



After the Storm: Public Health, Resilience, and Grief Recovery in Rural Disaster Response

Who We Are

About 45,000 people

Mostly rural

Our hours

One hospital



Why am I
here?



jonny_glessner • Foll
Lakeview, Ohio



jonny_glessner The
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32w



489 likes

March 16

Log in to like or comment.

A low-angle, close-up shot of a person's legs and feet as they hike up a trail. The person is wearing dark brown hiking boots with red laces and red accents on the soles. They are also wearing light blue socks and dark brown leggings. The trail is composed of dry, brown grass and small, light-colored rocks. The background shows a hilly landscape under a clear sky.

First Steps



All staff notification



So what do we do?

- Communicate, communicate, communicate

The next day

Volunteer management



Faith in humanity



A sign of things to come









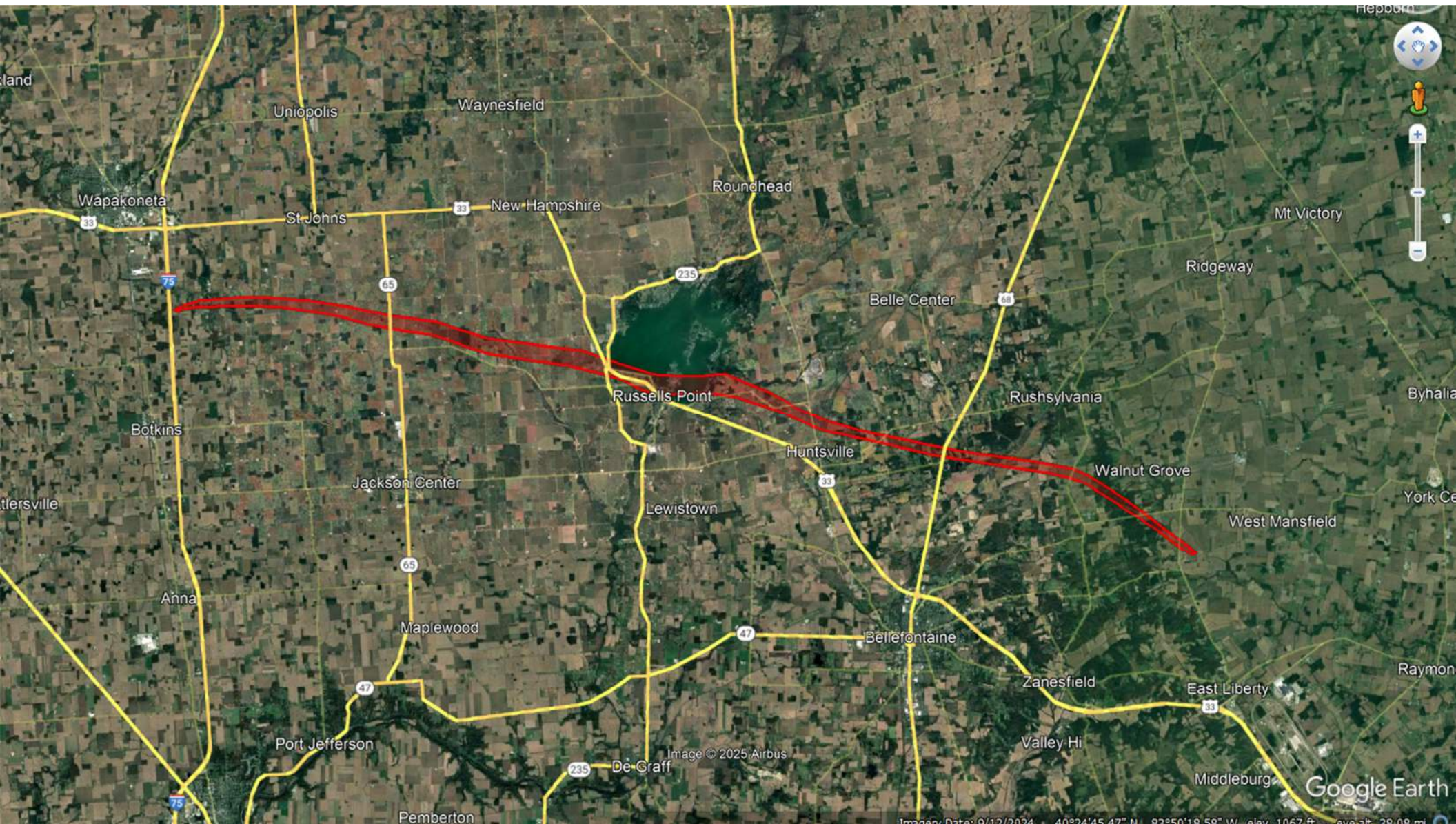














ODH Assistance



Grief
support

Track your costs



Item	# Completed	Cost
Birth certificates	95	\$2,470
Death certificates	1	\$26
Well testing	36	\$1,440



Debris management

What is this again?







Disaster Area Renewal Plan

County wide plan to assist in
rebuild/recovery

Routine Environmental Health



Department of
Health

odh.ohio.gov

Mike DeWine, Governor Jon Husted, Lt. Governor Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, Director

April 11, 2024

Travis Irvan, MPH, Health Commissioner
Logan County Health District
310 South Main Street
Bellefontaine, OH 43311

RE: Variance request for Logan County Health District to waive late fees for campgrounds in Logan County

Dear Commissioner Irvan:

The Ohio Department of Health is in receipt of a request for a variance from Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3701-26-03(D)(1). This rule requires the licensor to assess a penalty to each operator that submits their campground license renewal application after April 30. The request for a variance asks the late fee to be waived.

