



### *A Message from Commissioner Williams*

*“We lost our beautiful mother to the disease of mental illness.”* As I recently read those words about one of the best singer-songwriters in my lifetime, I was struck by how many people are struggling with untreated mental illness across our great state and how many families have experienced a similar tragic loss of life. A loss that in many cases might have been prevented if they knew about the mental health supports that are available. Supports that I would like to focus on for this Month of Mental Health Awareness.

Tennessee’s first line of mental health services is our [Statewide Crisis Line – 855-CRISIS-1 \(855-274-7471\)](https://www.tn.gov/2018/06/11/statewide-crisis-line-855-274-7471). As states across the nation work to standardize, unify, and expand their crisis services offerings to get ready for the rollout of 988 this summer, Tennessee is already well-positioned to respond in a crisis. We have statewide mobile crisis services available for adults and children. This means you don’t need to call 911 or go to the emergency room. You can simply call our Statewide Crisis Line and talk to a trained professional

who can connect you with the appropriate level of care.

Tennessee's [Behavioral Health Safety Net \(BHSN\)](#) offers essential mental health services to uninsured adults who have no other way to pay. Each year, this program serves about 40,000 adults who otherwise would likely go untreated. [The BHSN for children](#) covers services for kids who are uninsured, those who have coverage but have used it up, and those whose insurance doesn't cover behavioral health services.

Tennessee has several amazing providers who are saving lives every day through their suicide prevention work. Our department is blessed to have funding to support the [Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network](#), the [Jason Foundation](#), and Mental Health America [of the MidSouth](#) and [of East Tennessee](#). These agencies outreach to youth, provide trainings at schools and community groups, and offer simple tools to measure risk and connect with help.

These are just a few of foundational programs to support the mental health of Tennesseans, and the good news is that our state's leaders continue to make additional investments. Thanks to the support of Governor Bill Lee and the members of the Tennessee General Assembly, we're adding new funding in the coming year totaling more than \$360 million. That includes nearly \$18 million to help our providers recruit and retain staff, \$35 million to build new community-based mental health options to keep people out of emergency departments or jail, \$5.6 million to make a landmark investment in mental health courts across our state, and funding to replace our 61-year-old mental health hospital in Chattanooga.

If you don't know where to start with mental health, start with a screening. Mental Health America is a wonderful group with affiliates in Tennessee who do life changing work. They have simple, fast screenings on their website at [screening.mhanational.org](https://screening.mhanational.org). The screenings are easy to share with family, friends, and coworkers, and they can be the start of a conversation about connecting to supports and additional resources if needed.

These services and supports are available no matter who you are or where you live. They are available no matter your ability to pay and even if you don't have insurance. They are available because of a governor and legislature that believe in the power of treatment which allows all of us to fully enlist our God-given talents and abilities. They are there because of a network of mental

health providers across our state who spend each and every day caring for more than 300,000 Tennesseans that come to them for help, hope, and recovery.

Many Blessings,

Marie

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# Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. and it is also Children's Mental Health Month. We're highlighting posts from our Office of Children, Youth, and Young Adults, and Families on our social media all month long to promote the various programs and initiatives offered across the state.



## THE POWER OF CHILD-DIRECTED PLAY

### BENEFITS

- Builds a child's self-confidence
- Fosters language & social development
- Strengthens caregiver-child relationship



| INSTEAD OF   | LET'S TRY   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Criticizing</b></p> <p>"No, that doesn't go there"</p>               | <p><b>Praise Specific Appropriate Behavior</b></p> <p>"Great job playing gently!"</p>                   |
| <p><b>Questioning</b></p> <p>"What color is that? What shape is this?"</p> | <p><b>Paraphrase Appropriate Talk</b></p> <p>Child: "Look! A car."<br/>Adult: "Yes! That is a car."</p> |
| <p><b>Leading the Play with Commands</b></p> <p>"Draw me a house."</p>     | <p><b>Point Out Appropriate Behavior</b></p> <p>"You put the blue block on top."</p>                    |



Play is the work of a child, so go with the flow and have fun playing with your child!

