Updates from the HHS Commissioner, Deborah Youngblood

Before you head off into summer mode, I wanted to share a few updates particularly relevant to families with school-age children.

**Smartphones**: Thinking of getting your student a smartphone this summer? [This letter](http://www.newtonma.gov/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=1018&TargetID=31) targeted to elementary school families highlights research and resources available to help parents navigate this decision in the context of their own family’s values and circumstances. Additional information relevant to students of all ages is available on the [Newton Public Schools website](https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/3068), including [suggested [guidelines from Newton-Wellesley Hospital](https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907692/Centricity/Domain/112/Principles%20-%20Smartphones.pdf)](https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907692/Centricity/Domain/112/Principles%20-%20Smartphones.pdf).

**Summer Food:** Backpacks filled with a few meal's worth of nonperishable items will be available this summer for students at locations throughout Newton. [The program](http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/health_n_human_services/humansvcs/foodbank.asp) – a collaboration between the Church of the Redeemer’s FUEL program and the city is an effort to bridge the food gap for students who may rely on school breakfast and lunch during the year. Backpacks may include bread, peanut butter, canned fish, and canned fruits and vegetables. Nut-free bags can be requested. The locations include: Health and Human Services Department, Church of the Redeemer, West Suburban YMCA, The Boys & Girls Club, Crystal Lake, Gath Pool, Newton Free Library, and [many more!](http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/health_n_human_services/humansvcs/foodbank.asp)

**What’s in Your Medicine Cabinet?** Be a part of the solution to the opioid epidemic. Misuse of prescription drugs is a common way for teens and adults to start down the road of addiction. The most typical place young people get access to prescription drugs is their home medicine cabinet. A few simple steps taken by adults can have a significant impact. Immediately and safely dispose of unused medication. Two Newton locations are available year-round: the Newton Police Station and Newton-Wellesley Hospital. [Here are additional tips, and specific addresses and resources](http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/inc/blobfetch.aspx?BlobID=90179).