We’re All in This Together Ohio
Regional Psychiatric Hospital Staff - Lifting Spirits, Saving Lives Amid Pandemic
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2,500+
Ohio CareLine Staff Field Thousands of Calls As Demand for Help Surges
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ABCs of Mental Health
OhioMHAS, ODE Team Up to Create New Resource to Help Educators Maintain Wellness
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We ARE YOU
ADDICTED?
You can become addicted to technology. Phones, video games, computers can all be sources of addiction.

TAKE BACK CONTROL
B-CON OF HOPE
Bed Registry pilot program debuts in NE Ohio ... page 4

HELPING HELPERS
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OhioMHAS Liaison Helps Emergency Workers Cope

Ohio first responders — law enforcement, fire, EMS, dispatchers — stand ready to protect, defend, and provide life-saving services to Ohioans, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Often, this work can put them at risk, both physically and mentally. In December 2018, OhioMHAS created the position of First Responder Liaison and brought on Steve Click, a 32-year veteran of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, to serve as staff lead.

“Clicker,” as he is affectionately known by colleagues, provides trainings for Ohio’s first responder community, along with other state and local agencies. These trainings include Crisis/Addiction Awareness, Self-Care, Question, Pursue & Refer (suicide awareness and prevention) and “After the Call,” which discusses how an agency responds to a specific incident or accumulative trauma. Repeated exposures, coupled with the immense stress of roles in emergency services, can lead to an increased risk for adverse behavioral health outcomes such as distress, worry, disturbed sleep or concentration, alterations in work function, difficulties with interpersonal relationships, increases in substance use, somatization, and depression (Benedek, Fullerton, & Ursano, 2007).

The situations first responders are generally faced with are inherently difficult and stressful. Police officers, firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) are typically the first to arrive on the scene of events involving injuries and loss of life. They often provide emotional as well as physical support to traumatized survivors. These duties often put first responders at risk for secondary or vicarious traumatization, which is defined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration as “experiencing similar symptoms to trauma victims as a result of indirect traumatic exposure via close contact with the survivors.”

The number of police officer and firefighter suicides each year routinely surpass the number of those killed in the line of duty. The toxic stress from the job can also lead to substance abuse, changes in behavior, and trouble at home. The F.I.R.S.T. Support App, available for both Android and iOS operating systems, is not a replacement for counseling or treatment, but it does provide around-the-clock, in-demand support. First responders anonymously complete a short introductory assessment and are introduced to individualized self-help tips and courses, affirmations/meditations and articles using a sophisticated algorithm. A back-end dashboard allows staff to monitor progress and tailor additional content, as needed.

“First responders see things that nobody should ever have to see,” said Dr. Yeager. “This platform provides a safe space for users to explore healthy ways to deal with stress and trauma without having to worry about colleagues or family looking over their shoulder.”

This summer, Ohio became one of the first states in the nation to develop and launch a smartphone app specifically designed to help first responders build the resiliency needed to cope with job-related stress and trauma. The F.I.R.S.T. Support App, launched at the August First Responder Summit, is the brainchild of Dr. Kenneth Yeager, a professor and researcher at The Ohio State University, who partnered with developers from Accentus Health to build the app. The needs-driven project grew out of a statewide survey of first responders and was supported financially by OhioMHAS.

“Everybody looks for us to take care of them, but what we’ve failed to do miserably in the last 30 years, is take care of the people who are taking care of you,” said Madison Township (Lake County) Fire District Chief Todd Baker, who welcomed the new resource.

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In This Together

Regional Psychiatric Hospital Staff
Keep Things Positive Amid Pandemic

Appalachian Behavioral Healthcare recognized September as National Suicide Prevention Month by designing and selling t-shirts to build awareness and reduce stigma related to suicide. With hope that the phrase, “one conversation can save a life” would do just that, an educational postcard was provided with each order so those wearing the shirts can respond if asked about it. The t-shirts (pictured above) were designed by ABH staffers Jane Riley, SAMI coordinator, and Erin Souder, benefits coordinator. More than 140 shirts were sold. Proceeds benefitted the Athens County Suicide Prevention Coalition (ACSPC). ACSPC is discussing using the funds to purchase and provide gun locks to community members. The group also provides suicide prevention and postvention services, including awareness building, training, education, and the Athens County LOSS Team.

