

RESOLUTION NO. 24-195

RESOLUTION FOR COMMENDATION SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH SANTA BARBARA COUNTY – SEPTEMBER 2024

WHEREAS, This Resolution recognizes suicide as a national and statewide public mental health problem, and suicide prevention as a national and statewide responsibility, and designates the month of September as “National Suicide Prevention Month” in Santa Barbara County. This month overlaps World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th, recognized internationally and supported by the World Health Organization.

WHEREAS, suicide is a significant public health issue that affects individuals, families, and communities nationwide, with more than 47,000 lives lost to suicide in the United States each year (with the Centers for Disease Control estimating a total of 49,476 deaths by suicide in the United States in 2022); and

WHEREAS, in California, suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals aged 15-34, and more than 4,000 Californians die by suicide annually; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that there were 1.6 million adult suicide attempts, nationally, in 2022, and in 2021 California experienced 4,148 suicide attempts; and

WHEREAS, over 90% of the people who die by suicide have a diagnosable and treatable mental health condition, although often that condition is not recognized or treated; and

WHEREAS, Santa Barbara County lost 45 community members to death by suicide in 2023; and

WHEREAS, it is essential for everyone in our community to recognize the warning signs of suicide and encourage those who struggle to seek help, and to know how to offer support and to be aware of the resources available, including hotlines, counseling services, and other mental health programs; and

WHEREAS, if someone can get through the intense and short moment of active suicidal crisis, chances are they will not die by suicide;

WHEREAS, during Suicide Prevention Month, we call upon all in the community to learn more about suicide prevention, to reach out to those in need, and to work together to build a safer, more supportive community;

WHEREAS, the Department of Behavioral Wellness and organizations such as The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention envision a world without suicide, and are dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide, through research, education, advocacy and resources for those who struggle and for the family, friends and community of those who have lost,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors recognizes the Month of September as Suicide Prevention Month in Santa Barbara County, and

1. Recognizes suicide as a preventable national and state public health problem and declare suicide prevention to be a priority, and commit to actively participating in awareness campaigns, events, and initiatives throughout September 2024;
2. We express our deepest sympathy to those who have lost loved ones to death by suicide and honor their memories by taking meaningful actions to prevent future tragedies;
3. Commit to creating stigma-free environments that foster open conversations about mental health and encourage individuals to seek help without fear or judgement or discrimination;
4. Acknowledge that suicide prevention is a collective responsibility, and we will work together to build supportive, connected, and empathetic communities where every life is valued and cherished;
5. Encourage initiatives based on the goals contained in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and California’s strategic plan on suicide prevention;
6. Develop and implement strategies to increase access to quality mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention services.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of Santa Barbara County, State of California, this 10th day of September 2024, by the unanimous votes of the members present.