



Riverside County Suicide Prevention Month 2024 Activity Guide

This September we can make a big difference for our community simply by recognizing when someone is lonely and reaching out to them. Simple acts of kindness or a conversation can be the turning point for someone who's feeling alone. During Suicide Prevention month let's focus on spreading **"Love Over Loneliness."** By building strong connections and supporting each other, we can make others feel valued and cared for.

Research shows that people of all ages benefit from participating in activities that strengthen their self-care and wellness. These activities may look different across the lifespan as we grow and evolve. Building resiliency is important at all ages, and strategies can be tailored depending on what is enjoyable or accessible at your age.

Now, more than ever, it's vital that we recognize the importance of strengthening resiliency, protective factors, and physical and emotional wellness throughout the lifespan and at different life stages. Focusing on ways that we can improve our personal well-being can help reduce stress, improve our relationships, and reduce suicide risk.

This month we honor National Recovery Month, Suicide Prevention Week and World Suicide Prevention Day. During Suicide Prevention Month this September, we want to take special care of our friends, family, loved ones, and other people in our lives who may be struggling with alcohol or other substances.

There are many options for promoting Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, many of which can be done from home or online. We have provided suggestions for how to plan your September activities week-by-week, or you can choose your favorites.

We invite you to share knowledge and resources around suicide prevention with your social network this month and all year long. Remember, all of us can play a role in suicide prevention.

Join in our activities and share your participation on social media using **#PEISEPT2024** and **#RUHSRecoveryHappens2024**. (remember to change setting on posts to public to help spread the word)

Together, we can help prevent suicide in Riverside County with the power of love and connection!

Week One (September 1-7)





Do something Kind for someone else!

Acts of kindness create a sense of belonging and reduce isolation. Helping others is thought to be one of the ways that people create, maintain, and strengthen their social connections. For example, volunteering and helping others can help us feel a sense of belonging, make new friends, and connect with our communities. Face-to-face activities such as volunteering at a food bank can also help reduce loneliness and isolation.



Reflect on your feelings

If you're feeling the Monday blues take time to understand why. Are there specific aspects of your job or schedule that you dread? By pinpointing the reasons, you can work on addressing them directly, whether that means delegating tasks, discussing concerns with a supervisor, or reevaluating your work goals and satisfaction. ❤️ Learn how to Clarify Your Feelings Through Writing during this session from the [Overcome Stress and Anxiety series with Dr. Julie.](#)



Have Lunch away from your desk or with a friend!

We are sometimes so busy with work and family obligations that we lose track of our friends. We need friendships for a happier, healthier life. Use your lunchtime to catch up with your friends. You won't be sorry. When all is said and done, the research on getting away from your desk at lunchtime is very clear- you need to take a break during the middle of the day if you want to do your best work. Give yourself a lunch break away from your desk. **You deserve it!**



Mental Health 101

This training focuses on understanding mental health vs mental illness, the mental health spectrum, stigma reduction, risk and productive factors as well as available resources. Available in English on Wednesday, September 4th from 2:00 PM– 4:00 PM. To register please visit www.rivcospc.org/gettrained





Call, Text or Chat with Someone today!

Make the conscious effort to reach out to someone today. Whether it is a call, text or in person conversation, make one! This can be a loved one, a friend, neighbor, or a fellow shopper at the grocery store. Also try to schedule time every day to stay in touch with family, friends, and neighbors to avoid isolation and feelings of loneliness.



Pause and Take a Breath

Deep breathing is one of the best ways to lower stress in the body. This is because when you breathe deeply, it sends a message to your brain to calm down and relax. The brain then sends this message to your body. Breathing exercises are a good way to relax, reduce tension, and relieve stress. Schedule a *breathe break* today.

Third Annual Suicide Awareness Vigil and Community Candlelight Vigil

This Saturday, September 7th, join the community to raise awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding suicide. Your participation lets those struggling with suicidal thoughts know that they are not alone, and that support is available in their times of struggle. This event will also provide a space to remember and honor those who have died by suicide and allow their memory to live on. The event will be held at Todd Park in Blythe CA at 5 p.m. #PeacefromChaos



Week Two (September 8-14)

Rebuild Spiritually



LOVE OVER LONELINESS

Suicide Prevention Week: September 8-14, 2024
World Suicide Prevention Day: September 10
National Recovery Month: September



Spirituality influences many decisions that people make. It encourages people to have better relationships with themselves, others, and the unknown. Spirituality can help you deal with stress by giving you a sense of peace, purpose, and forgiveness. It often becomes more important in times of emotional stress or illness. Spirituality means different things for different people, yet the results are the same. Take 10 minutes a day this week to pray or meditate and strengthen your mental wellness.



