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March 2023 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; get involved, volunteer with local & state FSPC activities; & obtain reduced registration at FSPC events. To join or find out when your renewal is due, please contact

Myrtice Landers, FSPC Treasurer

(floridasuicideprevention@gmail.com). Membership info:

<http://floridasuicideprevention.org/membership/>

FLORIDA STATEWIDE SUICIDE PREVENTION CONFERENCE DEEMED SUCCESS (FEBRUARY 20-21, 2023)

Source: Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition

FSPC's 7th Florida Taking Action for Suicide Prevention Conference (conference) was hosted at Hyatt Place Tampa Wesley Chapel on Monday and Tuesday, February 20 & 21, 2023. The FSPC conference hosted over 140 registered attendees from around Florida.



Over half of attendees registered for one of FSPC's three pre-conference workshops on Monday morning, February 20, 2023 were will attended with lots of information sharing. Check out pictures from the event at the end of the newsletter.

PROMISING RESEARCH SUPPORTS REDUCED SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Source: Leah Kuntz, Psychiatric Times, September 20, 2022

Link: <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/reading-first-hand->

[stories-may-help-reduce-suicidal-thoughts](#)

Partial information below from website: (click on link above to read full article)

Reading First-Hand Stories May Help Reduce Suicidal Thoughts.

Can reading an online story a day by someone with lived experience managing suicidal thoughts reduce your patient's suicidal thoughts and behaviors? New research says yes.



Investigators at Montefiore-Einstein, Harvard University, and The Mighty — an online community that connects people facing health challenges — challenged the notion that social media is harmful to mental health with their findings, “[Digital Bibliotherapy as a Scalable Intervention for Suicidal Thoughts: A Randomized Controlled Trial.](#)” published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*.¹ In a randomized-controlled trial of digital bibliotherapy, investigators found evidence that social connection and shared experience had potential in lowering suicidal thoughts.

“What we’ve learned gives us a new line of attack in this long-standing public health crisis: an easy way to address key psychological factors, such as loneliness and hopelessness, that lead people to think about ending their lives,” said study lead Peter J. Franz, PhD, of Montefiore Medical Center. “It takes 10 minutes or less each day to read a story, yet digital narrative-based bibliotherapy makes a measurable difference, which may have a protective effect against suicidal thoughts and behaviors. This could be layered into complementary therapies. And it’s as highly scalable as the internet, able to reach millions of people simply and cost-effectively.”

“Bibliotherapy is well-established as a way to treat psychological distress, but this was the first randomized-controlled trial of digital narrative-based bibliotherapy for those struggling with suicidal thoughts and behaviors—and the first using content generated organically by users,” said Matt Nock, PhD, Chair of Harvard’s department of psychology. “This is a potentially important piece in the suicide-prevention puzzle. And, because mental health impacts overall health and vice-versa, these findings may be useful in addressing a broad range of conditions, particularly those involving feelings of isolation or hard-to-discuss subject matter.”

TAKE ACTION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention and Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council have teamed up to create a series of concerted effort by all members and with our community support and participation hope to make a difference in Florida. These Action Steps are often referred to as a Quarterly Challenge (since each action is the focus for three months).

The current Action Step which everyone can support and join is to help build capacity, our own knowledge (receive training). Try to complete your personal action step (see below) by the end of March.



Take a suicide prevention training: Virtual Youth Suicide prevention trainings are offered free of charge and through Talkable Communities.

To learn how to register for an event and further information on suicide in Florida, visit:

www.myffamilies.com/suicideprevention

STATEWIDE OFFICE OF SUICIDE PREVENTION HIGHLIGHTS RESOURCES

By Anna Sever, M.S., Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention, Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Florida Department of Children and Families

Link: <http://www.myffamilies.com/service-programs/samh/prevention/suicide-prevention/index.shtml>



Decreasing the Stigma Associated with Suicide:

Promote safe messaging: Please use safe messaging, replacing terms like “committed suicide” or “completed suicide” with “died by suicide”. This helps us think about suicide in the same way as any other health condition like dying from cancer or heart disease rather than a moral problem, choice, goal to achieve, or a crime. Using safe messaging promotes help seeking behavior and respect for the individuals who are currently battling suicidal ideation, have lost their lives to suicide, as well as their families and loved ones.

