



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Suicide Deaths Increased by 45% Among All Ohioans and by 56% Among Youth Ages 10-24 From 2007-2018

People may help save a life by knowing suicide warning signs and steps to take

COLUMBUS – In Ohio, five people die by suicide every day, and one youth dies by suicide every 33 hours, according to a new report released by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). In 2018, there were 1,836 suicides in Ohio and the highest suicide rate – the number of suicide deaths per 100,000 population – was among adults 45-64 years old. Males are disproportionately burdened by suicide across the lifespan, and their suicide rate is nearly four times the rate among females.

“One of the goals of my RecoveryOhio initiative is to address mental illness and other issues that contribute to suicide,” said Ohio Governor Mike DeWine. “If you know someone is struggling, you may be able to help save someone’s life by recognizing the warning signs and steps to take.”

“Suicide in Ohio and nationally is a growing public health epidemic, particularly among young people,” said ODH Director Amy Acton, MD, MPH. “Suicide is the leading cause of death among Ohioans ages 10-14 and the second leading cause of death among Ohioans ages 15-34.”

Warning signs of suicide include:

- A major change in mood or behavior, appearing consistently unhappy/depressed, irritable, withdrawn from family or friends
- Poor grades in school or other bad performance in extra-curricular activities
- High-risk behaviors, including use of alcohol or other substances
- Problems with concentration, and changes in energy level, appetite or sleep schedule
- Expressing feelings of hopeless or not wanting to live anymore
- Hurting themselves (e.g., wrist-cutting, burning self)
- History of depression or family history of depression

If someone you know is showing signs of suicide, here are some things you can do:

- Ask directly about thoughts of suicide (asking about suicide does not increase the risk of suicide but does open up conversation)
- Listen to what they need
- Keep them safe by keeping lethal means away from them
- Call 911 if necessary
- Help them connect with ongoing support, such as a local crisis line, the National Suicide Prevention Life line (1-800-273-8255) or the Crisis Text Line (text “4hope” to 741 741)
- Check back the next day to see how they are doing
- Encourage them to seek out a counselor for more help

Other highlights of the ODH report include:

- From 2007 to 2018 the number of suicide deaths increased nearly 45% in Ohio.
- Suicide rates are highest among white, non-Hispanic males.

(more)

- From 2007 to 2018 the number of suicides among youth ages 10-24 increased by 56%, and the suicide rate increased by 64%. In 2018, 271 of Ohio's suicide deaths were in this age group.
- From 2014 to 2018 the suicide rate among black non-Hispanic males increased nearly 54%.
- From 2007 to 2018 the suicide rate among older adults age 65+ increased nearly 48%.

Governor DeWine created the RecoveryOhio initiative and a RecoveryOhio Advisory Council that includes a diverse group of individuals who have worked to address mental illness and substance use issues in prevention, treatment, advocacy, or support services; government; private industry; law enforcement; healthcare; learning institutions; and faith organizations. In an initial report, the council issued more than 70 recommendations in the areas of stigma, parity, workforce development, prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery supports, and data and outcomes measurement. Information and resources on where to get help are available at RecoveryOhio.gov.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services offers suicide prevention information and resources on its website at mha.ohio.gov.

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NOTE TO NEWS MEDIA – A copy of ODH's full 2018 Ohio Suicide Demographics and Trends Report is available [here](#). More information about Governor DeWine's RecoveryOhio initiative is available [here](#). A copy of the RecoveryOhio Advisory Council Initial Report is available [here](#). The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' *Ohio Suicide Reporting Guidelines* for news media are available [here](#).