[www.tn.gov/parenting-that-works](http://www.tn.gov/parenting-that-works)



## Ways to Support Children's Social Emotional Learning

### Identify & Label Feelings



Describe what these feelings look like and feel like in our bodies, and don't forget to teach the positive and negative emotional

### Encouragement

Encourage and recognize when children express their emotions in appropriate and healthy ways



### Games, Books, & Songs



Make it fun! Play games and sing songs like Charades or "If You're Happy And You Know It" to teach young children about a variety of feelings.

### Model Self-regulation

Children learn by observing. When adults are able to model appropriate ways to express emotions, they can help teach calm down techniques such as taking a deep breath or going for a walk.



### Feeling Chart



Use visuals to label feelings and do daily emotional check-ins

[www.tn.gov/parenting-that-works](http://www.tn.gov/parenting-that-works)




**TN** Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

May also includes awareness events for **Maternal Mental Health**. The department

was proud to share a pair of maternal mental health stories on our social media. This video features Kristina Dulaney of <https://cherishedmom.org/> who turned her experiences into passion for creating a peer support community for new moms.

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## Recovery Court Month



Judge Daryl Colson congratulates Bethany on her successful completion of Overton County Recovery Court.

Governor Bill Lee recognized May as Recovery Court Month. Currently, 82 recovery courts across the state improve education, employment, housing, and financial stability, promote family reunification, reduce foster care placements, and provide hope of a new life in recovery. With many graduations taking place across the state this month, TDMHSAS would like to offer our congratulations to all the graduates. Recovery is real and the graduates have proven it is possible. [Read Governor Lee's proclamation for Recovery Court Month.](#)



*31st Judicial District Adult Recovery Court celebrates their graduates*

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## National Prescription Drug Take Back Day sees more than 18,000 pounds collected

This year's spring National Prescription Drug Take Back Day was a huge success. More than 100 agencies across the Tennessee helped collect 18,716 pounds of prescription medication. TDMHSAS, the Department of Health, and Tennessee Together collaborated with the Nashville Predators to host Take Back Day events at the Ford Ice Centers in Antioch and Bellevue. Each location had a table with resources about overdose prevention, overdose reversal kits, lock boxes with information on how to safely store medications at home. 175 pounds of expired an/or unused medication was collected at the Ford Ice Centers.



Take Back gave Tennesseans an opportunity to clean out their medicine cabinets and safely and securely dispose of medications that are expired or no longer needed. The next Take Day Back will take place in October but you can find a permanent drop box in your area at [tntogether.com/takebackday](https://tntogether.com/takebackday).

As we reflect back on Take Back Day, we want to say thank you to our amazing Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions who worked with their local law enforcement and community to host events in their area. Here are a few photo highlights!



Hamilton County represents with their various Take Back Events



Summer Prevention Coalition collected 449 pounds of expired and unused medication.

A video player interface showing an interview with Jeremy Reese. The video is paused, indicated by a large red play button icon. The video player has a dark blue overlay at the bottom with the text 'NEWSCHANNEL 5 SAFE. INFORMED. CONNECTED.' and 'PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK EVENTS'. On the right side of the overlay, it shows the time '5:06', the temperature '82°', and the NewsChannel 5 logo. Below the video player, there is a caption.

Regional Overdose Prevention Specialist Jeremy Reese was interviewed by NewsChannel5 for a story promoting Take Back Day.



# Commissioner Williams honored by NAMI-TN



TDMHSAS Commissioner Marie Williams was honored by NAMI-TN at their annual Vision of Hope Gala on May 10. Commissioner Williams and Dr. William Petrie both received Vision of Hope Awards, and author and activist Dixie Gamble was honored with the Courage to Share Award. Thanks to NAMI-TN for putting on such a wonderful event and for all they do for Tennesseans affected by mental health challenges.

