

THE OUTLOOK

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 18TH

THE ADMH STRIKE OUT STIGMA MONTGOMERY BISCUITS BASEBALL GAME IS BACK!

The Alabama Department of Mental Health, community mental health and substance use disorder prevention and treatment partners and the Montgomery Biscuits are hosting [Strike Out Stigma Night](#) to offer valuable information and resources on mental illness and substance use disorders. Join us Wednesday, August 18th for the 6:35 p.m. game!

Mental illness touches hundreds of thousands of families in America, with at least one family member diagnosed during their lifetime. Navigating life with a mental health condition can be tough, and the isolation, can create huge challenges to reaching out, getting needed support and living well.

Conversations about mental health and where to find help for oneself or for family and friends is vital. Mental health and substance use disorder community providers and partners will offer information at the event on services and opportunities for those in need and their families.

Ticket Information will be announced on the ADMH website and all social media pages.

For more information, contact ADMH Public Information at 334-242-3417, or email publicinformation.dmh@mh.alabama.gov.



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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 | 334-242-3417



PREVIEW OF RECOVERY MONTH - SEPTEMBER 2021

The 2021 National Recovery Month theme, *“Recovery is For Everyone: Every Person, Every Family, Every Community,”* reminds people in recovery and those who support them that no one is alone in the journey through recovery. Everyone's journey is different, but we are all in this together. Recovery Month will continue to educate others about substance use disorders and co-occurring disorders, the effectiveness of treatment and recovery services, and that recovery is possible. All of us, from celebrities and sports figures to our co-workers, neighbors, friends, and family members, have experienced peaks and valleys, both large and small. But with strength, support, and hope from the people we love, we are resilient.

[National Addiction Professionals Day](#) will be celebrated on September 20, 2021, as part of National Recovery Month. This day aims to celebrate the vital players of the health care system and continuum of care: addiction professionals. The day was established by NAADAC to commemorate all the hard work that addiction professionals do on a daily basis.

Previously, Recovery Month was sponsored by the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#). In June of 2020, SAMHSA announced its decision to retire its annual convening of Recovery Month stakeholders as well as the development of future themes and assets, and the management of the events calendar.

[Faces & Voices of Recovery](#) has created a new [Recovery Month website](#) that will host all Recovery Month events and assets that make this celebration possible. Download [shareable graphics](#) and more on the [Recovery Month website](#). You can find and post upcoming events on the [Recovery Month website](#) as well.



Every Person, Every Family, Every Community

Recovery is For Everyone:

OUR CHALLENGE:

VETERANS AT RISK

Though Veterans represent about just 9% of Alabama's population, 18% of suicides in the state are Veterans.

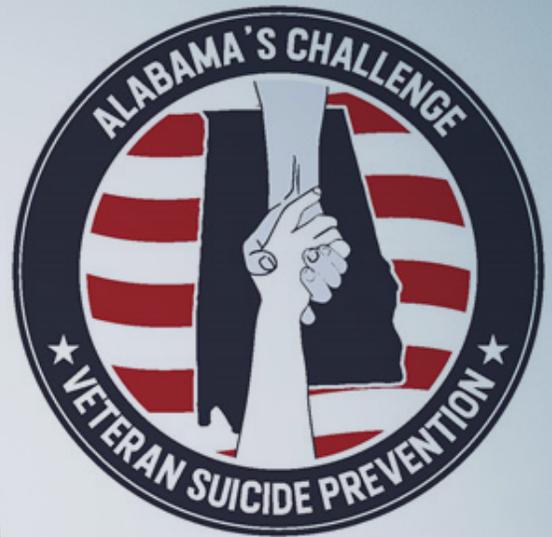
36% of Alabama Veterans who die by suicide are over the age of 55.

Male Veterans die by suicide at a rate 1.3 times than their civilian counterparts. For Female Veterans, it is 2.1 times higher.

Firearms are used by 83% of Alabama Veterans who die by suicide, compared to 51% nationwide.

