



# Maryland Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Network Newsletter

**WITH HELP COMES HOPE**

## September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Since 2008, people around the country have observed September as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, raising awareness about suicide and to providing education, support, advocacy and resources to those in need.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that over 47,000 people died by suicide in 2017. Suicide rates continue to rise nationally, with many contributing factors.

You can make a difference. Below are a few ideas about how you can observe National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

- Share your story on social media, at an event or with your community.
- Honor a loved one lost to suicide by adding a square to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's digital memory [quilt](#)

- Ask your local government to proclaim September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month
- Share information about suicide warning signs, resources and facts with others
- Participate in or organize a [walk](#), or other commemorative event
- Request suicide prevention trainings to be offered in your community
- Hold a poster contest in your school for students to submit original suicide prevention artwork that can be displayed within your school or community

You don't have to go through a crisis alone. If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts, contact Maryland's helpline by calling 211 and press 1 or text 898-211.



**MARYLAND**  
Department of Health  
Maryland's Commitment to Veterans

Maryland's Commitment to Veterans (MCV) is a program devoted to total wellness for veterans and their families.

MCV provides training to the community about veteran-specific topics to improve awareness of available behavioral health resources. Regional resource coordinators provide assistance to veterans and their families to support a healthy transition to civilian life.

To connect to a regional resource coordinator, call the MCV referral line at **877-770-4801**.

**211**  
Maryland

**Get connected. Get help.**  
Call 211, press 1

# The National Weekend of Prayer

September 6-8 is the third annual National Weekend of Prayer launched by the Faith, Hope and Life Campaign, part of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention (Action Alliance). The National Weekend of Prayer invites members of all faith communities across the United States to pray for individuals affected by suicide.



Picture courtesy of [Canva](#).

Immediately preceding September 10, World Suicide Prevention Day, the National Weekend of Prayer connects themes of faith, hope, reasons for living and community. While congregations are encouraged to give sermons about suicide prevention, organize community events, create posters or conduct other suicide prevention activities, any congregation can participate simply by praying.

However congregations choose to participate, the Action Alliance provides three easy steps for faith leaders to prepare for the weekend:

1. Communicate to your members about the event.

2. Consider how you may include the weekend into your existing services.

3. Educate your members about ways to support individuals who've experienced a suicide loss and individuals who are struggling with suicidal thoughts.

The Action Alliance created a prayer guide, promotional tools, competency guide for leaders and other [resources](#) to assist congregations in supporting the weekend. To participate in the National Weekend of Prayer, begin by taking the [pledge](#) and [promoting](#) your event.

## Resource Spotlight: 1-800-GAMBLER

Did you know:

- Over 150,000 adults in Maryland have a gambling problem
- Nearly 50 percent of people struggling with gambling disorder have thoughts of suicide
- People struggling with problem gambling are more than twice as likely than the general population to attempt suicide

If you or someone you know needs help with a gambling problem, help is available. 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537) is a free and confidential 24-hour helpline. Gamblers in need can call, text or [live chat](#) the hotline. Callers will speak to knowledgeable listeners who can provide information on support services, including:

- No cost, confidential [counseling](#) accessible to all Maryland residents seeking help regardless of insurance coverage, financial status or ability to pay
- [Peer recovery support](#) support offered by the University of Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling that connects individuals with resources in their communities
- No cost [family peer support](#), offered by the Maryland Coalition of Families. A Family Peer Support Specialist is a spouse, sibling, parent or other loved one of someone with gambling issues and has been trained to help other families

A graphic for 1-800-GAMBLER. It features a yellow background with black and white text and icons. The text reads: "HAVE THE CONVERSATION... 1-800-GAMBLER About the risks of gambling and how to keep gambling safe Call, Text (1-800-426-2537) or Chat (help@gamblingproblems.org)". There are icons for a telephone, a speech bubble, and a smartphone. At the bottom, a yellow box lists: "• Confidential, 24-7 • Knowledgeable listeners • Resources for help and information • Referrals to counselors".

For more information on gambling resources, please visit the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration's [website](#). For problem gambling research and evaluation, visit [MDProblemGambling.com](#).

For service provider reimbursement questions, email [marylandproviderrelations@beaconhealthoptions.com](mailto:marylandproviderrelations@beaconhealthoptions.com).

TRAINING SNAPSHOT

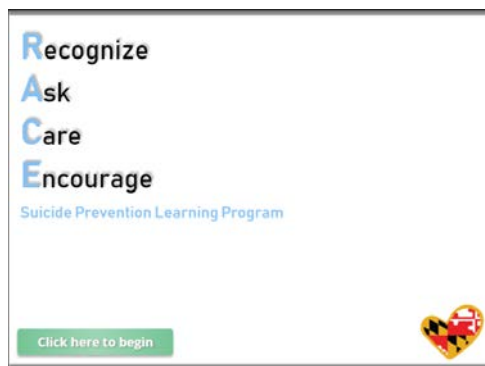
**Meet Our Newest ASIST-Trained Caregivers!**

17 people were trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) in June. Below are our newest ASIST-trained caregivers that are helping to make Maryland suicide-safer.



