

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact Valori Stone

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## **Suicide Prevention**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 700,000 people die due to suicide every year, and it's estimated that for each suicide, there may be more than 20 suicide attempts. As suicide prevention month begins, we need to work to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and encourage people to seek help and support when they need it the most.

It is important for people to receive help in addressing the underlying factors that contribute to suicidal thoughts and behaviors, such as mental health issues, social isolation, substance abuse, and more. Receiving effective treatment can alleviate symptoms and improve an individual's overall quality of life.

If you suspect someone might be at risk, initiate a conversation with them. Express your concerns, actively listen without judgment, and encourage them to seek professional help. Talking openly about suicidal thoughts can help reduce stigma and make the person feel supported. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) is there to provide immediate support.

Recognizing warning signs is crucial for early intervention. These signs may include talking about wanting to die or feeling hopeless, increased substance use, withdrawing from social interactions, extreme mood swings, giving away possessions, and researching methods of suicide.

It is vital to train individuals in various settings within the community, including schools, so that they are able to recognize signs of distress and know how to respond appropriately to get them help. Friends, family, and community members can provide a crucial safety net for individuals struggling with their mental health. Suicide prevention is a collective effort that involves individuals working together to create an environment where seeking help is encouraged and mental health is prioritized.

QPR is a suicide prevention training for participants to be able to recognize the warning signs of suicide and question, persuade, and refer people for help. If you or your agency are interested in being trained, please contact Valori Stone at the K-State Research and Extension Wildcat District for further information at [valori@ksu.edu](mailto:valori@ksu.edu) or 620-378-2167.

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