JOIN OR RENEW FSPC MEMBERSHIP!
Join FSPC, a statewide, grassroots organization of survivors, crisis centers, & interested individuals. Collaborate to advance suicide prevention efforts in larger numbers; get involved, volunteer with local & state FSPC activities; & obtain reduced registration at FSPC events. Not sure when your renewal is due, please contact Rene Favreau, FSPC Treasurer (rene.favreau@gmail.com) to find out when. Membership info: http://floridasuicideprevention.org/membership/

NEWSWORTHY
FCC TO CONSIDER DESIGNATING '988' AS NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is moving forward with a proposal to create a three-digit, nationwide suicide prevention and mental health hotline, the agency announced Thursday.

The FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau and Office of Economics and Analytics submitted a joint report to Congress on Wednesday laying out its recommendation for the new hotline to be designated 988.

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said he intends to act on the recommendation and move forward with a rule-making proceeding.

“There is a suicide epidemic in this country, and it is
disproportionately affecting at-risk populations, including our Veterans and LGBTQ youth,” Pai said in a statement. “Crisis call centers have been shown to save lives. This report recommends using a three-digit number to make it easier to access the critical suicide prevention and mental health services these call centers provide.”

A year ago, President Trump signed the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act, a law that directs the FCC to begin creating the new line, similar to a nationwide 311 or 911.

The number for the current National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-8255.

The staff report submitted to Congress Wednesday found that “designating a 3-digit code dedicated solely for the purpose of a national suicide prevention and mental health hotline would likely make it easier for Americans in crisis to access potentially life-saving resources.”

The proposal for a new hotline will be subject to a period of public comment and a final vote among the FCC’s commissioners before it can go into effect.

ALSO NEWSWORTHY

NATIONAL PHYSICIAN SUICIDE AWARENESS DAY
Shine a Light. Speak its name.
September 17, 2019

In order to address the issue of physician suicide, the Council of Emergency Medicine Residency Directors (CORD), in collaboration with AAEM, ACEP, ACOEP, EMRA, RSA, RSO and SAEM have come together to annually dedicate September 17th as National Physician Suicide Awareness (NPSA) Day.

Zero Vision Statement
Physician suicide is a tremendous issue in healthcare today. While estimates of the actual number of physician suicides vary, literature has shown that the relative risk for suicide being 2.27 times greater among women and 1.41 times higher among men versus the general population. Each physician suicide is a devastating loss affecting everyone - family, friends, colleagues and up to 1 million patients per year. It is both a very personal loss and a public health crisis. Vision Zero calls on individuals, residency programs, health care organizations and national groups to make a commitment to break down stigma, increase awareness, open the conversation, decrease the fear of consequences, reach out to colleagues, recognize warning signs and learn to approach our colleagues who may be at risk. Let us challenge each other as individuals, communities, institutions and organizations to make changes to reach zero physician suicides.

YET ANOTHER NEWSWORTHY ITEM
THIRD ANNUAL NATIONAL WEEKEND OF PRAYER
September 6-8, 2019

The Action Alliance announced the 3rd annual National Weekend of Prayer for Faith, Hope, & Life, which will take place on September 6-8, 2019. The National Weekend of Prayer, a component of the Action Alliance’s FaithHopeLife campaign, is an annual event during which faith communities all around the country pledge to join in prayer for those who have been touched by suicide, those who are dealing with mental health concerns and feelings of hopelessness, and for the people who love and care for them.
There are a number of ways to join the movement to empower faith communities nationwide to support those who are struggling with suicidal behavior and to promote hope, resiliency, and recovery. Organizations and individuals can:

- Pledge to participate, and encourage other to pledge too.
- Plan how they will incorporate the National Weekend of Prayer into their faith communities.
- Spread the word widely, inviting all types of faith communities and organizations to pledge to join the movement.
- Post their prayers for *Faith, Hope & Life* to social media using the hashtag #PrayFHL

To learn more, visit [www.PrayFaithHopeLife.org](http://www.PrayFaithHopeLife.org)

**FOR THE REST OF US**

**SCHOOLS PREPARE TO IMPLEMENT SENATE BILL 7030**

Dr. Scott Poland from Nova Southeastern University and Dr Dewey Cornell from the University of Virginia recently completed three separate four-day training sessions for the state of Florida. The training sessions were designed to help schools implement Senate Bill 7030 which requires all county school districts to have in place procedures to assess threats of violence towards self and threats of violence towards others. School personnel representing administrators, safety specialists, and school mental health professionals from all over the state attended one of the three training sessions. The training was sponsored by the Florida Department of Education and the Florida School Safety Center.

