

Date: September 10, 2020

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The City of Milwaukee Health Department Office of Violence Prevention Implores City Residents to Increase Awareness and Action for Suicide Prevention

Mayor Tom Barrett to dedicate a Proclamation in honor of September's National Suicide Prevention and Recovery Month

MILWAUKEE – The week of September 6th-12th, 2020 is National Suicide Prevention Week, and September 10th is **World Suicide Prevention Day**. On this day, millions of people around the world join their voices to share a message of hope and healing. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 800,000 people die by suicide in the world each year, which is approximately **one death every 40 seconds**.

On September 10, 2020, Mayor Tom Barrett and the Office of Violence Prevention will join community supporters to honor suicide survivors, and issue a proclamation in remembrance of those who have died by suicide. According to the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner, Milwaukee saw a 300% increase in suicides in the month of August alone. “The timing and urgency for increasing efforts to prevent suicide in our city cannot be understated. It is clear that people have been experiencing increased feelings of stress and loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Mayor Tom Barrett. “We see the connection between major life events connected this virus, such as job loss, and increased feelings of depression, anxiety, distress, substance abuse and suicide. As we continue to fight this virus, we must keep finding ways to bring people together, be it virtually or socially distanced, to provide hope and support for a better future.”

“Milwaukee residents should be able to access high quality prevention and mental health support services that allows them to recover and live a meaningful and healthy life,” Vaynesia Kendrick, Adolescent Suicide Prevention Specialist for the Office of Violence Prevention.

The benefits of preventing and overcoming mental health challenges, suicide attempts and losses, and substance abuse are significant and as a community, we can all work together to provide messages of hope and healing for anyone suffering from mental illness.

As we continue to live through a medical global health pandemic, racial injustice and civil unrest, we must encourage our family members, friends, co-workers to recognize the signs of a problem, and guide those in need to appropriate services and support programs. The Suicide Prevention and Awareness Press Conference will be held virtually on September 10, 2020 from 12:30 pm-1:00 pm.

The event will be streamed live on the social media Facebook page of the Office of Violence Prevention and via Zoom. ***TOGETHER, WE CAN FIND HOPE, BUILD RESILIENCY AND SUPPORT RECOVERY EFFORTS.***

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