

# Office of Suicide Prevention Newsletter

With Help Comes Hope

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## Maryland's 33rd Annual Suicide Prevention Conference

In its 33rd year, Maryland's Annual Suicide Prevention Conference will be held virtually on October 6. The theme of this year's conference, "Connecting, Responding, and Recovering," calls on the shared responsibility of suicide prevention and encourages Marylanders to effect change by connecting and working collaboratively with others in various roles. Keynote speaker, Dr. Rheeda Walker, is a University of Houston professor, psychologist, and leading expert in African American mental health. Her presentation will debunk myths about mental health, build the case for psychological fortitude, and deliver practical advice for use in everyday life. The plenary panelists are prominent researchers and innovative leaders in suicide prevention at the National Institute of mental Health (NIMH). See our [website](#) for more information.



## Youth Suicide is Preventable

Teen suicide is a growing health concern. It is the second-leading cause of death for young people ages 10 to 24, surpassed only by accidents, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The challenges of adolescence, a time marked with significant cognitive, mental, emotional, and social change, coupled with the challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic, have been overwhelming for some. Some are at greater risk due to predisposing vulnerabilities such as mental disorders, institutionalized racism, and food instability. Other examples of stressors associated with suicide risk include disciplinary problems, interpersonal losses, family violence, sexual orientation confusion, physical and sexual abuse, and being the victim of bullying. According to a recent CDC study, there was a 31% increase in the proportion of mental health-related emergency department visits for youth aged 12–17 years during 2020 as compared to 2019. CDC data also showed increased rates of suicide ideation and suicide attempts in 2020 during COVID-19 as compared with 2019 rates. Youth suicide prevention is preventable. Despite how common thoughts of suicide and attempts are among youth, there is a great deal known about prevention as well as caring for youth and communities after an attempt or death. Parents, guardians, family members, friends, teachers, school administrators, coaches, extracurricular activity leaders, mentors, service providers, and many others can play a role in preventing suicide and supporting youth. See this [Suicide Prevention Resource Center \(SPRC\) article](#) for resources.

**Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people ages 10-24, and has been increasing every year since 2007.**

## Talk to Kids When They Need Help

Teachers and parents are often the first line of support for kids and teenagers. Kids and teens tend to internalize their feelings. They may not always speak up and ask for support. Sometimes, they don't realize that help is available. It's essential for parents and teachers to be able to detect when something is wrong and how to approach your kids and teens. [Read the article.](#)



## 2nd Annual Racism and Mental Health Symposium

Coming this fall, we are proud to present our 2nd Annual Racism and Mental Health Symposium. This virtual event is hosted by the Maryland Department of Health Suicide Prevention Office and is co-sponsored by the Black Mental Health Alliance and the Institute for Healing. This year's theme is "The Time is Always Now," inspired by the quote from author, James Baldwin: "There is never time in the future in which we will work out our salvation. The challenge is in the moment; the time is always now." The conversation continues with a renewed focus on the intersections of mental

health, trauma, systemic racism, diversity and cultural humility. The keynote speaker is Dr. Theopia Jackson, the President of the Association of Black Psychologists. Join us this November, as we welcome innovative research, stimulating discussion, new workshops, and celebrated speakers on this journey to an equitable and anti-racist future. You can find [archived presentations](#) and [recordings](#) from our First Racism and Mental Health Symposium on our [website](#). Stay tuned for more registration details by signing up for our [bi-weekly newsletter](#).

## Best Practices in Care Transitions for Individuals with Suicide Risk: Inpatient Care to Outpatient Care

To help close these gaps that put individuals at increased risk for suicide after psychiatric hospitalization, the Action Alliance (Care Transitions Advisory Group) developed Best Practices in Care Transitions for Individuals with Suicide Risk: Inpatient Care to Outpatient Care Report.

[Access the resource](#)



# Updates from the Field

## Researchers reveal new suicide prevention tools from survivor

This article discusses new tools developed by those with lived experience of suicide. These tools highlight the efficacy and the importance of peer support and storytelling in preventing suicide deaths. [Read more.](#)

## Care Transitions Podcast Series

The Care Transitions Podcast Series highlights brief conversations with health care and lived experience experts across the United States. Each podcast focuses on a single facet of quality care transitions. Care Transitions is a rich and varied area of suicide prevention. Podcast topics cover a broad range of best practices, evidence-based strategies, innovations, practical examples, and the personal impact of care transitions.

[Access the resource](#)

## Addressing Structural Racism and Inequities in Depression Care

This Viewpoint proposes actionable, multilevel recommendations to address racism and promote mental health equity based on a real-world clinical vignette. [Read more.](#)

## Racial/Ethnic Disparities in the Performance of Prediction Models for Death by Suicide After Mental Health Visits

This diagnostic/prognostic study of outpatient mental health visits evaluates racial/ethnic differences in the performance of statistical models that predict suicide. [Read more.](#)

## Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices

Suicide prevention requires a comprehensive public health approach. Learn suicide prevention strategies that range from those designed to support people at increased risk to a focus on the whole population, regardless of risk.

