



## FSPC Officers

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August 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](mailto:rene.favreau@gmail.com)) to find out when. Membership info: <http://floridasuicideprevention.org/membership/>

### AN EXTRA HELPING . . .

#### CONGRESSMAN JOHN R. LEWIS (1940-2020)

Link: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/105th-congress/house-resolution/212>

Representative John R. Lewis, 5th Congressional District of Georgia, can be remembered as the first congressman in our history to publicly step into the taboo subject of suicide and call on this country to recognize that the prevention of death by suicide is a “national priority.”

Yes, that congressman was John R. Lewis. He was the first.

Motivating his action were Elsie and Jerry Weyrauch, who lost their daughter to suicide. Thus, two loss survivors and John R. Lewis (he was their congressman), launched that key “first movement” that began on July 31, 1997 and has led us all into a brave new world where we can all work together to save lives from suicide.

The link to the resolution is <https://www.congress.gov/bill/>

[105th-congress/house-resolution/212](https://www.congress.gov/105/legislation/house-resolutions/212) I encourage you to click on the text tab to see the full resolution. A brief summary of House Resolution 212 of the 105th Congress (1997-1998): *Declares that the House of Representatives recognizes suicide as a national problem and declares suicide prevention a national priority, acknowledges that no single prevention program will be appropriate for all populations or communities, and encourages certain initiatives, including the development (and the promotion of accessibility and affordability) of mental health services to enable all persons at risk for suicide to obtain services without fear of stigma.*

## **SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

### **GRATITUDE FOR SERVICE: SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS TO DR. SOFIA CASTRO**

Submitted by Pam Mezzina, FSPC Region 2 Director on Behalf of the FSPC

Dr. Sofia Castro started in her role as the Suicide Prevention Coordinator for the State of Florida late in 2014. Over the years she has been a vital partner with the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition, other suicide prevention stakeholders and communities all over Florida. In June of this year, Dr. Castro transitioned from her suicide prevention role to focus solely on policies relating to Baker and Marchman Acts.

The Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition wants to extend our deep appreciation to Dr. Castro for her years of service. Whether she was presenting, leading a meeting, researching, or talking one on one, her extensive wealth of knowledge in the field of suicide prevention was invaluable to us and many others. Dr. Castro helped FSPC find rooms at the Florida Capitol so we could organize Suicide Prevention Day and helped arrange space at DCF for our first several FSPC conferences. She helped arrange press conferences and worked with our FSPC leadership on the Florida Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council which she chaired. We were fortunate to have her present at several of our FSPC annual Florida suicide prevention conferences.



What I noticed in talking with other people about Dr. Castro is that they frequently mentioned other, more personal qualities. They remarked on her warmth, kindness, compassion and her calm and welcoming demeanor. And despite her busy and demanding schedule, she somehow seemed to always make time to listen. She listened to advocates. To professionals. To lawmakers. To family members. To survivors. One of the last times I spoke with Dr. Castro, I asked her what she most enjoyed about working in the field of Suicide Prevention. She replied how grateful she felt to meet so many advocates who work passionately and tirelessly to reduce the number of deaths by suicide. And we are grateful to her for her years of advocacy, effort, and dedication.

FSPC wishes Dr. Castro success and happiness in her new endeavors.

## **AVAILABLE RESOURCE**

### **SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS:**

#### **A GUIDE FOR FUNERAL DIRECTORS (2020, second edition)**

By Samaritans, Inc., and Education Development Center (EDC)

Link: [http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/COI-SP-Funeral-Directors-Guide\\_WEB%20Version%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/COI-SP-Funeral-Directors-Guide_WEB%20Version%20FINAL.pdf)



This guide provides critical information and practical advice to help funeral directors better serve people who are bereaved by a suicide loss. It also suggests useful resources for suicide loss survivors. The second edition is a collaboration of Education Development Center (EDC) and Samaritans, Inc., with input from funeral directors, psychologists, and suicide loss survivors. Highlights of the second edition include:

- Updated information on topics such as common experiences of suicide loss survivors and services that funeral directors should consider providing to them
- Updated and expanded resource list
- A new table containing preferred ways to communicate with suicide loss survivors
- A new section on the role of funeral directors as community leaders

## **ANOTHER AVAILABLE RESOURCE**

### **2020 SUICIDE PREVENTION SUMMIT**

By American Association of Suicidology (AAS), the Mental Health Academy (MHA), and the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)

Link: <https://www.mentalhealthacademy.net/suicideprevention>

*The purpose of the Summit is to equip practicing mental health professionals in the United States with the most up-to-date, advanced knowledge and treatment options for suicide prevention.*

*Intended for counselors, mental health practitioners, & students (eg. social work, clinical, mental health)*

Dear Mental Health Professional,

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, and one of the world's most pressing health challenges. As a mental health professional, you are the frontline of defense, and you will be required to work with suicidality.

