

NEWS RELEASE

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ND Department of Health Awards Grants for Youth Suicide Prevention Programs

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) awarded \$588,870 for evidence-based suicide prevention projects in schools and communities across North Dakota. The grants are part of a \$1.2 million appropriation recommended by Governor Jack Dalrymple and approved by the legislature during the 2015 session.

“Suicide impacts people of all ages, but suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages 15-24 in North Dakota,” explains Alison Traynor, Suicide Prevention Director with NDDoH. “Suicide has impacted families in nearly every community in North Dakota. Suicide prevention programs exist and many have been proven effective in reducing suicide risk factors among youth.”

Six Regional Education Associations (REAs), Great Northwest, Mid-Dakota, Missouri River, Northcentral, Northeast, and Roughrider, received funds to provide gatekeeper training programs like SafeTALK and to assist participating schools in implementing the Sources of Strength program, whose mission is to prevent suicide by increasing help-seeking behaviors and promoting connections between peers and caring adults.

The NDDoH awarded funds to FirstLink to support their 24/7 service of the National Suicide Lifeline as well as their evidence-based “Call-back” program. Firstlink is a key service provider for North Dakota, providing 24/7 telephone support for 211 and the National Suicide Lifeline as well as a variety of evidence-based trainings.

PATH Inc. received a grant to provide ASIST and “Zero Suicide” trainings to their therapeutic foster homes, therapists, and staff. Awards were also granted to community clinics and Family Planning clinics across North Dakota to provide depression screening and referrals to patients.

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Other recipients included ND Cares, LaMoure County Public Health, South Prairie Public School, Southwestern District Health Unit, Valley Community Health Clinics, Turtle Mountain Outreach, and Northern Plains Chaplaincy for direct prevention services. Minot State University North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities received an award for SafeTALK trainings and to enhance other programs. Grants were selected by a multidisciplinary advisory committee, including the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, through a competitive grant process.

For more information on the suicide prevention fund and free training opportunities, contact Alison Traynor, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.4580.

Visit <http://www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention/> for information about suicide and suicide prevention.

If you are thinking about suicide, call someone. If you think someone you know is considering it, ask them. Call the hotline to break the silence and to receive confidential help from local professionals any time, day or night. Call **1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)**

The National Suicide Lifeline is answered locally by FirstLink.

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