

STATE OF ALASKA



Executive Proclamation by Governor Mike Dunleavy

WHEREAS, protecting the health and wellness of Alaskans is key to ensuring a stronger future for our families and communities; and

WHEREAS, suicide is the most tragic consequence of mental and emotional illness and distress. Occurring in Alaska at a rate twice the national average, it is one of the top ten causes of death in our state; and

WHEREAS, Alaska has high rates of many risk factors for suicide, which include a previous suicide attempt, substance abuse, feelings of hopelessness or isolation, access to lethal means, physical or sexual abuse, history of mental health disorders such as clinical depression, lack of access to mental health treatment services, chronic pain or serious physical illness, or incarceration; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that all Alaskans watch for these signs, and take action if they are worried about a friend, family member, or loved one. Individuals of all ages are at risk for suicide; and

WHEREAS, mental illness and suicide may often be stigmatized, discouraging those at-risk from seeking the help they desperately need. Every individual should be treated with respect and compassion; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is actively working to ensure agencies and personnel are equipped to offer help and support to those in need. The Alaska Statewide Suicide Prevention Council provides outreach and education, and the Alaska Division of Behavioral Health's Community-Based Suicide Prevention Program supports communities in promoting resilience and training Alaskans in basic prevention techniques; and

WHEREAS, if you think someone needs help, the right thing to do is to **ASK**: **A**sk if they are thinking about ending their life; **S**hare that you care; **K**eept them company until you connect them with Careline Alaska, other suicide prevention resources, or someone they trust.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Mike Dunleavy, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA, do hereby proclaim September 5 - 11, 2021 as:

Suicide Prevention Week

in Alaska, and encourage all Alaskans to take this opportunity to speak up if they know someone who may be contemplating suicide or to seek help if they are in need, and to reaffirm their commitment to community, family, and life.

Dated: September 5, 2021



A blue ink signature of Mike Dunleavy.

*Mike Dunleavy, Governor
who has also authorized the
seal of the State of Alaska to
be affixed to this proclamation.*