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January 2020 Newsletter

FLORIDA SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION

*A statewide, grassroots organization
of survivors, crisis centers, & interested citizens*

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

RECORD-SETTING EVENT TO SAVE LIVES FROM SUICIDE

Link: <https://www.louisvillecultureofhealth.com/blog/2018/6/11/louisvilles-multi-year-focus-on-suicide-prevention-ramps-up-to-set-a-world-record-save-lives>

For the years 2008-2014, Jefferson County, Kentucky ranked 11th out of 50 peer counties in terms of highest rates of suicide. This statistic inspired the Louisville Health Advisory Board - a cross-sector group of community organizations and leaders working to improve physical, mental and social well-being for residents of Louisville - to come together and set an objective to design and implement a community-wide, evidence-based and data-driven program to eliminate suicides in Louisville.

Over several years, Louisville Health Advisory Board's Behavioral Health Committee hosted *Bold Moves Against Suicide Summit*, experienced a condensed version of the Zero

Suicide Academy and how one might implement at his or her organization, created a 90-day plan for implementing Zero Suicide at their organizations, and continued discussion about how to eliminate suicides in their city. At one meeting, guest speaker Andy Lawrence, Director of Suicide Prevention for Centerstone (KY) walked through his organization's initiation of the Zero Suicide framework and learnings on the journey, since launching in 2011. A subsequent discussion was facilitated with several local media partners to learn more about their experiences covering suicides in Louisville. Then, the group discussed the concept of setting the world record for the most individuals trained in QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) in a week.

This group sought to save lives and help Louisville set a record by training the most individuals in one week in the technique of Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR). Similar to CPR, QPR is a 90-minute training course designed to support an emergency response to someone in crisis, and it can save lives. From September 9-15, there were 117 training events facilitated in 50 locations across the community - in community centers, colleges, churches, places of work and more. Thank you to all the supporters, trainers and over 2,200 Louisvillians who participated in the training.

ALSO NEWSWORTHY

CONGRESSIONAL FORUM ADDRESSES BLACK YOUTH SUICIDE

National Council for Behavioral Health

Link: <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/capitol-connector/2019/10/congressional-forum-addresses-black-youth-suicide/>

The Congressional Black Caucus's Emergency Taskforce on Black Youth Suicide recently hosted its fourth forum, "Hearing Their Stories: Students and How They Handle Their Mental Health." Members of Congress heard from five students, as well as Susan Taylor, former editor-in-chief of Essence Magazine, and Dr. Cheryl Grills, Professor, Loyola Marymount University. The panelists provided recommendations for Congressional action to address mental health concerns among black youth.

YET ANOTHER NEWSWORTHY ITEM

FLORIDA TAKING ACTION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION 5TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition

Registration is open for Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition's (FSPC) 2020

Florida Taking Action for Suicide Prevention 5th Annual Conference. Join

FSPC and others February 25, 2020 (1:00 pm - 5:00 pm) & February 26, 2020

(8:30 am - 4:00 pm) at the Florida Sheriffs Association Training Center in Tallahassee. Registration highlights reduced rates for early registration and reduced rates for FSPC members. Registration is available at: <http://floridasuicideprevention.org/fspcevents/>

FSPC reserved a limited block of rooms at Candlewood Suites Tallahassee (2815 Lakeshore Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312) for \$150-\$160 (single/double) per night just a few miles from the conference location. Call to reserve a room at the special rate: 850-597-7000 (use group name "Florida Suicide Prevention").

FOR THE REST OF US

LIGHTING THE DARKNESS EVENT, FEBRUARY 26, 2020, TALLAHASSEE

By Monica Ellis, MSW, Big Bend Hospice &

Pam Mezzina, LCSW, FSPC Region 2 Director & Director, Capstone Center Counseling

If you've lost someone special to suicide, you're not alone. In 2018, 3552 Floridians died by suicide with more lives lost this year. Lighting the Darkness is an annual event sponsored by Big Bend Hospice, the FSU College of Medicine, and the Children's Miracle Network to remember lives lost to suicide. We hope you'll join us.



