



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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GOVERNOR

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DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statewide Events to Raise Awareness of Suicide Prevention in Hawaii; September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch, in partnership with the Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force, is announcing a series of community events on Oahu in recognition of National Suicide Prevention Month in September.

According to the DOH, suicide is the leading cause of fatal injuries for people ages 15 to 44 and is the ninth leading cause of all deaths in the state. From 2012-2016, there were 887 deaths from suicides in Hawaii. On average, one person dies by suicide every two days in our state.

“During National Suicide Prevention month in September, events will be held statewide to raise public awareness about the topic of suicide, the impact of suicides in Hawaii, and to connect survivors with postvention services,” said Nancy Deeley, DOH Suicide Prevention Coordinator. “These annual community events strengthen our efforts to identify effective strategies to reduce the risk factors for suicide.”

Each year, volunteers organize “Out of Darkness” Walks, which are an important event for increasing awareness of suicide prevention resources and the available support for at-risk individuals, loved ones of suicide survivors, and the public.

On Oahu, more than 800 participants, including representatives from all branches of the military, took part in the 2016 Out of Darkness Walk and more than 1,000 are expected for this year’s event on Sept. 9 at Magic Island.

Mental health experts encourage individuals who have suffered losses or experienced extremely stressful events to talk with someone about their thoughts and feelings.

If you are experiencing difficult or suicidal thoughts, or know someone who is, call the Crisis Line of Hawaii at 832-3100 or the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

National Suicide Prevention Month Activities on Oahu for September 2017

- Sept. 6 (10 a.m.): Joint Service Proclamation Signing at Hickam Air Force Base Missing Man Memorial. Contact Brent Oto at Brent.Oto@us.army.mil or (808) 478-8722.
- Sept. 9 (8 a.m. - 1 p.m.): Out of the Darkness Walk at Magic Island. Contact Pua Kaninau-Santos at pkshawaii@gmail.com or (808) 271-8582.
- Sept. 11 (3 p.m.): Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell proclamation signing in the Mayor's Conference Room at Honolulu Hale. Contact Nancy Deeley at Nancy.Deeley@doh.hawaii.gov or (808) 733-9238.
- Sept. 11: LifeKeeper Memory Quilt Square Workshop at Liliuokalani Trust, 87-1876 Farrington Highway. Contact Pua Kaninau-Santos at pkshawaii@gmail.com or (808) 851-7817.
- Sept. 18 (1 - 2:30 p.m.): F4EO (Fight for Each Other) - a talk with people directly impacted by suicide - at Sgt. Smith Theatre, Schofield Barracks. Contact Brent Oto at Brent.Oto@us.army.mil or (808) 478-8722.
- Sept. 22 (11 a.m.): Gov. David Ige Proclamation Signing in the governor's office at the State Capitol. Contact: Nancy Deeley at Nancy.deeley@doh.hawaii.gov or (808) 733-9238.
- Sept. 22-24 (8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.): The Good Life Expo Seniors Fair at the Neal Blaisdell Arena will have a Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force Resource table. Contact Pua Kaninau-Santos at Kkaninausantos@onipaa.org or (808) 851-7817.

Neighbor Island Events

For information on National Suicide Prevention Month Activities on the neighbor islands, contact the following:

- East Hawaii: Yolisa Duley, Chair, East Hawaii Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force, at hduley@hawaii.edu or (808) 932-7462.
- West Hawaii: Nancy Sallee, Chair, West Hawaii Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force, at Orchid_isle_psychotherapy@yahoo.com or (808) 333-8988.
- Kauai: Madeline Hiraga-Nuccio, Chair, Kauai Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force, at Madeleine.Hiraga-Nuccio@doh.hawaii.gov or (808) 274-3890.
- Maui: Aris Banaag, Chair, Maui Prevent Suicide Hawaii Task Force, at (808) 984-3278.

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