More information on safe messaging can be found here: [Suicide Prevention - Florida Department of Children and Families \(myflfamilies.com\)](https://www.myflfamilies.com/suicideprevention)

Sharing Available Resources and Upcoming Suicide Prevention Events:

Ensure that all of the great work done in our state is not siloed, yet we are funneling a comprehensive listing of suicide prevention trainings and events. The Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention is working



to ensure that this information is regularly updated. Please see the instructions on the suicide prevention website at <https://www.myflfamilies.com/suicideprevention> if you have an upcoming suicide prevention event that you would like to share across the state.

Resources for individuals experiencing a suicidal crisis

If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255/ 988.

Text **HOME** to 741741 to be connected to a trained Crisis Counselor at the Crisis Text Line.

To reach the Florida Veterans Support Line, dial 1-844-693-5838

To learn more about resources available in schools, visit www.fldoe.org/mental-health

For suicide prevention resources, visit <https://www.myflfamilies.com/suicideprevention>

Follow the hashtag #StopSuicideFL on social media to learn about statewide suicide prevention activities and initiatives.

SAMHSA RELEASES NEWLY REFRESHED & IMPROVED [FINDTREATMENT.GOV](https://www.findtreatment.gov) WEBSITE



Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

By Stephen Roggenbaum, FSPC Chair

The site is built to be the most comprehensive resource for persons seeking treatment for mental and substance use disorders. [FindTreatment.gov](https://www.findtreatment.gov) offers you the ability to:

- Search for treatment from multiple sources such as certified substance use & mental health treatment facilities, opioid treatment programs, buprenorphine practitioners, & health care centers
- Access an interactive map and search filters to tailor treatment options.
- Search for a facility by entering address, cit, state, zip code or facility name
- Download printer-friendly search results including facility location (i.e., phone number, address, website, etc.)

Check out the website for yourself.

FREE YOUTH SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION TRAINING

Source: Talkable Communities

Website: <https://www.talkablecommunities.org/>



Talkable Communities offers free virtual and in-person training on youth suicide prevention. Three various trainings target different groups: QPR (Questions, Persuade, Refer.) for everyone; It’s Time to Talk about it! (ITTAI) for families and adults who interact with young people; and Youth mental Health

First Aid (YMHFA) for adults who work or interact with young people. The organization focusses on six Florida counties in the Northeast (Clay, Duval, Flager, Nassau, Putnam, & St. Johns) but you could be anywhere in Florida (or the USA) for free virtual trainings.

Suicide prevention trainings are offered free of charge and virtually through Talkable Communities. Become trained in the new year. Visit the following link to learn more about how to register for a training, <https://www.talkablecommunities.org/>

STARTING JANUARY 17, VETERANS IN SUICIDAL CRISIS CAN GO TO ANY VA OR NON-VA HEALTH CARE FACILITY FOR FREE EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE

Source: Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (FDVA)

Website: https://floridavets.org/starting-jan-17-veterans-in-suicidal-crisis-can-go-to-any-va-or-non-va-health-care-facility-for-free-emergency-health-care/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Partial information from website: (click on link above to read full article)

WASHINGTON – Starting Jan. 17, Veterans in acute suicidal crisis will be able to go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for emergency health care at no cost – including inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days. Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to use this benefit.

This expansion of care will help prevent Veteran suicide by guaranteeing no cost, world-class care to Veterans in times of crisis. It will also increase access to acute suicide care for up to 9 million Veterans who are not currently enrolled in VA.

Preventing Veteran suicide is VA's top clinical priority and a top priority of the Biden-Harris Administration. This effort is a key part of VA's 10-year *National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide* and the Biden-Harris administration's plan for *Reducing Military and Veteran Suicide*. In September, VA released the *2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report*, which showed that Veteran suicides decreased in 2020 for the second year in a row, and that fewer Veterans died by suicide in 2020 than in any year since 2006.