Lighting the Darkness is an evening to remember and raise visibility about children, teens, adults, and Veterans whose lives ended too soon by suicide. This event is held in coordination with the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition Conference and Suicide Awareness Day at the Florida Capitol. It features local providers, activities, music, speakers, and a time of remembrance. It is free to community members and to those visiting Tallahassee for Suicide Awareness events. Light refreshments will be provided.

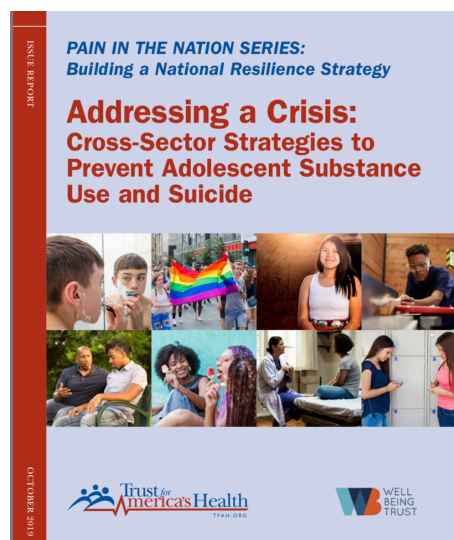
Lighting the Darkness will be held at the Woman's Club of Tallahassee, 1513 Fernando Drive, Tallahassee FL on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm. Ceremony starts at 6:30 pm. For more information, contact Monica Ellis at 671-6077. If you have lost a loved one to suicide and would like to include their photo and a short passage in the memorial slide show, please email mlellis@bigbendhospice.org

AVAILABLE RESOURCE

ADDRESSING A CRISIS: CROSS-SECTOR STRATEGIES TO PREVENT ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND SUICIDE

Trust for America's Health / Well Being Trust

Link: https://www.tfah.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/TFAH2019TeensPainRptFINAL10_24.pdf



Addressing a Crisis: Cross-Sector Strategies to Prevent Adolescent Substance Misuse and Suicide finds that, while progress has been made in reducing some risky behaviors, adolescent suicide and substance misuse rates remain high and in some cases are climbing. The report calls for the expansion of evidence-based and cross-sector strategies in order to save lives.

To reverse the troubling rates of teen substance misuse and suicide communities across the country should adopt a prevention framework that harnesses and aligns the strengths of many sectors to create a collective approach to both reducing risk and promoting protective factors in teens' lives. Furthermore, policies and programs that support families, such as the earned income tax credit, paid-time-off, affordable housing or access to healthcare, will paid divided ends for those families' children.

Among the report's top recommendations are:

- The federal government and state legislatures should create and/or scale up policies that support families including increases to federal and state earned income tax credits and programs that provide access to health insurance and affordable housing.
- Congress should increase funding for substance misuse and suicide prevention including Project AWARE and the Garrett Lee Smith State/Tribal Youth Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Grant program.
- States should expand Medicaid services in schools using flexible models such as school-employed providers, school-based health centers and telehealth.
- Congress should increase investments in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Adolescent and School Health which promotes safe and supportive learning environments in schools nationwide. Mental health services should be available in all schools.
- Public and private funders should incentivize strategies that address common risk/protective factors across all adolescent serving sectors.
- All youth-serving systems should adopt trauma-informed and culturally appropriate policies and practices and should engage youth leaders in program development.

Intimate Tyler Posey Interview about Mental Health & His Real Story | JED Voices

The Jed Foundation (JED)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTrYRNplYHU>

In 2014, the world saw Tyler Posey taking on the role of a high school student trying to contend with his new life as a werewolf in the popular TV series, *Teen Wolf*. Behind the scenes, Tyler was experiencing intense grief from losing his mother to breast cancer and the years of depression that followed.



