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**DOH, PARTNERS ANNOUNCE EVENTS FOR
SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH**

Leaders include DOH, Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force, the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families, Hawai'i United Prevention Task Force and Other Statewide Suicide Prevention Partners

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HONOLULU – This year is the inaugural designation of September as “Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month” for the state of Hawai'i. This recent enactment coincides with the globally recognized World Suicide Prevention Day, observed each year on Sept. 10.

“We must do more as a state to build more connection and more resilience in our communities, as we know these protect us from severe mental health challenges and prevent suicide,” said Hawai'i Gov. Josh Green, M.D. “This is a personal issue for me and my family, as we've lost loved ones to suicide. There are too many families who have a similar experience and none of us wants to see another family go through the same heartbreak and loss.”

The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) and its partners will conduct numerous events to increase public awareness of suicide prevention education, resources and support available to individuals, families and communities.

The 2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) named suicide as “an urgent and growing public health crisis.” Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for Hawai'i residents. On

average, almost four people die from suicide every week. A total of 1,050 residents died from suicide from 2019 to 2023. Both suicide and suicide attempts have lasting economic, emotional, mental and physical health impacts.

More than 76% of individuals in Hawai'i who died by suicide were men. Men ages 20 to 59 had the highest risk for suicide death. Women ages 15 to 19 had the highest risk for suicide attempts.

“Communities across Hawai'i can join together to prevent suicide by increasing hope, help and healing,” said Dr. Deborah Goebert, co-chair of the Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force (PSHTF). “We can all create a space for hope through our actions. One act of aloha can make a difference and save a life.”

“On behalf of HUPTF (Hawai'i United Prevention Task Force), we continue to collaborate with the Department of Health Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch (EMSIPSB) and the Governor's Challenge to prevent suicide, offer training and provide resources to service members, veterans and families in our community,” said Brent Oto, chair of HUPTF and Army Substance Abuse Program manager.

“I once heard a suicide loss survivor say suicide does not have a typical face,” said Renee Yu, suicide prevention coordinator for DOH EMSIPSB. “It's important to remember there is never one cause for suicide, many factors can either contribute to or protect someone from suicide. Effective suicide prevention needs to address different aspects of suicide at the same time, which requires us to collaborate at all levels. It means checking on the people you care about, and always taking someone's mention of suicide or suicidal thoughts seriously, every time. When in doubt, talk to a trusted friend, family member, or mental health professional. Together, we can help each other and save lives.”

If you are struggling, resources are available. Help is just a call, text or chat away.

Resources:

- The **Hawai'i CARES 988** is a free crisis, mental health and substance use call center. Locally trained and qualified clinical and crisis call center staff provide supportive counseling and screening for urgent or emergent mental health or substance use needs, recommendations for behavioral health assessments, services and crisis interventions. Call or text 988 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information, visit hicares.hawaii.gov.
- To learn more about suicide prevention in Hawai'i, participate in **free, anonymous online suicide prevention training**, visit <https://health.hawaii.gov/emsipsb/injury-prevention/suicide-prevention/>.
- The **Hawai'i Poison Center** provides help for poisoning emergencies. Call 1-800-222-1222. Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information, visit hipoisoncenter.org.

- The **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** Hawai'i Chapter brings people together from all backgrounds. To learn more, visit www.afsp.org/hawaii.
- Visit **Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Task Force** website for local resources: <https://sites.google.com/hawaii.edu/pshtf/home>

2024 Suicide Prevention Month Events

Statewide:

- Sept. 17: Death Education and Resilience for Frontline Death Workers, a free webinar by Hawai'i National Violent Death Reporting System, and Delaware Health and Social Services, 9:30-11 a.m. For information, email zeruirenee.yu@doh.hawaii.gov
- August through September: Critical Incident Stress Management trainings for police, fire, EMS, and water safety first responders, sponsored by the DOH Adult Mental Health Division.

Kaua'i:

- Aug. 25: Mayor Derek Kawakami proclamation and Awareness Month Kick Off by Kūkulu Kumuhana O Anahola (KKOA). Movies, sign-making, rock painting, and dinner, 5 p.m. at Anahola Club House. For information, email Virginia Lei Taber at vtaber@onipaa.org and Priti Maya Tayal at ptayal@haleopio.org
- Sept. 4: Sign-waving with Kaua'i Prevent Suicide Task Force, 11 a.m.-noon at Rice Street. For information, email Virginia Lei Taber at vtaber@onipaa.org and Priti Maya Tayal at ptayal@haleopio.org
- Sept. 7: Suicide Prevention and Awareness Walk with Kaua'i Prevent Suicide Task Force, 5-9 p.m. at Kapa'a. For information, email Virginia Lei Taber at vtaber@onipaa.org and Priti Maya Tayal at ptayal@haleopio.org
- Sept. 12: Suicide Prevention safeTALK training for organizations and professionals. For information, email Rae Nam at rae.nam@kkoa.org
- Sept. 20: 2nd Suicide Prevention and Awareness Walk with Kaua'i Prevent Suicide Task Force, 5-9 p.m. at Hanapepe Kaua'i Art Night. For information, email Virginia Lei Taber at vtaber@onipaa.org and Priti Maya Tayal at ptayal@haleopio.org
- Sept. 25: Sources of Strength training, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Lili'uokalani Trust. For information, email Virginia Lei Taber at vtaber@onipaa.org and Priti Maya Tayal at ptayal@haleopio.org
- For updates on Prevent Suicide Kaua'i Task Force activities, visit: PreventSuicideKauai.org

Maui:

