

# THE OUTLOOK

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



Seeing Double? Two Mental Health Commissioners!  
YMCA Youth Legislature 2019 Mental Health Commissioner Julia Holmes and Commissioner Beshear compare notes.

## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

### WATCH THE VIDEO

- A new Alabama Department of Mental Health website was recently unveiled after nearly a year of work by numerous ADMH staff and the state Office of Information Technology
- The website offers an opportunity to showcase services and resources for those we serve in a clear and easy to access fashion
- The site will be continuously updated and a hub for information on mental health in Alabama, along with information and events found our social media pages
- We invite you to take a tour through the new site and contact the ADMH Office of Public information with any questions or comments



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

[publicinformation.DMH@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:publicinformation.DMH@mh.alabama.gov) | 334-242-3417

## Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month 2019

#ddawareness19

Each March, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (**NACDD**) create a social media campaign that highlights the many ways in which people with and without disabilities come together to form strong, diverse communities. ADMH is proud to help promote this campaign and showcase Alabama individuals and programs too!

The campaign seeks to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all areas of community life, as well as awareness of the barriers that people with disabilities still sometimes face in connecting to the communities in which they live. DD Awareness Month covers three main areas: education, employment and community living.

A Proclamation declaring the month as Developmental Disability Month has been offered, honoring those we serve and the work of partners and providers.

Follow or like ADMH on social media [@ALMentalHealth](#) on Twitter and [Alabama Department of Mental Health on Facebook](#) and use the hashtag #DDawareness18!



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
 DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
 STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION  
**HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES**



ARE YOU RECEIVING SERVICES?  
 ARE YOU WAITING FOR SERVICES?  
 ARE YOU A SERVICE PROVIDER?  
**JOIN THE CONVERSATION!**

Keeping Families Together    Promoting Employment and Productivity    Reaching Those in Need

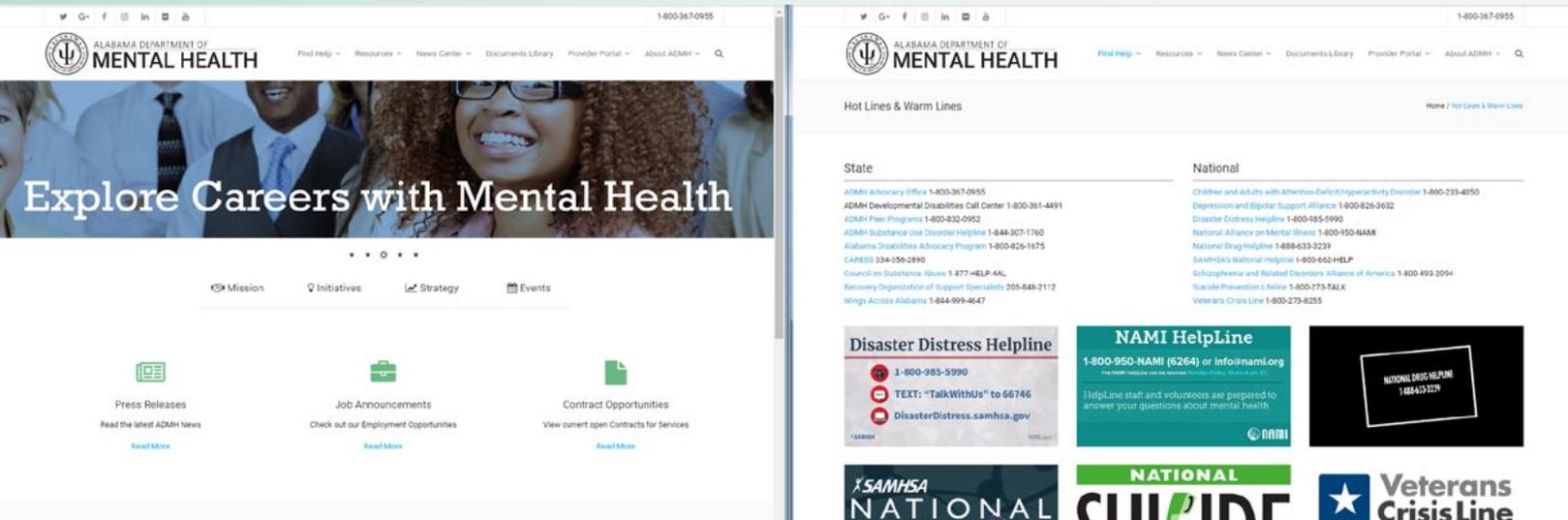
What Should the Future Look Like?  
 What kinds of Home and Community Based services are needed the most?  
 What kinds of supports are needed by caregivers?  
 How can services be improved?  
 What are ways to provide HCBS more cost effectively, so more people who need services may receive them?