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# TDMHSAS Attends International IPS Learning Community Annual

# Meeting



Pictured (L to R): Sebbly Edwards, Statewide IPS Trainer; Tiffanie Whittaker, Statewide IPS Trainer; Stephanie Cooper, TDMHSAS Assistant Director Office of Wellness and Employment; Mark Liverman, TDMHSAS Director Office of Wellness and Employment; Deborah Becker, Director of IPS Learning Community; Melanie Randolph, Statewide IPS Trainer

The TDMHSAS Office of Wellness and Employment joined the International IPS Learning Community in Detroit for its annual meeting May 3-4. Together the group was able to highlight the strong partnerships Tennessee has between TDMHSAS, DHS-VR, and the trainers as they discussed employment related topics ranging from new research findings, opioid addiction and employment, peers and IPS, to how to fund IPS programs with our Learning Community colleagues from across the world. One of the keynote speakers at the meeting was our own Monty Burks who shared the story of his personal lived experiences and the importance of community.

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## Nurse Appreciation Week

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(L-R) Jacqueline Nuere, Arati Joshi, Priyanka Khadka, Adeline Nuere are nurses at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute.

Nurses were celebrated across our four mental health institutes in the state. Thank you nurses for your dedication, hard work, and continuous positive attitude and energy you bring to patients. You are greatly and deeply appreciated. TDMHSAS employs more than 300 nurses-- thank you for your service!



MTMHI night shift nurses and psych techs celebrate National Nurses Week



MMHI CEO Jeff Coons presents Maggie White with Nurse of the Year award!!



(L to R) Summer Ross, Shelby Moore, Regina Badejoko, Jacanto Bills, Jodi Bishop, Britney Evans, Paige Noble-Roberts, and Clifton Lockett. Other Committee members not pictured are Alicia Wilkes, Jeremy Bogue, JoJuan Walker, Joshua Gager, and Mary Williamson.

Western celebrated Employee Appreciation Day on May 13 with a cookout on the hospital's front lawn. Employees enjoyed games, great food, and fellowship. The event was planned by WMHI's Employee Engagement Committee, shown in the photo above.



# Fentanyl Awareness Day



(L to R) Jennifer Knisley, Intake Coordinator; Ashlee Crouse, Regional Lifeline Director; Jessica Stanley, Regional Overdose Prevention Specialist; Emory Young, Recovery Coach

In honor of Fentanyl Awareness Day, members of Metro Drug Coalition hosted

a community awareness event within the community of individuals experiencing homelessness. Education involved naloxone training and information, fentanyl basics, safe syringe box distributions and overdose deaths.

To learn more about fentanyl and resources available, visit [Fentanyl Information and Resources \(tn.gov\)](#)

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## Research Opportunity: Correctional Officer Mental Wellness

Tennessee Corrections Institute, the state agency responsible for inspecting jails, training jail staff, and providing jail operations technical assistance, is seeking a partner to help them with studying Correctional Officer Mental Wellness. TCI needs a partner that is experienced in performing qualitative studies and data analysis, as well as a partner that can create a toolkit for mental wellness best practices and facilitate peer support training/programming for corrections officers. TCI will issue a grant later this summer. Download the Word .doc file at this link for more information: [REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR CORRECTIONAL OFFICER MENTAL WELLNESS - STUDY AND TRAINING COURSE](#)

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## New Hires

Please welcome Lynlee Shutka to the department. She is the new State Opioid Treatment Authority (SOTA) Field Coordinator. Lynlee is a social worker with 8 years of collective experience developing and managing client relationships within the professional setting. She has a Master of Social Work from the University of Washington and

recently moved from Tacoma, WA to Clarksville.



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## Shout Out!

*Western Mental Health Institute celebrated National Accounts Receivable Day.*



L-R: Jacque Jackson, Kathy Eubanks, Molly Deming and Alina Haro.

If you'd like to "shout out" to a TDMHSAS colleague, please send an email to [Kearston.Winrow@tn.gov](mailto:Kearston.Winrow@tn.gov). Tell us who you'd like to recognize and why.