Heartland Behavioral Healthcare in Massillon honored staff with a video showing various members of the team donning their masks to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Healing Vibes
Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare Music Therapists Mike Witter, Annie Sturtewagen, and Laura Hauser recorded a modified version of Matisyahu’s song “One Day,” changing a few of the lyrics to reflect both the stressors and the hope that staff and patients have shared during this difficult time. The therapists said they recorded the song for two primary purposes: to come together and use music in their own healing and self-care; and to lift up others in the TVBH community and offer them hope as we face this pandemic together.

ABC’s of Mental Health
ASK yourself how you’re feeling
BE aware of signs & symptoms
CARE for yourself & others

If you need support, call the Ohio Crisis Line at 1-800-721-9615 or visit mha.ohio.gov/ABC

Teaming Up For Teacher Wellness
OhioMHAS, ODE Launch ABCs of Mental Health to Help Educators Weather the Stress of COVID-19

The Ohio Departments of Education and Mental Health and Addiction Services this fall announced the launch of the ABCs of Mental Health, a resource for educators who may be feeling the weight of new expectations along with heightened health and safety concerns amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The ABCs of Mental Health were developed by Ohio’s leading suicide prevention experts with teachers, administrators and school staff specifically in mind. The resource offers tips, tools, and supports to help educators acknowledge their feelings and learn potential signs and symptoms of mental health issues or suicide.

The ABCs of Mental Health are:

1. Ask Yourself How You’re Feeling
2. Be Aware of Signs and Symptoms
3. Care for Yourself and Others

The social media ads, sample press release, and editorial can be used in local outreach to share these messages within your community.

According to a 2017 national survey from the American Federation of Teachers, a greater percentage of educators are feeling “always/often” stressed, are more likely to describe their mental health as “not good” over the past 30 days, and are sleeping fewer than six hours each night.

Teacher stress:
By the numbers

Always/Often Stressed 61%
Poor Mental Health 58%
<6 Hours Sleep 48%
Responding to the Surge

Community mental health and addiction treatment and recovery support providers are seeing an increased demand for services amid the coronavirus pandemic. Many in the media are labeling it the “epidemic within the pandemic.” The good news is that Ohio has been preparing for an expected surge from the get-go.

Behavioral health problems are among the most commonly experienced adverse health effects of a pandemic, and demand for services historically increases during a crisis, according to a new literature review from OhioMHAS research staff. Almost everyone in the community where an infectious outbreak occurs will feel some type of emotional effect as general anxiety increases with fear of contamination and death, financial instability and loss, lifestyle changes, and uncertain futures.

Difficulty in coping with pandemic-related events can lead to confusion, panic, anxiety, depression, hopelessness, loneliness, despair, and grief. Startling evidence of widespread distress among U.S. citizens can be seen in the nine-fold increase in March 2020 in the number of calls to the Disaster Distress Hotline reported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

OhioMHAS remains committed to meeting the behavioral health needs of all Ohioans across the full continuum of care and services. Below is a brief summary of some of our efforts to meet the needs of Ohioans during this difficult time. Click HERE to view a detailed summary of surge-related efforts.

Real-Time Connection to Expert Help

- Launched the COVID CareLine (1.800.720.9616) to provide the public with access to licensed behavioral health professionals 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Continued to promote and support the Crisis Text Line (“4HOPE” to 741 741) to provide free and confidential service via text on mobile devices.
- Expanded the OhioMHAS Toll-free Bridge line (1.877.275.6364) hours to 8 a.m.-8 p.m., M-F to ensure the public can access the behavioral health information that they need, when they need it.

(Continued on next page)
Surge Response, cont.