Know the Signs

Pain isn't always obvious, but we can all learn tools on how to reach out and help someone who may be in crisis. Register for this free 1.5-hour webinar to learn how to recognize the signs, find the words, and reach out. Available in English on Monday, September 9th from 9:00 – 10:30 AM. To register please visit <https://www.rivcospc.org/get-trained>

safeTALK

Learn how to support others in caring for their emotional wellness by attending this 3.5-hour training that prepares participants to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Those who attend this training are better able to identify people who have thoughts of suicide and move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or avoid suicide. Participants must be age 15 and older. Available in English on Wednesday, September 10th from 9:30 AM– 12:30 PM. To register, please visit <https://www.rivcospc.org/get-trained>



World Suicide Prevention Day

Light a candle, near a window, on World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th, at 8 PM, in support of suicide prevention, to remember a loved one lost to suicide and for the survivors of suicide. Help to share the message of suicide prevention with others.

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)

Join us September 11th & 12th for this *two-day* interactive workshop that teaches participants to recognize when someone may have thoughts of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety. Although ASIST is widely used by healthcare providers, participants don't need any formal training to attend the workshop—anyone 16 or older can learn and use the ASIST model. To register please visit <https://www.rivcospc.org/get-trained>





Find the (Cross) Words

Crossword puzzles ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)) are a fun way of learning terms and facts. Challenge yourself or play with others in a group or community setting. Test everyone’s knowledge about suicide prevention by downloading this crossword and the instructions ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)). Have fun solving all the clues. Share it with your friends and family for a fun and educational group activity!

Self-Care & Wellness

This training focuses on understanding the impact of stress (psychological, spiritual, interpersonal and physical) and learning strategies to help manage stress and build resiliency. The training guides participants through virtual activities, available resources, and how to connect. Available in English on Wednesday, September 12th from 9:00 AM– 11:00 AM. To register please visit www.rivcospc.org/gettrained

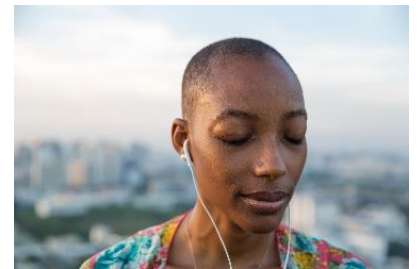


Play an Active Role in Suicide Prevention

Contribute to the amazing work being done by our sub-committees! Join a subcommittee today! Visit www.rivcospc.org for a brief description of each sub-committee's objectives. If you have additional questions regarding the coalition, please email us at pei@ruhealth.org.

Improve Your Mood

Research shows that people listen to music to achieve self-awareness, social relatedness, arousal, and mood regulation. Today we encourage you to listen to something new! Try the playlist Love Over Loneliness which can be found here: [Love Over Loneliness - playlist by TakeAction4MH | Spotify](#). Make a playlist with songs to lift you up or soothe you and share your playlist on social media to inspire others using the hashtag #PEISEPT2024.



Week Three (September 15-21)



LOVE OVER LONELINESS

Suicide Prevention Week: September 8-14, 2024

World Suicide Prevention Day: September 10

National Recovery Month: September



Visit a Shared Social Setting

Being social can be a difficult thing for many individuals. We encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and go to a shared social setting to enjoy the company of others without the pressures of interacting. Some great examples are your local library, coffee shop or even a grocery store!

Join A Social Media Group!

Social media platforms provide spaces where individuals with similar interests can come together, transcending geographical boundaries. From niche hobbies to broad topics, these online communities foster a sense of belonging, enabling individuals to connect, share experiences, and explore their passions. Whether it's a group dedicated to photography, literature, or a particular TV show, social media allows people to find their tribe and connect with others who share their enthusiasm. These online communities provide a sense of camaraderie and a space to express shared passions.



