



Recent Celebrity Deaths Draw Attention to Rising Suicide Rates

Anthony Bourdain's and Kate Spade's deaths by suicide have sent shock waves throughout the country. Coupled with data recently released from the CDC highlighting that suicide rates are going up for everyone between the ages of 10 and 75, we know something has to be done. There is a mental health crisis in America, and we all need to step up to the plate.

What to do if someone you know is suicidal?

Please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 if you or someone in your life is thinking about suicide and offer [Mental Health First Aid](#) as a resource to your friends and family. There are already more than 1 million people trained across the country. Although many people worry that asking, "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" will insult someone they are trying to help — or worse, encourage someone to act on suicidal thoughts — Mental Health First Aid teaches that the opposite is true.

The more educated we all are on matters of mental health, the better hope we have of reversing the troubling trends developing around anxiety, suicide and depression. Let's spread the word and make as much of a positive impact as we can.



The "Awkward" Conversation: How You Can #BeTheDifference in June

At Mental Health First Aid USA, we know that conversations about mental health and substance use don't have to be awkward, if you know what to say and what to do. That's why our #BeTheDifference topic of focus in June is The "Awkward" Conversation: Tips and Tools for Talking about Mental Health.

Here's how you can #BeTheDifference in June:

- **Show, don't tell.** [This video](#) shows real-life conversations between Dani – a person facing a mental health challenge – and some complete strangers. As Dani opens up about her depression, we see how the strangers react and attempt to break down the barriers around talking openly about mental health and substance use. [Take a look](#) and share the video with your social networks!
- **Share information.** Each week in June, we'll be sharing an infographic featuring some practical tips for having productive, supportive conversations about mental health and addiction on Twitter and Facebook, like this one on [five conversation starters about mental health](#). Look for upcoming graphics on Twitter and Facebook, and feel free to share them with your networks.

- **Read up.** We're blogging about ways to talk about mental health and substance use and how to support someone in your life on the [#BeTheDifference blog](#) all month long. Do you have a story to share about supporting someone experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge? Email Erica Hoffman at EricaH@TheNationalCouncil.org for a chance to be featured on the blog!
- **Join a conversation.** On Thursday, June 21, we're hosting a [#BeTheDifference Twitter Chat](#), *The "Awkward" Conversation: How to Have Effective Conversations About Mental Health*. [Join us on Twitter](#) from 2 – 3 p.m. ET to talk about how to notice when a person may need support with a mental health challenge, ways to start and continue conversations about mental health and substance use and where you can direct people for appropriate help.
Thank you for making a difference in your communities every day!



The Awkward Conversation: How to Respond When Someone Tells You They're Not Okay

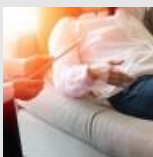
"How are you?"

Those three words have become a prescriptive question with a prescriptive answer in today's society. When we're asked how we are, we're expected to automatically respond with, "Great," "Good," or at the very worst, "I'm fine." But in a world where 1 in 5 people will experience a mental health or addiction challenge in their lifetime, and 100 percent of people will have a bad day every now and then, why is it that so few of us are prepared to respond when someone tells us they're not actually doing okay? [Read more...](#)



Mental Health First Aid USA Launches New Module to Address Unique Needs of First Responders

With one out of every five persons experiencing a mental illness every year, it is highly probable that firefighters and emergency medical service (EMS) personnel will encounter someone facing a mental health or substance use crisis. That is why the National Council for Behavioral Health announced its newly created Mental Health First Aid training supplement that provides firefighters and EMS personnel with the skills they need to support themselves, the people they serve and their colleagues through a mental health or addiction crisis [Read more...](#)



GUEST BLOG: Three Common Types of Eating Disorders

"When I think of eating disorders, the only thing that comes to my mind is

how one of the main characters from Centerstage, Maureen, was bulimic. Seeing someone living with an eating disorder and being able to vividly diagnose the problem has only been recognizable when it's blatantly in my face on television. Ironical, isn't it? [Read more...](#)



GUEST BLOG: Anxiety: What to Know and Look For

"When I think back to college, it was a time when my days were filled with classes, Friday night football games, campus organizations and socializing. I also remember all the people I knew who had some form of anxiety. The majority of my peers' anxiety could be attributed to moving to a new state, being isolated, worrying about grades or not knowing how to socialize. [Read more...](#)



Eight Ways to Help a Friend with Depression

More than 16 million men and women in America – roughly 6.7 percent of the adult population – have had at least one major depressive episode in the past year, making it one of the most common mental illnesses in America. In addition, 3.1 million adolescents are affected each year.

Knowing how to recognize the signs of depression—and how to intervene and support someone who may be facing depression—could be life-saving.

[Read more...](#)



Talk About It: Breaking the Stigma of Addiction and Mental Illness

As a flight attendant, Julie found herself drawn to the international nightlife, drinking at bars in London, cafes in Paris and pubs in Ireland.

"It all sounds so glamorous, but near the end, most of my drinking was done alone in my room.... I was living a double life and it was taking everything I had to keep up the charade. I just couldn't do it anymore."

It was her determination to have a better life for herself and her children that led her to seek help.

[Read more...](#)



Don't Know How to Open Up About Your Mental Health? Lady Gaga's Mom Has Some Advice.

Lady Gaga's mom, Cynthia Germanotta, penned a recent article for Mashable in which she discusses how to open up about your own mental health challenges, and how you can be there for someone in your life who may be facing a mental health challenge of their own.

"...trainings like Mental Health First Aid are an amazing way to learn how to step up in a situation like this," said Germanotta. "It's an 8-hour course offered nationwide by the National Council for Behavioral Health that will teach you how to spot the signs that someone is experiencing a mental health challenge or crisis, and how to help them. We should all have these skills – it literally saves lives."

[Read more...](#)



ALGEE on The Hill

Mental Health First Aid advocates took to Capitol Hill last month to highlight the importance of Mental Health First Aid training in helping communities respond to opioid overdoses and other crises. The briefing, hosted by the National Council for Behavioral Health, introduced Congressional staff to Mental Health First Aid's new opioid overdose education and naloxone training component. The day's panel included law enforcement, firefighters/paramedics and community educators from across the U.S. who discussed the impact that Mental Health First Aid has had on their communities and departments.

[Read more...](#)

KEEPING YOU IN-THE-KNOW



FAST FACTS

1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.

44,965 Americans die by suicide every year.

About 80% of adults with depression reported at least some difficulty with work, home and social activities because of their depression.



#MHFA

On Thursday, June 21 from 2 - 3 p.m. ET, we're hosting our monthly #BeTheDifference Twitter chat, "The 'Awkward' Conversation: How to Have Effective Conversations About Mental Health." Join us to chat about tips on starting and continuing conversations about mental health, telling your story and supporting people facing mental health and addiction challenges. To join the chat, follow @MHFirstAidUSA on Twitter and use the hashtag #BeTheDifference in your responses.

ALGEE-O-METER



There are now more than 1.1 million Mental Health First Aiders in the U.S. trained by more than 12,000 Instructors. [See how your state stacks up.](#)