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April 2021 Newsletter

## FLORIDA SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION

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

### JOIN OR RENEW FSPC MEMBERSHIP!

Join  
or  
Renew  
your  
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/>

### FSPC 2021 ANNUAL MEETING

By Stephen Roggenbaum

*SAVE THE DATE - May 15, 2021 (time - TBD)*

The 2021 FSPC Annual Meeting will be online/virtual and is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, May 15. Additional details, notice of nominations, and election ballots will be emailed to current members in good standing over the next few weeks. NOTE: You must be a member in good standing of FSPC to hold office and to vote during the meeting - should a vote occur. However, FSPC non-members are welcome to listen and participate in discussions during the annual meeting.

### NEWSWORTHY

#### SUICIDE PREVENTION CONFERENCE IN ORLANDO & ONLINE

By The American Association of Suicidology (AAS)

Link: <https://www.aasconference.org/about>

The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) is proud to

host AAS21, its 54th Annual Conference, April 21 – 24, 2021. The conference will take place via a unique format - both in person in Orlando, FL at the Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista Hotel and also virtually for those across the globe. This hybrid approach will enable AAS to critically broaden its conference impact at such a pivotal time. At its annual conference, AAS provides the time and space for everyone - clinicians, researchers, those with lived experience, public health officials, and others - to connect and learn about ways in which we can all address the rising rate of suicide in the US and abroad while also discovering ways to create a world worth living in.

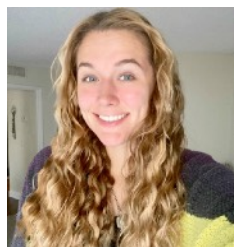


AAS21 will focus on blending diverse content, including new and innovative research and intervention practices. The conference will meet the needs of the field's diverse audience while convening world leaders in suicide prevention to spur robust conversations and to build collaborations to achieve our shared vision and goals. This year's conference will bring balance and stability to a field that has experienced a tremendous amount of change and growth in the last year, relying on the cross-pollination of specialties and expertise of attendees to break down barriers and silos that have traditionally stalled effective solutions. True, effective, public health and socially-focused suicide prevention requires everyone's voice to find a path forward, while continuing to recognizing the accomplishments of past science and research. The field must move from reactionary efforts to effective implementation of research, prevention, and treatment. For more information: <https://www.aasconference.org/about>



## CARING CONTACTS

By Beth Walters, BA, Centerstone Suicide Prevention Specialist



You matter. Believe in Yourself. These are some of the messages written on the caring contacts cards that are sent out monthly by Suicide Prevention Specialist Beth Walters from the Suicide Prevention Program at Centerstone. As a person with lived experience with suicide, Beth provides peer support for clients who join the program & are struggling with thoughts of suicide. Thwarted belongingness is a risk factor for those who struggle with suicidal ideation which often stems from a lack of connection to others or the world around them. By sending out monthly caring contacts, clients are more inclined to feel a sense of connection. The evidence based-practice of caring contacts was first introduced by psychiatrist Dr. Jerome Motto, who conducted a study from 1969 to 1974 sending caring letters to discharged patients from the San Francisco Hospital<sup>1</sup>. As a result of the study it was concluded that those in the post-discharge group who had received periodic caring letters were less likely to die by suicide. Currently Beth sends out over 50 handwritten caring contact cards each month to past and current clients enrolled with the suicide prevention program. The positive client response to staff has reinforced the conclusion of Motto's study. Clients have reported to staff that they keep the cards hanging on their refrigerator or wall, have called to say thank you, and some have even written their own responses via handwriting or electronically. A response email from a client reads: "I went to pick up my mail, and there it was the cutest card, saying I'm awesome. Thank you and Centerstone for thinking of me. It sure feels good knowing people care. God bless all." To quote Kevin Hines from an interview he did with CBS "I could not reach out. I needed someone to reach in<sup>2</sup>." A four by four card may only weigh an ounce, but the weight of the impact it has on a person's life is immeasurable.



<sup>1</sup> <https://sparq.stanford.edu/solutions/caring-letters-prevent-suicide>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/reaching-out-how-caring-letters-help-in-suicide-prevention/>

## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

### MAYIM BIALIK HAS STRAIGHT TALK, HONEST ADVICE ON HANDLING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

*In her new podcast series, The Big Bang Theory actress, who holds a doctorate in neuroscience, breaks down questions about mental health in a world still coping with COVID.*

By Connie Guglielmo (CNET), 2/22/21

Link: <https://www.cnet.com/news/mayim-bialik-has-straight-talk-honest-advice-on-handling-your-mental-health/?ftag=CAD090e536&bhid=22995054989242896055597906335194&mid=13276268&cid=534608072>

With a million followers on YouTube and a strong fan following thanks to her work as an actor on popular shows including The Big Bang Theory, Blossom and a new 2021 Fox sitcom called Call Me Kat, Mayim Bialik decided to use her reach -- and her doctorate in neuroscience -- to share what she knows about mental health.

"During the quarantine, I realized that many people who had already been struggling with mental health challenges were seeing an increase in those challenges," Bialik, the mother of two boys, said in an interview for CNET's Now What? series.

"And many people who had previously never really acknowledged or experienced mental health challenges all of a sudden were saying, 'What is this feeling?' 'What is happening?' 'Why can't I sleep?' 'Why can't I eat?' 'Why do I have racing, scary thoughts?' Many people were asking me the difference between anxiety attacks and panic attacks during last year."



Click on link above to read entire article about the new podcast.