**Suicide Prevention Training: Recognize, Ask, Care, Encourage**

Our new online training module, [Suicide Prevention Training: Recognize, Ask, Care, Encourage](#), went live on June 6. So far, 153 people have used the course to learn basic suicide intervention skills.



**FAST FACTS**

38%

Lesbians and gay men who identified religion as important to them are [38% more likely](#) to have had recent suicidal ideation than those who reported religion as not important.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

[The Role of Faith Community Leaders in Preventing Suicide](#)

# Updates from the Field

**Striking a Balance: A Comprehensive Approach to Suicide Data**

Current suicide data collection methods can take a year or more for data to become available. Having access to near real-time data can assist communities in responding to crises and preventing future suicides. [Read more.](#)

**Post-Traumatic Growth in Adults Bereaved by Suicide**

A new [study](#) researched positive psychological change following trauma in adult suicide loss survivors. The study concluded that problem-focused coping, reaching out to support systems and self-care strategies predicted post-traumatic growth.

**National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health**

The Trevor Project released a new study of over 34,000 young people that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning. The survey asked respondents about their experiences with mental health and suicide. [Read the full report.](#)

**How Social Networks May Increase Risk after Exposure to Suicide**

Researchers in a new [study](#) performed a case study of the cultural beliefs about suicide in one town. Researchers concluded that the town's residents created a "youth under pressure" narrative to explain the high suicide rate in the town.

**Suicide Rate for Native American Women is Up 139 Percent**

A new federal [report](#) was released highlighting the increased suicide rates between 1999 and 2017 for almost all races and ethnicities. The largest increase was among Native American women, and experts believe trauma, poverty and restricted access to mental health care have contributed to this spike.

**New Publication: Guidance to States and School Systems on Addressing Mental Health and Substance Use Issues in Schools**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration released a new guide of best practices for schools to implement mental health and substance abuse treatment services in schools. [Read more.](#)

**Call for Proposals for MD-SPIN's Lunch and Learn Series**

MD-SPIN is seeking proposals for its popular Lunch and Learn series. Lunch and Learns are held monthly and presentations focus on various topics relating to suicide. [Submit your proposal.](#)

**The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention Responds to New Reports**

The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention released a [statement](#) in response to two new studies that concluded that the suicide rates of certain demographics are the highest they've been in two decades.

**Call for Input on the Use of Telehealth in Emergency Department Settings to Reduce Suicide**

The National Institute of Mental Health is seeking input from clinicians who have experience using telehealth in emergency department settings to reduce suicidal ideation and behaviors. [Responses](#) are due August 30.

**Suicide Prevention Coalitions Guide**

The California Mental Health Services Authority released a [guide](#) detailing a four-step approach to creating effectual suicide prevention coalitions in other communities.

# Events

## August

August 15	<b>There is Life After an Attempt</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
August 19	<b>Question Persuade Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
August 21	<b>Mental Health First Aid for Veterans</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
August 21	<b>Webinar : Human Performance Optimization – A Paradigm Shift to Improve Mental Health Care of Service Members</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
August 22	<b>First Responders Understanding Veterans : Mental Health and Suicide Prevention</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
August 26	<b>Adult Mental Health First Aid Certification Class</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
August 23-31	<b>The Way Out</b>	<a href="#">More information</a>

## September

September 7	<b>Carroll County Out of the Darkness Community Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 10	<b>Youth Mental Health First Aid</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 10-11	<b>Webinar : Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Suicide Prevention</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 14	<b>Hagerstown Out of the Darkness Community Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 15	<b>Run for EveryMind 5K Run and 3K Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 18	<b>Governor’s Commission on Suicide Prevention Meeting</b>	<a href="#">More information</a>
September 19	<b>Early Identification and Treatment of Mental Illness with Psychosis</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 19	<b>Suicide Prevention Education for Professionals and The Kevin Hines Story</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 21	<b>Annapolis Out of the Darkness Community Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 21	<b>Howard County Recovery Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 21	<b>Ocean City Out of the Darkness Community Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 22	<b>Montgomery County Out of the Darkness Community Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 25-26	<b>Webinar: Online Prolonged Exposure Training</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 28	<b>Howard County Out of the Darkness Community Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>
September 28	<b>Mid-Shore Out of the Darkness Community Walk</b>	<a href="#">Register</a>

## Keep Up With Us

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### About MD-SPIN

Maryland's Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Network (MD-SPIN) 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. MD-SPIN will increase the number of youth, ages 10-24, identified, referred and receiving quality behavioral health services, with a focus on serving high risk youth populations (LGBTQ, transition age, veterans and military families, youth with emotional and behavioral concerns) and in target settings (schools, colleges/universities, juvenile services facilities, primary care, emergency departments).

### Maryland Behavioral Health Administration Mission

The Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration will develop an integrated process for planning, policy and services to ensure a coordinated quality system of care is available to individuals with behavioral health conditions. The BHA will, through publicly-funded services and support, promote recovery, resiliency, health and wellness for individuals who have or are at risk for emotional, substance related, addictive and/or psychiatric disorders.