- Sept. 5: Mayor Richard T. Bissen, Jr. proclamation and Maui Suicide Prevention Awareness Month event by E Ola Hou Prevent Suicide Maui County Task Force, 10-11 a.m. at J. Walter Cameron Center, Wailuku. For information, email Danielle Bergan at Danielle.Bergan@mentalhealthhawaii.org
- Sept. 6: Youth Mental Health First Aid training by Mental Health America of Hawai'i, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at J. Water Cameron Center, Wailuku. For information, email Danielle Bergan at Danielle.Bergan@mentalhealthhawaii.org

- Sept. 11: Suicide Prevention safeTALK training by Mental Health America of Hawai'i, 8:30 a.m.-noon at J. Water Cameron Center, Wailuku. For information, email Danielle Bergan at Danielle.Bergan@mentalhealthhawaii.org
- Sept. 10: Sign-waving with Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. youth, 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Queen Ka'ahumanu Shopping Center facing Maui College. For information, email Dane Ka'ae at dane.kaae@meoinc.org

O'ahu:

- Sept. 5-6: Applied Suicide Interventions Skills Training (ASIST) at the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, Mililani. For information, email Melody Bell at mbell@cfs-hawaii.org
- Sept. 6: Sign-waving and resource table by Project HI Aware-Community Collaboration at Nanakuli and Farrington Hwy, 4-6 p.m. For information, contact Angela Hoppe Cruz at angela.hoppe_cruz@k12.hi.us
- Sept. 12-13: Applied Suicide Interventions Skills Training (ASIST) at the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, Mililani. For information, email Melody Bell at mbell@cfs-hawaii.org
- Sept. 14: The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's annual Out-of-the-Darkness Walk O'ahu and Resource Fair, Sky Gate, Honolulu Hale. Registration is at 8 a.m., the event starts at 9 a.m. To register, visit <https://afsp.org/chapter/hawaii/>
- Sept. 20: Heal the Healers – healing burnout awareness fair for providers by the Hawai'i United Prevention Task Force and the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Mililani. For information, email Melody Bell at mbell@cfs-hawaii.org
- Sept. 21: Gun Safety Education by Dr. Elna Nagasako from Hawai'i Moms Demand Action and Be SMART. In conjunction with National Seat Check, at Waipio Shopping Center, sponsored by Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition and Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children
- Sept. 26-27: Applied Suicide Interventions Skills Training (ASIST) at the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic in Mililani. For information, email Melody Bell at mbell@cfs-hawaii.org
- Sept. 27: Adult Mental Health First Aid by Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center and Steven A. Cohen Military, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center. For information, email Natalia Werkoff at nwerkoff@hhrc.org
- Sept. 27: Walk and Vigil by Project HI Aware-Community Collaboration at Wai'anae Neighborhood Place to Pōka'i Bay, 4-7 p.m. For information, contact Angela Hoppe Cruz at angela.hoppe_cruz@k12.hi.us
- Nov. 23: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, O'ahu Veterans Center. For information, email Karen Ng and Dennis Hida at Hawaii@afsp.org

Moloka'i:

- Sept. 10: Sign-waving with Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. youth, 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Moloka'i Public Library. For information, email [Dane Ka'ae at dane.kaae@meoinc.org](mailto:dane.kaae@meoinc.org)
- Sept. 21: Moloka'i Out-of-The-Darkness Walk, 4:30 p.m. to sunset at Moloka'i Canoe Club. For information, contact U'ilani Kiaha at 808-757-0460.
- Second Tuesday of the month: Adult survivors of suicide loss bereavement support group organized by Nā Pu'uwai. For information, email Anuhea Bear at ipc@napuuwai.org or call 808-560-1060.

Hawai'i Island:

- Sept. 3-4: Applied Suicide Interventions Skills Training (ASIST) by the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, Hilo. For information, email Melody Bell at mbell@cfs-hawaii.org
- Sept. 1-30: Poster banners to be displayed at Hilo and Kea'au
- Sept. 10: Sign-waving with Hawai'i Island Prevent Suicide Task Force, UH Hilo & Hawai'i Community College, 4:30 p.m. at University of Hawai'i at Hilo. For information, contact Yolisa Duley at hipreventsuicide@gmail.com
- Sept. 21: Sign-waving and resource tables with Hawai'i Island Prevent Suicide Task Force, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Kamehameha Avenue, Bay Front, in Hilo (across from King Kamehameha Statue). For information, email Yolisa Duley at hipreventsuicide@gmail.com
- Sept. 22: Sign-waving with Together with Veterans at Hilo. For information, email Deborah Funai at twv.hawaii1@gmail.com

Military:

- Aug. 1-26: 1,000 Cranes – A Message of Hope (Hawaii Air National Guard). For information, email Yumi Panui at yumi.panui@us.af.mil and Clara Balha at clara.balha@us.af.mil
- Sept. 7: Spice of Life – Community Wellness Fair by the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at 95-1091 'Āinamakua Dr., Mililani. For information, email Melody Bell at mbell@dfs-hawaii.org
- Sept. 11, 18, and 25: Paint and Zen – Tools and skills to manage stress and worry through art making by the Hawai'i United Prevention Task Force and the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, 5-7 p.m. For information, email Melody Bell at mbell@cfs-hawaii.org
- Sept. 20: Suicide Prevention Event by U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Health Care System (VAPIHCS) at Daniel K. Akaka VA Clinic, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. For information, email Maurice Martin at Maurice.Martin@va.gov and Jenelle Duldulao at Jenelle.Duldulao@va.gov
- Hawai'i United Prevention Task Force meets on the first Thursday of the month from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For information, email huptf808@gmail.com

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