Logan County Ohio suffered substantial damage from tornadoes that moved through the state on March 14, 2024. Many campgrounds in Logan County were heavily damaged and mail delivery has not been fully restored to many of these campgrounds. As a result, it is anticipated that many campground operators may not be able to renew their campground license timely.

After reviewing the information provided with this request, I hereby approve this variance. Logan County may waive the late fee for any application submitted after April 30, 2024.

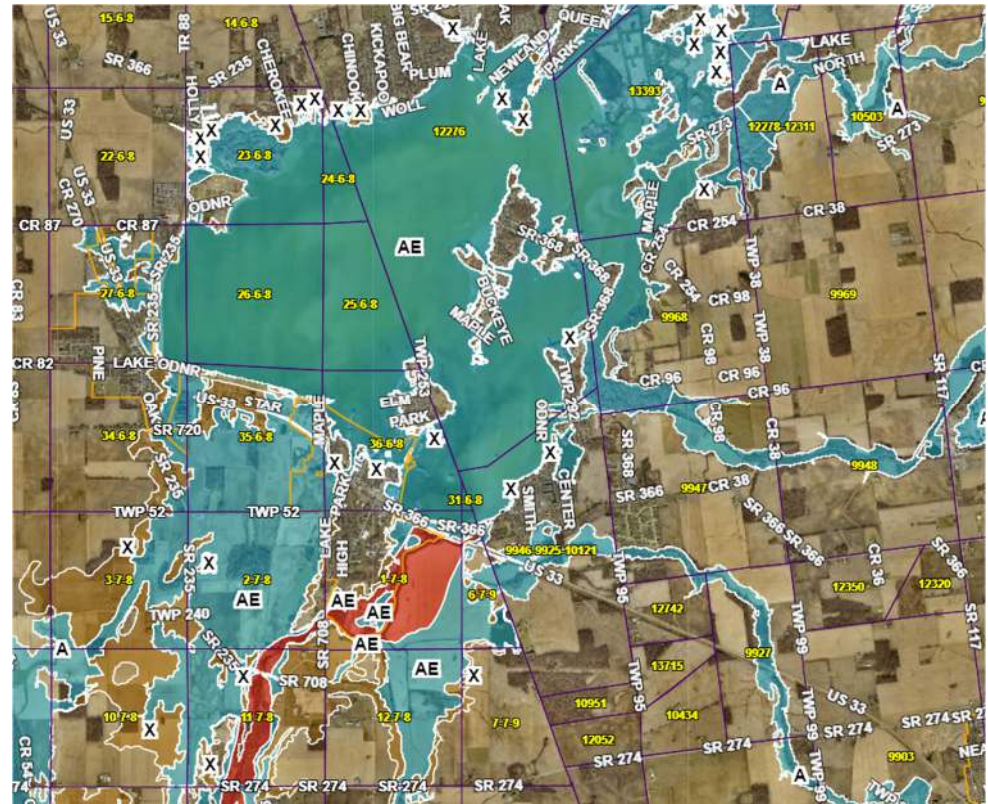
If you have any questions, please call a member of the REACH Unit campground staff at (614) 644-7455.