Be prepared.

AAS has partnered with the American Mental Health Counselors Association and the American Association of Suicidology to bring you the 2020 Suicide Prevention Summit.

The purpose of this Summit is to equip practicing mental health professionals with the most up-to-date, advanced knowledge and treatment options on suicide prevention.

To achieve that, we've assembled 11 highly respected experts on suicide into one online specialized Summit.

Over 2 days, August 29 & 30, you'll have free access to all Summit sessions, **live online** (via webinar). You will then have **on-demand streaming access** for an additional three weeks, from August 31 to September 20.

One of the most powerful resources we have to reduce suicide is our frontline mental health workforce. We believe that by providing mental health practitioners with global best-practice knowhow and skills, we can tangibly reduce suicide rates in the United States.

We see our role as bringing global best-practice education to practitioners – for free. Your role is taking the time to learn and apply.

As we endeavor to save valuable lives, we look forward to seeing you at the online 2020 Suicide Prevention Summit.

### **WHAT'S HAPPENING**



August 29 & 30, 2020. *2020 Suicide Prevention Summit*. AAS, MHA, & AMHCA.

Information at <https://www.mentalhealthacademy.net/suicideprevention>

Thursday, August 20, 2020, *Florida Behavioral Health Conference 2020 Virtual Conference*.

Register for Complimentary Access at <https://mailchi.mp/bhcon.org/virtualreg>

September 2020. National Suicide Prevention Month.

September 6 - 12, 2020. Suicide Prevention Week.

September 10, 2020. World Suicide Prevention Day.

April 22-24, 2021 (*next year*). American Association of Suicidology's (AAS) 54th Annual Conference. Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista, Orlando, Florida. Information coming at: <https://suicidology.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.stevfund.org/>

## SUPPORT FSPC WHEN YOU SHOP

Amazon donates to FSPC, when you make an online Amazon purchase. Support FSPC by going to [smile.amazon.com](https://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](https://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](mailto:roggenba@usf.edu)

## FSPC MEMBERSHIP

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

## A HISTORY OF FLORIDA SUICIDE PREVENTION AND LEGISLATION

Terry Smith, former FSPC webmaster and longtime member/advocate, kept a history of suicide prevention activities and related legislation that was maintained on a previous FSPC website. It is

reproduced here for your perusal (*please note that some links may no longer work*). The history is from 1984 through 2006.

The Florida Legislature recognized the criticality of the problem of suicide in **1984** by passing the ***Florida Emotional Development and Suicide Prevention Act*** (Chapter 84-317). This act required the Department of Health Rehabilitative Services, in cooperation with the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) and Law Enforcement (FDLE) to develop a state plan for *youth* suicide. The Task Force concluded that while a number of service components existed in many districts, coordination and supplementation of these services was needed in order to establish a starting point for the development of a full continuum of services, including prevention, intervention, and treatment coordinated to address children's needs in a holistic way.

Subsequently, in **1985** a Comprehensive Plan for the Prevention of *Youth* Suicide in Florida was developed and submitted. This plan:

- Provided a model that addressed detailed Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment strategy. Included a budget.

At the completion of developing this plan the Task Force stated: We firmly believe that this plan, if approved and funded, will fulfill the legislative intent – to promote the positive emotional development of youths and to address the continuing problem of youth suicide in the state.

The plan was **never** implemented.

In **1990**, Florida also made suicide prevention training a requirement for teacher certification. It was mandated that a life-management skills class be taught in secondary education level and include suicide awareness.

In **1998**, the Florida Department of Children and Families (FDCF) funded a *Youth Suicide Prevention Study, Report to the Florida Legislature* was presented by the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute at the University of South Florida,. This study, completed in **September 1999**, stated that after a decade following legislatively mandated initiatives to address youth suicide and described the state of affairs in Florida's programs for children, youth and their families addressing suicide prevention, knowledgeable intervention strategies and promising practices that have been successful in reducing the risk factors associated with incidence of child and youth suicide. (click here: [See Report - \[pdf 131pgs\]](#))

- Florida currently ranks tenth in the nation for suicides per 100,000 population.
- Suicide ranks fourth as the leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 15-24.

The Florida House of Representatives passed *House Resolution No. 9233* in **1999**. A resolution encouraging suicide prevention efforts. The Florida Senate passed *Senate Resolution No. 2684* in **1999**. The Florida Senate recognized suicide as a state problem and declared suicide prevention to be a state priority.

