

World Suicide Prevention Day: Having the Difficult Conversation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE « le français à suivre »

OTTAWA (September 10th, 2016) Today, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) acknowledges and supports World Suicide Prevention Day. This day acknowledges the commitment of numerous organizations and communities who are working towards the goal of raising awareness about suicide and preventing it from happening.

According to the World Health Organization, about 4,000 Canadians die by suicide every year, making suicide the ninth leading cause of death among Canadians.^[i] Suicide also disproportionately affects more vulnerable groups in society: Indigenous peoples, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning (LGBTIQ) persons, refugees and immigrants.^[ii] First Nations youth die by suicide about five to six times more often than non-Indigenous youth. Moreover, suicide rates for Inuit youth are among the highest in the world at 11 times the national average.^[iii]

“Suicide is a public health issue that needs to be addressed like any other health issue”, said Dr. Natasha Caverley, President of the CCPA. “It affects a large number of us: suicides and suicide attempts have deep emotional impacts on families, friends, and within the communities of the individuals who have tried or taken their own lives”.

Every year on September 10th, people show their support for World Suicide Prevention Day by checking in with the people they care about and having conversations about mental health. The International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) provides valuable resources on how to navigate this inherently difficult conversation.

“Communication is key”, continued Caverley. “If we are to dispel myths about suicide and reduce the stigma surrounding it, we are going to have to talk about it, and talk about it clearly. The focus should be on providing people access to the right resources to make easier the conversation with someone they may be concerned about, and then connecting them with the right counsellor or psychotherapist.”

If you are looking for professional support, please visit www.ccpa-accp.ca, where you can search for a Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC) in your region. Members of the public can also find authoritative information about the profession of counselling and psychotherapy by visiting CCPA’s public website, www.talkingcanhelp.ca. If you, or someone you know, is in immediate distress: talk to a trusted friend, dial 911, a crisis centre, or local health facility.

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national bilingual association providing professional counsellors and psychotherapists with access to exclusive educational programs, certification, professional development and direct contact with professional peers and specialty groups. CCPA promotes the profession and its contribution to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians.

For further information, please contact:

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^[i] Statistics Canada. *Leading Causes of Death, by Sex*. 2012.

^[ii] World Health Organization. http://www.who.int/mental_health/management/depression/en/

^[iii] CAMH Facts and Statistics. Health Canada. First Nations and Inuit Health – Mental Health and Wellness. 2015.