

World Suicide Prevention Day

September 10, 2023

Creating Hope Through Action



CASP CANADIAN ASSOCIATION
FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

ACPS ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR
LA PRÉVENTION DU SUICIDE



World Suicide Prevention Day *a time to connect and reflect*

Every year on September 10th, people in over 50 countries recognize World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD)

World Suicide Prevention Day is a chance for everyone to join us in promoting understanding about suicide: those impacted by a suicide attempt or loss, family and friends, charitable organizations, professionals, politicians, volunteers and community members.

We know that suicide is a major public health issue. However, we at CASP believe there is no reason anyone has to die by suicide and, if we all do our part, we can prevent those deaths that do happen and the devastating impact that they have.

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*Visit our website for WSPD banners in
different languages, social media images
and other materials.*

suicideprevention.ca



WSPD Theme 2023

Creating Hope Through Action

Through this year's theme, we aim to work together to create a movement of preventative action, to recognize the impact of suicide and ultimately, strive to prevent it.

At times, the work of suicide prevention can feel overwhelming, but even small actions can make a huge difference.

#WSPD2023 #CreatingHopeThroughAction #WSPD

Need Help?

Resources are available to you and your community

Search the CASP Support Services Directory by clicking **"NEED HELP"** on our website: www.suicideprevention.ca

When someone is struggling:



Check in with them regularly to see how they are doing;



Listen supportively to what they have to say;



Remember that you don't have to have all the answers;



Know and introduce them to resources in their area, if they need additional support;



Be prepared to assist them in finding information, but don't take over as that may reinforce their sense of helplessness.

How to Help?

The power of coming together and reaching out to each other is immeasurable... It can save lives.

We can learn a lot from people impacted by suicide. Many people who survive suicidal thinking or behaviours describe the intense pain, filled with hopelessness and despair. They also talk about wanting the pain to end, not necessarily to die. That pain is often caused by complex and unique circumstances that could include a treatable mental illness, stressful life event, and/or difficulties with coping skills. Interventions exist that can help with each of those challenges and people need to be aware that things can change.

People often fear intervening. Taking a moment to reach out to someone – a close family member, a friend, or even a stranger – can change the course of their life. Because talking about suicide is difficult, listening with a non-judgmental ear can help lessen feelings of isolation and remind the person that others care about them.

The hopelessness and despair that lead to thoughts of suicide can be incredibly isolating. While people may think about suicide for a long time, the urge to act on those thoughts fluctuates in terms of duration and intensity. Compassion and empathy can help turn things around. A genuine conversation can make all the difference. We should not assume that everyone who is in distress is having suicidal-related thoughts or exhibiting associated behaviours (they're not!). If you are worried about someone, it's best to start by asking general questions about their wellbeing. Bringing up the conversation can be difficult, try starting with something like: "I know you've been going through a lot lately. I want you to know I'm concerned about you." If the response is worrisome, you can ask: "are you feeling safe?", and "do you think about suicide"?. It is a myth that asking or talking about suicide will put the idea in someone's head.

Key Messages for public speaking, writing, and media



Humans are social learners; that is, we learn how to behave from observing our peers. There is strong research evidence that disseminating stories of suicide death, especially in highly identifiable people like celebrities, can cause harm, including more suicides.

In contrast, sharing stories of resilience (i.e. people surviving suicide-related crises) can save lives. For that reason, it is important to emphasize stories of resilience and survival when disseminating information about suicide. If we have to talk about deaths, these situations should be contextualized as tragic outliers with a message of hope that future suicides can be prevented.



DO tell those considering suicide how they can get help.



DO refrain from discussing means and methods as this can make it worse. If the person identifies/ thinking about suicide, ask about the availability of means or methods but don't suggest any.



DO talk about suicide in terms of: died by their own hand - died by suicide - attempted suicide - DON'T use obsolete vocabulary including committed, failed, completed, successful.



DO share stories of resilience (not rose glasses stories but real inspiring ones).



DO include information about life promotion when you talk about Suicide Prevention.



DO talk about all the resources available.



DO remind people that healing takes time and care.

Public Messaging

Seek guidance in developing safe and effective public messaging. Visit the “MEDIA” section of our [website](#) for more information.

Discuss national, regional, provincial/territorial, and local strategies for suicide prevention, highlighting cultural initiatives and emphasizing how specific prevention initiatives are shaped to address local cultural conditions.

The following two pages provide links for suicide prevention and life promotion initiatives.

Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion Initiatives in Canada



The following is a list of Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion Initiatives in Canada. It is not a comprehensive list, and was compiled as a resource for exploration, discussion and potential action relating to suicide prevention and life promotion efforts in Canada.

