

SAMPLE EDITORIAL

September 10th is World Suicide Prevention day. Suicide is a complex problem involving biological, psychological, social and spiritual factors. Suicide is most often the result of pain, hopelessness and despair. Every year in Canada almost 4,000 Canadians die by suicide, 100,000 over the past three decades. When someone dies by suicide their pain is transferred to their family, friends and community. Almost 3,000,000 Canadians have been affected by the tragedy of suicide, a tragedy that is compounded by the knowledge that many of these deaths are preventable.

On September 10th people across the world will come together to remember the lives of those whose pain, fear and losses overwhelmed their feelings of hope and died by suicide. Equally as important it is an opportunity to demonstrate our support to our families, friends, co-workers and neighbours grieving the loss of someone they cared for who took their own life. It is however important to remember that this grief is not limited to September 10th nor should our compassion, participation be limited to one day of the year. It requires a commitment every day. Suicide is a major public health problem, no one is immune and it is everyone's responsibility to get involved and learn more about this issue.

Suicide is so often shrouded in secrecy and silence. Preventing suicides begins by talking openly, publicly and respectfully about suicide. Our federal government has all too often been silent on this issue. Canada's suicide rate is ranked in the top third of all countries. Canadian expertise in suicide has made major contributions in the development of suicide prevention strategies in countries all over the world. In spite of Canada's lead and knowledge, we are one of the few developed countries that still do not have a national suicide prevention strategy. The U.S., Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and many others have had national strategies to prevent suicide for years. When will Canada? Preventing suicides requires everyone's participation and most especially it needs the involvement and leadership of our federal government. When will our government speak up and publicly declare it's commitment to those grieving suicide losses and to ensuring that Canada joins the rest of the developed world with it's own national strategy for suicide prevention? If you want to show your support and get involved ask your political leaders and federal government what they are doing to prevent these needless deaths and when Canada will have national strategy for preventing suicides.