Strengthening Access to Care
- Expanded OhioMHAS telehealth rules to ensure continued access to critical mental health and addiction services.
- Providing technical assistance to behavioral health providers on clinical best practices for quality telehealth care.
- Supporting peer providers through regular technical assistance, including the development of a comprehensive guide to Ohio’s county resources.
- Providing personal protective equipment (PPE) and technical assistance to support the continuation of in-person services for existing and new patients.
- Enhancing MAT access through federally licensed opioid treatment programs: Ohio has expanded take-home dosing policies.
- Supporting congregate care providers (Adult Care Facilities and Recovery Housing) in continued provision of safe spaces, through connections to PPE and providing technical assistance.

Preventing Overdose Deaths
- Conducting outreach to jails to promote provision of naloxone upon release for those with substance use disorders.
- Expanding community access points for naloxone, including the provision of naloxone at local pharmacies, fire stations, and syringe exchange locations.
- Created a mail-order naloxone program.
- Investing in campaigns targeting the general public, those struggling with addiction, and their loved ones for stigma reduction, education, and promotion of resources on where to get help.

Suicide Prevention
- Promoting healthy messages aimed at improving resilience and increasing safe and healthy habits through campaigns and community networks.
- Raising awareness through new campaigns and existing communication channels (e.g., social media) about when, where, and how to access behavioral health services.
- Expanding school-based behavioral health prevention services in collaboration with school districts and community behavioral health systems, including the use of telehealth for prevention activities.
- Funding expansion of Mental Health First Aid for the general public and Critical Incident Training (CIT) for police officers.
- Expanding access to quality crisis services in communities across the state through ongoing training and investment in crisis care infrastructure.
- Funding stigma reduction grants to community and faith-based organizations in targeted high-risk communities.
- Providing learning opportunities to organizations on the core components of Zero Suicide and on how to implement service protocols for individuals at differing levels of suicide risk.

Ohio’s behavioral health services system has embraced technology throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. From promoting continued access to vital prevention, treatment, and recovery support services via telehealth to providing 24/7 access to free, confidential crisis care and emotional support by phone or text, the health and wellness of all Ohioans has remained a top priority for the DeWine administration, the legislature, OhioMHAS, and our community partners.

Capitol Conversations

Sen. Nickie J. Antonio | District 23

OhioMHAS is kicking off a new video series where Legislative Liaison Vanessa McMahon will host a conversation with legislators who have been champions for behavioral health related policies impacting Ohioans.

This issue, we are pleased to feature Sen. Nickie J. Antonio, who serves approximately 312,000 Ohioans in Ohio Senate District 23, which includes a number of Greater Cleveland suburbs such as Brooklyn, Brookpark, Lakewood, Middleburgh Heights, and Parma. Sen. Antonio previously served eight years in the Ohio House of Representatives, as a member of Lakewood City Council, executive director of an outpatient drug and alcohol treatment program for women, and as a teacher for children with special needs.

Sen. Antonio currently serves as the Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee and the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee, where she has been instrumental in working with members of both parties. Most recently, she worked on a bill to improve access to naloxone by requiring training for pharmacists to make them aware of the laws allowing naloxone to be dispensed without a prescription. This bill was recently included into HB 341 and will take effect on Dec. 16. For more information about Senator Antonio, click HERE.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration will host its next Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, Oct. 24, from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Click HERE for a list of participating collection sites in your area and HERE to learn more about Take Back Day.
The Next Generation of Medicaid

In response to Governor Mike DeWine’s call to ensure Ohioans get the best value in providing quality care, the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) has embarked on an effort to procure new managed care contracts to support a future program with a mission to “focus on the individual rather than the business of managed care.” ODM has designed its future Medicaid managed care program to:

- Improve wellness and health outcomes
- Emphasize a personalized care experience
- Support providers in better patient care
- Improve care for children and adults with complex needs
- Increase program transparency and accountability

ODM envisions a next-generation Medicaid managed care program where ODM, the MCOs, PBM and OhioRISE work together to provide the best possible care for each individual. OhioRISE (Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence) – a single, statewide prepaid inpatient health plan – is responsible for providing behavioral health services to children involved in multiple state systems and/or with complex behavioral health needs. In the future program, a single pharmacy benefit manager (SPBM) will be responsible for providing and managing pharmacy benefits for all individuals, along with coordinating and collaborating to achieve health care excellence through a seamless service delivery system for individuals, providers, and system partners.