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# Save-the-Dates

## *Planning and Policy Council Meetings*

### **Statewide Planning and Policy Committee**

Tuesday June 14, 2022

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. CST

Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

Conference Center

221 Stewarts Ferry Pike

Nashville, TN 37214

### **Regional Council meetings are scheduled to resume in July**

To verify the schedule and plans for future meetings, please visit the department website at these links:

[Statewide & Committee Meeting Schedule \(tn.gov\)](#)

[Regional Council Meeting Schedule \(tn.gov\)](#)

TDMHSAS is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from TDMHSAS programs, activities, and services. To request reasonable accommodations or modifications, please contact Amy Holland at [amy.holland@tn.gov](mailto:amy.holland@tn.gov) at least 10 business days prior to the meeting. Requests for accommodations or modifications made after the deadline will be honored to the maximum extent feasible, but it may not be possible to fulfill them.

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## Resources



*Call or text for emotional support for healthcare workers, first responders, and teachers*

## COVID-19 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT LINE FOR TENNESSEE

Need to talk to someone about feelings of stress, anxiety, sadness, or depression related to work? Calltakers with the COVID-19 Emotional Support Line can help.



Tennesseans working in education, healthcare, or first responder roles can call or text:

# 888-642-7886

Calltakers are available: 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. (CT), 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. (ET)

The COVID-19 Emotional Support line is a collaborative project among National Association of Social Workers-TN Chapter and the following groups:



*In the event of a mental health emergency ...*

**STATEWIDE**

# CRISIS LINE

**HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS**

**855-CRISIS-1** [TN.gov/CrisisLine](https://www.tn.gov/CrisisLine)

**855-274-7471** 

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*For questions about addiction treatment/referrals ...*



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*To talk with a TDMHSAS Consumer Advocate ...*

Need help with mental health or substance use services?

Call the TDMHSAS Office of Consumer Affairs and Peer Recovery Services

# HELPLINE

## 1-800-560-5767

We can help with:

- finding mental health and substance abuse resources in your area
- questions about insurance
- finding housing options
- communicating with mental health and substance abuse providers
- questions about the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist program
- filing a complaint



We are available

- Monday through Friday
- 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. CT
- Closed on state holidays



Department of  
**Mental Health &  
Substance Abuse Services**

OCA.TDMHSAS@tn.gov | TN.gov/behavioral-health

**OUR MISSION:** CREATING  
**COLLABORATIVE PATHWAYS**  
*TO RESILIENCY, RECOVERY & INDEPENDENCE*  
FOR TENNESSEANS LIVING  
WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND  
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

## OUR VISION:

A STATE OF *RESILIENCY, RECOVERY, AND INDEPENDENCE*  
IN WHICH **TENNESSEANS**  
LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS  
AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS **THRIVE**

## AS A DEPARTMENT, WE VALUE:

**CUSTOMER FOCUSED:**

*An unwavering commitment to keep patients and those who serve them at the forefront of every decision.*

**INTEGRITY:**

*Honesty and truth in all we do.*

**INSPIRED PURPOSE:**

*The call to action in service of a cause greater than one's self.*

**EXCELLENCE:**

*The highest standards for services, efficiency, and conduct.*

**COMPASSIONATE**

**AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:**

*The commitment to make effective decisions and inspire others through active listening and empathy.*

**SOLUTIONS AND OUTCOMES-ORIENTED:**

*The commitment to positive outcomes and meaningful changes in response to the critical needs of the Tennesseans we serve.*

**PARTNERSHIP:**

*Beyond teamwork, collaboration based on mutual success to the benefit of the Tennesseans we are blessed to serve.*

*We hope you've enjoyed this issue of the Update!  
If you have news to share (a story idea, accomplishment,  
provider news, etc.) or if you'd like to be added to the  
distribution list, please email: the Office of  
Communications at [OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov](mailto:OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov).*

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