In **1999**, The FDOE introduced the SAFE School Action Planning and Preparedness Program. School Critical Response Plans incorporated suicide threats and gestures at all levels.

In **November of 1999**, Pam Harrington, who lost her daughter Beth in 1997, emailed Governor Jeb Bush about suicide and its' devastating losses. Governor Bush became interested in Pam's story and invited Pam and her husband Bob to Tallahassee to discuss this problem. A meeting was set for January.

On **January 11, 2000**, Governor Jeb Bush, recognizing that suicide is a serious health problem, met with grass roots suicide prevention activists Pam and Bob Harrington. Following this meeting Governor Bush directed the Florida Office of Drug Control to assist in decreasing the incidence of suicide in Florida.

**June, 2000** the Adolescent Prevention Plan, Task Force Report to the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of EMS was completed and submitted. This document is available at [www.ac.wvu.edu/~hayden/spsp](http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~hayden/spsp)

**November, 2000**, at the request of Jim McDonough, the Director of the Florida Office of Drug Control, representation from AFSP n/k/a Florida Initiative for Suicide Prevention (FISP), DCF, DOC, DJJ, DOE, DOH, USF, and SPAN-FL convened at the Governor's Office to begin establishing an infrastructure for a state suicide prevention task force. The organization is the **Florida Task Force on Suicide Prevention**.

In **2002**, a pilot program is announced to provide a five-year plan which considers the entire continuum of a community-based *youth* suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention in Alachua and Broward Counties to end in 2007. The program will be pursued through the Institute for Child Health Policy and called the Florida Metropolitan and Non-metropolitan Community *Youth* Suicide Prevention Prototype Program, administered by Deborah Mulligan-Smith, MD, FAAP, FACEP at Nova Southeastern University.

**IJune, 2002** 13 individuals from around the State met in Orlando to discuss the possibility of organizing the State with the intention of educating, preventing suicide within the State.

**IAugust, 2002**, the Florida Suicide Prevention Task Force announced the Statewide Suicide Prevention Strategy to reduce the incidence of suicide in Florida by one-third by 2005. The Strategy Paper can be viewed here: [Preventing Suicide in Florida - A Strategy Paper](#)

**October 14-17, 2002**, 30 individuals met at Camp Blanding (Florida Army National Guard Camp) for a three-day meeting to learn about Coalition building and to formalize the organization of the **Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition**.

**March 26, 2003**, survivors and friends of the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition gathered at the Florida Capitol to help dedicate the day as "**Suicide Prevention Day -- A Day to Focus on Suicide Prevention Awareness**". This proclamation was read at a press conference held by Governor Jeb Bush. Governor Bush gave an impassioned statement regarding the need to reduce the incidence of suicide and cited the Strategy Paper as the beginning. The Governor announced that he and his wife Columba are pleased to serve as honorary Chairpersons of the Coalition. The Coalition set up tables and Quilts in the Rotunda of the Capitol and made visits to the Legislators with packets explaining the tragedy of suicide in Florida and in their respective communities.

**October 1, 2003** the **Youth Suicide Prevention Prototype Project** Executive Summary Report: Year One was released; [Click here: Youth Suicide Prevention Prototype Program Report](#)

**November 17 & 18, 2003**, the first FSPC Conference in partnership with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Volusia/Flagler Counties "**Making Strides to Save Lives**". Held at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach, FL. The two day conference featured speakers; Dr John Agwunobi-Director Florida Department of Health, James T. Reese, Trainer International CISM, Reverend William Morrison-Spiritual Warfare, Stuart Perry- The Journey, Dell Hackett-Suicide Prevention for Law Enforcement, Keri Lubell-CDC, Hendricks Brown-Science Based Strategies, Dr. Deborah Mulligan-Smith-Florida Pilot Program, Pam Harrington & Laura Meyer-Florida Gatekeeper Training, Heather Scanlon-Columbia Teen Screen.

**February 3, 2004**, Suicide Prevention Briefing with Governor and Mrs. Jeb Bush. The meeting was hosted by Director Jim McDonough of the Office of Drug Control to update the Governor on suicide prevention efforts including overviews of:

- TeenScreen (Columbia University)
- Jason Foundation
- 1-800-SUICIDE
- Grassroots Efforts
- Youth Suicide Prevention Prototype Program
- Legislation
- Governor's Task Force

**February 12-13, 2004**, Governor's Task Force on Suicide Prevention retreat at Camp Blanding. The purpose was to brainstorm and develop a current strategy for reducing

suicide in our communities over the next 5 years. Director Jim McDonough of the Governor's Office of Drug Control welcomed everyone and directed the activities for the two days. Participants included individuals from; The Governor's Office of Drug Control, Department of Children and Families,



Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Elder Affairs, Florida Mental Health Institute of University of South Florida, Department of Juvenile Justice, Agency for Workforce Innovation, Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition, Beth Foundation, University of Florida-Department of Psychology, Crisis Centers, School Psychologist, and Florida Institute of Suicide Prevention. Captain Diana Travis, Community Coalition Officer for the Florida Counterdrug Training Academy hosted the retreat.

