

SPECIAL EDITION: SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK: Sept. 8th - Sept. 14th
WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2019: October 10: A Day for 40 Seconds of Action
If you or someone you know is considering suicide, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), text "home" to the Crisis Text Line at 741-741 or go to suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

THE SPECTRUM

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance of Greater Chicago

DBSA-GC Board of Directors Update

If you are interested in volunteering, we need writers for our Spectrum and enthusiastic individuals who want to join our board and further our mission through fundraising and community outreach. Please email wecanhelp@dbsa-gc.org and we will send you information.

We Need YOUR Help!

Are you a student? Researcher? Writer? Have some thoughts you want to share about your experience? Submit an article for our upcoming Spectrum! Send your writing to: wecanhelp@dbsa-gc.org with the subject "Spectrum" and we'll review your article and contact you for our next issue!

World Mental Health Day 2019: October 10th



The World Health Organization has selected Suicide Prevention as this year's World Mental Health Day theme. Every 40 seconds, someone loses their life to suicide - suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year olds.

The World Health Organization is asking everyone to take "40 seconds of action" on October 10th to:

Improve awareness of the significance of suicide as a global public health problem;

Improve knowledge of what can be done to prevent suicide;

Reduce the stigma associated with suicide; and

Let people who are struggling know that they are not alone.

For more information on the World Health Organization's World



DBSA-GC needs a webmaster!

DBSA-GC is looking for a volunteer to manage its website! Know anyone? Please contact us at wecanhelp@dbsa-gc.org if you are:

- Technologically savvy
- Available by e-mail
- Have 1-2 hours per month to volunteer on website development
- Available for an initial re-vamp of the website, and subsequent occasional updates as dictated by the Board of Directors

Our website was created years ago with wix.com. We have made periodic updates to it, but none of us are technologically savvy enough to spruce it up! Being a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, we unfortunately do not have the means to hire a professional webmaster. We desperately need a volunteer to help us! If you have experience in web development, or know someone who does, please contact us at wecanhelp@dbsa-gc.org.

THANK YOU!

Mental Health Day and 40 seconds of action, click [HERE](#).

Share your messages, photos, illustrations and videos Twitter or Instagram using the hashtag #40seconds. Include #WorldMentalHealthDay in your posts too.

Suicide Awareness Week was September 8th - September 14th

National Suicide Prevention Week was this past week, September 8, 2019 through September 14, 2019. Did you know close to 800,000 people die by suicide every year? Furthermore, for each suicide, there are more than 20 suicide attempts. Suicides and suicide attempts have a ripple effect that impacts on families, friends, colleagues, communities and societies. Suicides are preventable. There are a number of measures that can be taken at population, sub-population and individual levels to prevent suicide and suicide attempts. These include:

- reducing access to the means of suicide (e.g. pesticides, firearms, certain medications);
- reporting by media in a responsible way;
- school-based interventions;
- introducing alcohol policies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol;
- early identification, treatment and care of people with mental and substance use disorders, chronic pain and acute emotional distress;
- training of non-specialized health workers in the assessment and management of suicidal behavior;
- follow-up care for people who attempted suicide and provision of community support.

Suicide is a complex issue and therefore suicide prevention efforts require coordination and collaboration among multiple sectors of society, including the health sector and other sectors such as education, labour, agriculture, business, justice, law, defense, politics, and the media. These efforts must be comprehensive and integrated as no single approach alone can make an impact on an issue as complex as suicide.

Challenges and Obstacles

Stigma and taboo

Stigma, particularly surrounding mental disorders and suicide, means many people thinking of taking their own life or who have attempted suicide are not seeking help and are therefore not getting the help they need. The prevention of suicide has not been adequately addressed due to a lack of awareness of suicide as

a major public health problem and the taboo in many societies to openly discuss it. To date, only a few countries have included suicide prevention among their health priorities and only 38 countries report having a national suicide prevention strategy.

Raising community awareness and breaking down the taboo is important for countries to make progress in preventing suicide.

How to Support Someone Who Feels Suicidal



According to AFSP, there is no single cause for suicide, although depression is cited as the most common condition associated with it. Warning signs the association advises to look out for include:

1. Talking: If someone talks about dying by suicide, feeling hopeless, having no reason to live or being a burden to others, these could be signs that they are having suicidal thoughts.

2. Behaviors: Increased use of alcohol or drugs, withdrawing from activities, isolating from people, sleeping too much or too little or giving away prized possessions are some examples of behaviors people might display if they're feeling suicidal.

3. Mood: People who are considering suicide often display moods such as depression, anxiety, shame, anger, agitation, or even relief.