Word Search

Print this word search out and share it with someone to see who can find the words and phrases related to prevention and mental health. Doing activities such as word searches helps with concentration, stress, vocabulary and more! Prevention Word Search & Answer Key ([English](#))

Directing Change

Be inspired and watch the 2024 award winning 60 second PSA videos at <https://directingchange.org/riversidecounty/>. Young people can take action for suicide prevention by submitting art and films to the **Directing Change Art and Film Contest**. There are also monthly contests to submit art to the **Hope & Justice Art contest**. For September's prompt and to learn more please visit: <https://gallery.directingchange.org/contest/monthly-prompt/>



LOVE OVER LONELINESS

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Mental Health First Aid

This training is designed to help people learn how to recognize the signs of mental health or substance use challenges in adults ages 18 and older, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person toward appropriate care if necessary. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, psychosis, substance use/addictions, trauma, and self-care. Available in English on Thursday, September 19th from 8:00 AM– 5:30 PM. To register please visit www.rivcospc.org/gettrained



Building Resiliency and Understanding Trauma

This training focuses on defining trauma and different trauma types, the impact of trauma on the brain, Child Traumatic Stress (CTS), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs); Adverse Community Experiences, Resiliency and being trauma informed. Available in English on Thursday, September 19th from 2:00pm-4:00pm. Please register at www.rivcospc.org/gettrained

Reconnect with Nature!

Go for a walk, sit outside or drive with the windows open. Share this reconnection with a loved one! Outdoor spaces play an important role in encouraging physical activity and promoting social contact. Specifically, research has found a positive relationship between naturalized spaces and leisure-time activities. Active play, walking and cycling, have been associated with positive outcomes across physical, mental, social, emotional and cognitive measures of health and well-being.



Self Care Saturday!



Practicing self-care is a strategy we can all employ to reduce suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Engaging in a self-care routine has been clinically proven to reduce or eliminate anxiety and depression, reduce stress, improve concentration, minimize frustration and anger, increase happiness, and improve energy. Regular self-care in which we do the things that make us feel taken care of mentally, physically, and emotionally doesn't always happen, and we may need to stop and take the time to remind ourselves that we are important, too.

Week Four (September 22-28)





Create a Vision Board

A vision board is a creative way to help visualize your dreams, goals, or aspirations by compiling images, words, and symbols that represent these dreams. To make one, gather materials like magazines, photos, and craft supplies, or use digital tools. Start by identifying your goals, then cut out or print images and words that resonate with those goals. Arrange them on a board in a way that inspires you. This activity can be particularly useful for suicide prevention as it encourages positive thinking, self-reflection, and goal setting, which can foster hope and a sense of purpose!



Wellness Bingo

Play [wellness bingo](#)! Use a custom-made bingo-sheet to mark off healthy wellness habits you complete this week. Caring for yourself plays a vital role in your overall wellbeing, as well your future. With our busy lives, it can be easy to forget to make time for self-care. Prioritize your self-care today and play wellness bingo, either on your own or with a friend!

Know the Signs

Pain isn't always obvious, but we can all learn tools on how to reach out and help someone who may be in crisis. Register for this free 60-minute webinar to learn how to recognize the signs, find the words, and reach out. Available in English on Wednesday, September 23rd from 9:00 – 11:00 AM. Please register at <https://rivcospc.org/gettrained>.



LOVE OVER LONELINESS

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World Suicide Prevention Day: September 10

National Recovery Month: September



Visit Someone you care about

Visiting someone you care about can make a huge difference in their life, especially if they're struggling. When you spend time with someone, it shows that you care and are there to listen, which can help them feel less alone and more understood. This can be a lifeline during tough times, reducing negative thoughts and encouraging communication about difficult emotions. Just being there can offer the support they need to see a brighter future. Help yourself and someone else choose love over loneliness today!

5-Minute Yoga

A quick yoga session can work wonders for your health and mental well-being. Just like meditation, 5-minutes is all it takes to reduce stress, improve mood, and increase mindfulness. Moving through gentle poses and focusing on your breathing can release tension and help make you feel more centered. This can be especially helpful in preventing suicidal thoughts, as it provides a moment of calm and clarity, which can help break the cycle of negative thinking. Plus, the physical activity releases endorphins - natural mood lifters.



safeTALK

Learn how to support others in caring for their emotional wellness by attending this 3.5-hour training that prepares participants to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Those who attend this training are better able to identify people who have thoughts of suicide and move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or avoid suicide. Participants must be age 15 and older. Available in English on Wednesday, September 25th from 9:30 AM– 12:30 PM. Please register at <https://rivcospc.org/gettrained>.