**FSPC MEMBER PRESENTS SUICIDE PREVENTION TO SARASOTA SCHOOLS**

Jody Smith, MSW Sarasota County Schools School Social Worker and School Suicide Prevention Specialist helped prepare educators for the school year with an informative suicide prevention presentation. Jody has been a FSPC member for several years and is also credentialed through the Americans Association of Suicidology’s *School Suicide Prevention Accreditation Program*. Jody thought her presentation was improved due in part to FSPC - “thanks to additional and relevant information that I gained while attending the FSPC State Conference.” Jody will be able to repeat her presentation this fall for Sarasota educators who were unable to attend this first event.

**FIRST RESPONDER SUICIDE PREVENTION**

By Jim Bonoyer, Captain, Escambia County Emergency Medical Services

First responders (police officers, deputies, firefighters, and emergency medical services) answer many calls for help every day. These can range from a lost child to a loved one who is dying before them. These calls take their toll from time to time, and it’s not always the last bad call that rocks the boat. Sometimes it’s just the frequent and repetitive calls over time that causes stress. It’s like a boiling pot that overflows. Add enough heat and water over time and you end up with a very bad recipe.

Most first responders deal with stress very well. It is not a sign of weakness to have an accumulation of stress. It is a sign of being on the job and seeing repetitive bad things. First responders are some of the strongest men and women out there, but every pot can boil over with the right circumstance. It doesn’t matter what you call it but accumulative stress, critical stress, post traumatic stress, and post traumatic stress disorder are all a clear and present dangers to our first responders.

In 2017, 243 first responders (police officers, deputies, and firefighters) were reported to have died by suicide¹. That number is higher than those who died in the line of duty. Accumulated stress has been
pointed to as a possible contributing factor. There are many names for this type of stress, and a Florida
Bill\(^2\) has specifically made Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as an occupational disease. First responders
can now receive workman’s compensation benefits for treatment.

A survey reported in The Journal of Emergency Medical Services\(^3\) found that 86% of the first responders
(emergency medical services) queried had experienced “Critical Stress,” 38% had consider taking their
own lives, and 6.6% attempted suicide. This should sound some warning bells in our community and in
our own minds. Our front-line heroes are at risk of suicide and could benefit from support.

Florida Statute\(^4\) 112.1815 spells out that an employing agency of a first responder must provide
educational training related to mental health awareness, prevention, mitigation, and treatment. This will
go a long way to help our front line first responders. Education is key to preventing and recognizing the
dangers of stress. Each department should be making this a priority. Our front-line heroes deserve nothing
less.

In Northwest Florida, each agency has taken steps to begin this education. In Santa Rosa County, for
example, the Santa Rosa Fire Fighters Association Chaplains\(^5\) has conducted education for local
departments to include suicide prevention, post trauma stress disorder education, and critical incident
stress debriefings as requested. This is the beginning of a culture change from the old days where first
responders were told to “suck it up – buttercup,” after a bad day. This new mentality supports the well-
being of the first responder, and that is what is needed. Education and support will go along way to help
this front-line hero crisis. Our first responders are worth it!

References

1. FOX 13 Local News. “243 first responders commit suicide last year; more than died in the line of duty.” By
   commit-suicide-in-2018

   www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00376

3. JEMS. “Survey Reveals Alarming Rates of EMS Provider Stress and Thoughts of Suicide.” Chad Newland, EMT
   and-thoughts-of-suicide.html

4. Florida Statute 112.1815. https://m.flsenate.gov/statutes/112.1815

5. Santa Rosa Fire Fighters Association Chaplains, Chief Chaplain William Wright.
   ChaplainWright2190@gmail.com
outgoing and relational and thrives on building new relationships.

Michael reached out to those in the community who are involved—directly or indirectly—with mental health or have a need for such services. These included institutions like law enforcement, emergency medical services, school districts, local hospitals, the local NAMI chapter, the department of health, and local nonprofits. It is important to talk to these types of organizations about the community’s need for a suicide prevention coalition and how their help would positively impact those in need, and ultimately reduce our suicide rate. Local partners are also vital resources when it comes to gathering data and learning more about the specifics of the suicide problem in one’s community. More great information about forming collaborations can be found at https://pscollaboration.edc.org/collaboration-tools.

