



## **THE NATIONAL ACTION ALLIANCE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION RESPONDS TO NEW CDC REPORT**

*Increase in Suicide in the United States, 1999-2014*

*A joint statement prepared by partners of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention*

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 22, 2016)--The data in the [new CDC report](#) demonstrates incremental increases of the U.S. suicide rate over a 15 year period, which accumulate to an overall increase in suicides of 24% from 1999 to 2014. It is unclear as to what may be contributing to this slow and steady rise in suicide rates, including to what degree more accurate reporting is a factor. However, these data underscore why suicide prevention must remain a national public health priority. While more is being done now than ever before to prevent suicides in the United States, greater efforts must occur to reverse this disturbing trend in a preventable cause of death.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has formed the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention (Action Alliance) to develop partnerships with leaders across the country to implement evidence-based suicide prevention strategies that can reduce suicide in health care systems, workplaces, schools and communities throughout the nation. In addition, significant suicide prevention efforts are underway to reduce suicide through connections in online communities. Dedicated partners such as Facebook, Twitter, Google, and Apple are incorporating suicide prevention approaches across their various technology platforms. Further, growing awareness of the SAMHSA-funded National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-TALK, or 8255) is allowing more people to get help from a service that has been shown to effectively reduce caller distress and suicidality. The Lifeline network is expected to answer more than 1.7 million calls this year.

The CDC data remind us that there is more we must all do to prevent suicide in our communities. However, it is important to be aware of data that indicates suicide prevention is effectively occurring daily, in ways that are rarely finding headlines. For every one person who tragically dies by suicide in the U.S., there are approximately 278 people who have moved past serious thoughts about killing themselves, and nearly 60 who have survived a suicide attempt, the overwhelming majority of whom will go on to live out their lives. These untold stories of hope and recovery are the stories of suicide prevention, stories which are informing the Action Alliance's efforts to prevent more suicides every day.

We also know that reporting on suicide carries a great responsibility for the media. Research shows that the media may influence suicide rates by the way they describe suicides or trends in suicide. Interestingly, evidence suggests that when the media tells stories of people positively coping in suicidal moments, more suicides can be prevented. We urge all members of the



media working on these stories to please see our best practices for reporting on suicide:

[www.reportingonsuicide.org](http://www.reportingonsuicide.org)

For more information about stories of hope and recovery, suicide prevention resources and efforts underway by the Action Alliance, a number of resources are listed below.

For more on the National Alliance for Suicide Prevention and its partners go to:

[actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org](http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org)

For stories of persons with lived experience of suicidality and finding hope, see:

[lifelineforattemptsurvivors.org](http://lifelineforattemptsurvivors.org)

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Other resources for suicide prevention information:

- American Association of Suicidology ([suicidology.org](http://suicidology.org))
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention ([afsp.org](http://afsp.org))
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline ([suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org))
- Suicide Awareness and Voices of Education ([save.org](http://save.org))
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center ([sprc.org](http://sprc.org))

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION:

The [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](http://NationalActionAlliance.org) is the public-private partnership working to advance the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* and make suicide prevention a national priority. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, through the 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. Contact: Liliya Melnyk, [lmelnyk@edc.org](mailto:lmelnyk@edc.org)

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