To prevent additional deaths by suicide and trauma to Alabama veterans, the Alabama Department of Veteran Affairs will launch a statewide campaign by the Alabama Department of Veteran Affairs. They will partner with other state agencies and organizations, designed to broaden the conversation on suicide prevention and help end stigma around mental illness. The effort began with House Joint Resolution 151, ACT 2019-144, establishing the State Task Force on Veteran's Suicide. Its charter was "to investigate the causes of and prevention of suicides among returning Alabama veterans of the United States military and to make recommendations to the Legislature to address this important issue."

In early 2020, Alabama was invited to participate in the Governors Challenge to Prevent Suicide among service members, veterans, and their Families (SMVF). This is a well-established program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Efforts and actions related to the resolution and the Challenge are led by the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs, assisted by the Alabama Department of Mental Health, Public Health, and community Veterans partners and providers.



THE FACTS:

Nationally, approximately 17 Veterans die by suicide per day (the number "22 a day" is not current).

Only about 30% of all Veterans use VA healthcare. 11 of 17 Veteran suicides per day are not enrolled in VA care.

When speaking about Veterans suicides, it is important to distinguish between rate of suicide and number of suicides. While the highest rate of Alabama Veteran deaths by suicide is among young Veterans 18-24, the highest number of Veteran suicide deaths are among older veterans (ages 55+).

LEARN MORE AND KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

S.A.V.E. – The Department of Veterans Affairs uses this acronym for those wanting to help individuals struggling with suicide.

These are the key elements: know the Signs; Ask the question; Validate the thoughts; Encourage and Expedite help seeking.

For those wanting to learn about S.A.V.E., the free, on-line training by the PsychArmor Institute (and sponsored by Wounded Warrior Project) may be found on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49Vg-xM9L7Q>



NALOXONE TRAINING AND FREE NARCAN

Community members are encouraged to register for a one-hour training conducted by the Jefferson County Department of Health on how to recognize, prevent, and respond to an opioid overdose by using naloxone.

Naloxone, sold under the name Narcan, is a prescription medication used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

WHO CAN ATTEND?

People worried that a loved one or community member is at risk for overdosing on opioids.

People who work with populations at risk for overdosing on an opioid.

WHAT WILL I GET FOR COMPLETING THE TRAINING?

A free naloxone kit containing the medication and training on how to recognize and reverse an opioid overdose.

[REGISTER FOR NARCAN TRAINING](#)

2021 AIR CONFERENCE

THE 2021 ALABAMA INSTITUTE FOR RECOVERY CONFERENCE IS HAPPENING AUGUST 23-25

And it's Time for the Nomination of the Respect and Hope Awards!

[Click here for more Information](#)

Open now until July 26!

[Click here for the Nomination form](#)



BARON'S BASEBALL GAME - AUGUST 14

Connect with Recovery peers, partners and providers for a fun event with the Birmingham Barons at Regions Field! The event provides education to the community on addiction and recovery resources will be available for those in need.

NAMI WINS BIG ON JEOPARDY!



In early June, Mayim Bialik (who starred in Big Bang Theory) hosted the game show Jeopardy. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), which has a location here in Montgomery, was her charity of choice. Bialik raised nearly \$100,000 for NAMI and much awareness!



CONSUMER CONFERENCE AUGUST 27 – 29

The annual Consumer Conference at beautiful Lake Guntersville is on! This event provides education for consumers currently in substance use disorder treatment to educate them on recovery resources and celebrate their recovery efforts. Join ADMH, partners and providers for the two-day conference that facilitates time and space for conversations on recovery, partnerships and creating lifelong friendships!

Scholarships are available but must be submitted by July 2. Click here for the [Registration Form](#).

Return the Registration form to Deborah Pennington at deborah.pennington@mh.alabama.gov.

ADDICTION & RECOVERY

INTERNATIONAL
OVERDOSE
AWARENESS DAY

31 AUGUST

INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE
AWARENESS DAY

#END
OVERDOSE

A Pennington Institute Initiative

International Overdose Awareness Day is a global event held each year on August 31st 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.