- “Veterans in suicidal crisis can now receive the free, world-class emergency health care they deserve – no matter where they need it, when they need it, or whether they’re enrolled in VA care,” said VA Secretary for Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough. “This expansion of care will save Veterans’ lives, and there’s nothing more important than that.”

SPEAK UP: LET’S TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH



By Dawn Handley, President Speak Up: Let's Talk About Mental Health

Website: <https://www.speakupformentalhealth.org/>

Speak Up: Let's Talk About Mental Health is a non-profit organization that was founded to honor Scott Handley's memory. Scott was a son, a brother and a friend. He was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 2020 at the age of 23 and struggled with his illness for ten years. In February of 2020, at the age of 33 he died by suicide.

As Scott's mother, I quickly discovered how broken our mental health care system was by trying to find quality care and to be an advocate for his care. I learned how much stigma there was surrounding mental illness and later suicide. There are no words to describe how difficult it was to see my smart, handsome and kind son struggle with voices that were real to him and not be able to find a cure for him. After he made his decision to die by suicide, I found that I needed a purpose and a way to honor his life and our family started Speak Up.

Speak Up: Let's Talk About Mental Health works with youth community centers, Chamber of Commerces, Parks and Recreations Departments, schools, PTA groups, and many others to educate youth and adults on mental illness and suicide awareness. We partner with other organizations, such as NAMI

and Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) to bring programs to the youth of our communities. One of our goals is to remove the stigma of both mental illness and suicide by offering town hall meetings and programs to share our story and teach people how to use the right words as well as how to recognize signs that someone may need help. I personally work with Law Enforcement Officers during their CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) training to share Scott's and mine interaction with non-CIT and CiT officers and educate the officers how to interact with someone in a mental health crisis. We also advocate to our state delegates to increase funding for mental health and suicide awareness programs. Speak Up started the first north Pinellas County Support Group for those who have lost someone to suicide. We have local fundraisers that are unique to raise money for our programs. One of our long term goals is to purchase at least one mental health crisis dog for the Sheriff's office to take on their mental health crisis calls.



It is important to address this crisis in our society and to make a difference by saving lives and offering resources to those who have lost someone to suicide. Please visit our website speakupformentalhealth.org to learn more about us and what we do. We look forward to partnering with FSPC.

YOU CAN DIAL 9-8-8 FOR A MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

The three-digit code is like 911, but for mental health emergencies

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Website: <https://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/press-announcements/20220715/us-transition-988-suicide-crisis-lifeline-begins-saturday>

On July 16, the 10-digit National Suicide Prevention Lifeline transitioned to 988—an easy-to-remember 3-digit number for 24/7 crisis care. The lifeline, which also links to the Veterans Crisis Line, follows a three-year joint effort by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to put crisis care more in reach for people in need.

WHAT'S HAPPENING - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



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

RESOURCES



If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call **9-8-8** or 1-800-273- 8255 (*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline*).

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

Veteran's Crisis Line **9-8-8** or 1-800-273- 8255, **press 1** & <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition Facebook/Meta page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/997344794378650>

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 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.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/>

Supporting Children who are Grieving a Death by Suicide Toolkit at <https://nacg.org/resource-library/>

Naseha Muslim Mental Health Hotline: 1-866-627-3342 (available 9AM – 6PM PST)

AMALA Muslim Youth Hopeline: 1-855-952-6252 (available 6PM – 10PM PST except Tuesdays & Thursdays)

Find a *Muslim Mental Health Provider* in your area here: <https://muslimmentalhealth.com/directory/>

Muslim informational toolkits: <https://www.thefyi.org/toolkits/>

To access *Muslim Suicide Response Trainings and Manual*: Maristan.org

Resources on AAS website for people with *Autism*: <https://suicidology.org/resources/autism-resources/>

FSPC NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

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

FSPC MEMBERSHIP

New FSPC Membership or Renewal information available online at:

<http://floridasuicideprevention.org/membership>

FLORIDA STATEWIDE SUICIDE PREVENTION CONFERENCE: BRIEF PICTURE REVIEW