To reduce provider burden and promote consistency across the Medicaid managed care program, ODM has retained the administrative responsibilities for centralized claims submissions and prior authorization submissions and for credentialing and re-credentialing. ODM’s fiscal intermediary (FI) will serve as a single clearinghouse for all medical (non-pharmacy) claims. ODM’s FI will also serve as the single, centralized location for provider submission of prior authorization requests. Under ODM’s centralized credentialing process, providers will submit an application for Medicaid enrollment and credentialing to ODM and will not need to submit credentialing and re-credentialing materials to MCOs.

Click HERE for more about the future Ohio’s Medicaid managed care program and procurement.

Investing in the Mental Wellness of Ohioans

Soon after taking office Governor DeWine created RecoveryOhio, an initiative to address Ohio’s behavioral health crisis and invest in the health and well-being of Ohio’s citizens. The Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) is joining with the initiative’s many partners to move the needle in a positive direction on mental health and substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery support services in Ohio.

ODI has been front and center to educate Ohioans on how to access mental health and substance use disorder benefits in their health plan — benefits that can serve as a vehicle for their road to recovery. Some of the department’s efforts include closely regulating insurance company conduct and product compliance, and engaging consumers, advocates, and stakeholders on how these benefits work. The department also works to address consumer complaints and clear up confusion about insurance coverage.

Through in-person and now virtual training and outreach, ODI continues to expand its network of informed consumer groups, advocates, and other stakeholders on the department’s role in mental health parity regulation. In addition, the department ensures that health insurers are providing mental health and substance use disorder benefits in compliance with Ohio law and that health insurers are appropriately handling consumer complaints.

ODI launched a statewide educational media campaign across television and radio stations, and social media in September. The vast knowledge and expertise of RecoveryOhio’s partners, including OhioMHAS, was leveraged to identify target audiences and to formulate messaging for the campaign.

A central resource for consumers, advocates, and stakeholders is the department’s mental health and substance use disorder toolkit. This resource continues to expand with information pertaining to understanding benefits, filing an insurance complaint, and after appealing a claim decision. It also features specialized information for advocates to use when assisting consumers.

ODI staff are also available at 1-800-686-1526 and consumer.complaint@insurance.ohio.gov to help consumers, advocates, and stakeholders with their insurance questions, as well as a complaint or appeal. Appeals with the department are conducted by independent external reviews in situations where a consumer believes that his/her health plan wrongly denied a claim or reduced payment for a benefit or service. If you are a third-party advocate or you believe your plan may be violating the law you can submit information to the department’s ombudsman at ombudsman@insurance.ohio.gov.

Join our effort to assist Ohioans about how their mental health and substance use disorder insurance benefits can impact their lives. If you are interested in a training session or an engagement partnership, contact Molly Mottram at Molly.Mottram@insurance.ohio.gov.

New Suicide Prevention Campaign Reaches African American Males

Suicide attempts among African American adolescents have increased 73 percent since 1991. In an effort to reverse that trend, the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation has launched the “With You Here” campaign to encourage those in the Black community to share their stories, start conversations about mental health wellness, gain helpful resources, and help save lives. Click HERE to access the campaign microsite.

Across the board, mental health problems such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder put youth at risk for suicidal thoughts and attempts. But many African American children and adolescents face additional challenges, including exposure to violence and racial discrimination, that may further increase their risk, according to the “Ring the Alarm” report prepared by members of the Emergency Taskforce on Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health, commissioned by U.S. Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-N.J.) and the Congressional Black Caucus in 2018.

Life is better with you here.
There’s Hope in Help. Need Help? (800) 273-8255 withyouhere.org

www.mha.ohio.gov
For many youth and adults, video games are a fun way to pass time. Video games can bring about positive benefits such as bonding with friends and family, teamwork, and conflict resolutions skills. However, just like many things, there can be too much of a good thing. The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined the preoccupation with video games as a gaming disorder. According to the WHO, a pattern of digital or video gaming that causes an individual to prioritize gaming over other activities causing regular negative consequences can put an individual at-risk for a gaming disorder.