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Doodle Your Feelings

You would be surprised how effective putting your feelings and emotions in writing is to improve your mood and mental outlook. This simple act allows you to express complex emotions visually, which can be easier than finding the right words for some people. It can release repressed feelings and provide a creative outlet for stress and anxiety. By focusing on your doodles, you can also take your mind off negative thoughts and gain a sense of calm and clarity. This process can be therapeutic, offering a moment of relief and helping to break the cycle of harmful thoughts for those who may be struggling.

Make Time for Yourself

Taking time for yourself isn't just for the introverted or the busy! It's beneficial for the mental well-being of us all. Engaging in self-care activities helps reduce stress, increase self-compassion, and provide a sense of accomplishment and joy. For example, activities like gardening or reading a good book can offer a peaceful escape from daily pressures. You can even try taking a nap! Reconnecting with yourself and finding moments of peace can also be a powerful tool in preventing suicidal thoughts, helping you focus on the present moment and reducing anxiety. Remember, taking even a few minutes each day for yourself isn't selfish—it's essential to your overall health and happiness.



Out of the Darkness Walk

We are social beings, and we are not meant to live in isolation. Community is essential for us to thrive, especially for someone with a mental illness who is already experiencing the common symptoms of loneliness and isolation. The walk will take place on September 28th beginning at 9:00 a.m. at Fairmount Park in Riverside, CA.

Join a team and go for a walk to raise awareness for suicide prevention efforts, as well as to remember those who have died by suicide. Scan the QR code to join the Riverside County Suicide Prevention Coalition team or visit:

<https://supporting.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donordrive.team&teamID=341764>



Week Five (September 29 & 30)





Find a Hobby

Engaging in enjoyable activities stimulates us and releases feel-good chemicals like dopamine, which can enhance your mood and overall well-being. So, why not find a new activity to enjoy!? Research and pick up a hobby like painting, playing a musical instrument, or even a board game! All these can provide a creative outlet and a sense of accomplishment when you increase your skill in them. You can also try picking up a sport or joining a community club to increase your social connections, which is vital for mental health. By immersing yourself in a new hobby, you can find joy, purpose, and a positive distraction from negative and/or intrusive thoughts.

Create Steps Toward a Health Behavior

Making a change in yourself or setting a goal about your health can be hard! It is easy to put it off and procrastinate, so why not start with baby-steps? Breaking down a big goal – like walking more or going on a trip – can help you really think about what it takes to reach it and make achieving it more realistic. It can even help you reach it faster if you set a timeline to follow! Start making a difference in how you feel and map-out a better you TODAY!



A Collaborative Approach to Suicide Prevention in Riverside County

Riverside County released its Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan in June 2020. Created with collaboration from community members from different sectors in Riverside County, it encompasses the collaborative approach needed to work toward ending suicide. Contact PEI@ruhealth.org for your digital copy of the plan or find it on the Riverside County Suicide Prevention Coalition Website at www.rivcospc.org. Find out how you can become part of the Suicide Prevention Coalition to help end suicide in Riverside County!

Links





Take Action 4 Mental Health Suicide Prevention Toolkit: <https://takeaction4mh.com/toolkit-categories/suicideprevention/>

Know the Signs Crossword
Crossword Puzzle – English

https://www.suicideispreventable.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Suicide_Prevent-Crossword-puzzle-2021-Eng.personal.pdf

Answer Key - English

https://www.suicideispreventable.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Suicide_Prevent-Crossword-puzzle-2021-Eng.Answer-Key.pdf

Crucigrama – Español

https://www.suicideispreventable.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Suicide_Prevent-Crossword-puzzle-2021-Span-personal.pdf

Respuestas – Español

https://www.suicideispreventable.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Suicide_Prevent-Crossword-puzzle-2021-Span-Answer-Key.pdf

Reach Out!

Available Resources and Information

www.rivcospc.org

<https://www.suicideispreventable.org/>

<https://up2riverside.org/>

Directing Change

Riverside County Page: <http://directingchange.org/RiversideCounty/>

Hope & Justice September Contest: <http://www.hopeandjustice.directingchange.org/>

Wellness Bingo

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGNT9_w4OI/4EJE_KbKtRXObxUI_eVlow/edit?utm_content=DAGNT9_w4OI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

Word Search- <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/npw-23-word-search.pdf>

To get trained

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeKWGBMUYte_cafnVDxwris17iwiUgpmkJXuEauB0maRRbLWg/viewform

Out of the Darkness Walk – Join Our Team!

<https://supporting.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donordrive.team&teamID=341764>