### SUICIDE RATES DECLINE FOR FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE

By CDC (summary from Center for Disease Control and Prevention)

Link: [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7008a1.htm?s\\_cid=mm7008a1\\_w&ACSTrackingID=DM50168&ACSTrackingLabel=2019%20Suicide%20Rates%20Decline%20and%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Efforts%20\\_DM50168&deliveryName=DM50168](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7008a1.htm?s_cid=mm7008a1_w&ACSTrackingID=DM50168&ACSTrackingLabel=2019%20Suicide%20Rates%20Decline%20and%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Efforts%20_DM50168&deliveryName=DM50168)

The CDC report (*MMWR and Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*) indicates that from 2018 to 2019, the overall suicide rate declined significantly by 2.1% (14.2 per 100,000 population to 13.9); among females, the rate declined by 3.2% (6.2 to 6.0) and among males by 1.8% (22.8 to 22.4). This decline is a great milestone but there is still much to be done!

#### *A What is already known about this topic?*

Suicide is preventable. In 2019, approximately 47,500 lives were attributed to suicide. From 2018 to 2019, the suicide rate declined for the first time in more than a decade.

#### *What is added by this report?*

Suicide rates declined overall by 2.1%, among females by 3.2%, and among males by 1.8%, as well as in five states, certain demographic groups, & by certain mechanisms of suicide; however, disparities persist.

#### *What are the implications for public health practice?*

To build on 2019 progress, CDC's Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices supports a comprehensive approach to prevention. Implementing such an approach, especially in disproportionately affected populations (e.g., American Indian/Alaska Natives), is needed in all states.



Stone DM, Jones CM, Mack KA. Changes in Suicide Rates — United States, 2018–2019. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021;70:261–268. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7008a1>

*Click on link above to read or download full report.*

## STATE OF STATE, TERRITORIAL, AND TRIBAL SUICIDE PREVENTION

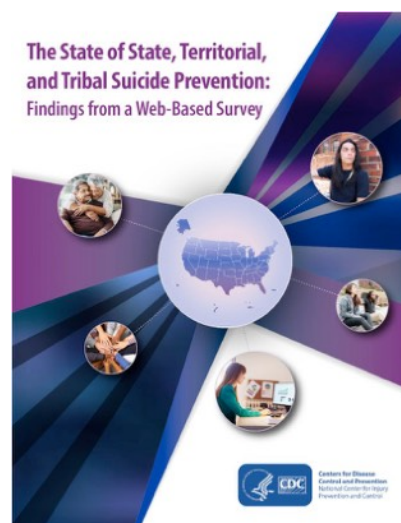
By CDC (Key Findings from Center for Disease Control and Prevention)

Link: [https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/resources/sos.html?](https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/resources/sos.html?ACSTrackingID=DM50168&ACSTrackingLabel=2019%20Suicide%20Rates%20Decline%20and%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Efforts%20_DM50168&deliveryName=DM50168)

[ACSTrackingID=DM50168&ACSTrackingLabel=2019%20Suicide%20Rates%20Decline%20and%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Efforts%20\\_DM50168&deliveryName=DM50168](https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/resources/sos.html?ACSTrackingID=DM50168&ACSTrackingLabel=2019%20Suicide%20Rates%20Decline%20and%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Efforts%20_DM50168&deliveryName=DM50168)

The suicide prevention landscape across states, territories, and a selection of tribes and tribal organizations depicts a diverse array of existing suicide prevention infrastructure, capacity, partnerships, prevention activities, and overall progress towards our national goal to reduce suicide rates by 20% by 2025.

- 90% of states, 75% of territories, and 33% of tribes had a suicide prevention plan.
- For states, champions receiving the highest average activity rating were nonprofit organizations and survivors of suicide loss; these champions were also rated the most influential.
- Six states (12%) said it was “somewhat likely” and none said, “very likely” that they could reach the national goal for suicide reduction of 25% by 2025.
- 37% of states reported state funding  $\leq$ \$100,000, including 11 states (22%) that reported no state appropriations.
- 81% of states and 50% of territories reported increased awareness of suicide prevention as a public health issue as a key facilitator to suicide prevention. The facilitator reported most frequently by tribes was federal funding dedicated to suicide prevention (42%).
- 73% of states and one-third of tribes identified a lack of surveillance resources as a barrier.
- 88% of states and 50% of territories reported insufficient funding as barriers.



The report highlights gaps across all the above domains and suggests key areas for improvement, including a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention inclusive of strong infrastructure, multi-sectoral partnerships, and implementation and evaluation of prevention strategies with the best available evidence.

*Click on link above to read or download full report.*

## WHAT'S HAPPENING



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

May 6, 2021 (10 am - 5 pm). *4th annual Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day symposium* (Free). National Council on aging, US Administration for Community Living, and Substance Abuse and mental Health Services administration. <https://www.ncoa.org/event/4th-annual-older-adult-mental-health-awareness-day-symposium/>

Check Florida's Statewide Office of Suicide Prevention's Event's Calendar for more of What's Happening statewide. <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/prevention/suicide-prevention/index.shtml>



## 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 Fun*. Dedicated to the mental health and emotional well-being of students of color. <https://www.stevfund.org/>

## SUPPORT FSPC WHEN YOU SHOP ONLINE



Donate 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

Please submit news, events, poems, & writings for FSPC Newsletter inclusion consideration. Be sure to follow safe messaging guidelines. Email Steve Roggenbaum, Vice Chair, [roggenba@usf.edu](mailto:roggenba@usf.edu)

## FSPC MEMBERSHIP

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