The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention's (NAASP) campaign [BeTherTo](#) is encouraging people to reach out to those who may be suffering from suicidal thoughts. They advise people to:

- 1. Ask:** According to its website, asking the question "Are you thinking about suicide?" lets the person know that you're open to speaking about suicide in a non-judgmental and supportive way. It can open the door for someone thinking about suicide to talk about how they feel or what they're going through. Other questions could include, "How do you hurt?" and "How can I help?" NAASP advises that when asked, friends and family should not promise to keep the person's thoughts of suicide a secret.
- 2. Keep them safe:** NAASP says that it's important to find out whether the person in question has already done anything to try to die by suicide before being approached. Depending on whether they have a plan in place or if they have access to firearms or other potential weapons, people looking to provide support may need to take them to the emergency department or call the emergency services.
- 3. Be there:** This could be being physically present for someone or speaking with them on the phone, though it's important to follow through. This can be life-saving, according to NAASP.
- 4. Help them connect:** This could include developing a safety plan or a crisis plan, connecting the person with a health professional or calling a support line such as Lifeline, 800-273-8255.
- 5. Follow up:** NAASP advises that this could be leaving a message to see how the person is doing, sending a text or giving them a call. This type of contact can increase feelings of connectedness.

If you have thoughts of suicide, confidential help is available for free at the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Call 1-800-273-8255. The line is available 24 hours every day.

Source: [Newsweek](#)



Robin Williams' Son Zak Opens up About Mental Health Struggles, Reveals What Helped Him Cope With the Trauma

On what would have been Robin William's 68th birthday, the fifth anniversary of his suicide, his son Zak opens up about his personal pain over the loss of his father and how he copes. During his lowest times, Zak said he "found great help" in volunteering and doing service work, such as teaching financial literacy to prisoners in a California prison. "[I] found that teaching financial literacy helped me cope with the trauma," he said. "After that, I found that being vulnerable and open about my struggles seemed to actually help others. So I just kind of kept doing it." Read more at [Parade](#) and [People](#).

New Mental Health Netflix Series: "The Mind Explained"

Ever wonder what's happening inside your head? From dreams to anxiety disorders, discover how your brain works with a new illuminating Netflix series. Watch the [TRAILER](#).

Hope for the Day: The Hope Ball

October 10, 2019 | 6:30pm | Salvage One



Hope For The Day achieves proactive suicide prevention by providing outreach and mental health education.

Suicide completion rates have surged to a 30-year high. Suicide has no prejudice, and each year more than 800,000 die in this silence. In the United States, over 44,000 people die by suicide every year, averaging 121 suicide completions each day.

Suicide is a preventable mental health crisis. The primary obstacle to suicide prevention is the silence of stigma. Stigmas are social and cultural factors that try to dictate how we express ourselves and compel individuals to be silent on their internal experiences. Too often, we do not discuss mental health or suicide until it directly impacts our community.

Proactive prevention is about creating an environment that doesn't wait for someone to reach a point of crisis to address their mental health. In doing proactive prevention, individuals step up to take action and facilitate the conversation on mental health in their spaces.

Hope For The Day's signature event, **THE HOPE BALL**, brings the Chicagoland community together on **October 10th, 2019** for an extraordinary evening of celebration of the future of mental health that we are creating together as a community! 100% of the proceeds from The Hope Ball 2019 will support our mental health education programs in the Chicagoland area and beyond.

The Hope Ball will feature Chicago's finest Chefs + Mixologists, Live Music, Raffles and good times for a good cause!

HOPE Ball 2019 will support Hope For The Day's free public 1 hour Things We Don't Say workshop and 4 hour PEERvention workshop along with HFTD's newest community education variants:

Project R.E.D. Team: Active Military, Veteran and military spouse mental health education program

Workplace Mental Health: Increasing mental health education and resources in workplaces from Large Corps to small businesses.

For more information and to purchase tickets, click [HERE](#)



“I’ve found the DBSA support groups to be lifeline for me”

DBSA Alliance has recently recently highlighted suicide prevention awareness by speaking to suicide survivors in the DBSA community:



Carrie Cantwell, Suicide Survivor

Reach out for help, because help is out there. You're not alone. No matter how isolated you feel, remember that there are people who care about you, who would miss you if you were gone. There are others who have been through what you're going through, and they can provide support and encouragement. Get out of your bed, and out of your head. The world is a better place with you in it! [Carrie's full story](#)



Rebecca Ann Lombardo, Suicide Survivor

I understand how much pain you're in. I have been there. Please stop a moment and consider if you really want to end your life or put an end to your pain. I know it hurts, but suicide is never the answer. Consider what you'll leave behind. [Rebecca's full story](#)

DBSA-GC Reminders & Updates

Support Groups: Please join us at one of our support groups this holiday season! All groups are listed on our website [HERE](#) and are free of charge. No RSVP necessary!

Give Now: DBSA-GC is committed to providing free, quality peer mental health support, but now more than ever we need your help in order to continue expanding our reach. [DONATE TODAY](#) to be a part of what DBSA-GC is building. **We've Been There. We Can Help.**