Symbols of International Overdose Day include the silver badge, the purple wristband, and purple lanyard.

Together, they raise awareness of the detrimental effects that overdoses have on those who experience them, as well as the people closest. Wearing these symbols is a demonstration of support for all who have experienced such loss. They are also a reminder that every life is precious and holds meaning and value.

ADMH PROVIDER:

RECOVERY ORGANIZATION OF SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

The Recovery Organization of Support Specialist (R.O.S.S.) is the first 501 3C, non-profit, peer-run organization in Alabama. R.O.S.S. aims to advocate, empower, and collaborate for any individual seeking recovery. The idea of R.O.S.S. grew when Alabama Department of Mental Health Coordinator of Recovery Services (CRS) Pamela Butler, spoke about the need for a peer-run service available for Alabama residents. The need was apparent based on the rising substance use epidemic in Alabama.

R.O.S.S. prides itself in developing ongoing relationships between its state-certified recovery support specialists known as peers, and the individuals it serves. R.O.S.S. believes in many pathways of recovery, meeting people where they are and loving people to have a better life.

For R.O.S.S. Marketing Director Mark Litvine, the mission and purpose for R.O.S.S. are two-fold. Litvine, is not only a founding member of the program, but has too lived on the path of recovery.

"I am a person in long-term recovery and what that means is since March 1, 2013. I have lived a life of purpose which is to help others and make a difference in my community," explained Litvine. *"I am a certified recovery support specialist and certified peer specialist on the mental health side as well,"* Litvine continued.

"When we started R.O.S.S. I was tasked with getting the word out and today, I do the same thing but to a larger degree statewide. I work on developing relationships with stakeholders across Alabama for R.O.S.S., so that no one falls through the cracks."

The Mountain Brook native says his biggest priority is serving individuals across Alabama and charting the path to recovery for those that may have hit their limits like he once did. *"Our lived experience as CRS' is our greatest tool. We provide hope, assistance, guidance understanding, and encouragement to the individuals we serve. Everything we do at R.O.S.S. is to eliminate the barriers to recovery,"* he noted.

Litvine says in addition he chose R.O.S.S. because of his personal experiences. *"It is only by God's grace that I am even alive today and I am giving back because someone gave back to me. I experienced a life of darkness and hopelessness for many years due to my untreated mental health diagnosis, an eating disorder, and self-medicating by seeking a chemical solution,"* said Litvine.

"I experienced the criminal justice system and many dark times due to stigma in jail until Jimmy Walsh, a board member for NAMI became my attorney and biggest advocate," he said. *"Today, I give thanks to Mr. Walsh. I am a recovery advocate for both substance use disorder and mental health so that no one has to go through what I went through."*



Litvine says he first became a peer at the Birmingham Fellowship House when he started volunteering and it was both R.O.S.S. Executive Director Cynthia Rice and Beth Bachelor that planted the seed and encouraged him to be in the first Certified Recovery Support Specialist training in 2016.

"When I came into recovery, I experienced a lot of shame, guilt and remorse due to my mental health and the old-timers in my path to recovery got me involved in service early on – without them I wouldn't be here today."

On July 24, 2017 R.O.S.S., became available to help individuals with a substance use disorder in obtaining and maintain recovery. Since its inception, R.O.S.S. has offered free peer support to help improve an individual's emotional health, well-being, and sense of belonging.

"What we do at R.O.S.S. has never been done before in Alabama and there is so much more that we want to do as well. Everything that we do is groundbreaking, and, in a sense, we are trailblazers in this peer movement going on right now in Alabama," he concluded.

R.O.S.S. employs nearly 75 individuals and its recovery support services and programs include three Recovery Community Centers located in Birmingham, Montgomery, and Marshall County, a 24/7 Helpline, an outreach program in 35 counties, and a mentorship program. In addition, R.O.S.S. works with expectant mothers, veterans and plays a role in the criminal justice system. R.O.S.S. also develops ongoing relationships between its current peers and emergency departments, Neonatal/OB departments, and first responders throughout Alabama.

