



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 31, 2018

18-073

Events planned statewide to raise awareness during National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September

HONOLULU –The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch (EMSIPSB) in partnership with the Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force is hosting a series of community events across the state for National Suicide Prevention Month in September. Events aim to raise public awareness about the topic of suicide and the impact of suicides in Hawai'i as well as to connect survivors with postvention services.

Suicide is the leading cause of fatal injuries in Hawai'i for people ages 15 to 44 and is the ninth leading cause of all deaths in the state. From 2013 to 2017, 926 Hawai'i residents died from suicide. On average, one person dies by suicide every two days in the state.

"Our goal is to educate the public about the warning signs of suicide and encourage individuals to address these warning signs with family members, friends and colleagues," said Nancy Deeley, DOH EMSIPSB's suicide prevention coordinator. "These annual events help to strengthen our efforts by allowing us to build stronger community support systems for those who most need them and to identify effective strategies to reduce the risk factors for suicide."

Out of the Darkness Walk is the largest event held during National Suicide Prevention Month in Hawai'i. It is organized by volunteers to build awareness of suicide prevention resources, and support at-risk individuals, loved ones of suicide survivors, and the public. More than 1,000 participants, including representatives from all branches of the military and students from local schools, are expected to attend this year's event on Sept. 15 at Magic Island in Ala Moana Beach Park. Event and participation details are available at www.afsp.org/oahu.

For anyone experiencing difficult or suicidal thoughts, or anyone who knows someone who is, call the Crisis Line of Hawai'i at 832-3100 (Oahu), 1-800-753-6879 (Neighbor Islands), the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), and message the Crisis Text Line at 741741. Resources are available 24 hours every day. More information about suicide prevention may be found at <http://health.hawaii.gov/injuryprevention/home/suicide-prevention/information/>.

Additional National Suicide Prevention Month activities planned include:

Hawai'i Island:

- Sept. 11: All-day sign waving at University of Hawai'i at Hilo, corner of Kapiolani St. and Kawili St. Contact Yolisa Duley at easthawaiiisucide_prevention@gmail.com.

- Sept. 15: Prevent Suicide Hawai'i meet-and-greet for the community. Contact Yolisa Duley at easthawaiiisucide_prevention@gmail.com.
- Oct. 6 (9 a.m.): Out of the Darkness Big Island Walk at Waimea Elementary School Field. Check-in at 8 a.m. Contact Saydee Gabriel-Souza at bigislandootdw@gmail.com or (808) 339-1794.

Maui County:

- Maui County events are to be announced. For more information and updates, contact: Jeny Bissell at jeny.bissell@doh.hawaii.gov or (808) 984-2136.

O'ahu:

- Sept. 5 (10 a.m.): Joint Service proclamation signing at Hickam Air Force Base. For information, contact Melanie D'Andrea at melanie.dandrea@navy.mil or (808) 474-0089.
- Sept. 13, 19, 20, and 25: Fight for Each Other (F4EO), a series of talks from those affected by military-related suicide, including survivors, family members, friends, and coworkers. Contact Brent Oto at Brent.Oto@us.army.mil or (808) 478-8722. Community welcome.
- Sept. 15 (8 a.m.-1 p.m.): Out of the Darkness Walk at Magic Island. Visit www.afsp.org/oahu. Contact Pua Kaninau-Santos at pkshawaii@gmail.com or (808) 271-8582.
- Sept. 16-22: Honolulu City Hall will display purple and teal lights in recognition of Suicide Prevention Month.
- Sept. 18 (11 a.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. 21 (11 a.m.): Governor David Ige proclamation signing in the Governor's Office at the Hawai'i State Capitol. Contact Nancy Deeley for details at Nancy.Deeley@doh.hawaii.gov or (808) 733-9238.

Kaua'i:

- Sept. 8 (3 p.m.): Walk to Prevent Suicide at the Kaua'i Community College in the Fine Arts Auditorium. Check-in at 2:30p.m. Performances by Larry Rivera and Lurline Rivera-Fernandez and the Kapa'a Middle School Choir and Ukulele Band. For information, contact Madeleine Hiraga-Nuccio at Madeleine.Hiraga-Nuccio@doh.hawaii.gov or (808) 274-3890.
- Oct. 6 (9 a.m.): Out of the Darkness Walk at Waimea Canyon Softball Field. Check-in at 8 a.m. Email kulamanu@hotmail.com or call Tracey Camara at (808) 652-9177 or Vanya Fagasa at (808) 634-0826.

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