

# THE OUTLOOK

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



Governor Kay Ivey held a press conference to announce "The Smart on Safety Initiative"

## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

The "Securing Alabama's Facilities of Education" (SAFE) Council was created by Governor Ivey on March 6, to study school safety. My goal as part of my inclusion on the council, is to ensure preventive and interventional mental health services are offered more widely in K-12 schools. The council sent a report to the Governor on May 7, which focused on improvements in three areas: physical security, threat assessments and mental health, and coordinated training and planning.

There is increasing concern about the growing number of children and adolescents who experience difficulties associated with the adverse effects of social and emotional disturbances. In school-aged children and adolescents, unmet mental health needs can cause negative and often tragic long-term consequences.

A mental health program currently in place, but in just 36 school districts, is the School-Based Mental Health Collaboration. Services are offered through the local mental health authority by placing a Master's level clinician in the school setting, in a structured manner that ensures confidentiality while enhancing mental health service delivery. This integrated best practice approach began in 2010 and has grown over the years. As the school year grows closer and for future years, we will be working to expand the effort with additional support and partnerships with local schools.

*Steph Bebeau*



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Want to be included in the next issue? Send us your stories, achievements, initiatives, events...etc!

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# RESPECT INITIATIVE

## HOLDS ITS FIRST GRADUATION CEREMONY

The RESPECT Initiative, created by mental health advocate Joel Slack, helps participants develop the skills necessary to transform their experiences of mental health and substance use challenges – and across disabilities - into educational and inspirational presentations. This program is supported by the Alabama Department of Mental Health.

The RESPECT Initiative helps participants organize, construct, and customize their personal stories of recovery and independent living so they can share their stories in diverse venues such as management meetings, legislative meetings, employee orientations, university classrooms, civic meetings and continuing education programs.

The RESPECT Initiative is a three and half day program that empowers participants by acknowledging, by honoring and by valuing their personal experiences and insights. Through this recognition and acceptance, participants reclaim their sense of self. They own their lived experiences without shame or embarrassment and become instrumental in eliminating stigma in the public, in advancing the message of recovery and in educating the next generation of behavioral health professionals.

The first class of the RESPECT Initiative graduated on May 25, 2018 with five individuals successfully completing the course learning to tell their stories to help others and decrease stigma surrounding mental illness and substance abuse. Congratulations!



Please join Commissioner Lynn Beshear as we honor the new Graduates of The RESPECT Initiative of Alabama

Commencement will be held on Friday, May 25, 2018 at 10:30 AM

100 North Union Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor – Purchasing Auditorium



# ALABAMA OPIOID OVERDOSE AND ADDICTION COUNCIL

## THE WORK CONTINUES

The Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council met in late June to follow up on continued implementation tactics of the Top 5 strategies identified by the co-chairs, Attorney General Steve Marshall, Commissioner Lynn Beshear and Dr. Scott Harris of Public Health. The council's objective is to combat opioid addiction in Alabama by creating policies, writing legislation, spreading education and awareness and creating programs to decrease opioid use and the impacts.



The subcommittees of the council discussed their current and future work:

- Data –In process of determining a solution for a Central Data Repository to assist with collating important data on the opioid epidemic
- Law Enforcement – Related legislation was introduced and passed during the 2018 session; for example, laws regarding the trafficking of Fentanyl.
- Treatment and Recovery – Care coordination is in development along with more access to Peer Support.
- Prevention and Education – Strategies for education will be implemented through two ADMH media campaigns set to be promoted in late summer and fall. More promotion will be realized through coordination of partner agencies and resources offered to local providers.

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- Rescue – An increase of Naloxone, the life-saving medication administered to a person who is experiencing overdose, has been realized due to further education of law enforcement. The AG's office has sent information out to the counties with the greatest need regarding immunity and a prioritization of distribution.
- Prescriber/Dispenser Practices – Education of prescribing board members is a top priority. Training has been offered to post-secondary schools with suggestions of an integrated curriculum.
- Community Engagement – Information to judges and members of the justice system will be communicated through trainings and materials.

The committee also enjoyed a presentation from Daniel Blaney-Koen, Senior Legislative Attorney, American Medical Association. Blaney-Koen offered information on current state statistics and a **toolkit, Smart & Safe Alabama**, created in part with the Medical Association of the state of Alabama. The toolkit offers resources and links to important information for patients and physicians.

The committee and subcommittees meet regularly to update plans and further implementation efforts. For more information on the council, please contact ADMH at 334-242-3417.

# PEER SUPPORT

“When I was depressed, it took everything I could do to get out of bed in the morning,” said Director of Peer Programs Mike Autrey.

Autrey was first diagnosed with mental illness in his late 20s. He has been diagnosed with depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and bipolar disorder by different doctors.

After years of testing medications, he found one that worked. Once stable on medication, Autrey could drive his car, go outside and do normal activities. Yet, he was unhappy.