Given that the restrictions around COVID-19 have caused individuals to spend more time at home, youth and adults may be tempted to increase the amount of time they spend playing digital games on smartphones or video games. In fact, game developers spend around $23 billion dollars annually to make games more enticing to players.

“The games are designed to have players crave the excitement that they get from leveling up or other accomplishments built into games. They do this by designing games that periodically cause a release of dopamine which is the ‘feel good’ chemical in the brain,” said Montgomery County Prevention Coalition Manager Tristyn Ball.

Given that the brain doesn’t fully develop until around age 25, youth are more likely to chase the feeling of excitement and satisfaction they get from playing digital and video games. Parents can be important in setting safety protocols that decrease the risk of a young person from developing a gaming disorder.

“Games are designed to have players crave the excitement that they get from leveling up…”

A recent study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Journal showed that “violent video-game play is associated with increases in physical aggression.”

“As parents purchase games and have conversations with their children around video gaming, it is important to keep in mind the violent nature of some video games and the potential impact extensive exposure to these types of games can have on children,” said Ball.

The Montgomery County Prevention Coalition and Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services Board recently released a new resource, Digital Detox 101 for parents and youth to provide tips on how to prevent gaming disorders, as well as negative consequences related to extensive exposure to social media.

Keep the following tips in mind when children play video games:

- Have a conversation by asking kids why they love playing video games and why they think they are fun.
- Be sure to check the Entertainment Software Rating Board rating and that it is appropriate for your child’s age.
- Keep in mind who your child is playing games with if they are engaging in online game play, and be mindful if they are playing online video games with strangers.
- Discuss boundaries with your children and let them know that they can talk to you if they feel uncomfortable with another player’s behavior.
- Set limits on the amount of time a child can play digital or video games each day.
- Be sure to monitor expenditures related to games, especially if there is a credit card attached to a gaming account.

Digital Detox:
How video gaming can be addictive

By: Tristyn Ball,
Montgomery County ADAMHS

The Montgomery County Prevention Coalition and Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services Board recently released a new resource, Digital Detox 101, for parents and youth to provide tips on how to prevent gaming disorders, as well as negative consequences related to extensive exposure to social media.
In recognition of September as Recovery Month, OhioMHAS launched a new statewide public awareness campaign to highlight the resources and addiction treatment help available through the Take Charge Ohio initiative (https://takechargeohio.org/Get-Help). The campaign features radio, television, and digital creative to help Ohioans recognize warning signs and know where they can turn for help. For more information about the campaign, please email CreativeServicesTeam@mha.ohio.gov.

What Does Recovery Mean to You?

We asked Ohio’s certified Peer Recovery Supporters to share their thoughts for Recovery Month.

Upcoming Trainings

**OCTOBER**
20-23 Midwest Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Summit
23 Ohio Council: State of BH and Annual Meeting
23 Adolescent Screening & Assessment
27 OACBHA: 2020 Virtual Recovery Series
29 Tri-State Trauma Network Fall Conference, Day 1
29 Ohio Council: Clinical Documentation Compliance
30 Adolescent ASAM
30 Gambling Treatment Supervision & Consultation

**NOVEMBER**
2 Financial Wellness Fundamentals Roundtable
4 Youth With Problematic Sexual Behavior Series
6 Building Resiliency in Children of Addicted Parents
6 Ohio Council: Cultural Humility & Implicit Bias
6 Adolescents: Differential Considerations

**NOVEMBER, cont.**
7 Trauma-Informed Schools Conference
9-13 ADAPA Conference
10 Tri-State Trauma Network Fall Conference, Day 2
11 Crisis Resolution for African-American Children in Care
13 Youth and Family Engagement
20 OhioAAP “Reverse the Trend” Adolescent Suicide
20 Gambling Disorder Case Presentation

**DECEMBER**
2-3 Stage 1: Problem Gambling
11 Adolescent/Family Motivational Interviewing Refresher

Click [HERE](https://takechargeohio.org) to view the online OhioMHAS Calendar.

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**e-Update**

**Upcoming Trainings**

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**NEED HELP?** Call 1.800.720.9616 | mha.ohio.gov