



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Suicide Prevention Task Force works to educate Alabamians

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Each year suicide claims the lives of over 500 Alabamians. In an effort to bring awareness to this alarming problem, the Alabama Suicide Prevention Task Force is unveiling a new suicide prevention strategic plan during National Suicide Prevention Week, Sept. 7-13.

“Right now the suicide rate is higher than the homicide rate, and it is the third leading cause of death for youths between the ages of 15 and 24. We must address the issue and try to find answers to prevent more Alabamians from making this devastating decision,” said Dollie Hambrick, director of the Social Work Division at the Alabama Department of Public Health.

Since 2001, the task force has been diligently working to educate Alabamians about the risks and warning signs of suicide and enable persons who are depressed, despondent and feel hopeless to find appropriate medical and mental health care through early detection and referral. The task force encourages persons who are experiencing thoughts of suicide to call 1-800-273-TALK.

“People can receive immediate assistance and referral by calling the 1-800 number,” said Hambrick. “There are several crisis centers and other resources available for both persons who are at risk, and persons who have lost a loved one to suicide.”

Gov. Bob Riley has proclaimed the week of Sept. 7-13 as Suicide Prevention Week in Alabama and joins others in promoting the message that suicide is preventable, including the Alabama Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. The foundation will be hosting its third Out of the Darkness Walk on Saturday, Sept. 13, at the Heardmont Park in Birmingham, followed by walks in Mobile and Huntsville.

Persons interested in supporting suicide prevention, or in linking with others who have been touched by suicide, can learn how to participate in the walk by visiting www.afsp.org.

For more information on suicide prevention, please visit the Alabama Department of Public Health’s Web site at www.adph.org/suicideprevention.