“I would get up every morning, go in the den, turn on the TV, and watch CNN all day,” Autrey said. “It wasn’t a real life.” He accepted that his life would always be unsatisfying and that it would never get better. It was through peer support he was able to begin living a fulfilling life.

The Alabama Office of Peer Programs works closely with consumers, consumer operated programs and advocacy organizations to help people who are in recovery from mental illness and substance abuse. One of the main pillars in the Alabama Department of Mental Health’s foundation of work is the expansion and support of peers.



The office trains people with mental illness to be peer support specialists. These specialists help consumers who aren’t as far along in their recovery to live a satisfying and meaningful life, by sharing their own experiences.

“What a peer support specialist brings to the table that nobody else can, is that they been through what the person they’re working with has been through,” Autrey said.

Peer services are offered as part of an overall recovery plan. The treatment part of the plan is done through medication and therapy. “The goal of treatment is to keep you out of the hospital,” Autrey said. “Peer support is about recovering from the effects of mental illness, recovering your mind.”

There are about 250 certified peer support specialists in the state of Alabama; 100 are actively working. The Alabama Office of Peer Support is currently working to increase their training opportunities and expand their network. “It’s the future of mental health,” Autrey said.

For more information, contact the ADMH Office of Peer Programs at 334-242-3492.

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

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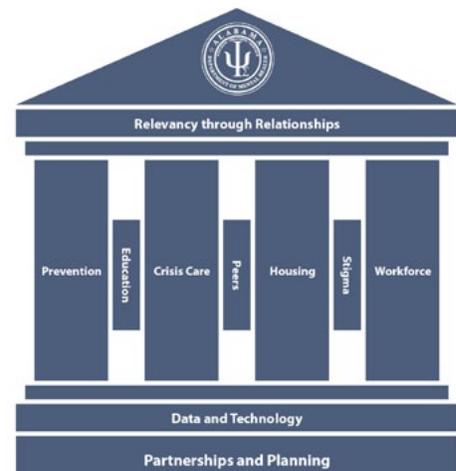


View us on  
**Wikipedia**



**Check out our new Instagram account!**

Through our social media channels, we promote mental health news, events, jobs and more from around the state. Connect with us for the most up-to-date information from ADMH!



# SABE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

## FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS

The Self Advocates Becoming Empowered Conference took place at the Birmingham Jefferson Civic Center from June 7-9.

SABE is an organization whose mission is to ensure that people with disabilities are treated as equals. The SABE conference aims to encourage self-empowerment, celebrate self-advocacy and educate people regarding disability rights.



“The theme of the conference was disability rights are civil rights,” said People First of Alabama Advisor Susan Ellis. “This theme allowed the disability community in our state to make bonds and network with all the organizations working toward human and civil rights.”



The SABE conference acts as a networking hub for self-advocacy organizations. More than 700 people from across the country attended this national event; 200 of which



were Alabama residents. Together the organizations share how they promote equal treatment for people with disabilities.

“People are here to learn about self-advocacy and all different areas of their life,” said SABE Event Planner Julie Petty. “We have workshops on relationships, unemployment, independent living, just how to have a life like everybody else. Because we deserve equality just like everybody else.”

SABE’s continuing dedication to the advancement of the disability rights movement is evident by the 2018 event’s tagline, “Let’s make it happen!”

Check out a video of the festivities [here!](#)

## PREVIEW

### SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH

Every September, SAMHSA sponsors Recovery Month to increase awareness and understanding of mental and substance use disorders and celebrate the people who recover. The annual **theme** is Join the Voices for Recovery: Invest in Health, Home, Purpose, and Community. Provider and partners can download promotional materials [here](#). ADMH is excited to see all the events and celebrations around the state and will showcase those on social media and in future newsletters.

National  
*Recovery Month*

Prevention Works • Treatment is Effective • People Recover  
**september 2018**

# OFFICE OF DEAF SERVICES

## CELEBRATES 15 YEARS!

The Office of Deaf Services (ODS) opened for business on January 3, 2003. On that date, Director Steve Hamerdinger, turned on the lights at the nascent Alabama Department of Mental Health Office of Deaf Service for the first time. The day was the culmination of nearly five years of work on the part of the Alabama Association of the Deaf that led to the litigation and settlement of the landmark *Bailey v. Sawyer* lawsuit.

Since that time, it has grown from a one-person operation to a statewide program, employing 19 people over five regions and at Bryce Hospital. Through contracts, it provides approximately 60 jobs for people that are deaf or hard of hearing in mental health programs. It has garnered national and international acclaim for its programming, including the Mental Health Interpreter Training Institute.

The Mental Health Interpreter Training project began in 2003. In October 2003, Alabama became the first state in the nation to codify what a "Qualified Mental Health Interpreter" is. The work done by MHIT over the next ten years would garner international accolades.