<b>February 27, 2019</b> Huntsville/ Madison Li- brary 142 Plaza Blvd. Madison, AL 35758  Providers 10 AM - Noon  Families & Self- Advocates 1PM - 3 PM	<b>March 6, 2019</b> Region II Office 1305 James I. Harrison Pkwy, East Tuscaloosa, AL 35405  Providers 10 AM - Noon  Families & Self-Advocates 1PM - 3 PM	March 13, 2019 Al Dept. of Rehab Services 560 South Lawrence St. Montgomery, AL 36104  Providers 12:30PM - 2:30PM  Families & Self-Advocates 3PM - 5 PM	<b>March 27, 2019</b> Goodwill Easter Seals 2440 Gordon Smith Drive Mobile, AL 36617  Providers 10 AM - Noon  Families & Self-Advocates 1PM - 3 PM	April 3, 2019 Region V Office 631 Beacon Pkwy, Suite 211 Birmingham, AL 35029  Providers 10 AM - Noon  Families & Self-Advocates 1PM - 3 PM
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If you cannot attend, give your input using the [Online Survey!](#)

# THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

FIRST COMPREHENSIVE WEBSITE REDESIGN IN 11 YEARS MAKES INFORMATION MORE ACCESSIBLE, AND USER-CENTRIC



Commissioner Lynn Beshear announced the new Alabama Department of Mental Health website featuring an improved design and navigation from any device. The website offers quick and easy access to essential information and features, increasing understanding of the department’s programs and services.

The new website has a clean design, improved functionality and enhanced rich content, focused on the department’s mission to Serve · Empower · Support and can be found at the same web address: [www.mh.alabama.gov](http://www.mh.alabama.gov).

“We are excited about our new website and the robust information it provides for the people we serve, for providers, for ADMH partners and for the public about services, employment with our department, mental health resources and tools,” said Commissioner Lynn Beshear. “We believe the new site will allow our visitors to have an enlightening experience and will help everyone to better understand the importance of mental health.”

The website was developed through a collaborative, data-driven process involving mental health stakeholders across the state, user testing and analytics research that identified top user requests and the most important information to highlight. The website prioritizes information, found in the Navigation menus, that is in high demand by Alabamians, and makes it easier to find key services and programs. [MH.Alabama.gov](http://MH.Alabama.gov) launches with specially designed pages to locate providers of services for mental health, substance abuse and developmental disabilities, resources for individuals and families, and a provider portal.

The website’s overall design has been enhanced to be more engaging and usable. It features a simplified, streamlined look with brighter colors, larger images and text size. Through the adoption of best practices in accessibility, the new website meets all ADA requirements. It was designed and built in partnership with the Alabama Office of Information Technology Services (OIT), ADMH Office of Public Information and ADMH Bureau of Information Technology. The redesign also includes a new content management system that allows the communications team to more quickly publish information.

ADMH’s new website will be updated on a regular basis with content regarding initiatives and programs, information about community partners and services, press releases, videos and newsletters. Visitors are encouraged to explore it at [www.mh.alabama.gov](http://www.mh.alabama.gov). Please send any questions to [publicinformation.dmh@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:publicinformation.dmh@mh.alabama.gov).

