



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Suicide Prevention Week focuses on education and training

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the United States with one suicide occurring on average every 16 minutes. During the week of Sept. 9-15, Alabama will join the rest of the nation to recognize Suicide Prevention Week. This year the week's theme is "40 years of Suicide Prevention: Moving Forward with Education and Training." The national week will coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day held on Sept. 10.

Each year people across the country take time during Suicide Prevention Week to bring awareness to an issue not often discussed. Currently, Alabama ranks 24th in the nation in its rate of suicide deaths.

"I don't think that people have a clear understanding of how large an issue suicide is in this country, especially in certain age groups. We hope that Suicide Prevention Week will bring more awareness to the issue in this state and in the nation," said Dollie Hambrick, director of the Social Work Division at the Alabama Department of Public Health.

The following are some disturbing facts about the incidence of suicide in the United States:

- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among 15 to 24 year olds.
- The elderly make up 12 percent of the population, but comprise 16 percent of all suicides.
- Approximately 811,000 Americans attempt suicide each year.
- An estimated five million Americans are survivors of the suicide of a friend, family member or loved one.

One of the goals during the week is to provide better education and training for those who are in a position to respond to those who are at risk for suicide. The American Association of Suicidology will be holding workshops across the country titled "Recognizing and Responding to Suicide Risk: Essential Skills for Clinicians." The workshops will train clinicians on how to accurately identify risk factors for suicide and to develop effective treatment programs for prevention. One of these workshops will be held in Birmingham on Sept. 27 and 28 at the Redmont Hotel. Registration forms and more detailed information about the workshop can be found at [www.suicidology.org/trainingRRSR](http://www.suicidology.org/trainingRRSR).

For more information on suicide prevention, please visit the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's Web site at [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org).

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