

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Suicide Prevention Video Series to Air on Ohio PBS Stations

(COLUMBUS, OH)—The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) is pleased to announce the release of a four-part video series focused on prevention of suicide and supports for people with mental health concerns. *Suicide in Ohio: Conversations*, was developed in partnership with the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF) and will launch on The Ohio Channel/PBS stations beginning Dec. 10 at 8 p.m. The Ohio Channel produced the videos as a component of Ohio's goal to raise awareness of suicide and prevent future deaths.

The series features well-known leaders and experts in healthcare, as well as the parents of a young woman who died by suicide, and two University of Toledo football players who share their stories of loss and finding strength in mental health.

“Governor Mike DeWine has placed an emphasis on reducing suicides, especially among our young people. With these videos we want to educate family members, teachers, healthcare professionals and anyone watching about the signs of suicide,” said OhioMHAS Director Lori Criss.

OSPF Executive Director Tony Coder added, “Over the course of the program you’ll learn how to talk to someone who may be thinking about suicide, who is at highest risk, and how to get help for yourself or a loved one. This effort ties in with [The Suicide Prevention Plan of Ohio](#), a statewide collaboration meant to define and build a service system that helps us all to recognize signs of suicide and get help immediately.”

The program was taped as four, 15-minute segments, so that it can be watched as a whole on PBS or viewed in shorter segments online. Highlighted speakers include:

- Dr. John Ackerman, Nationwide Children’s Hospital
- Anthony J. Crider, Senior, University of Toledo
- Lori Criss, Director, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
- Anthony J. Harrison, Senior, University of Toledo
- Vanessa and Jason Martin, parents of Gaby
- Dr. Jacqueline Ridley, VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System
- Charleta Tavares, CEO, PrimaryOne Health

With the added stresses of the global coronavirus pandemic -- health, finances, isolation, home-schooling and work challenges -- serious depression and thoughts of suicide can affect anyone. *Conversations* will help viewers learn to recognize the signs of suicide and overcome the fear of bringing up the subject with a family member or friend.

The series educates viewers on common warning signs of suicide, which include:

- Talk about feeling hopeless, suicidal, being a burden to others
- Increased use of alcohol or other drugs
- Withdrawing from activities or isolating
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Giving away prized possessions, or saying goodbye to loved ones and friends
- Changes in mood, such as feeling depressed, anxious, irritable

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If someone you know exhibits one or more of these signs, experts suggest the following actions:

- Take the person seriously
- Stay with them
- Help them remove lethal means (firearms, medications, sharp objects)
- Call the Ohio CareLine at 1-800-720-9616, anytime, day or night
- Text TALK to 741 741 to text with a trained crisis counselor from the Crisis Text Line for free, 24/7 support
- Escort them to mental health services or an emergency room
- Call 911 if someone is in immediate danger

The videos can be viewed at <https://mha.ohio.gov/Families-Children-and-Adults/Suicide-Prevention#conversation>. Additional scheduled air dates on PBS channels will be Dec. 13 at 5 p.m. and Dec. 19 at 10 a.m. *Suicide in Ohio: Conversations* will continue to be broadcast in regular rotation with PBS specials and documentaries.

For more information about Ohio's current efforts to prevent suicide, visit <https://mha.ohio.gov/Families-Children-and-Adults/Suicide-Prevention> and <https://www.ohiospf.org/>. Download the Suicide Prevention Plan for Ohio 2020-22 [HERE](#).

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