



FSPC Officers

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R5 Jody Smith
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May 2021 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/>

FSPC 2021 ANNUAL MEETING

By Stephen Roggenbaum

SAVE THE DATE - May 15, 2021 (11:00 am EST)

The 2021 FSPC Annual Meeting will be through conference call capacity and is scheduled for Saturday, May 15 at 11:00 am EST. Additional details, notice of 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. However, FSPC non-members are welcome to listen and participate in discussions during the annual meeting. *Dial in number: 712-770-3822*
Access code: 604133#

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

By Mental Health America (MHA)

Link: <https://mhanational.org/get-involved/download-2021-mental-health-month-toolkit>

Since 1949, Mental Health America and its affiliates across the country have observed *May is Mental Health Month* by reaching out to millions of people through the media, local events, and screenings. MHA invites other organizations to join them in spreading the word that mental health is something

everyone should care about by using the *May is Mental Health Month* toolkit materials and conducting awareness activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health of people of all ages. Now, more than ever, it is critical to reduce the stigma around mental health struggles, because that stigma often prevents individuals from seeking help.

In 2021, we will continue with our theme of *Tools 2 Thrive*, providing practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase their resiliency regardless of their personal situation.

Our toolkit includes sample materials for communications and social media as well as printable handouts on the following topics:

- Adapting after trauma and stress
- Dealing with anger and frustration
- Getting out of thinking traps
- Processing big changes
- Taking time for yourself
- Radical acceptance

7TH ANNUAL SPECIAL MEMORIAL CEREMONY

By Ellsworth "Tony" Williams, CEO for Veterans Counseling Veterans INC. Veterans Counseling Veterans invites you to their *7th annual Special Memorial Ceremony* for families who've lost a veteran to suicide. This event will be virtual and can be seen on Veterans Counseling Veterans Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/veteranscounselingveterans> and LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ellsworth-tony-williams-4961b414/> The event will be on May 22, 2021 and start at 11:00 AM and end with the playing of taps at 12:30 PM.



WALK WITH MIKE: SUICIDE PREVENTION WALK ALONG THE PINELLAS TRAIL

Link: www.pemhs.org

On Wednesday, May 26th John Sammel is embarking on a journey. He is walking the entire Pinellas Trail to help raise awareness for mental illness and the countless people who are suffering from depression, PTSD, anxiety and OCD. He plans to hike the entire 50.1 miles trail in one day. He chose this challenge because it will be an “opportunity for me to listen to with my heart, so that I can carry on the tradition of what it means to be a good friend.”

Departing at 5 a.m. from 1st Ave SE & Bayshore Drive in St. Pete on May 26th - rain or shine!

100% of the proceeds will be donated to Personal Enrichment Through Mental Health Services of Pinellas County (PEMHS) in honor of Mike Polasky, John’s good friend who recently took his own life. His goal is to raise \$5,000.

Walk With Mike. John’s journey will begin in St. Petersburg and end at the Pasco County line. Feel free to run, walk or ride beside John on May 26th. There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up. Donate at https://www.gofundme.com/f/walking-with-mike?utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet&utm_medium=copy_link_all&utm_source=customer

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

FLORIDA SCHOOL TOOLKIT FOR K-12 EDUCATORS TO PREVENT SUICIDE

By Scott Poland, Licensed Psychologist, Director of the Suicide & Violence Prevention Office, Nova Southeastern University

Link: <https://www.nova.edu/publications/florida-toolkit/2021/florida-school-toolkit-educators-to-prevent-suicide/6/>

Florida School Toolkit for K-12 Educators to Prevent Suicide

The Florida STEPS School Toolkit for Educators to Prevent Suicide: STEPS is designed to assist all educators public and private in K to 12 schools to prevent youth suicide. The information and tools in STEPS may be used in any way to help educators in their essential work to prevent suicide. Suicide is now the second leading cause of death nationally for students 10 years and older and a dramatic rise in suicide rates has occurred for middle school age youth. Additionally many Florida students experienced isolation with only virtual instruction due the pandemic. Isolation and lack of connections is strongly associated with suicide. It must also be recognized that many Florida students lost a loved to COVID-19 and/or their family experienced financial

hardship. Suicide prevention in the Florida school has never been more important. STEPS was developed by Dr. Scott Poland with the assistance of Catherine Ivey a NSU doctoral candidate and many prominent Florida educators were interviewed about suicide prevention in schools. Dr. Poland has a long background having personally worked full-time in Texas schools for 26 years and has made suicide prevention in schools his highest priority. He currently trains school psychologists and school counselors in crisis intervention at NSU Florida.