National Initiatives



Links

[Suicide Prevention](#)

[Suicide Prevention Framework](#)

[The Case for a National Strategy and Nationwide Hotline](#)

[Statement on a National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, and an overview of Suicide prevention initiatives in Canada](#)

Source

Government of Canada

Canadian Association
for Suicide Prevention

Centre for Suicide Prevention

Life Promotion Initiatives



Links

[About Life Promotion](#)

[The Promoting Life Together Collaborative](#)

[First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework](#)

[Wise Practices Action Guide for Communities](#)

[National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy \(NAYSPS\) Program Framework](#)

Source

Canadian Association
for Suicide Prevention

Healthcare Excellence Canada

Thunderbird Partnership Foundation

Wise Practices

Government of Canada

Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion Initiatives in Canada



Provincial, Territorial, Regional and Local Initiatives

AB

[Action plan for youth suicide prevention 2019-2024](#)

[Effective Suicide Prevention Approaches and Evaluation of National Strategies](#)

[Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton](#)

[Métis Nation of Alberta Life Promotion Guide](#)

[Weaving together Métis knowledge & practice](#)

BC

[Vision for mental health and addictions care](#)

[Improving Suicide Care in BC](#)

[A Pathway to Hope](#)

MB

[Youth Suicide Prevention](#)

NB

[Youth Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Services Report](#)

[Recommendations to be implemented to address the demand for addiction and mental health crisis services](#)

NFLD
LAB

[Action Plans and Updates](#)

[Action Plan to Promote Life and Prevent Suicide in Newfoundland and Labrador](#)

[Mental Health and Addictions Plan](#)

NS

[Preventing and reducing the risk of suicide](#)

[Preventing and reducing the risk of suicide - Framework](#)

NT

[Suicide Prevention - Health and Social Services](#)

NU

[Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy](#)

ON

[Suicide Prevention Roundtable](#)

[Youth Suicide Prevention Life Promotion Collaborative](#)

PEI

[Government of Prince Edward Island suicide prevention action plan](#)

QC

[Rallumer l'espoir - Dévoilement de la Stratégie nationale de prévention du suicide 2022-2026](#)

[Unveiling of the 2022-2026 National Suicide Prevention Strategy](#)

SK

[Suicide Prevention Plan](#)

[Media Backgrounder - Pillars for Life](#)

YT

[Forward together: Yukon Mental Wellness Strategy 2016-2026](#)

OTHER

[Joint Suicide Prevention Strategy - Canadian Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

[VAC update to the CAF/VAC Joint Suicide Prevention Strategy - Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

Suggested Activities



We encourage communities to engage in outreach on WSPD to raise awareness for suicide prevention and life promotion, and to honour the lives that have been impacted by suicide. Initiatives which actively educate and involve people are likely to be most effective in helping people learn about suicide prevention and life promotion. Here are some ideas to help you start your own initiative.

Event Best Practices

- Recognize Indigenous territory;
- Designate a crisis counsellor;
- Prepare a calm space for privacy;
- Have resources information handy;
- Healthy snacks keep attention up!

If you are a citizen or a group of citizens

- Organize a cultural or spiritual event, fair or exhibition.
- Reach out to local businesses and organizations that may be interested in participating and showing support.
- Organize a walk to political or public places to highlight suicide prevention.
- Organize a memorial service, candlelight ceremony, or walk to remember those who have been impacted by suicide and raise awareness, distribute leaflets and other information.
- Light a flame of hope in your time zone at 8 pm.
- Post one of our messages on your favorite Social Media platform and add a temporary frame to your profile on Facebook.
- Call a friend, colleague, family member for a chat or invite them for a coffee.
- Commit to at least five acts of kindness on WSPD (and every other day of the year).

If you are an organization

- Provide a suicide awareness or intervention workshop or facilitate an educational seminar, public lecture or panel.
- Write an article for national, regional, and community newspapers, blogs and magazines.
- Secure an interview or speaking spot on radio and television to help educate.
- Hold a press conference or facilitate an announcement and/or discussion in a class, office, or team to let people know about WSPD.
- Ask national politicians with responsibility for health to make relevant announcements, release policies, or make supportive statements or press releases on WSPD.
- Launch new initiatives, policies, and strategies on WSPD.
- Hold a book launch, or launch for new booklets, guidelines, etc.

Virtual Events and Other Ideas

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of people impacted by suicide to be able to connect with others, whether that be in person or virtually. Especially public events that bring people together. With this in mind, we have compiled a list of virtual and other activities that promote connection.

Virtual Events

- Host an event, such as a webinar or speaker series, on a platform like Zoom or Facebook Live
- Contact your local radio station to devote an hour or two to play Life Promoting songs on WSPD.
- Create an on-line session on Zoom; Microsoft meetings, FaceTime, YouTube, etc. for an hour of time for people to draw, sing, recite the meaning of Creating Hope Through Action.
- Hold a virtual concert bringing musicians together on YouTube in a “Promoting Life” concert for WSPD.
- Contact your local public library asking them to suggest Life Promotion resources and promote stories of resilience and courage for the week of WSPD on their website.
- If your community has a local television station, ask them to air Life Promotion stories/movies of resilience between x-y hours on September 10 to mark WSPD
- Create a virtual “life” dinner party, sharing wholesome and nourishing foods.
- Create and play an on-line tournament of “The Game of Life”.

