



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

NEWS RELEASE

Office of Communications
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

4300 Cherry Creek Dr. S. | Denver, CO 80246
303-692-2021 | cdpheofficeofcommunications@cdphe.state.co.us

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CONTACT:

Lori Maldonado
Deputy Director, Office of Communications
303-692-2028
lori.maldonado@state.co.us

Experts and stakeholders gather to address suicide prevention, a critical public health problem in Colorado

DENVER-- In an effort to decrease the high suicide rate in Colorado, the fourth annual Bridging the Divide: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Summit will be held Friday, May 20, at Colorado State University's Lori Student Center in Fort Collins.



Colorado currently has the sixth highest rate of suicide in the nation. In 2009, Colorado experienced its highest suicide rate since 1988. Jarrod Hindman, program director for Colorado's Office of Suicide Prevention, said, "Suicide remains a significant public health issue in Colorado and far too many people die by or attempt suicide each year.

"Fortunately, Colorado is a leader in rallying support for suicide prevention efforts, implementing innovative programs and supporting suicide prevention initiatives statewide. The summit brings together the best minds and most passionate advocates for suicide prevention and provides a unique educational opportunity for those interested in learning more about suicide prevention and intervention."

This year's conference theme is, "New Partnerships, New Perspectives." Mental and public health professionals, researchers, bereaved family members, advocates, students and concerned citizens will hear from national, state and local leaders to better understand suicide and learn some of the best, most innovative methods for preventing suicide.

Agenda at a glance

8:45-9:30 a.m. - Fitting Advocacy into Our Busy Lives

Nancy Amidei, MSW, Civic Engagement Project

9:30-10:15 a.m. - Preventing Suicide: Why Means Matter

Cathy Barber, MPA, Harvard School of Public Health's Injury Control Research Center, will present a best practice model in suicide prevention and intervention.



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Breakout sessions

12:15–1 p.m. **Faith Panel**

A panel will include four faith leaders who will talk about support for families and friends in the aftermath of a suicide death.

1-1:45 p.m. – **Grace for Two Brothers**

BJ Ayers, executive director of Grace for Two Brothers, will share the heart wrenching story of the suicide deaths of two sons and her inspiring message of hope and healing.

Breakout sessions

3-5 p.m. – This session is open to high school and college students and is free of charge for up to 350 people:

Musician Steven McMorran, lead singer of Satellite (http://satellite-music.com/fr_home.cfm) performs a few songs, followed by closing presentation by **Jamie Tworkowski, founder of To Write Love on Her Arms**, <http://www.twloha.com>.

Jamie Tworkowski, founder of To Write Love on Her Arms, a nonprofit movement dedicated to presenting hope and finding help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide. The movement has gone viral through social media, T-shirt sales, and its connection and partnership with musicians nationwide. To Write Love on Her Arms has responded to over 160,000 messages from more than 100 countries, and has invested in excess of \$850,000 directly into treatment and recovery.

If you or someone you know is suicidal, please call the 24-hour suicide prevention lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).