STEPS contains the most recent data about suicidal thoughts and plans for Florida secondary students and provides an overview of relevant Florida legislation. Additionally STEPS, in its 186 pages, emphasizes the vast majority of youth suicides can be prevented and debunks the myths that surround suicide. STEPS is divided into three primary sections prevention, intervention and postvention and contains more than 30 tools for schools to utilize.

Click on link above to read or download The Florida STEPS School Toolkit for Educators to Prevent Suicide.

WHO IS THE STATEWIDE OFFICE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION?

By Anna Gai, MS, Director of the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention, Florida Department of Children and Families

Link: <https://www.myffamilies.com/service-programs/samh/prevention/suicide-prevention/>



My name is Anna Gai, and I started as the director of Florida's Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention (SOSP) in August of 2020. Immediately prior, I was the assistant director of the Florida State University (FSU) Psychology Clinic and operating as a full-time graduate student in the FSU Clinical Psychology PhD program. With the mentorship and advisement of Dr. Thomas Joiner, my research focused on better understanding suicide-related experiences among special populations. Within my current role, my overall mission is to bridge the gap between science and practice, utilizing my research and clinical foundation to inform and guide policy implementation and approach of activities in the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention.

Helping me in this mission is our suicide prevention specialist, Amanda Regis. Amanda joined the SOSP in February 2021. Prior to joining DCF, Amanda worked with local behavioral health agencies in Tampa, providing services to individuals with serious mental illness and those with dual diagnoses.

Together, Amanda and I work to propagate suicide prevention efforts across the state of Florida as guided by the 2020 – 2023 Florida Suicide Prevention Interagency Action Plan. We are grateful to FSPC in allowing the SOSP the opportunity to share updates and information on the activities of the SOSP within their monthly newsletter. For more information on the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention and for resources, please visit our webpage: <https://www.myffamilies.com/service-programs/samh/prevention/suicide-prevention/>

Reminder! The Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council Quarterly Challenge is to spread the facts: Asking and talking about suicide may reduce, rather than increase, suicidal ideation.

Click on link above to visit the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention website.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



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/>

May 22, 2021, (11:00 am to 12:30 pm) Veterans Counseling Veterans' *7th annual Special Memorial Ceremony* for families who've lost a veteran to suicide. Virtual event. <https://www.facebook.com/veteranscounselingveterans> (see article above)

May 26, 2021 (5:00 am until completed) *Walk with Mike: Suicide Prevention Walk along the Pinellas Trail*. Begins in St. Petersburg and ends at the Pasco County line, the entire 50.1 miles trail in one day. 100% of the proceeds will be donated to Personal Enrichment Through Mental Health Services of Pinellas County (PEMHS) in honor of Mike Polasky (see article above).

August 18-20, 2021. Save The Date. The Florida Behavioral Health Association's *Florida Behavioral Health Conference* at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek, Orlando. In-Person information - <https://www.bhcon.org/event/a09c7d2f-c264-4dae-b9f9-1ea81f924ab2/websitePage:3b5bb8d5-3593-4919-a8e1-776d89311731> and

Virtual attendee details - <https://www.bhcon.org/event/a09c7d2f-c264-4dae-b9f9-1ea81f924ab2/websitePage:b776f26e-b03a-473e-9da6-3f5cc8016492>

Check Florida's Statewide Office of Suicide Prevention's Event's Calendar for more of What's Happening statewide. <https://www.myffamilies.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://suicidgrief.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://suicidgriefresources.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.myffamilies.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/>

SUPPORT FSPC WHEN YOU SHOP ONLINE

 **You shop. Amazon gives.** Donate 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

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

FSPC MEMBERSHIP

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

HEALING AFTER A SUICIDE LOSS

01

There is no time limit on healing

You do not need to "prove" that you loved the person who has died. It is okay to heal and it does not mean you love the person any less. Your healing journey is yours and may not be the same as someone else's.

