



"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Tennessee's Suicide Rate Hit Record High in 2016
Additional Funding and Resources Needed to Combat Rising Suicide Rates**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — In any given day, three people in Tennessee die by suicide. In 2016, the number suicides increased in young people (ages 10-18) in Tennessee, with one person in this age group lost to suicide every week. We lose one person between the ages of 10-24 every four days, and every day we lose at least one person over the age of 45, with adults in midlife and older adults remaining at higher risk. While suicide rates in Tennessee went up only slightly in 2016, the new figures are the highest recorded in Tennessee in over 35 years of record-keeping and the suicide rate remains above the national average.

The Tennessee Department of Health's Office of Health Statistics reports there were 1,110 recorded suicide deaths in Tennessee in 2016, up from 1,065 the past year (representing a 4% increase). The crude suicide rate went up from 15.6 to 16.2 per 100,000 (representing a 4% increase.) Firearms remain the most common means of suicide death in Tennessee, accounting for 677, or 61%, of the recorded suicide deaths in 2016. 222, or 20% of the deaths, were hangings or suffocations and 144, or 13% of the deaths, were poisonings or overdoses. All of these proportions are roughly the same as last year's figures. Whites account for 79% of the general population of Tennessee but 91% of the suicide deaths. Males are also disproportionately represented, making up 49% of the population but 77% (857) of the suicide deaths recorded in 2016.

"Going forward, we have our work cut out for us," explains Scott Ridgway, MS, TSPN's Executive Director. "Tennessee's suicide rate and raw number of deaths rose sharply in 2015, and recent statistics indicate a growing problem with suicide among adolescents and preteens. There are only two things that give us solace in the face of these developments: that without our dedicated involvement, even more people would have been lost; and that we have the staff, volunteers, resources, and strategy to turn back the tide."

"If we're really going to address the issue of suicide in Tennessee, we'll need additional funding devoted to suicide prevention efforts," Ridgway said.

. The complete County suicide numbers and rates for the last ten years are available on the TSPN website (see <http://tspn.org/suicide-statistics-2>).

Where to Get Help

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). This nationwide hotline connects to a nationwide network of certified local crisis centers, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In the event of an emergency where someone is in immediate danger of death or injury, *call 911 immediately.*

For non-emergency information and resources about suicide prevention and free training in your area, visit the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network website at www.tspn.org. The site features fact sheets and statistics about suicide, suicide and mental health reading lists and links, and customized local resource directories available for free download.



Text "TN" to
741741

TTY line: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

For non-emergency information on suicide prevention, contact the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at (615) 297-1077 or tspn@tspn.org.

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