# DD EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT + PARTNERSHIPS = SUCCESS

## TONY DEARMAN AND JACK'S RESTAURANT



We are proud to highlight the success story of Mr. Tony Dearman who works part-time at Jack's restaurant in Madison, Alabama. According to area supervisor, Crystal Sparkman and manager, Amber Davis, "Tony helps with keeping the front and back of the house clean. He helps when we need him to take care of the lobby for our guests." Tony washes dishes, cleans trays, and pulls garbage for the popular restaurant as part of a team.

When management at Jack's was asked about the capabilities of the intellectual and developmentally disabled working at Jack's, they said, "the employees are capable of doing anything with proper training." ADMH values employers who work with our providers to offer positions and training for the people we serve. On the subject of the importance of having job coaches

doing follow-ups, Area Supervisor Sparkman wrote, "It is wonderful because that way if we have any issues with employees, the coaches can better help us explain."

Tony enjoys playing golf and painting when not working at Jack's. He is quick to try to make his co-workers laugh. Tony was sidelined with a health scare last year which forced him to stop working for several months. When asked why he wanted to return, Tony said, "The people like me and I like them." Tony attends activities at the Arc of Madison County and competes in Special Olympics golfing events. He resides in a group home. The Arc Career Center assisted him in successfully gaining employment, served as a liaison in getting him re-employed and continues to keep in touch with him at his workplace on regular basis.

Area Supervisor Sparkman said when asked what advice she would give other employers about hiring people with developmental disabilities, "Make sure you give tasks that can be completed with little help and to make them feel part of the team." Among Tony's future plans at Jack's is to learn to cook when not cleaning or washing. "I would love to do that", said Tony.



A Proclamation signing for Transition Awareness Week was held on February 27th. Auburn University's Transition Leadership Institute spearheads this initiative with the partnerships of ADRS, ALSDE, Covington County Schools, Montgomery Public Schools and ADMH, Division of Developmental Disabilities.



# END HEROIN WALK

On Saturday February 22, hundreds of Alabamians assembled in Birmingham's Railroad Park for the 3rd annual End Heroin Bham walk. To honor lost loved ones, support survivors and peruse resource tables, each walker felt the power of solidarity and a renewed optimism to conquer this epidemic.

ADMH staff, providers and regional partners were very proud to be a part of the event! Over 3,500 folks attended! 285 participants



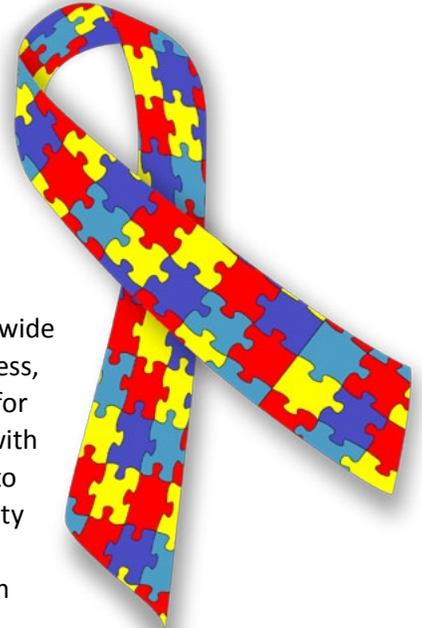
received Narcan training from Dr. Mark Wilson and staff of the Jefferson County Dept. of Health. There were 23 resource tables for attendees to receive the full array of important, relevant information. The event planners are grateful to Catherine Jackson, Prevention Specialist at East Alabama Mental Health, for driving up from Auburn, to be a volunteer at the Walk. #endheroin #mentalhealthmatters

# 24/7 Helpline 844-307-1760

Are you, or a family member, struggling with addiction or in need of support?