Sincerely,

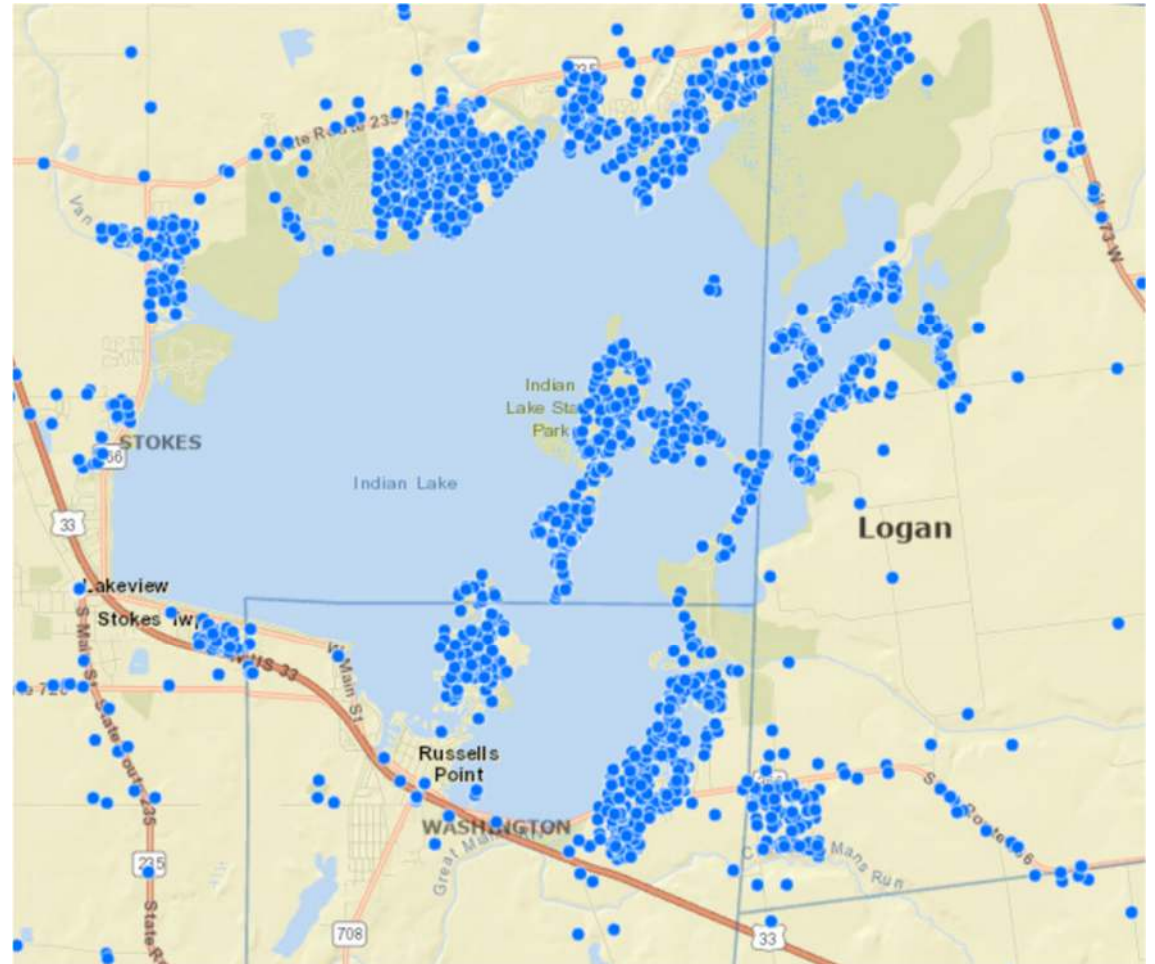
Bruce Vanderhoff, M.D., MBA by LDH

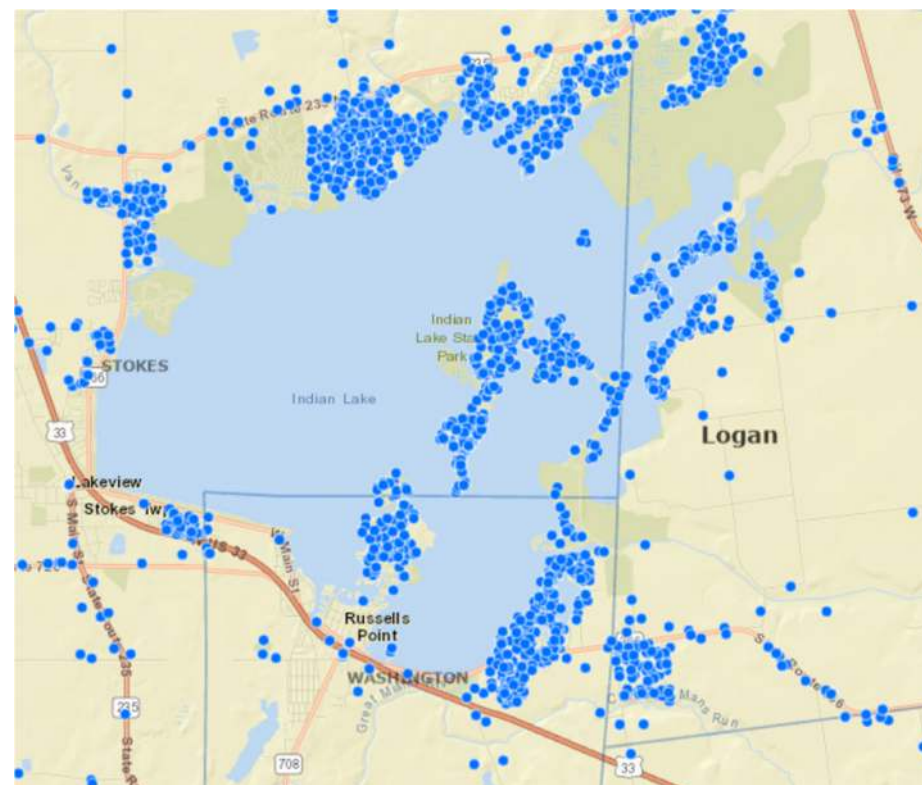
Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA
Director of Health

There's
nothing plain
about a
flood plain



Wells





Quick rundown



Emergency communication protocol



Exercise natural disasters and your response



Take care of your team



There is no playbook. Think outside the box

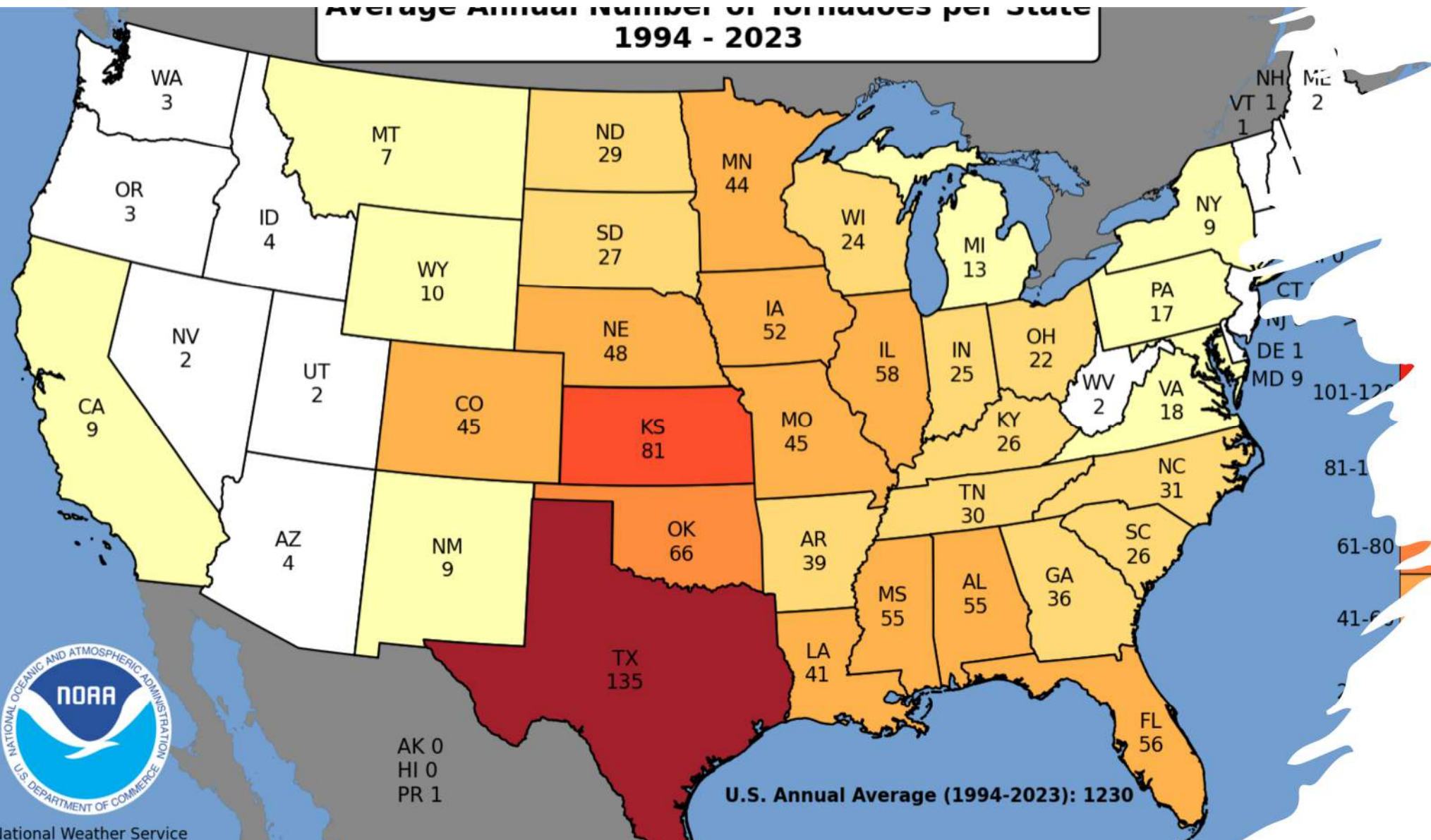


Organizing volunteers

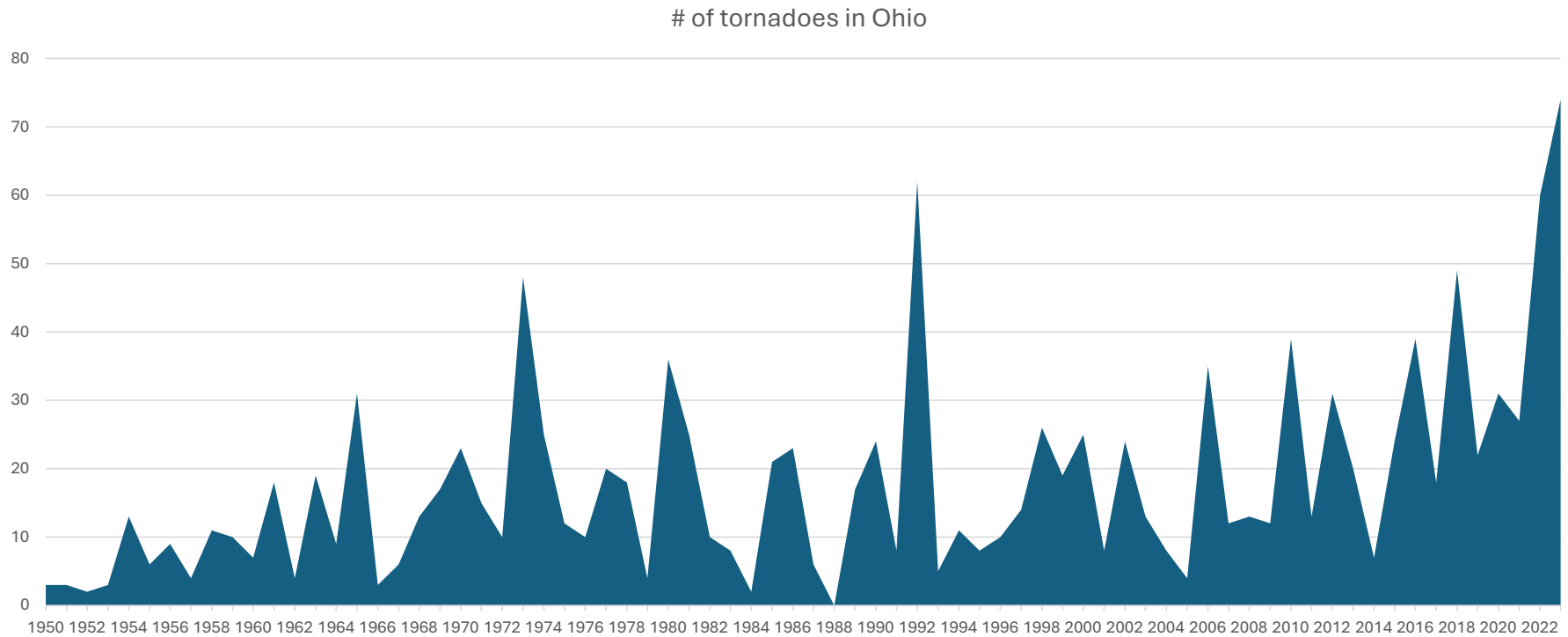


Track your costs

Average Annual Number of Tornadoes per State 1994 - 2023

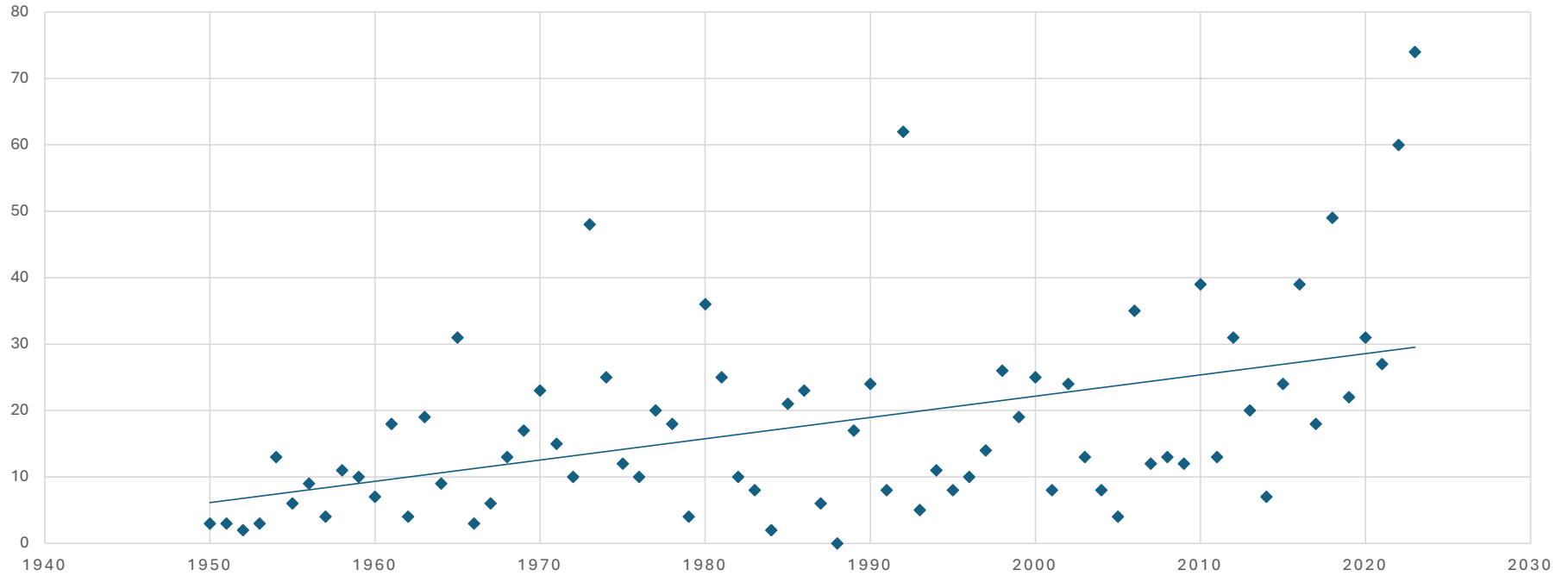


of tornadoes/year, Ohio 1950- 2023

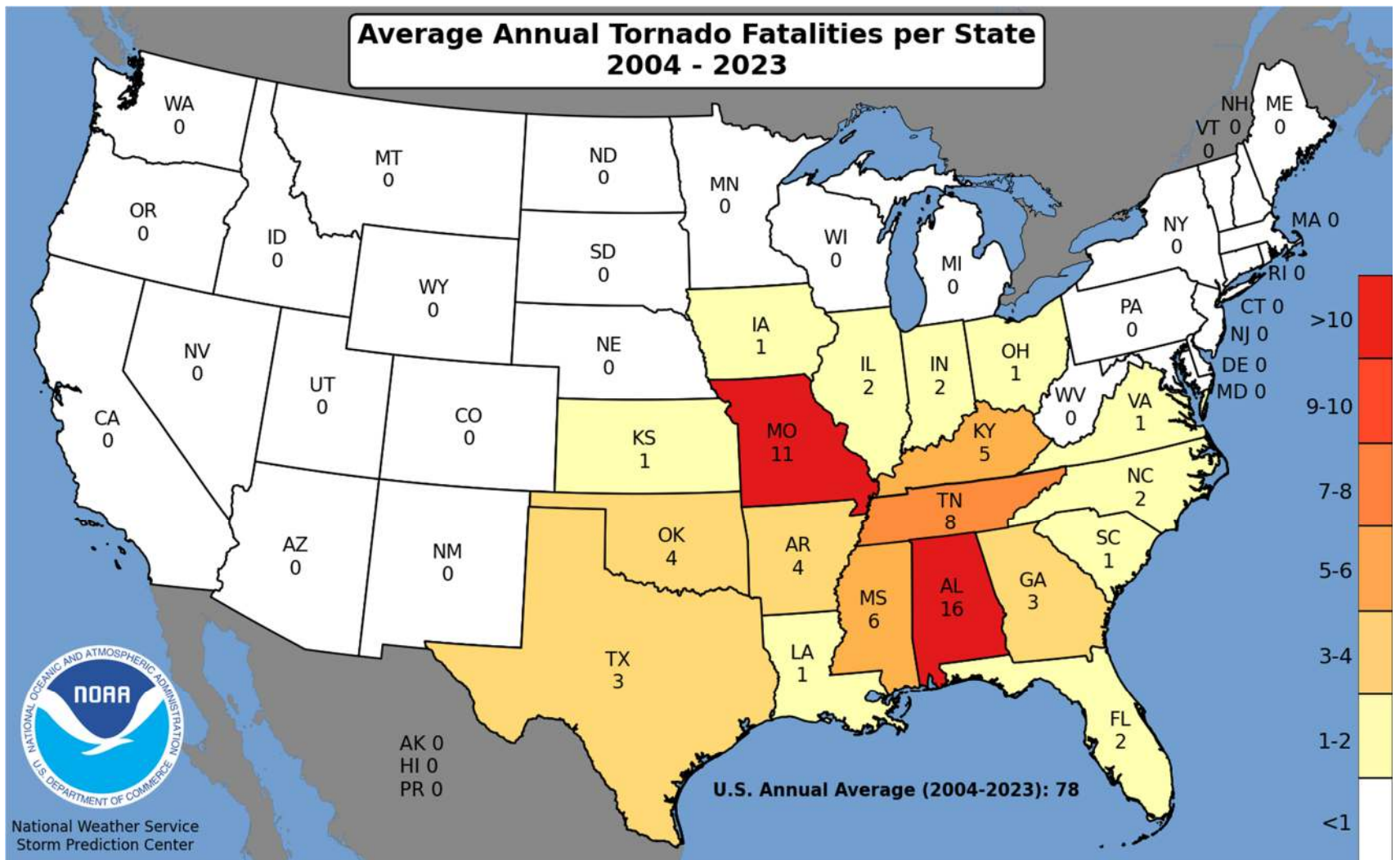


of tornadoes/year, Ohio 1950- 2023

