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“The Crisis Text Line is a vital and creative way to reach young people struggling with depression and suicidal ideation,” said StarkMHAR Executive Director John Aller. “When talking with young people—while they are not comfortable phoning a crisis hotline, we have found they are very comfortable interacting by text to obtain needed support.”

The Crisis Text Line launch is the latest in a series of strategies to strengthen and promote suicide prevention efforts in Ohio. In April, state officials unveiled a \$2 million suicide prevention initiative focused on reducing suicides through workforce development, expanded resources for survivors of loss, research, public awareness and stigma reduction. Persons who aren’t comfortable texting can still talk to a live individual by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1.800.273.TALK (8255).

On average, Ohio loses between 1,200-1,500 people annually to suicide. While the state’s suicide rate dropped last year to its lowest point in more than a decade, it still accounted for 10.8 deaths per 100,000 people. Nationwide, more than 41,000 people died by suicide – roughly one death every 13.7 minutes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Suicide now ranks as the second leading cause of death among Americans aged 10 to 34, and is the tenth leading cause of deaths overall.

For more information on what Ohio is doing to prevent suicides, visit <http://mha.ohio.gov/suicideprevention>. If you or someone you know is in an imminent danger to themselves or someone else, go to the nearest ER or call 911.

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