

TENNESSEE CONFERENCE SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, suicide is one of the most disruptive and tragic events a family and a community can experience; and

1. research reveals that the suicide rate in the United States is the highest since the Great Depression; and, in the US, one million people attempt suicide each year; and
2. for every 1 documented death by suicide, there are 25 attempts; and
3. 3,338 Tennesseans have died by suicide over the last three years. One person aged 45-54 every two days, one person over the age of 65 every 3 days, and one person between the ages 10-24 every 4 days; and
4. as a result, suicide is the 9th-leading cause of all deaths in Tennessee with more than 1000 lives lost in Tennessee each year; and
5. this equates to approximately three lives a day lost to suicide in Tennessee, which equates to 22 Tennesseans each week and 97 people per month; and
6. Tennessee veterans, active-duty military, and National Guardsmen face a disproportionate risk as compared to the general population, with more dying from suicide than combat; and
7. data reveals that other high-risk groups include survivors of suicide loss, survivors of suicide attempt, and those who suffer mental illness; and
8. suicide is the leading cause of death for children ages 10-17, and the second-leading cause of death among youth ages of 10 to 24; and
9. public awareness of this tragic problem is the key to preventing further suffering and loss of life; and the risk for human self-destruction can be reduced through awareness, education and treatment as the highest risk for suicide is among the survivors of those who died by suicide or those who have attempted suicide; and
10. suicide is not only a mental health issue, but it is also a public health issue; now, therefore,
11. every member of our community should understand that throughout life's struggles we all need occasional reminder that we are all silently fighting our own battles; and
12. all residents are encouraged to take time to inquire as to the wellbeing of their family, friends, and neighbors and to genuinely convey their appreciation for their existence by any gesture they deem appropriate. A simple phone call, message, handshake, or hug can go a long way towards helping someone realize that suicide is not the answer; and
13. talking and educating others about suicide will not give someone the idea of suicide;

Now, therefore be it resolved, by the 2019 Tennessee Annual Conference that:

1. the Safe Spaces Ministry of the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church will partner with the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network in which TSPN will provide materials, resources, and assist with Trainings; and
2. the Safe Spaces Ministry of the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church will work towards developing best practices that will be available as resources online for churches to utilize when working with a person in danger of suicide.
3. the Safe Spaces Ministry of the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church will work towards offering annual suicide prevention trainings in each district and local churches as requested; and
4. the Safe Spaces Ministry of the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church will develop a suicide prevention training session to be added to the curriculum for both the Safe Spaces online and in-person trainings required each quadrennium for all appointed persons.

Submitted by the Safe Spaces Ministry Team

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