Actor and musician Tyler Posey opens up and shares his life story, including his feelings of isolation and depression, the importance of therapy, his perspective on men's mental health, work life balance, reducing shame and judgement and how he finds hope and inspiration. A JED Voices interview with comedian Liz Miele for The Jed Foundation.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



February 25 & 26, 2020, **Plan to Attend!** *Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition's 5th Annual Florida Taking Action for Suicide Prevention Conference*. Tallahassee. Registration is available at: <http://floridasuicideprevention.org/fspcevents/>

February 26, 2020 (6:00 pm - 8:00 pm). *Lighting the Darkness* (free survivor event) at Woman's Club of Tallahassee, 1513 Fernando Drive, Tallahassee.

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

March 15-18, 2020. The 33rd annual Research and Policy Conference on Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Behavioral Health. Sponsored by the Department of Child and Family Studies at USF. Tampa. <https://www.cmhnetwork.org/tampa-conference/>

April 22-25, 2020. American Association of Suicidology's 53rd Annual Conference. Portland, Oregon. <https://www.aasconference.org>

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/>

Resources for Survivors of Suicide Loss. SAVE. Suicide Awareness Voices for Education maintains a resource list at: <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>

Suicide Grief Resources. Helpful information, tools, and links for people bereaved by suicide at <http://suicidegriefresources.org/>

STOP Suicide Northeast Indiana. (2016). *Help & Hope: For Survivors of Suicide Loss*. Retrieved from <http://www.stopsuicidenow.org/toolkits-now-available/>

Florida's Statewide Office of Suicide Prevention (DCF): <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/prevention/suicide-prevention/index.shtml>

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention: The Public-Private Partnership Advancing the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: <http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/resources>

Coping After Suicide Loss: Tips for Grieving Adults, Children, and Schools. The American Psychological Association tip sheet. <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/suicide-coping-tips.pdf>

The Steve Fund. Dedicated to the mental health and emotional well-being of students of color. <https://www.stevelfund.org/>

AN EXTRA HELPING . . .

A GUIDE TO WORKING THROUGH THE GRIEF AFTER A LOSS BY SUICIDE

By Katie Hurley, LCSW & Medically Reviewed by Allison Young, MD

Everyday Health Website

Link: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/emotional-health/guide-working-through-grief-after-loss-suicide/>

The FSPC Newsletter has covered A Guide To Working Through the Grief After a Loss by Suicide over the past few FSPC Newsletters. Last month, we included Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Below concludes the series with the remaining four chapters: Chapter 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Chapter 6: Recognizing the Prevalence of Suicide Among Men

According to the latest data compiled by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), in 2017 men died by suicide 3.54 times more often than women. (3) Statistics show that white males accounted for 77.97 percent of deaths by suicide in 2017.

There are risk factors for men, but, as with teens, it can be difficult to spot the red flags. In fact, not all men who experience suicidal ideation seek help or show any outward signs of struggle.

Suicide in men is most strongly associated with depression, physical pain and illness, isolation, and feelings of hopelessness. It helps to know the potential risk factors:

- Depression or other mental health disorders
- Drug and alcohol use to cope with stressors, loss, or other emotional issues
- Social isolation
- Difficulty forming or maintain relationships
- Divorce
- Unemployment
- Loss
- Imprisonment
- Access to firearms



Feeling disconnected or alone, feeling like a burden to others, and feeling hopeless about the future are all red flags for the male population. Midlife stress can be debilitating for men. Job loss, financial difficulties, relationship problems, and illness are all common problems among this population. How men learn to cope with this difficult phase of life is important. Offering support in the workplace or making accommodations to seek help during work hours can make a difference.

The stigma among men is overwhelming. Men continue to face societal pressure to brush off emotional issues and remain strong in the face of adversity. This sets men up to hide their struggles and suffer in silence. It's essential to talk openly and honestly about mental health and coping skills as a family, early and often, to help boys and young men learn to seek help when they need it.

Chapter 7: Turning to Religious Professionals for Help After Facing Loss by Suicide

The decision to seek counseling can be a difficult one. It's hard to open up to a complete stranger, particularly about something as personal as working through a loss by suicide. It can feel less overwhelming to seek help through your religious organization if you belong to one.