Do you prefer chat? Live chat is available through our website: [www.rosshelpline4u.org](http://www.rosshelpline4u.org)  
Want to send an email? Send us a message: [helpline4u.al@gmail.com](mailto:helpline4u.al@gmail.com)

# AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH 2019



Nearly a quarter century ago, the Autism Society launched a nationwide effort to promote autism awareness, inclusion and self-determination for all, and assure that each person with ASD is provided the opportunity to achieve the highest possible quality of life. The first National Autism Awareness Month was declared in April 1970.

The aim of this month is to educate the public about autism and decrease stigma. All of us need to embrace a new perspective and support all individuals living with autism with our actions and conversations. A basic goal from which to build is to provide factual information to promote acceptance and inclusion in schools and communities to result in true appreciation of the unique aspects of all people. We want to get one step closer to a society where those with ASDs are truly valued for their unique talents and gifts.

### What can I do?

- Learn more about what's happening in Alabama related to our Department
- **Sign up for e-newsletter Autism Matters** to continue sharing ideas on how to make a better world for autism here.
- **Share your experience/stories with NAAM or autism with us.** Use #StandUpForAutism to join the conversation!

**Put on the Puzzle!** The Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon is the most recognized symbol of the autism community in the world. Autism prevalence is now one in every 59 children in America. Show your support for people with autism by wearing the Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon! To learn more about the Autism Awareness Ribbon, [click here](#).

**Connect with your neighborhood.** Many Autism Society **local affiliates** hold special events in their communities throughout the month of April. But if you can't find an event that suits you just right, **create your own!**

**Watch a movie.** Did you know that something that seems as simple as going to the movies is not an option for many families affected by autism? The Autism Society is working with **AMC Theatres** to bring special-needs families **Sensory Friendly Films** every month.



# ANNUAL ALABAMA INSTITUTE FOR RECOVERY

APRIL 23, 2019



The annual AIR conference will be held at Shocco Springs and is organized by the Office of Peer Programs with the assistance of Wings Across Alabama. Approximately 800 participants attend each year with more than 600 attendees that would not be able to attend otherwise receiving scholarships.



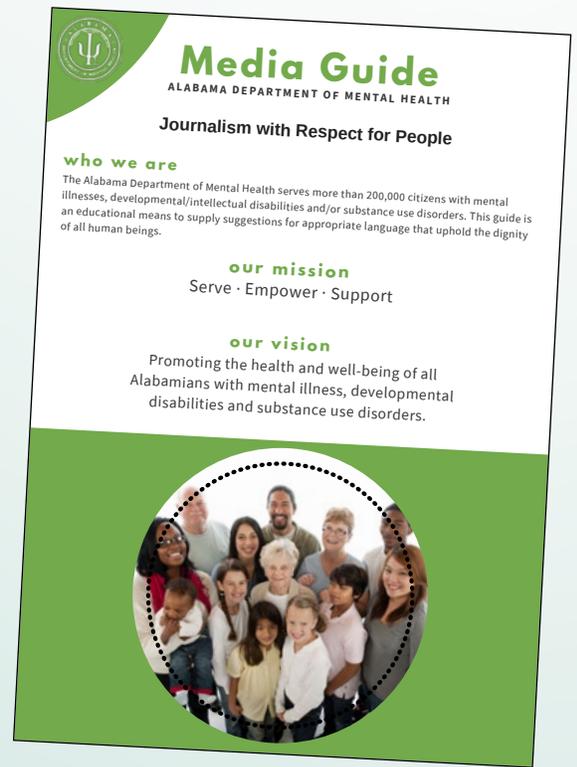
The conference is coordinated by peers and features speakers and workshops on topics and issues of interest to individuals with mental illness. Activities during the conference also include the presentation of the annual RESPECT awards, the annual Talent Show, a candlelight vigil, a watermelon social, and a dance.



This three-day conference not only offers educational and inspirational tracks, but promotes opportunities for true peer camaraderie and empowerment. Medical staff from state psychiatric facilities and community mental health centers volunteer every year to be part of the Crisis Response Team. Health screenings are offered to consumers in attendance.