The work of a coalition begins with identifying that there is a need for a suicide prevention effort in the community. It is important to learn the scope of the suicide problem in your community, searching for relevant data. You must collect any and all available data surrounding suicide deaths, suicide attempts, and vulnerable populations in your community. It is also important to become familiar with terminology regarding suicide (knowing the difference between deaths, attempts, and ideation/thinking) and identify risk and protective factors. The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) has a free online course called Locating and Understanding Data for Suicide Prevention that is perfect for helping to navigate this step.

Additionally, using the SPRC’s Strategic Planning Process when forming a community coalition is vital, supplemented by the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention’s Transforming Communities: Key Elements for the Implementation of Comprehensive Community-Based Suicide Prevention. You must determine the problem and its context within your community, to present to your stakeholders and determine long-term goals for the community. Members should be encouraged to share resources with the coalition, keep in contact with each other, and collaborate with other members to create a continuity of care. The coalition will work together to develop and implement the best interventions for the community that will work towards the long-term goal of promoting mental health resources, reducing the rate suicide deaths/attempts, and any other relevant objectives the coalition has decided to work towards.

It is also vital to implement a way to evaluate the effectiveness of the coalition’s interventions. Determining whether a preventative measure was effective in preventing suicides can be difficult if not impossible to directly quantify. However, there are other ways to measure changes in attitudes and behavior in the community as it relates to suicide prevention. Coalition stakeholders and partners can be critical to gathering data as interventions progress. Our second VISTA, Emilee Atwood, has been essential in the data collection, strategic planning and evaluation pieces of our Coalition progress. Having someone skilled in these areas really helps move our work along.

The EscaRosa Suicide Prevention Coalition meets monthly to discuss data, research, the strategic plan, showcase members as guest speakers, and implement interventions. Based on the data, we have determined goals related to holding or reducing the suicide rate among middle aged males and the suicide rate involving firearms in our area. We also want to work on creating a comprehensive community continuity of care pipeline, involving all of our stakeholders.

In order to achieve these goals, the Coalition is currently focusing on five main interventions, which are at varying stages of implementation: support groups, marketing, Crisis Text Line, trainings and gun safety. We also maintain a focus on three at-risk populations: middle-aged males, youth and active duty military/veterans. We have realized that, with limited resources, we must be strategic in our work and focus on what the local data shows us is of highest priority. There are lots of other things we could (and would like
to) be doing, but we must stay focused on the priorities in order to be most effective at preventing suicide in our community.

So what have we achieved so far? I’m thrilled to say that we now have an active open (drop-in) suicide loss survivor group that has been started by two of our partners, who are both loss survivors. We have another closed (6-week curriculum based) loss survivor group for spouses/significant others being started by Troy University’s Master’s in Counseling program in September. Troy is also facilitating the start of an attempt survivors group for the community. If there is need we may also have a children’s support group and another open support group starting later in the year also. What is amazing about this is that, until now, we had not had any consistent support groups for loss or attempt survivors in our area – this development is huge and is solely because we formed a Coalition to address needs like this.

Our other achievements include: working with the Marketing department of our local community mental health agency, Lakeview Center Inc., to create a logo for our Coalition; development and promotion of a keyword partnership (GULF) with the Crisis Text Line so that we can promote this vital resource; and promoting and supporting the various mental health and suicide prevention trainings offered by our partners such as Mental Health First Aid and QPR.

The EscaRosa Suicide Prevention Coalition is extremely proud of the strides we have made over the short 18 months that we have been in existence and we are excited to see the impact we are able to make in the coming months, as we collaborate for suicide prevention. What is even more exciting is that we have also begun helping our Okaloosa/Walton neighbors start their own Suicide Prevention Coalition.

As I said to begin with….we are better together!

AVAILABLE RESOURCE
HELP FOR STATE AGENCIES
NEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STATE SUICIDE PREVENTION INFRASTRUCTURE
Link: http://www.sprc.org/state-infrastructure?

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) is excited to release the first-ever recommendations for State Suicide Prevention Infrastructure. Developed with an advisory panel of experts and stakeholders, the guidelines lay out essential infrastructure elements for advancing state suicide prevention efforts. They are designed to help state policy leaders assess the status of their current infrastructure and guide policymaking, funding, and administrative decisions accordingly. These guidelines may also be useful to others who support suicide prevention at the federal, state, and local level, including funders, suicide prevention coordinators, coalitions, community organizations, advocates, and researchers.