Download and read [here.](#)

## Association Between Gender-Affirming Surgeries and Mental Health Outcomes

This study evaluates associations between gender-affirming surgeries and mental health outcomes, including psychological distress, substance use, and suicide risk. [Read more.](#)



Get connected. Get help.  
Call 211, press 1



## Need to Talk?

Maryland's Helpline offers 24/7 call, chat, and text support for Marylanders in need of help, guidance, and information related to a behavioral health concern. Trained call specialists can provide crisis intervention, risk assessment for suicide, homicide or overdose prevention, and assistance linking to community behavioral health providers and accessing community resources. To get connected to Maryland's Helpline, call 211 and press 1, text your zip code to 898-211, or visit 211md.org.

# Data Snapshot

## Suicides by Jump/Fall from Bridges in Maryland

This technical assistance package is a compilation of suicide fatalities recorded by the Maryland Violent Death Reporting System (MVDRS) from 2003-2018.

Jump/fall suicides can be associated with a variety of elevated structures, including residential buildings, parking garages, or natural features.

Of the 8,712 suicide deaths over the past five years, 305 were jumps or falls, accounting for 3.5% of total suicide deaths.

[More Information](#)

# Announcements

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

BHA has released FAQ guides to help behavioral health treatment providers navigate challenges brought on by COVID-19. The FAQs can be found on [BHA's coronavirus webpage](#), along with additional mental health and substance use resources. For more about COVID-19 visit [covidlink.maryland.gov](https://covidlink.maryland.gov), and for the latest COVID-19 data for Maryland visit [coronavirus.maryland.gov](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov).

## Governor's Commission 2021

The 2021 Commission meeting schedule is available, and you can look at past meeting agendas and minutes.

There are two vacant seats on the Commission:

- High school Student in their Junior or Senior Year
- Family Member of an individual who has died by suicide

If you or someone you know is interested, apply [here](#).

## Sign Up to Receive the Bi-Weekly Scoop

Every Friday, we send out the Bi-Weekly Scoop with news about our program, training opportunities, new research from the field, and more. Sign up [here](#).



# Events

## OCTOBER

10/06/2021	The 33rd Annual Suicide Prevention Conference	<a href="#">Information</a>
10/07/2021	QPR Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention Training	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/07/2021	Staten Island Suicide Network, Suicide Safe Sites, Zero Suicide Initiative	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/09/2021	Fight the Stigma Conference	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/13/2021	Networks for Life-Youth Suicide Prevention	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/14/2021	NAMI Family Support Group	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/15/2021	Suicide Prevention Training for the Military Affiliated Population	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/17/2021	Burgers and Bands for Suicide Prevention	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/20/2021	QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention Training	<a href="#">Register</a>
10/28/2021	NAMI Family Support Group	<a href="#">Register</a>

## NOVEMBER

11/02/2021	Implementing and Sustaining an Integrated Crisis System in the Baltimore Region	<a href="#">Information</a>
11/09/2021	Psychotherapy for Suicidal and Self-Harming Individuals on Telehealth: Practical Applications from a Dialectical Behavior Therapy Program	<a href="#">Information</a>
11/16/2021	Suicide and Online Life: Gaming, Social Media and more	<a href="#">Information</a>
11/17/2021	Governor's Commission for Suicide Prevention Meeting	<a href="#">Information</a>
11/30/2021	Studying Universal Suicide Prevention in Schools: the Teen Mental Health First Aid USA program	<a href="#">Information</a>

## DECEMBER

12/02/2021	Staten Island Suicide Network, Suicide Safe Sites, Zero Suicide Initiative	<a href="#">Register</a>
12/07/2021	S.A.V.E. Suicide Prevention Training	<a href="#">Register</a>
12/07/2021	Trauma-Informed Suicide Prevention: Counseling on Access to Lethal Means	<a href="#">Register</a>
12/07/2021	Talking about Suicide: Ten Tools - online training for Anyone	<a href="#">Register</a>
12/08/2021	The 2nd Annual Racism and Mental Health Symposium	<a href="#">Information</a>
12/14/2021	Suicide Screening and Referral	<a href="#">Register</a>
12/17/2021	Suicide Prevention Training for the Military Affiliated Population	<a href="#">Register</a>

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## About The Office of Suicide Prevention

Maryland Department of Health's Office of Suicide Prevention provides a continuum of suicide prevention training, resources and technical assistance to advance the development of a comprehensive suicide prevention and early intervention service system for youth and young adults.

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## Behavioral Health Administration Mission

The Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration will, through publicly-funded services and supports, promote recovery, resiliency, health and wellness for individuals who have or are at risk for emotional, substance-related, addictive and/or psychiatric disorders to improve their ability to function effectively in their communities.

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