

# Maryland Out of the Darkness Walks



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October 22, Howard County, Columbia – [afsp.org/howardco](https://afsp.org/howardco)

**October 23, Southern Maryland – [afsp.org/southernmd](https://afsp.org/southernmd)**

October 29, Baltimore – [afsp.org/baltimore](https://afsp.org/baltimore)

November 5, Havre de Grace – [afsp.org/havredegrace](https://afsp.org/havredegrace)



**Our Mission**

**Save Lives and Bring Hope to  
Those Affected by Suicide**



## Our Positioning

**We are the voluntary health organization that gives those affected by suicide a nationwide community empowered by research, education and advocacy to take action against this leading cause of death.**



In **1987**, the organization was founded by researchers and families who had lost loved ones and wanted to take action against this leading cause of death. Today, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention combines science and the grassroots, and gives those affected by suicide a nationwide movement of **over a million people**, with chapters in all

**50 states.**



# At Our State Level

## Suicide Data: Maryland



Suicide is a public health problem and leading cause of death in the United States. Suicide can also be prevented – more investment in suicide prevention, education, and research will prevent the untimely deaths of thousands of Americans each year. Unless otherwise noted, this fact sheet reports 2020 data from the CDC, the most current verified data available at time of publication (March 2022).

### 16th leading cause of death in Maryland

#### 3rd leading

cause of death for ages 10-24

#### 3rd leading

cause of death for ages 25-34

#### 6th leading

cause of death for ages 35-44

#### 8th leading

cause of death for ages 45-54

#### 12th leading

cause of death for ages 55-64

#### 17th leading

cause of death for ages 65+

### Suicide Death Rates

	Number of Deaths by Suicide	Rate per 100,000 Population	State Rank
Maryland	585	9.22	46
Nationally	45,979	13.48	

See full list of citations at [afsp.org/statistics](https://afsp.org/statistics).

78.13% of communities did not have enough mental health providers to serve residents in 2021, according to federal guidelines.

Almost **four times** as many people died by suicide in 2019 than in alcohol related motor vehicle accidents.

The total deaths to suicide reflected a total of **11,520 years** of potential life lost (YPLL) before age 65.

33% of firearm deaths were suicides.

46% of all suicides were by firearms.





# Research

**We are the global private leader in suicide research.**

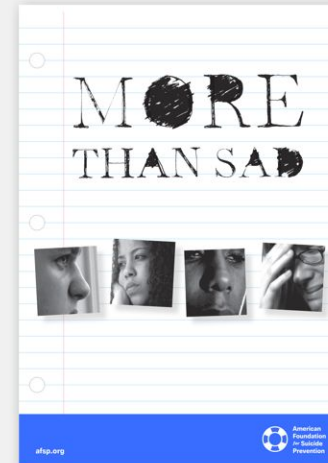
Thanks to our donors, this year we invested in 26 new research grants, totaling \$5.3 million, including two Focus Grants totaling over \$2.7 million.

Over the past five years, we have awarded \$21.7 million in research funding.

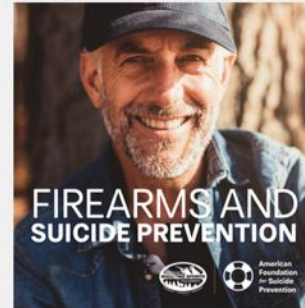


# Prevention Education

Through educational programs such as **Talk Saves Lives™** and **It's Real: College Students and Mental Health**, we teach schools, communities and workplaces how best to prevent suicide.



# A Sample of Our Prevention Education Materials




HAVE A LOVING DIFFERENT SUPPORTIVE SPONTANEOUS DIRECT AWKWARD RADICAL ENLIGHTENING BRAVE LIVELY BLUNT HONEST BEAUTIFUL CANDID UPBEAT IMPORTANT DEEP LIGHTHEARTED OPEN LIFE-SAVING HOPEFUL REAL CARING CONVERSATION


SEIZE THE AWKWARD









# Firearms Safety & Suicide Prevention



**Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Business:  
A Toolkit for Safe Firearm Storage  
in Your Community**






**VA**  U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  American Foundation for Suicide Prevention 



A Guide for Parents

## UNDERSTANDING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND PREVENTING UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS TO FIREARMS

PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION (NSSF), IN CONSULTATION WITH THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION (AFSP)



A Companion Piece for Peers

## BEING THERE FOR YOUR FRIENDS: A GUIDE TO HELPING PREVENT SUICIDE

Just as we all have physical health, which can vary from day-to-day, we also have mental health, and it's just as important. When you think someone might be going through more than just a hard time, know that you may be able to help by just reaching out to talk and encouraging help-seeking resources. Below are suggestions on what to watch for.