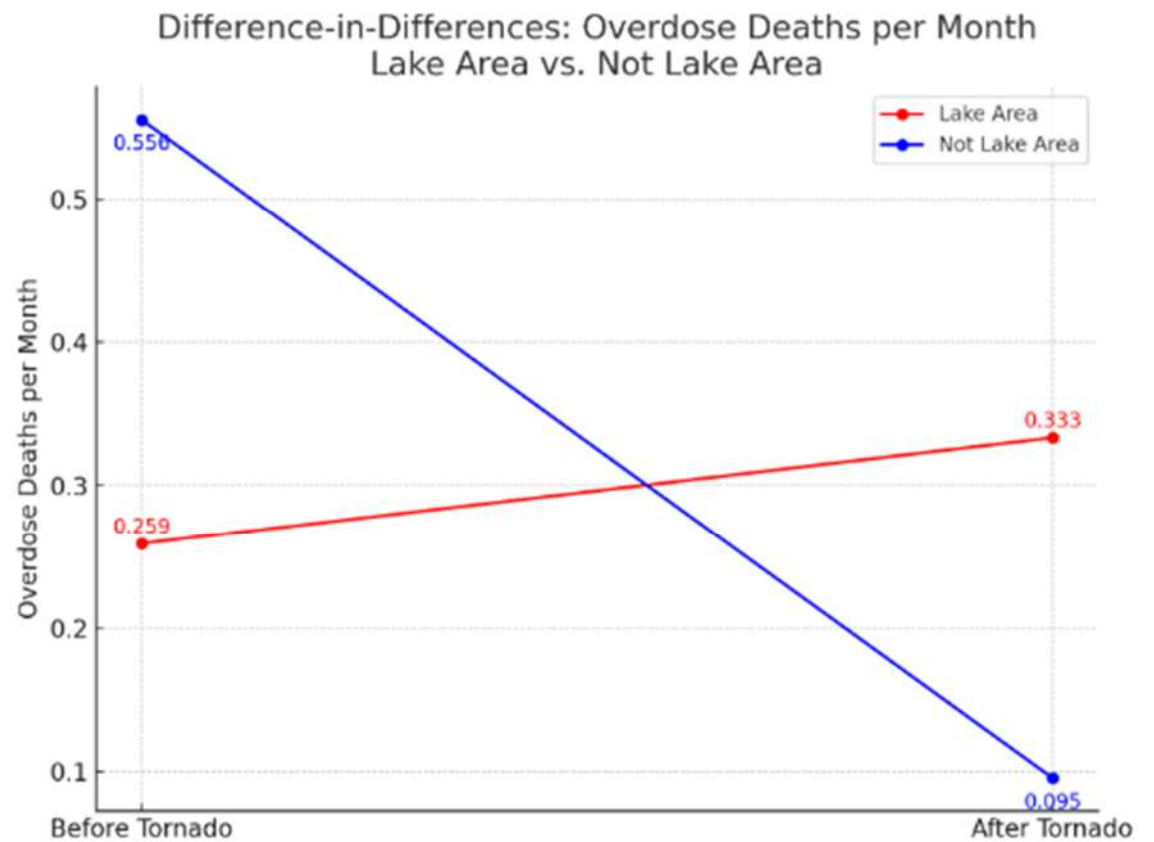
OF TORNADOES IN OHIO



Average Annual Tornado Fatalities per State 2004 - 2023



Mental Health





Contact info

Travis Irvan

Health Commissioner

Logan County Health District

tirvan@Loganhealthohio.gov

Grief – Chaos After the Storm So What Can We Do to Help?

