

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

September 10, 2024

# CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ON SUICIDE

## 'Changing the Narrative on Suicide' New Theme for World Suicide Prevention Day (2024-26)

CASP is proud to support the International Association for Suicide Prevention's timely theme for World Suicide Prevention Day, Changing the Narrative on Suicide - IASP, and its aims, "...to raise awareness about the importance of changing the narrative surrounding suicide and transforming how we perceive this complex issue."

This year's theme encourages us to consider how different narratives about suicide can impact suicide. Research provides us with a better understanding about the complex relationship between suicide-related news stories and future suicide deaths. A study in the Sage Journal, Is the narrative the message? The relationship between suicide related narratives in media reports and subsequent suicides (2023), highlights the positive impacts of hopeful narratives about suicide; those featuring people with lived and living experience who cope with thoughts of suicide and survive, living well beyond their suicide crisis.

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LA PRÉVENTION DU SUICIDE

A real-world example of how the public narrative can impact suicide, lies in the [2021 study](#) into the release of the song "1-800-273-8255" by Logic in 2017. The study found that following the song's release and social media promotion, there was a dramatic increase in calls to the National crisis service and a decrease in suicide among youth.

Research has led to the development of [Media Guidelines for Reporting on Suicide: 2017 Update of the Canadian Psychiatric Association Policy Paper](#) and supported the update of the Canadian Journalism Forum on Violence and Trauma's Mindset Guide on Mental Health Reporting to include the chapter, [Taking suicide reporting recommendations to the next level](#), each contributing to safer media reporting in Canada. It has also led to CASP's [Guidelines for Media, Entertainment, Public Service Announcements and Social Media](#).

Changing the narrative on suicide can involve organizations advocating for policies and legislation that prioritizes mental health and suicide care for all Canadians, such as the Canadian Mental Health Association's request for the federal government to [revisit the Canada Health Act](#), after mental health and substance use services were excluded from Canada's universal public health system.

Individuals and families impacted by suicide loss, have long advocated for increased awareness and support for both people with lived and living experience of suicide and those bereaved by suicide. The [Parker Family's Story](#) features one family's experience of suicide loss and their perspective on this year's WSPD theme. They understand the complexities of suicide messaging and endeavor to reduce stigma and increase awareness by talking about mental health, mental illness and suicide, encouraging hope and help-seeking among those hearing their story.

**We understand that 'changing the narrative on suicide' is going to require a collective shift among many facets of society. While we are encouraged by the work currently happening among individuals, families, groups and organizations, we know that more can be done.**

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US ON WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 FROM 10:30-11:30 AM EST FOR A **FREE ONLINE EVENT** FEATURING A PRESENTATION ENTITLED, "CHANGING THE NARRATIVE: HOW WE CAN RESHAPE PUBLIC DISCOURSE ABOUT SUICIDE TO SAVE LIVES"

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WITH SPECIAL GUEST,  
**DR. MARK SINYOR**

[REGISTER TODAY!](#)





## **WHEN SOMEONE IS STRUGGLING:**

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**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.**

## **NEED HELP? RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY**

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Search the CASP Support Services Directory by clicking "NEED HELP" on our [WEBSITE](#)

## **How to Help?**

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.

## 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.

## Do's



**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.**

**VISIT THE “MEDIA” SECTION OF OUR [WEBSITE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

# National Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion Initiatives

The following is a list of National 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.

## Suicide Prevention Initiatives:

Links	Source
<a href="#"><u>National Suicide Prevention Action Plan (2024 to 2027)</u></a>	Government of Canada
<a href="#"><u>Suicide Prevention</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Suicide Prevention Framework</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>The Case for a National Strategy and Nationwide Hotline</u></a>	Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention
<a href="#"><u>Statement on a National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, and an overview of Suicide prevention initiatives in Canada</u></a>	Centre for Suicide Prevention

## Life Promotion Initiatives:

Links	Source
<a href="#"><u>About Life Promotion</u></a>	Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention
<a href="#"><u>The Promoting Life Together Collaborative</u></a>	Healthcare Excellence Canada
<a href="#"><u>First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework</u></a>	Thunderbird Partnership Foundation
<a href="#"><u>Wise Practices Action Guide for Communities</u></a>	Wise Practices
<a href="#"><u>National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (NAYSPS) Program Framework</u></a>	Government of Canada