Other Activities

- Coordinate a public art display in an outdoor space, such as a park. Include art created by people impacted by suicide. Alternatively, consider sharing art, music, and other creative expression through social media.
- Organize a parade of cars with each car decorated with a message related to WSPD, such as the contact information for local mental health resources or hotline numbers and messages of hope and resilience.
- Encourage people in the community to place awareness messages or messages of resilience in their windows. Encourage community members to walk or drive around the community to find as many messages as possible.
- Create a “connectedness” scavenger hunt by walking/driving around your community looking for signs of life and connection. Person with the most ‘signs’ “wins” a token prize (t- shirt; bulbs to plant that will come to life in spring).

Social Media

Coordinate a social media campaign in your community to encourage people to connect on WSPD. Encourage people to share a picture or video of how they are Creating Hope Through Action for Suicide Prevention.

Visit our website for WSPD banners in different languages, social media images and other materials.

suicideprevention.ca

Life Promotion

Wisdom of the Universe: Christi Belcourt



Life Promotion provides a collective opportunity to balance and mobilize current suicide prevention paradigms towards comprehensive, holistic, strength-based pathways. Life Promotion has arisen from and is grounded in natural law and reflects the wisdom and circle of Indigenous traditional knowledge systems.

To provide foundational understanding and relationship to life promotion, CASP prioritizes the communication and guidance from the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework. We also give thanks to the ongoing guidance from Elders, youth, families, and communities in our shared wise practice stories and our original teacher, Mother Earth in our collective practice and vision.

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.” – Chief Seattle

Foundational Resources & Further Reading



[Thunderbird Partnership Foundation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework](#)



[Wise Practices in Life Promotion wisepractices.ca](http://wisepractices.ca)



[We Belong: Life Promotion to Address Indigenous Suicide Discussion Paper](#)



[Foundation: Choosing Life Special Report on Suicide Amongst Aboriginal People Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1995](#)

First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework

Thunderbird Partnership
Foundation

Mental wellness is a balance of the mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional. This balance and interconnectedness is enriched as individuals have: purpose in their daily lives whether it is through education, employment, care-giving activities, or cultural ways of being and doing; hope for their future and those of their families that is grounded in a sense of identity, unique Indigenous values, and having a belief in spirit; a sense of belonging and connectedness within their families, to community, and to culture; and finally a sense of meaning and an understanding of how their lives and those of their families and communities are part of creation and a rich history.

Elder Jim Dumont, in his opening to the National Gathering in June 2013, described how the four directions — the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual — are all necessary to mental wellness at the individual, family, and community level. He described how the key task for supporting mental wellness is to facilitate connections at each of these levels and across the four directions.





The Mental Wellness Continuum reflects these teachings and aims to support all individuals across the lifespan, including those with multiple and complex needs. The centre of the model refers to the interconnection between mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional behaviour — purpose, hope, meaning, and belonging. A balance between all of these elements leads to optimal mental wellness.

“These concepts and outcomes (hope, meaning, belonging and purpose) are drawn from research funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) for the “Culture as Intervention” project. From coast to coast, First Nations people have said that: a connection to spirit (identity, values, and belief) promotes hope; a connection to family, community, land, and ancestry promotes a strong sense of belonging; knowing who one is and where one comes from allows one to think and feel and understand life from an Indigenous perspective and promotes a sense of meaning; and an understanding of the unique First Nations way of being and doing in the world promotes purpose.”

We are grateful to the commitment and guidance of Senator Murray Sinclair, Dr. Ed Connors, Elder John Rice, alongside many others, who have dedicated their lives in their own way to share our life path teachings and centralize four questions to reawaken and support people through life, at any life path stage.

**Where do I come from? Who am I? Why am I here?
Where am I going?**

These four questions align with Life Promotion:

-  **Meaning – Where do I come from?**
-  **Purpose – Why am I Here?**
-  **Hope – Where am I going?**
-  **Belonging – Who am I (in relation to others?)**

It is important to emphasize that an acknowledgement of Mother Earth and our original teachings, in our relationship to the fundamental essence of life promotion. As such land-based connection and healing is central to how we promote and understand Life Promotion.

About CASP



The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) was launched in 1985 by a group who saw the need to provide information and resources to communities to reduce the suicide rate and minimize the harmful consequences of suicide-related thoughts and behaviours. Like many others, CASP envisions a world in which people enjoy an optimal quality of life, are long-living, socially responsible, and optimistic about the future.

CASP is a registered charitable organization that provides advocacy, communication and education on suicide prevention and life promotion through providing resources, guidance and information.

Get in touch



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suicideprevention.ca



"Light a Flame of Hope" Candle Vigil

September 10 - 8:00pm



Get connected

Follow us to stay up to date, learn about upcoming events and help share content on World Suicide Prevention Day.

#WSPD2023

#CreatingHopeThroughAction



<https://www.facebook.com/CanadianAssociationforSuicidePrevention>



<https://www.instagram.com/casp.acps/>



https://twitter.com/CASP_CA



<https://ca.linkedin.com/company/canadian-association-for-suicide-prevention-casp>