Presented for Logan County PH Staff
March 2024

A couple things to begin

1. Tell the truth about yourself – all the time.
2. Trauma is what happens - Grief is what lingers
3. Mental Health isn't the same as Emotional Health
4. May feel powerless, helpless, hopeless -> few choices
Choices -> getting our power back -> hopeful -> RESILIENCE
5. May get worse before it gets better – the “long haul” -
Tired –> exhausted -> weary -> then what?
6. Breathe – take time to remember to breathe
7. Take care of YOURSELF – you're grieving too!

Goals for Today's Talk

1. Define and describe what grief is, and why it's so tough on us; why it's so misunderstood; it begins in childhood
2. Identify ways unresolved grief impacts physical/mental health and performance – an issue for the community and PH staff – a true Public Health issue
3. Identify ways relieving the grief from the this “event” can help us live beyond “normal” by teaching resilience skills.
4. What can we do to help our kids
5. How you can include Grief Recovery Method programs in your planning and response

Grief Defined

1. Grief is the normal and natural reaction to change or loss of any kind -
 - Grief by any other name... is still grief. Stress, burnout, PTSD, complicated grief, Prolonged Grief Disorder.... Depression???
 - What was changed or lost due to the tornado?
2. Grief is the response to a change in, or end of, any familiar pattern of behavior
 - Grief is also about mixed emotions – terrified and thankful; exhausted and persevering; powerless and connected
 - Even good things bring grief – graduations, retirements, moves, births
 - Long term “routine” changes – the next time the alarm sounds...

What Causes Grief?

We go through life picking up rocks...



- Begins in childhood
- Not taught how to deal with them
- More as we age
- We don't take time to empty the backpack
- Our rocks include....



- . Binkies, blankies and bottles. Pets . Moves . abuse
- . Divorces . Deaths . Graduations . Job loss
- . Financial loss . Illnesses . Floods . Estrangement
- . Foster care and separations . Violence . Pregnancy
- . Loss of an addiction . Separation from siblings/friends . Loss of “stuff”
- . Environmental/climate losses . **CHANGE**

This how we came into this event!

What else causes grief?

The Intangible Losses

- . Safety
- . Security
- . Trust
- . Respect
- . Justice
- . Faith
- . Hopes, Dreams, and Expectations
- . Normal

How are OUR belief systems being challenged?

- . beliefs about our nation, state, community
- . beliefs about our workplaces/lifestyles
- . beliefs about our political systems, economy
- . beliefs about science and “facts”
- . beliefs about our educational system
- . beliefs about the goodness of humankind

Why grief is so misunderstood –

Myths and Misinformation

- . Don't feel bad – at least you didn't die, it was “just stuff”
- . Replace the loss – you can always rebuild the house
- . Grieve alone – often forgotten after the media goes home
- . Be strong – for your kids, your mom/dad, your staff
 - Logan County Strong – or Logan County Together??
- . Keep busy – let's volunteer after work, in the evenings, weekend
- . Just takes time – how much time? What do I do in the meantime? Importance of taking appropriate action...
- and more.... Just tell your truth...

Why grief is so misunderstood –

STERBs = Short-Term, Energy-Relieving Behaviors

- . Food . Alcohol . Tobacco . Drugs – street or Rx
- . Shopping . Violence . Risk taking . Sex . Video games
- . Exercise . Sleep . Cutting . Tattoos . Body art
- . Fantasy . Porn . Vaping . Cell phones
- . Church . “Picking” . Anger . Looting . Gambling
- . Suicide . Running away
- . What are tomorrow’s STERBs????

THESE – and the diseases/conditions they impact ARE Public Health issues. Our “dis-ease” causes our disease.

Physical Health Impacts of Grief –

- . high blood pressure
- . heart attacks
- . glucose changes
- . headaches/migraines
- . IBS/constipation
- . body pain
- . hair loss
- . skin changes
- . teeth grinding/TMJ
- . immune suppression
- . STDs
- . teen pregnancy
- . infant mortality
- . addictions
- . suicide
- . shaken baby
- . cancer???
- . depression/anxiety
- . violence
- . exhaustion/irritability

THESE – and more - ARE Public Health issues... How we came into this event...

Our “dis-ease” causes our disease

Impact at home/school/community

- Low morale – frustration, anger, numb, overwhelmed
- Absenteeism – sick, tired, just can't go... School Refusal
- Presenteeism – mind on other things
- Loss of focus – more mistakes
- Increases in addictive behaviors – healthcare costs
- Increases in ill health effects – healthcare costs
- Other interests lose emphasis

We don't live in a vacuum

- Grief at home
- Grief in their relationships
- Grief at school (work)
- Grief in the community
- Grief on the news
- Grief in the world

Why grief is so misunderstood –

- . Kids are like sponges – they learn this from US!
- . By age 2-3....Ava's "fine"
- . By age 12-15 They've lost those bright eyes.

