

There is Help, There is Hope: Save a Life by Recognizing the Suicide Warning Signs

by Richard Egan



September is designated as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Did you know Nevada currently has the sixth highest suicide rate in the nation? Thanks to local and statewide efforts, Nevada has been gradually reducing its suicide rate. We are achieving this through a tiered system of awareness training throughout the state, including conferences, awareness walks and suicide prevention training.

Because there is help, there is hope. We want to make sure individuals struggling with thoughts of suicide and the friends and families doing their best to support them have access to resources and services that can make a difference. The concerted efforts of the Nevada Coalition for Suicide Prevention, the Office of Suicide Prevention, the many local task forces and coalitions across the state via hosting events and providing vital information help make Nevada a healthier, safer place to live. You could be the difference between life or death for a person who needs help.

The First Step: Awareness

The most critical factor in suicide prevention is recognizing the warning signs. This important first step, awareness, requires first learning and recognizing the warning signs. That's why we need our community members to be trained

to address suicidal behaviors and symptoms. For example, training is being offered in safeTALK, a suicide alertness program. Additionally, suicide intervention training is offered through ASIST. You can find more information about these programs at our website: www.nvsuicideprevention.org or www.suicideprevention.nv.gov.

Mental health concerns are a factor in 60 – 70 percent of all suicides. Additionally, more teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza and chronic lung disease COMBINED. Think about that. To address this segment of the population, we have added Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) and Adult Mental Health First Aid (AMHFA) classes. It is crucial that we reach those at-risk populations and help them cope with their issues in a healthy manner.

Take the Next Step: Walk in Memory – Walk of Hope

On Saturday, Sept. 10, the Nevada Coalition for Suicide Prevention is hosting the 10th annual Walk in Memory – Walk of Hope in 14 Nevada locations. We encourage you to take part in this event to help us continue to raise awareness for our suicide prevention efforts. Please go to www.nvsuicideprevention.org to see how you can get involved.

Get Involved

You can learn more about these and many more initiatives at Nevada Coalition for Suicide Prevention's website. Or, feel free to contact Richard Egan directly at 702-486-8225 or e-mail at regan@health.nv.gov.

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