# Provincial, Regional, and Local Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion Initiatives

AB	<p><a href="#">Action plan for youth suicide prevention 2019-2024</a></p> <p><a href="#">Effective Suicide Prevention Approaches and Evaluation of National Strategies</a></p> <p><a href="#">Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton</a></p> <p><a href="#">Métis Nation of Alberta Life Promotion Guide</a></p> <p><a href="#">Weaving together Métis knowledge &amp; practice</a></p>	NT	<p><a href="#">Suicide Prevention - Health and Social Services</a></p>
BC	<p><a href="#">Vision for mental health and addictions care</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving Suicide Care in BC</a></p> <p><a href="#">A Pathway to Hope</a></p>	NU	<p><a href="#">Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy</a></p>
MB	<p><a href="#">Youth Suicide Prevention</a></p>	ON	<p><a href="#">Suicide Prevention Roundtable</a></p> <p><a href="#">Youth Suicide Prevention Life Promotion Collaborative</a></p>
NB	<p><a href="#">Youth Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Services Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Recommendations to be implemented to address the demand for addiction and mental health crisis services</a></p>	PEI	<p><a href="#">Government of Prince Edward Island suicide prevention action plan</a></p>
NFLD LAB	<p><a href="#">Action Plans and Updates</a></p> <p><a href="#">Action Plan to Promote Life and Prevent Suicide in Newfoundland and Labrador</a></p> <p><a href="#">Mental Health and Addictions Plan</a></p>	QC	<p><a href="#">Rallumer l'espoir - Dévoilement de la Stratégie nationale de prévention du suicide 2022-2026</a></p> <p><a href="#">Unveiling of the 2022-2026 National Suicide Prevention Strategy</a></p>
NS	<p><a href="#">Preventing and reducing the risk of suicide</a></p> <p><a href="#">Preventing and reducing the risk of suicide - Framework</a></p>	SK	<p><a href="#">Suicide Prevention Plan</a></p> <p><a href="#">Media Backgrounder - Pillars for Life</a></p>
		YT	<p><a href="#">Forward together: Yukon Mental Wellness Strategy 2016-2026</a></p>
		OTHER	<p><a href="#">Joint Suicide Prevention Strategy - Canadian Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Canada</a></p> <p><a href="#">VAC update to the CAF/VAC Joint Suicide Prevention Strategy - Veterans Affairs Canada</a></p>



## 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.

### 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.

### If you are a Citizen or 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 on World Suicide Prevention Day.
- ✔ Share our Changing the Narrative on Suicide WSPD and Flame of Hope social media graphics.
- ✔ Call a friend, colleague, family member for a chat or invite them for a coffee.
- ✔ Dedicate to at least five acts of kindness on WSPD (and try for at least one every other day of the year).

## 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!**

**[DOWNLOAD AND SHARE OUR SUICIDE PREVENTION FLYER WITH QR CODES AND TEAR TAB SHEET](#)**

# Virtual Events and Other Ideas:

It's important to be able to connect with others, whether in person or virtually. With this in mind, we have compiled a list of virtual events and 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, You Tube, etc. for an hour of time for people to draw, sing, recite and connect to #StartTheConversation and change the narrative on suicide.
- ✔ 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

## 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 and 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).





# Spread Awareness and Show Support

To further foster a sense of community, we have created a set of World Suicide Prevention Day social media graphics.

Download and share these graphics to spread awareness and show your support

The World Suicide Prevention Day Changing The Narrative banner is available in English and French. If you would like the banner in a different language, please fill out this [form](#).

Coordinate a social media campaign in your community to encourage people to connect on World Suicide Prevention Day. Encourage people to share how they are changing the narrative on suicide.

#StartTheConversation #WSPD #WSPD2024

[DOWNLOAD AND SHARE OUR  
SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS](#)

## CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ON SUICIDE

#StartTheConversation

suicideprevention.ca

World Suicide Prevention Day



# LIGHT A FLAME OF HOPE

September 10  
8:00 pm



suicideprevention.ca

## Light a Flame of Hope Candle Vigil September 10 at 8pm

Join the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention by lighting a candle in your window on September 10 at 8pm in your time zone.

The “Light a Flame of Hope” Candle Vigil is to recognize World Suicide Prevention Day and remember all lives that have been impacted by suicide.

“We need to know there is hope and the darkness can pass, in a world where many suffer, it’s so important for each of us to be the light, that light of hope” - Sean Krausert, Executive Director, CASP

## Follow us on Social Media



World Suicide Prevention Day

September 10, 2024





# Life Promotion

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

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

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

[Wise Practices in Life Promotion wisepactices.ca](#)

[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.



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## About CASP

The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention was founded in 1989 and is a registered charitable organization. CASP's mission is to advocate, communicate, and educate for suicide prevention, intervention, postvention and life promotion in Canada.

Envisioning a Canada without suicide, CASP is dedicated to providing information and resources to reduce the suicide rate and minimize the harmful consequences of suicide-related thoughts and behaviours.

Help increase awareness for suicide prevention with our [CASP vinyl sticker ribbons](#). Put your order in early to ensure they arrive in time for World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th. Shipping time is a minimum of two weeks.



## Quick Ways to Help

Follow us on social media, share our posts and promote suicide prevention in your community by building awareness about CASP, our events, and resources. Keep in the know by [signing up for our free newsletter](#) and encourage others to do the same.

## We Need Your Support

This WSPD, we could use your support to help us continue to advocate for improvements for Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion. We do not receive government funding and rely solely on donations to enable our small staff to continue with our free events, programs and add new ones. Every dollar makes an impact towards all of these and more:

- ✓ [Our annual suicide prevention conference](#)
- ✓ [The Forest of Hope Program](#)
- ✓ [Suicide Bereavement Group Facilitator Network](#)
- ✓ [Providing guides and resources, for example our guide how to facilitate support groups](#)
- ✓ [Online crisis and suicide bereavement group listing](#)
- ✓ [Free annual event for WSPD](#)
- ✓ [Free event for people impacted by suicide loss](#)

**DONATE**

Click the link above to make a donation today! You can also quickly start an online fundraiser to support CASP. [Learn how](#)

