



For Immediate Release

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New Video Provides Guidance to our Nation's Police Departments to Make Suicide a Health and Safety Priority

International Association of Chiefs of Police President Issues a Call to Action

Denver, CO – The Carson J Spencer Foundation, in partnership with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, and the American Association of Suicidology, launched a new video today entitled ***Breaking the Silence: Suicide Prevention in Law Enforcement***, making a clear call to action to Police Chiefs around the world to make suicide prevention a health and safety priority. Access video here: <http://youtu.be/u-mDvJIU9RI> .

The video was produced by the Carson J Spencer Foundation, a Denver-based nonprofit leading innovation in suicide prevention, and was supported financially by the Kenosha Police Department. Additional support was provided by the Denver Police Department and police psychologists from Nicoletti-Flater Associates.

“The tough-guy culture in law enforcement certainly makes for psychological hearty police officers, but when people are overwhelmed by trauma, loss, or a break with mental illness, this tough exterior can prevent the officer from reaching out and getting some much needed support and treatment,” said Sally Spencer-Thomas, CEO and Co-Founder of the Carson J Spencer Foundation and producer of the video.

The video features real police officers, many from Kenosha and Denver police departments, who describe their struggles in coping with challenges of law enforcement and their own experiences with suicide.



“Our jobs, as law enforcement officers, often place us in the middle of highly traumatic situations and this can cause a lot increased emotional stress and trauma for officers”, said IACP’s President, Chief Yousry “Yost” Zakhary (City of Woodway, Texas). “In addition to making sure our officers are physically safe, we also need to make sure they are psychologically safe.”

“Law Enforcement officers are the first line of defense in protecting our towns, cities and communities. We must be vigilant in helping them to protect their own health,” said Doryn Chervin, Dr.P.H., Executive Secretary of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention and Vice President and Senior Scientist in the Education Development Center, Inc.’s Health and Human Development Division. “The Law Enforcement community and its leaders are taking proactive measures to mitigate the risk of suicide and openly address mental health as a core element of officer safety. The video, *Breaking the Silence*, brings forth courageous stories of police officers openly discussing their own mental health challenges and why seeking mental health support fosters resiliency and overall wellness.”

"The American Association of Suicidology is proud to be affiliated with this campaign to raise awareness of suicide risk and decrease stigma associated with mental health treating-seeking among those serving in our police force," said Michelle Cornette, Executive Director for AAS. "We acknowledge the significant potential for trauma exposure in this line of work and strongly encourage treatment-seeking among those experiencing mental health sequelae."

“As a law enforcement officer for 30 plus years, the last eight as a chief, I assure you the care for officers' mental and emotional health must be equivalent to that of their safety and physical health. Use this video to start the conversation. Silence only compounds the problem,” said Kenosha Police Chief John Morrissey, member of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention’s Workplace Task Force.

Breaking the Silence: Suicide Prevention in Law Enforcement Video: <http://youtu.be/u-mDvJIU9RI> .

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The American Association of Suicidology (AAS; www.suicidology.org) is a membership organization founded in 1968 for all those involved in suicide prevention and intervention or touched by suicide. AAS leads the advancement of scientific and programmatic efforts in suicide prevention through research, education and training, the development of standards and resources, and survivor support services.

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The Carson J Spencer Foundation (www.CarsonJSpencer.org) is a Colorado nonprofit, established in 2005. We envision a world where leaders and communities are committed to sustaining a passion for living. We elevate the conversation to make suicide prevention a health and safety priority. We sustain a passion for living by:



- Delivering innovative and effective suicide prevention programs for working-aged people.
 - www.WorkingMinds.org
 - www.ManTherapy.org
- Coaching young leaders to develop social enterprises for mental health promotion and suicide prevention.
- Supporting people bereaved by suicide.

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International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)

The IACP is the world's largest association of law enforcement executives. Founded in 1893, the IACP has over 231,000 members in 100 countries around the world. The IACP's mission is to advance professional police services; promote enhanced administrative, technical, and operational police practices; and foster cooperation and the exchange of information and experience among police leaders and police organizations of recognized professional and technical standing throughout the world. Additionally, the IACP champions the recruitment and training of qualified persons in the police profession and encourages all police personnel worldwide to achieve and maintain the highest standards of ethics, integrity, community interaction and professional conduct. For more information on the IACP, please visit <http://www.theiacp.org>

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The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention

(www.ActionAllianceforSuicidePrevention.org) is the public-private partnership working to advance the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and make suicide prevention a national priority. Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) operates the Secretariat for the Action Alliance, which was launched in 2010 by former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates with the goal of saving 20,000 lives in five years.

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