According to the Ohio Department of Health, about 13 Ohioans die each day from unintentional drug overdoses and approximately five people a day take their own lives. To bring awareness and understanding of mental illness and substance use disorders across the country, September is recognized as National Recovery Month.

In DYS facilities, 66 percent of our youth are currently on the mental health caseload. We also assess youth for substance use disorders at intake. So far in 2019, 58 percent of the youth who have been committed to our three DYS facilities has been assessed at intake as having a moderate to severe substance use disorder diagnosis.
Our emphasis on treatment is an important component of helping youth better function in our facilities and in our communities. Staff lead a number of evidence-based interventions to help our youth respond to chronic stress, practice critical thinking, and work on life skills.

I greatly appreciate your work in helping our youth with mental health and substance use issues; these are two significant factors in a person’s life trajectory and the more we can help our young people, the better their chances for long-term success.

Governor DeWine’s first action in office was to create the Recovery Ohio initiative, which works to aggressively address the drug epidemic and invest in the health and well-being of Ohio’s citizens. The Recovery Ohio Advisory Council aims to build upon RECLAIM to ensure youth have access to treatment in lieu of incarceration. The Council also reviews the transition process for youth to adult prison facilities to ensure that incarcerated young adults benefit from services and environments that are specific to their age and development level.

Ohio’s Employee Assistance Program is available for all state employees and their family members, providing intake, information, counseling referral, and support services. EAP is designed to help employees, managers, and agencies meet life challenges, while remaining healthy, engaged, and productive. Please contact the Ohio EAP team by calling 1-800-221-6327 or via email at OEAP@das.ohio.gov. There is no cost to the employee and all information is strictly confidential.

Please note that DYS has its own Critical Incident Stress Management & Peer Assistance Team. More information may be found at MyOhio.gov, under: Resources/Employees/CISM&PAT.

If you are in crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741.