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Tuscarawas County
Health Department

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Tuscarawas County Health Department Receives Grant to Prevent Suicide & Drug Overdoses



DOVER—The Tuscarawas County Health Department (TCHD) was recently one of five grant award recipients in the United States chosen to receive a grant to “Strengthen Capacity in Suicide, Overdose, and Adverse Childhood Experiences for Local Health Departments” from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This grant award of \$55,000 enables TCHD to partner with the Alcohol, Drug Addiction, & Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board; Empower Tusc; and OhioGuidestone to create and adopt a strategic plan for community prevention of suicide and overdose deaths that relate to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).


This grant could not have come at a better time as overdose deaths in Tuscarawas County residents remain in the double digits and suicides have increased. Sadly, during 2022, 19 Tuscarawas County residents lost their lives through drug overdose according to the Ohio Department of Health, compared to 29 in 2021, and 28 in 2020. The Tuscarawas County Coroner’s office reported that in 2022, 17 people died by suicide in Tuscarawas County, compared to 12 suicides in 2021, and 13 in 2020. Additionally, data from the 2021 Tuscarawas County Community Health Assessment survey revealed that 14% (9,763 adults) of Tuscarawas County adults 19 and older experienced four or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), which is relevant since those who experience ACEs* are at higher risk of suicide and overdose. The most common ACEs experienced by Tuscarawas County adults include having parents who were separated or divorced; having a parent or adult in the home who swore at, insulted, or put them down; living with someone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic; and living with someone who was depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal.

“We are thankful to receive this grant award to allow us to pool resources with our partners and engage community leaders in developing a strategic plan with proven, evidence-based strategies to strengthen Tuscarawas County’s capacity and prevention response,” explained Katie Seward, MPH, CHES, Tuscarawas County Health Commissioner. “Even one life lost to drug overdose or suicide is one life too many. We hope this project will ultimately save lives by providing services to help those who are struggling with drug addiction, depression, and/or behavioral health challenges of any kind.”

To learn more about this TCHD NACCHO grant project, email healthed@tchdnow.org or call 330-343-5555, ext. 1780.

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*Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) refer to traumatic experiences that can occur during childhood, such as abuse, neglect, exposure to violence, substance abuse, or mental health. Research has shown that ACEs can have negative effects on physical and mental health, leading to a range of health problems later in life.