For more information on the conference, please contact Mike Autrey at 334-242-3492, [mike.autrey@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:mike.autrey@mh.alabama.gov).



## ADMH OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION UPDATES OUR MEDIA GUIDE

### JOURNALISM WITH RESPECT FOR PEOPLE

The guide “Journalism with Respect for People” was created to inform and increase awareness of appropriate language when speaking or writing about people with mental illness, substance abuse disorders or disabilities. This guide is an educational document, offering suggestions for wording, upholding the dignity of all human beings. Topics include: definitions, mental illness, suicide, disabilities, and more.

The guide was emailed to all media in the state to share this important information, to decrease stigma and negative stereotypes sometimes seen in media articles and videos. To view the guide or share, click [here](#).

# OPEN HOUSE FOR PROJECT SEARCH IN MONTGOMERY

We are proud to partner with Project Search - a program designed to educate and provide job skills and employment for persons with disabilities. The program is designed to break down stereotypes by increasing the public's expectations about people with significant disabilities. Project Search Montgomery provides these young people with the opportunity to contribute to their communities, and society, by providing support to help them work and earn a living. Learn more [here!](#)

Thanks to our partners- Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Baptist Health, Easterseals Central Alabama and Montgomery Public Schools!



## PREVIEW: 2019 CAPITOL SHOWCASE ART EXHIBITION DURING MENTAL HEALTH MONTH IN MAY

Join us May 1-23 at the State Capitol, Old Supreme Court Library to view the fantastic art of the people we serve! Since 2005, ADMH has hosted an art show at Alabama's state Capitol. Artists from around the state with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, substance use disorders and co-occurring disorders are invited to have their abilities showcased throughout the month of May in the Capitol in observance of National Mental Health Month. With each piece of art, a short narrative is attached. The artists offer heartfelt information about their lives and how art is an integral part of their mental health. Don't miss this art experience!

May is Mental Health Month. National Mental Health Month raises awareness about mental illness and related issues in the United States. Through awareness and acceptance, attitudes towards mental health issues appear to be changing. Negative attitudes and stigma associated with mental health have reduced and there has been growing acceptance towards mental health issues and support for people with them. Learn how to promote this month [here](#).



# DATES TO REMEMBER

## MENTAL HEALTH RELATED EVENTS OF INTEREST

<b>03/19</b>	<b><u>Alabama School of Alcohol and Other Drug Studies</u></b> Bryant Conference Center, Tuscaloosa
<b>03/25</b>	<b><u>Mental Health First Aid – taught in ASL with spoken English Interpretation</u></b> ADRS office, Montgomery
<b>03/28</b>	<b><u>Region IV Provider Training</u></b> Volunteers of America, Montgomery
<b>03/29</b>	<b><u>6th Annual Statewide Peer Conference</u></b> Gardendale Civic Center, Gardendale
<b>04/05</b>	<b><u>ASL Coffee Night</u></b> Starbucks, Montgomery
<b>04/12</b>	<b><u>Caring for Caregivers</u></b> Lakepoint Resort, Eufaula
<b>04/23</b>	<b><u>Annual Alabama Institute for Recovery</u></b> Shocco Springs
<b>04/24</b>	<b><u>Customized Supported Employment Training</u></b> AIDT, Montgomery
<b>05/03</b>	<b><u>ASL Coffee Night</u></b> Starbucks, Montgomery
<b>05/06</b>	<b><u>Mental Health First Aid – taught in ASL with spoken English Interpretation</u></b> ADRS office, Huntsville

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Office of Deaf Services (ODS) now has the ability to offer video remote interpreting to mental health centers for last minute walk-ins and crisis situations. This does not replace a center's plan for live interpreters. To access this service, the center will contact a Regional Interpreter as they would for any other appointment.

This service is offered

**Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

ADMH asks that you contact ODS prior to any use of the service to establish connectivity and capability of use.



# Serve • Empower • Support