### WARNING SIGNS TO WATCH

Suicide is complex and does not happen based on a single event. Suicide usually occurs after several issues (health problems, stress, anxiety over life events, family or relationship problems or any number of other "stressors") converge on someone and leave them with feelings of hopelessness or despair. To help support your friends, watch for the following warning signs and behaviors:

- Talks about killing themselves, feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Expresses being a burden to others, feeling trapped or experiencing unbearable pain.
- Appears depressed, anxious, disinterested, irritable, humiliated or agitated, or suddenly appears to have rapidly improved after previously displaying those moods.
- Increases use of alcohol or drugs.
- Withdraws from activities and isolates from friends and family.
- Reduces effort at school, stops trying academically or increases absences.
- Exhibits changes in sleeping or eating patterns, is always fatigued or not sleeping.
- Conducts internet searches for materials/ways for self-harm.
- Says goodbye to family or friends; gives possessions away.
- Displays aggressive behaviors.
- Makes unusual or cryptic social media posts related to the above (being a burden, saying goodbye, etc.).

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: CALL 1-800-273-TALK  
Lifeline Chat: [SUICIDEPREVENTIONLIFELINE.ORG/CHAT](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat)

Crisis Text Line: TEXT "TALK" TO 747431  
Emergency Response: CALL 911



# Loss & Healing



## **International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day**

People in over 360 locations worldwide gather to gain insight and share stories of hope and healing.

*The Journey* is a series of documentary films, released in conjunction with Survivor Day events, that explore the suicide loss experience over time.



## **Healing Conversations**

Personal support for suicide loss

Fellow loss survivors, trained by AFSP, meet in person, by phone or through video chat with the newly bereaved.





# Advocacy & Public Policy

Located in Washington, D.C., the AFSP Public Policy Office advocates for policies and legislation at the federal and state levels that help reduce suicide and improve mental health.

We now have over 25,000 advocates representing all 50 states.



**PROJECT**

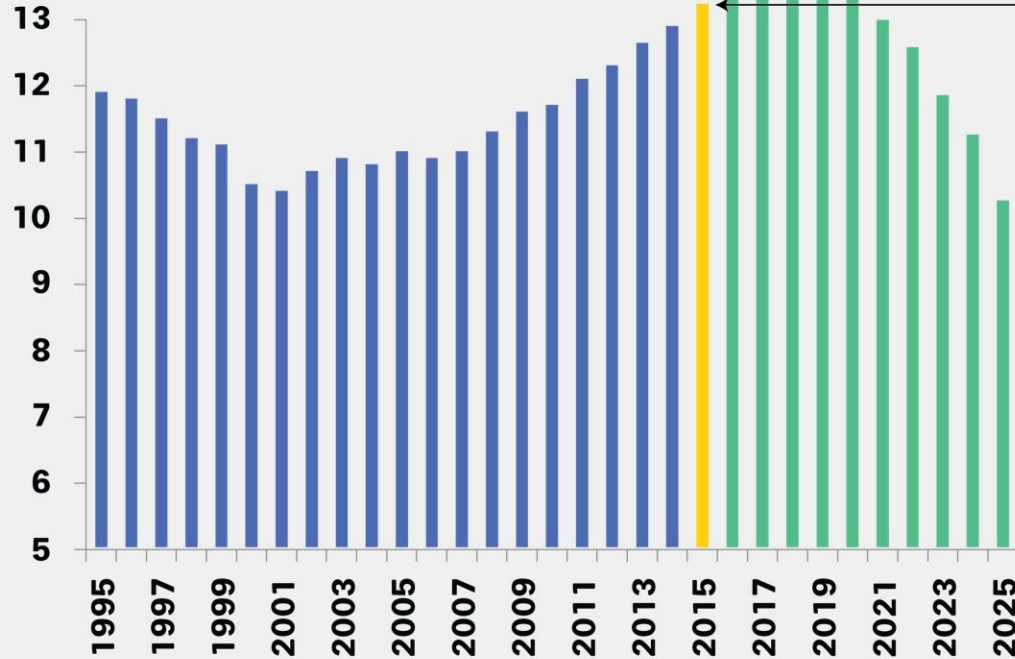
**2025**

**AFSP.ORG/PROJECT2025**

An initiative to reduce the nation's annual suicide rate 20 percent by 2025.



## Suicide Rate per 100,000



The 2015 age-adjusted suicide rate in the U.S. was 13.26 deaths per 100,000.

AFSP's goal of 20% by 2025 would reduce the suicide rate to 10.3, the lowest it has been in more than 30 years.



# About Project 2025

With guidance from leading advisors in the field and dynamic data modeling, AFSP has determined the programs, policies and interventions that will save the most lives in the shortest amount of time. Project 2025 is a collaborative effort to implement and scale these suicide prevention strategies nationwide.

## Critical Areas

- Firearms and Suicide Prevention
- Healthcare Systems (Primary Care & Behavioral Health)
- Emergency Departments
- Corrections System





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**American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention**