Décor, Preschool Kindergarten Classroom Must Haves by Victory (Unknown Brand)		\$9.99
Tress Wellness - Waxing Sticks for Hair Removal - Premium Splinter-Free Wooden Sticks for Waxing, Wax Stick for Body and Face Waxing, 150 Wax Sticks by Tress Wellness (Health and Beauty)		\$6.95
Honeyso 24 Pcs Folded Take Home Heavy Duty 2 Pocket Homework Folders for Students Parent Teacher Communication (Blue) by Honeyso (Office Product)		\$26.99
Everest Basic Backpack, Jade, One Size by EVEREST (Luggage)		\$6.96
Sharpie S-Gel Pens, Fashion Barrel Gel Pens, Pearl White Body, Medium (0.7mm) Point, Bold Ink Colors, 12 Count by SHARPIE (Office Product)		
Pacorr 70% Recycled Mailbox Storage Unit, 15 Slots, Blue by Pacorr (Office Product)		
Barkers Box Decorative Eight Compartment Literature Sorter, Letter, Black/White Brocade (8170301) by Barkers Box (Office Product)		
Sharpie S-Gel Fashion Barrel Gel Pens, Medium Point, 0.7 mm, Assorted Barrel, Assorted Ink, Pack Of 12 Pens by SHARPIE (Office Product)		
Sharpie Clear View Highlighter Sticks Chisel Tip Assorted Fluorescent 8 Count by SHARPIE (Office Product)		
OFFICEJOY Storage Cart, Rolling Utility Cart with 10 Drawers, Portable Handles & Lockable Wheels, Mobile Paper Toys Storage Organizer Large Capacity for by OFFICEJOY (Home)		
S is for Sunflower: A Kansas Alphabet (Discover America State by State) by Devin Schlan, Doug Bowles (Hardcover)		
CHYK Spots - A Game About Rolling Dice, Pushing Your Luck...and Dogs by CHYK (Toy)		
Snap Circuits Jr. SC-100 Electronics Exploration Kit, Over 100 Projects, Full Color Project Manual, 28 Parts, STEM Educational Toy for Kids 8+ by Snap Circuits (Toy)		
Bananagrams Hy First Multi-Award Winning Kids Spelling Board Game For Ages 4+ by Bananagrams (Toy)		
Junior Learning Spelling Word Building Game, Ages 5-8, Phonemic Awareness, 75 Letter Tiles by Junior Learning (Toy)		

MAKE THIS A Season of Impact

GREATER NORTHWEST KANSAS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund - Grinnell Strong

In the aftermath of the Grinnell, Kansas tornado that struck the west half of town on Sunday, May 18th, many residents are in urgent need of relief and support. As a town of just 253 residents, the tornado caused significant damage to 45-50 homes and key infrastructure, leaving families displaced and our community deeply shaken. As a rural, close-knit community in Western Kansas, the resilience and unity of Grinnell will be vital in the effort to rebuild. We are actively seeking donations to help residents make repairs, rebuild their homes, and return to a sense of normalcy. Every contribution makes a meaningful impact, and we're incredibly grateful for your support. More details on available incentives and ways to give will be shared soon—thank you for standing with Grinnell during this time of recovery.

Donate

One-time Donation Amount

☐ \$50

☐ \$100

☐ \$250

☐ \$500

☐ Other Amount

\$



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RESOURCES & SUPPORT

Back-to-School Relationship Building

- [5 Back-to-School SEL Strategies for Educators](#) – CASEL offers classroom-ready SEL tools to help teachers build connections on Day 1 and foster a positive learning environment.
- [3 Back-to-School SEL Tips for Families](#) – Practical guidance for families to establish routines, open communication, and emotional support.

Bereaved Parents Support

- [The Compassionate Friends](#) – A national, peer-led nonprofit offering local chapters, online forums, and support following the loss of a child.
- [To the Newly Bereaved](#) – A compassionate guide for parents dealing with fresh grief.

Trauma & Emergency Preparedness

- [Ready.gov: Build a Kit](#) – A checklist and tips to assemble an emergency kit for home and families.
- [Community Preparedness Toolkit](#) – Steps and resources to build resilience and coordinated response in your community.
- [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#) – Tornado resources for kids and families.

Brain Health & Mental Wellness

- [World Brain Day 2025 – Brain Health for All Ages](#) – Official site with toolkits and campaign materials for July 22.

Whether we're preparing for a new school year, supporting grieving families, responding to emergencies, or promoting brain health—relationships are the throughline. When we invest in each other, we create safer, more compassionate spaces where everyone has the chance to heal, grow, and thrive.