View the recommendations online (http://www.sprc.org/state-infrastructure?) or visit the tools section to download a PDF version, as well as a two-page customizable summary (http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/SPRC-State%20Infrastructure-Summary.pdf) and an interactive checklist. To stay up to date on new tools and content that will be added in the coming months, sign up for SPRC’s new State Suicide Prevention Infrastructure mailing list.

WHAT’S HAPPENING


September 7, 2019 (Saturday). 1st Annual Team Kyle’s Suicide Prevention Ride. Registration 9:00 am. Begins at 10:30 am. Seminole Powersports, 1200 Rhinehart Road, Sanford, 32771. [https://afsp.donordrive.com/campaign/Team-Kyle-s-Suicide-prevention-Ride](https://afsp.donordrive.com/campaign/Team-Kyle-s-Suicide-prevention-Ride)


October 19, 2019 - 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. 1st Annual Boost Your Brain Healthy Event sponsored by FISP (Florida Initiative for Suicide Prevention). Features Clark Flatt, Jason Foundation Founder. Broward College, Davie Central Campus (Building 10). Register at [https://www.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) search Boost Your Brain or call 954-384-0344 for more information.


Thursday, February 27th 2020, Florida Suicide Prevention Day at the Capitol. Tallahassee. Mark your calendars now!

**RESOURCES**

If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call **1-800-273- 8255 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline).**

*Crisis Text Line* – text “start” to **741-741**

**Veteran’s Crisis Line 1-800-273- 8255, press 1 & [https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/)**

**Resources for Survivors of Suicide Loss.** SAVE. Suicide Awareness Voices for Education maintains a resource list at: [http://suicidegrief.save.org/ResourceLibrary](http://suicidegrief.save.org/ResourceLibrary)

**Suicide Loss Survivors.** The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) hosts a webpage with listed resources for survivors of suicide loss at [http://www.suicidology.org/suicide-survivors/suicide-loss-survivors](http://www.suicidology.org/suicide-survivors/suicide-loss-survivors)

**Suicide Grief Resources.** Helpful information, tools, and links for people bereaved by suicide at [http://suicidegriefresources.org/](http://suicidegriefresources.org/)


**National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention:** The Public-Private Partnership Advancing the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: [http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/resources](http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/resources)


**The Steve Fund.** Dedicated to the mental health and emotional well-being of students of color. [https://www.stevefund.org/](https://www.stevefund.org/)
AN EXTRA HELPING . . .
LIVING WITH GRIEF by Bob Riley
Link: http://www.bobrileycoaching.com/grief_coaching.html

- Refraining from working on your grief delays the healing process.
- Each death we encounter brings back previous deaths.
- Learning how to heal is vital to living a rich, fulfilled and rewarding life.
- Coaching works at the rate you decide. Grief is never rushed.
- Grief coaching can be done by phone and in the comfort of your own surroundings.
- Grief bottled up simply reappears in some way.
- When in pain, learn not to fight it.
- Grief causes vulnerability especially after a traumatic, sudden death.
- Emotional wounds need time and help to heal.
- Cry, cry and cry some more. Release those tears of toxins to begin to feel better.
- Learn that you are able to bend and you will not break.
- Know you can heal and that is a choice “you” make.
- Know that the reality of grief is terribly lonely and takes work to heal.
- Learn the language of feelings to teach others how to treat you.
- There are no rules about the length of time you will take to heal.
- Grievers need to talk and talk to come to grips with what has happened

From Bob Riley Grief Coach

Reference

SUPPORT FSPC WHEN YOU SHOP
Amazon donates to FSPC, when you make an online Amazon purchase. Support FSPC by going to smile.amazon.com (you must start here and begin shopping from here to have your selected charity receive an Amazon donation) and register the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition (FSPC) as your chosen charity. Then start shopping on Amazon (smile.amazon.com) & support suicide prevention.

FSPC NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS
Submit news, events, poems, reviews, & writings for FSPC Newsletter inclusion consideration. Be sure to follow safe messaging guidelines. Email Steve Roggenbaum, Vice Chair, at roggenba@usf.edu

FSPC MEMBERSHIP
New FSPC Membership or Renewal information available online at: http://floridasuicideprevention.org/membership