“This is why I do what I do, and this is why I choose this work, I want to educate our communities that addiction is a disease and not a moral failing and that substance use disorder and mental health are both chronic health conditions that should be treated as such,” continued Litvine.

If you, a family member, or a friend is struggling with a substance use disorder, call R.O.S.S. 24/7 helpline at 844-307-1760. All calls are confidential, and you will be connected to a Certified Recovery Support Specialist. More information can be found online at ross4u.org or rosshelpline4u.org. Also, visit R.O.S.S. on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @rossbhm4us.



AL-APSE & ACDD

2021

We've Gone Virtual!

August 5–6, 2021



Alabama APSE and the Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities really missed hosting our annual training event in 2020 and again this year that was scheduled for July. While the Covid-19 pandemic has prevented us from gathering in person, it can't stop us from sharing good information via the world wide web.

Join us on **August 5 –6, 2021**, via zoom, and become inspired and informed on life after the pandemic and the impact of the pandemic on service delivery at both the state and national levels.

Registration is open for the full 1.5 day event, just day one or just the half day.

The tentative agenda:

August 5	August 6
9:00 Welcome	9:00 Ethics Part I (Rm 1)
9:30 Oh My God What's Next? Tom Morrison	Self Advocacy (Rm 2)
10:45 State & National Updates	10:30 Ethics Part II (Rm 1)
12:15–1:30 Lunch	Self Advocacy (Rm 2)
1:30 Message from Supported Employees AL-APSE Awards	
2:45 - 4:00 Closing Keynote	

REGISTER FOR ALABAMA APSE AT <https://conta.cc/353fCe5>

Have you seen our campaign to share FREE Narcan Kits? Call the 24/7 Helpline at 1-844-307-1760 to learn more!



WARNING

Fentanyl is killing Alabama residents

Don't Trust your Drugs

Any drug can be cut with Fentanyl
Don't chance it- Carry Narcan

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

Free Narcan (Naloxone) Kits Available
24/7 helpline 844-307-1760





HELPLINE
844-307-1760

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

Do you prefer chat? Live chat is available through our website:

Want to send an email? Send us a message:

helpline4u.al@gmail.com

Every call, live chat and email is answered by a person in recovery at:

R.O.S.S. RECOVERY ORGANIZATION OF SUPPORT SPECIALIST

www.rosshelpline4u.org

Addiction is a disease, not a moral failing.

All services are confidential and FREE,
made possible through funding from ADMH and SAMHSA.



SAMHSA

ADMH STAFF SUCCESS:

CONGRATULATIONS TO BEVERLY JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF PREVENTION SERVICES, ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS WITH THE NATIONAL PREVENTION NETWORK!

The National Prevention Network (NPN) is an organization of State alcohol and other drug abuse prevention representatives that provides a national advocacy and communication system for prevention. State prevention representatives work with their respective State Agency Directors to ensure effective alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse prevention services in each State.



CONGRATS TO OFFICE OF DEAF SERVICES' STAFF!

- Alabama Association of the Deaf (AAD)/ President's Award – Lee Stoutamire
- Council of Organizations Serving Deaf Alabamians (COSDA) Professional of the Year – Amanda Somdal
- Service to the Community Award – Ryan MacDonald, Group Home Manager at Jackson's Place (Mountain Lakes)

CONGRATULATIONS TO ADMH STAFF MEMBER, CHARLES MITCHELL WHO CELEBRATED 47 YEARS OF RECOVERY ON MAY 25!

CONGRATS TO THESE SERVICE PIN RECIPIENTS FOR APRIL & MAY 2021:

Tomika Taylor	20	Jean Long	15
Lyndie Watson	20	Keisha Reason	15
Gayla Caddell	15	Joseph Rittner	15
Maegan Ford	15	Brandon Heath	5
Maggie Kersh	15	Barry Robbins	5

FAREWELL TO THESE RETIREES:

Bryce Hospital

Charles Rankin

Harper Center

Janice Rich

Taylor Hardin

Jeremy Booth

Central Office

Lory Hemby

Kevin LaPorte

DID YOU KNOW?