Pastoral counseling is a branch of counseling in which trained ministers, priests, rabbis, imams, & faith-based counselors provide therapy services. Pastoral counselors often integrate modern psychological methods with traditional religious training.

Seeking help from clergy can actually help de-stigmatize mental health services. People may feel comfortable with their faith leaders and might be more likely to seek help within their religious organizations. Faith leaders that are trained to spot the

signs of mental illness or red flags for suicide are also a first line of defense. They have direct contact with their congregants, often on a weekly basis, and can offer support to someone who appears to be struggling.

Not all pastoral counselors are licensed mental health providers. Another option is to seek faith-based therapists who weave spiritual beliefs into the therapy process. Check with your religious organization to find a faith-based therapist in your area.

Chapter 8: Understanding the Phenomenon of Suicide Contagion

Suicide contagion, or “copycat suicides,” refers to the phenomenon that exposure to suicide or suicidal behavior within one’s family, one’s peer group, or through media coverage of suicide can result in an increase in suicides or suicidal behaviors. News of comedian Robin Williams’s death by suicide, for example, was associated with a nearly 10 percent increase in similar deaths by suicide, according to a study published in February 2018 in the journal PLoS One.

Media coverage of high-profile deaths by suicide can be triggering for people struggling with depression or at risk for suicide. Media coverage tends to focus on the sound bites, but suicide is complex and involves many factors.

Changes to media coverage of suicide can make a difference. Media coverage should avoid oversimplification of the suicide, such as focusing on recent negative life events or current acute stressors. Media reports should not divulge detailed reports of the method of suicide or glorify the event. Media outlets can offer help to those struggling by providing direct links to suicide hotlines and emergency contacts.

If people are exposed to death by suicide or suicidal behavior within the family or a peer group, it’s important to offer support from a mental health practitioner. This ensures a proper evaluation of the survivor of loss by suicide and assists with building coping skills to work through the loss.

Talking openly about the suicide and building support systems for the survivors of the loss by suicide can help decrease suicide contagion. Discussing the many complex factors that contribute to suicidal behavior and attempts helps people understand the scope of the problem. Talking about mobilizing help and learning how to cope offers hope to those who struggle with their mental health and might be considering suicide.

Chapter 9: Helping a Friend Who Has Lost Someone They Love to Suicide

It’s hard to know what to say to help a friend or loved one who lost someone to suicide. Though you can’t relieve your loved one’s pain, there are things you can say and do to help your loved one through this difficult time. Simply checking in, even by text, offers a line of support.

It can feel awkward to start conversations about suicide, but survivors of loss by suicide need friends who are willing to listen. Don't be afraid to show up with support, even if your friend or loved one isn't asking for help.

There are several things you can do to help:

- Express your concern. A simple, "I know this is difficult for you. I'm here when you need me," shows your loved one that you are there for support.
- Be direct. Don't dance around the issue. Use the word "suicide" and be prepared to listen.
- Empathize. Reflecting your friend's feelings shows support and empathy. Statements like, "You're feeling shocked and angry about this," communicate that you're listening.
- Ask how you can help. It can be overwhelming for people to ask for help. More often than not, they don't know where to start. Ask specific questions to offer help. "Can I pick up some groceries for you? Do you need a ride to an appointment? Can I help you get the house organized?"
- Offer to help find support. Chances are your friend or loved ones need extra support at this time. Offer to help your friend find someone to talk to or a support group to attend, and be sure to offer to go with your friend.
- Listen. The most important thing you can do is listen. You don't have to have all the answers; you simply have to listen and offer support.



If you notice that your friend or loved one communicates feelings of hopelessness or unbearable emotional pain, encourage professional help right away. It is common for grieving people to feel depressed, isolated, confused, and angry. Professional mental health practitioners can help your friend work through and cope with grief following suicide.

If you or someone you love is considering suicide or shows warning signs for suicide, contact the [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/) (1-800-273-8255) or call 911 for immediate assistance.

This Series on Working through Grief After a Loss by Suicide is concluded.

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

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