**March 23, 2004**, the second Florida Day at the Capitol was held in the Rotunda in partnership with the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition and the Governor's Florida Task Force on Suicide Prevention. Governor Jeb Bush and Mrs. Columba Bush held a Press Conference. Governor Bush Proclaims March 23, 2004 as "**Florida Suicide Prevention Day - A Day to Focus on Suicide Prevention Awareness**".



Charles Curie, Director of the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) also participated. The Coalition set up tables and Quilts in the Rotunda of the Capitol and made visits to the Legislators with packets explaining the tragedy of suicide in Florida and in their respective communities. The members visited members of both the Senate and the House to push for the SB 2042 and HB 0897 a suicide prevention bill to create the Office Suicide Prevention Coordinator and a Suicide Prevention Council, with an appropriation of \$100,000. Students Larissa Alter and Catherine Manfre and Student Government Association (SGA) advisor Debbie Couch from Flagler Palm Coast High

School were in attendance and spent time with Governor and Mrs. Bush describing the high school's suicide prevention program.

**2004 Florida Legislative Session:** Bills were introduced to create a Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention, create a Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council and asked for an appropriation of \$100,000. But these Bills relating to Suicide Prevention [H 0897 failed to make it out of a House Subcommittee - Committee on Transportation & Economic Development Appropriations \(AP\)](#). with the bill failing in the House. **Senate bill [S 2042](#) passed the entire Senate 39 YEAS, 0 NAYS** with many thanks to Senator Evelyn Lynn the sponsor. Without the House voting on the measure, the bill died in committee and could not be forwarded to Governor Bush for approval. Representative Kim Berfield fought hard. It seem to come down to the money. The appropriations request of \$100,000 equated to \$42.88 per loved one lost to suicide in 2002 (2,332). Back to the drawing board for the grassroots and others who fought hard to educate the legislators regarding the tragedy of suicide.

**March 30, 2005**, the third annual Florida Suicide Prevention Day at the Capitol was held in the Rotunda in partnership with the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition and the Governor's Florida Task Force on Suicide Prevention. Governor Jeb Bush and Mrs. Columba Bush held a Press Conference. Governor Bush Proclaims March 30, 2005 as "**Florida Suicide Prevention Day - A Day to Focus on Suicide Prevention Awareness**". The Coalition set up tables and Quilts in the Rotunda of the Capitol and made visits to the Legislators with packets explaining the tragedy of suicide in Florida and in their respective communities. The members visited members of both the Senate and the House to push for the [S 0210](#) and [HB H 0447](#), suicide prevention bills to create the Office Suicide Prevention Coordinator and a Suicide Prevention Council. Senator Evelyn Lynn and Representative Hugh Gibson sponsored the respective bills.

**2005 Florida Legislative Session:**

**S210 GENERAL BILL/CS/CS/CS by Health and Human Services Appropriations; Governmental Oversight and Productivity; Children and Families; Lynn; (CO-SPONSORS)**

**Fasano; Wilson; King; Smith; Klein**

Suicide Prevention Statewide Office; creates Statewide Off. for Suicide Prevention in Executive Off. of Governor; creates position of statewide coordinator for statewide office, contingent upon specific appropriation; creates Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council within Statewide Off. for Suicide Prevention; creates interagency workgroup for state agencies within coordinating council in order to coordinate state agency plans for suicide prevention, etc. Creates 14.2019, 20195.