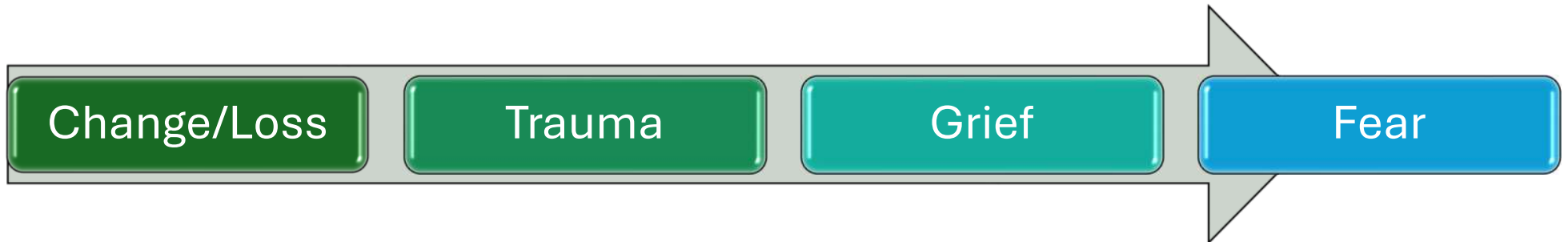
Academy Award Recovery -

I'm fine.... Feelings Inside, Not Expressed

Suck it up, don't be a sissy, don't cry or I'll give you something to cry about, put your big girl panties on, and more

What can you say that is your emotional truth:

- You go first – set the example
- You don't need to share the details
- You don't even need to talk about your feelings
- Just tell your truth
 - I've been better, I've been worse
 - It's a tough time but thanks for asking
 - I'm doin' well today – thanks
 - I'm not even sure – bouncing all over the place
- What do YOU say? Plan ahead...
- And don't ask "how are you?" It begs people to lie... Ask open ended questions.



Common Responses to Fear

1. Humor – gallows Humor
2. Anger – “explosive,” road rage, more than reasonable, violence
3. Isolation – physical, emotional or both
4. Combinations of the above

An attempt to “get control” of an out-of-control situation

Ways to Relieve the Grief We Carry

- . Recovery comes by learning to make a series of small, positive changes in our attitudes and then our behaviors. (KABB) Ongoing....
 - . Comes sooner with appropriate support – what support do you have?
 - . Validate the grief/trauma – **Identify** and name the losses – tangible and intangible
d
 - . Help **name** the feelings – they’ll tell you the story – they want you to hear how it feels.
 - . **Give them voice** – listen without “fixing.” Grievors just want to be heard
 - . Help them make choices – even small ones
 - . Help them identify the stimuli that lead to STERBs

Changes -> Challenges -> Choices

- . House is gone -> where to live -> family, shelter, hotel, rebuild?
- . Loss of stuff ->
- . Financial loss ->
- . Job isn't coming back ->

GRM is both for our grief and for our youth

- . For our grief – 8 wk GRM groups/7 wk one/one – education not therapy
 - . In person or online (advanced GRMS)
- . For our children and youth – via the adults in their lives – the “village”
 - . GRM skills/tools to use in the future
 - . Helping Children with Loss – 4 wk group or one/one; **teaches adults** how to help our youth better skills/tools for a lifetime
 - . In person or online (advanced GRMS)

Helping Children with Loss

- . For us – the big people - professionals, family and caregivers
- . Unpacks some of our “old tools” so we can be better models for teaching our kids some new tools
- . Teaches us to think before we speak with our kids
- . Teaches us to learn to listen to our kids – to be a “big heart with ears”
- . Helps them make choices – in how they respond
- . Helps us help our kids give voice to undelivered communications
- . Can help us deliver consistent messages

Other tips – from Vanessa Cobham

Professor of Psychology, University of Queensland

- . Uncertainty is uncomfortable – but not unbearable
- . Support your child's emotional skills
- . Encourage your child to believe they can cope
- . Show them you value the time you have with them
- . Let them share their emotions – JUST LISTEN – don't fix
- . Be open minded – don't analyze, criticize or judge (try...)
- . YOU are their best example – kids are like sponges
- . Learn to think more flexibly

Resources –

Grief Recovery Method website – www.griefrecoverymethod.com

. What teachers know/wish they knew, about grief - <https://www.newyorklife.com/foundation/our-purpose/research-and-findings>

Impact of environmental disasters – the Paradise Fire –

https://www.washingtonpost.com/magazine/2021/10/27/camp-fire-ptsd/?utm_campaign=wp_post_most&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&wpisrc=nl_most&carta-url=https://s2.washingtonpost.com/car-ln-tr/351c617/617980249d2fda9d41270e57/5974d56d9bbc0f1cdcfea59d/8/70/617980249d2fda9d41270e57

. Impact on mental health among youth - <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/a0331-youth-mental-health.html>

. Many Grief Recovery Method Specialists in communities all over Ohio, the nation and even around the world
[CLICK HERE](#)

Lois Hall, MS

Advanced Grief Recovery Method Specialist, Trainer

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