



By His Excellency Ned Lamont, Governor: an

# Official Statement

*WHEREAS*, prevention is designed to promote the overall health and wellbeing of both individuals and communities, and is accomplished by delaying or inhibiting substance use disorders and promoting mental health and healthy behaviors; and

*WHEREAS*, 51.5 million adults – or nearly one in five – live with a mental illness in the United States; and

*WHEREAS*, approximately 40.3 million people aged 12 or older had a substance use disorder in the past year, and approximately 17 million Americans aged 18 and older have co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders; and

*WHEREAS*, in 2021, there were 367 suicide deaths in Connecticut – an average of one person every 23 hours – making suicide the 11<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for all residents, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for individuals aged 10 to 34 in Connecticut in 2019; and

*WHEREAS*, in 2021, there were 1,496 confirmed drug overdose deaths in Connecticut – a 9 percent increase in drug overdose deaths compared to 2020; and

*WHEREAS*, in 2020, youth reported more alcohol use when they are alone, rather than in social settings – in order to cope with depression, anxiety, and boredom; and

*WHEREAS*, in 2020, youth reported increased use of marijuana as a coping mechanism to combat increased stress and anxiety experienced during COVID-19; and

*WHEREAS*, in 2021 – of young adults who use substances – 48 percent reported using substances as a way to cope with mental health issues; and

*WHEREAS*, the stigma associated with mental health and substance use disorders is a barrier to help-seeking behaviors; and

*WHEREAS*, National Prevention Week recognizes the important work that has been accomplished in communities throughout the year to inspire action and prevent substance use, suicide, and mental health disorders; now

*THEREFORE*, I, Ned Lamont, Governor of the State of Connecticut, do hereby officially proclaim the week of May 8 - 14, 2022, to be

## PREVENTION WEEK

in the State of Connecticut.



*Ned Lamont*

GOVERNOR