THERE ARE TWO SETS OF TWINS THAT WORK FOR ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH!



Tameka Bean (on left) in IT-Central Office and Yumeka Bean (on right), Fiscal Manager at Taylor Hardin!



And Latisha and Latosha Walton! Latisha (on left) works at Taylor Hardin and Latosha (on right) works at Region 2 DD Office.

DATES TO REMEMBER

MENTAL HEALTH RELATED EVENTS OF INTEREST

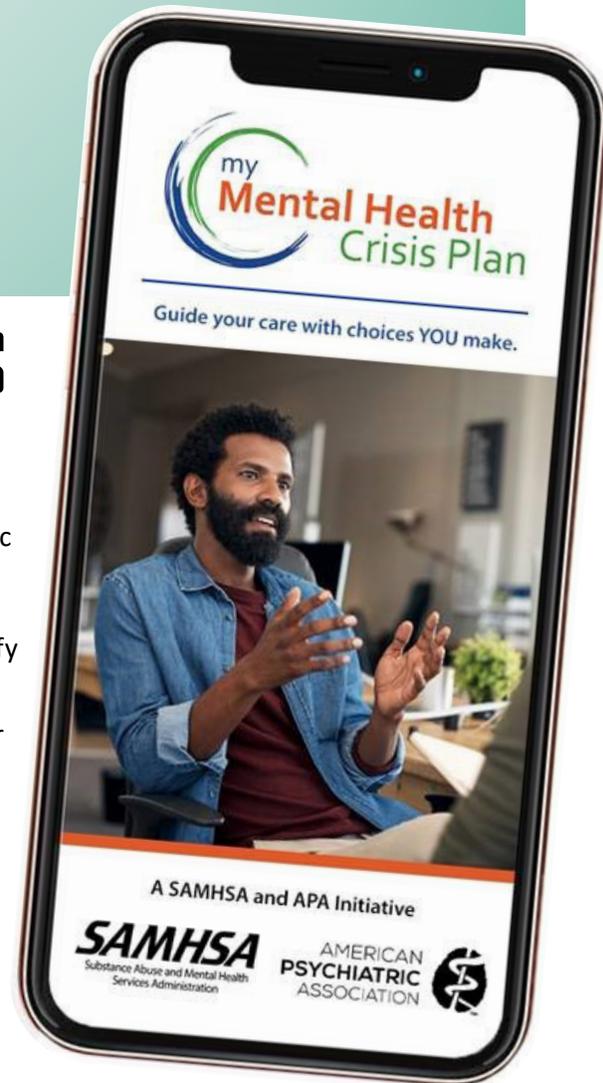
08/02	<u>Mental Health Interpreter Training (19th year!)</u> Virtual
08/05	<u>Alabama APSE & ACDD 2021 “We’ve Gone Virtual”</u> Virtual
08/19	<u>NAMI Alabama Annual Meeting</u> In Person, Opelika
08/23	<u>Alabama Institute for Recovery (AIR),</u> In Person, Shocco Springs
08/27	<u>Consumer Conference</u> In Person, Lake Guntersville
11/05	<u>Peer Conference</u> In Person, Gardendale

NEW APP CAN HELP INDIVIDUALS

EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

The My Mental Health Crisis Plan app enables individuals to create a new psychiatric advance directive (PAD) or upload an existing one. A psychiatric advance directive (PAD) is a legal document that individuals can use to make a plan before a crisis occurs to help ensure that their needs and preferences for care are known. A PAD also allows the individual to identify a surrogate decision-maker through a health care power of attorney.

After developing the PAD independently or with their psychiatrist or other mental health professional, users may then share it with family members and loved ones, mental health professionals, and others on their care team. If a person is in crisis, they can use the app to send out an alert message. This not only informs loved ones of their need for support but indicates that it is time for that person’s care team to spring into action. And as more people create PADs, asking about this legal document can become a part of the conversation when law enforcement officers respond to mental health crises. [Learn more](#) and [download here!](#)



Serve • Empower • Support