04/21/05 Passed all committees

04/22/05 SENATE Placed on Calendar, on second reading -SJ 00567

**05/06/05 SENATE Died on Calendar**

**H447 GENERAL BILL by H. Gibson; (CO-SPONSORS) Berfield; D. Davis; Harrell; Jennings; Mahon; Patterson; Porth**

Suicide Prevention Statewide Office; creates Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention in Drug Control Office; creates position of statewide coordinator for statewide office, contingent upon specific appropriation; creates Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council within Drug Control Office; creates interagency workgroup for state agencies within coordinating council in order to coordinate state agency plans for suicide prevention, etc. Creates 397.3335, 3336

02/23/05 Now in Governmental Operations Committee

03/08/05 1st Reading In Governmental Operations Committee

04/11/05 HOUSE On Committee agenda-- Governmental Operations (SAC),

04/13/05, 5:00 pm, Morris Hall --Temporarily deferred

**05/06/05 HOUSE Died in Committee on Governmental Operations (SAC) ??**

**Jeffrey Kottkamp (R) (District 74 - Cape Coral) was the Chairman of the SAC.**

**August 19 & 20, 2005**, individuals from Florida State agencies, members of the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition and others met at Camp Blanding, FL (Florida Army National Guard Camp) for two days of meetings. Discussions included; State and National updates, goals and strategies from the new State strategy, suicide prevention week activities, discussion of the upcoming Suicide Prevention Day at the Capitol - March 21, 2006 and other goals setting agendas to go from this meeting.



Some in attendance were; from FSPC - Laura Meyer-Chair, Teresa Tate, Pam Harrington, Judy Bousquet, Rene Barrett, Donna Cacciatore, Bonnie McClelland, Rene Favreau, Kay Doughty, Terry Smith and other organizations - Teresa Hays, Phyllis Law, Steve Wiggins, Gail Gregory, Anita Godfrey, Steve Roggenbaum. As special thanks to Capt Diana Travis of the Florida Army National Guard for hosting the meeting.

**2006 Legislative Session: FAILED on LAST DAY!**

**HB 527 - Last Event: 05/05/06 S Died in Messages**

**on Saturday, May 06, 2006 1:11 AM**

**SB 1008 - 05/05/06 SENATE Died on Calendar**

**[SB 1008] GENERAL BILL by Lynn**

Suicide Prevention; creates Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention in Executive Office of Governor; authorizes said office to seek & accept grants or funds from any source to support its operation; creates Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council within said office; creates interagency workgroup for state agencies within coordinating council in



order to coordinate state agency plans for suicide prevention, etc.  
 Creates 14.2019.,20195. APPROPRIATION: \$100,000. EFFECTIVE DATE:  
 07/01/2006.  
 12/02/05 SENATE Filed

[\[HB 527\]](#) - Suicide Prevention  
 GENERAL BILL by Gibson, H.

**Suicide Prevention:** Creates the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention within the Office of Drug Control; provides the goals and objectives of the office; creates the position of coordinator for the statewide office; specifies the education and experience requirements for the position of coordinator; details the duties and responsibilities of the coordinator; authorizes the office to accept grants and funds; creates the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council within the Office of Drug Control; provides the scope of activities for the coordinating council; creates an interagency workgroup for state agencies within the council to coordinate state agency plans for suicide prevention; authorizes the council to assemble an ad hoc committee to advise the council; provides for membership on and meetings of the council; provides for per diem and travel expenses.  
 Effective Date: July 1, 2006.

**March 21, 2006**, the fourth annual Florida Suicide Prevention Day at the Capitol was held in the Rotunda in partnership with the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition and the Governor's Florida Task Force on Suicide Prevention. Governor Jeb Bush and LT Governor Toni Jennings held a Press Conference. Governor Bush Proclaims March 21, 2006 as "**Florida Suicide Prevention Day - A Day to Focus on Suicide Prevention Awareness**". The Coalition set up tables and Quilts in the Rotunda of the Capitol and made visits to the Legislators with packets explaining the tragedy of suicide in Florida and in their respective communities. The members visited members of both the Senate and the House to push for the [\[SB 1008\]](#) and [\[HB 527\]](#), suicide prevention bills to create the Office Suicide Prevention Coordinator and a Suicide Prevention Council. Senator Evelyn Lynn and Representative Hugh Gibson sponsored the respective bills.

**October 10, 2006**, the Annual FSPC meeting was held at Camp Blanding in Starke, FL. Chair Dennis Ross presided.

**October 11, 2006**, a joint meeting of the Suicide Prevention Task Force and the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition was held. The meeting was to integrate efforts and break down the Florida Suicide Prevention Strategy into more manageable actions steps and disseminate responsibility statewide. Erin MacInnes of the Office of Drug Control managed the efforts.

**December 4, 2006**, a Suicide Prevention Task Force meeting was held at the Clearwater Hilton Beach Resort preceding the Symposium. Coalition members and anyone around the state who were interested were invited to attend. Following up from the Camp Blanding meeting, continuing work on the action plan based on the Florida Suicide Prevention Strategy.

**December 5-6, 2006**, [2006 Florida Suicide Prevention Symposium](#)  
[\[click here for complete details\]](#)  
 Erin MacInnes of the Office of Drug Control was in charge.