Over the years, the Office has provided quality mental health services to over 800 unique deaf and thousands of hard of hearing consumers. They field hundreds of requests for technical assistance and consultation and provide scores of training events reaching thousands of people yearly.

Read more about the office in the *Signs of Mental Health* [newsletter](#).



## A SUCCESS!

The 5th annual Peer Conference included a two-day workshop to provide education which highlighted the accomplishments of the peers, and allowed for the peers to share their knowledge and experience working as a certified peer specialist. This year's conference had over 100 attendees!

The conference topics centered around ways to improve peer supportive services, promote the value of utilizing peer services, promote advocacy, and encourage collaborations. The opportunity for the peers to learn from each other continues to transform recovery supportive services in Alabama. The peer's lived experience is the foundation to help others obtain and maintain recovery from a substance use disorder through many pathways to recovery.

**Check out the great pictures from the Peer Conference! The event had over 100 attendees and provided fellowship and education for our peers!**



# #COMMUNITY #COMMUNICATION

Commissioner Beshear had the opportunity to speak to the Montgomery rotary club on June 11. She is featured in their newsletter with a recap of her message.

Read more here! [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AOhW4fLit-KPh0M-Tya1O4VgVlcm\\_cLf/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AOhW4fLit-KPh0M-Tya1O4VgVlcm_cLf/view)

## Our Greatest Challenge STIGMA



 **Marcie L. Foster** @marcie\_foster  
Commissioner Lynn Beshear @ALMentalHealth giving us a Mental Health Overview. #EndStigma #stopthestigma #MentalHealthMatters #YouAreNotAlone #MentalHealth #SteppingUp #alpolitics #67Counties #OneVoice @AlabamaCounties @NACoTweets @gediau



A Pennington Institute Initiative

**International Overdose Awareness Day** is a global event held on August 31st each year and aims to raise awareness of overdose and reduce the stigma of a drug-related death. It also acknowledges the grief felt by families and friends remembering those who have died or had a permanent injury as a result of drug overdose.

International Overdose Awareness Day spreads the message that the tragedy of overdose death is preventable. Join ADMH and local providers in sharing the message of hope, prevention and recovery.

31 AUGUST

INTERNATIONAL  
OVERDOSE  
AWARENESS DAY

TIME TO  
REMEMBER.  
TIME TO  
ACT.

## CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING

FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT – AUGUST 20-23

The lack of mental health crisis services across the U.S. has resulted in law enforcement officers serving as first responders to most crises. Taking Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training is an innovative, community-based approach to improve the outcomes of these encounters.

NAMI Alabama, the River Region United Way and Auburn University will host Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) at the Montgomery Alabama Crime Prevention Clearinghouse & Training Institute, August 20-23. This event is for all members of law enforcement who would like to be informed and educated

CIT programs bring community leaders together, they can also help keep people with mental illness out of jail and in treatment, on the road to recovery.

To sign up for the class, please register at <https://learning.aum.edu/wconnect/outreach/CourseStatus.awp1?&course=18CP113> act NAMI Alabama at <http://namialabama.org/627031>

# DATES TO REMEMBER

## MENTAL HEALTH RELATED EVENTS OF INTEREST

**07/27**

**2018 State Children's Policy Council Conference**  
Renaissance Hotel & Spa Convention Center, Montgomery

**07/30**

**16th Annual Mental Health Interpreter Training Institute**  
Troy University, Montgomery

**08/01**

**Conquering the Crisis: Fighting Substance Misuse in Alabama**  
McWane Center, Birmingham

**08/03**

**The Office of Women's Health Eleventh Annual Women's Health Update**  
St. Vincent's Health System Bruno Conference Center, Birmingham

**08/03**

**ASL Coffee Night**  
Starbucks, Montgomery

**08/04**

**Inaugural Recovery Night - Knock Addiction Out of the Park**  
Birmingham Barons Park, Birmingham

**08/14**

**Regional Conference for Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers**  
Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach

**08/24**

**Strike Out Stigma with the Montgomery Biscuits**  
Riverwalk Stadium, Montgomery

**08/24**

**Fourth Annual Substance Abuse Consumer Conference**  
Lake Guntersville State Park, Guntersville

**08/28**

**National Prevention Network Conference**  
Boston Park Plaza, Boston, MA

## DID YOU KNOW?

The statue of the goddess outside of Bryce Hospital was, for many years, referred to as Hygeia, the Greek goddess of health, during tours and new employee orientation. She was brought to the grounds in the late 1880s or 1890s. Dr. Robert Mellown's book "Bryce Hospital Historic Structures Report" (1990) offered information that the statue is in actuality, the Greek goddess Hebe, goddess of restoring youth, and of released prisoners. She is made of zinc and was refinished by the University of Alabama's Art Department before being moved to the new Bryce hospital.

-Thanks to Steve Davis, ADMH Historian for this interesting info!



# Serve • Empower • Support