

For Immediate Release

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**National Suicide Prevention Week: A Coachella Valley Perspective**

Palm Desert, CA (September 11, 2017) — This week marks National Suicide Prevention Week, an initiative that has been running for over a decade and is endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Data from WHO indicates that nearly 800,000 deaths occur every year that are due to suicide, and several times as many individuals make suicide attempts. In America, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death, and claims approximately 44,100 lives per year. In Riverside County, approximately 10.8% of adults have seriously considered suicide at some point in their lives, according to the California Health Interview Survey.

HARC's 2016 Coachella Valley data reveals that approximately 4.5% of local adults have seriously considered suicide within the past year. That equates to more than 13,700 of our friends and neighbors who've come close to taking their own lives in the past year.

What is perhaps most significant to understand about suicide is that it is preventable. Understanding the warning signs of suicide, learning how to respond to these signs, and knowing who to contact for help are critically important skills that provide tremendous help in the effort to support individuals who are at risk of suicide.

The theme of this year's World Suicide Prevention Day, "Take a Minute, Save a Life," reflects the ability that we all have to help prevent suicide. A simple moment of intervention to ask if someone is okay or refer them to some resources can make all the difference in the life of a person contemplating taking his or her life.

For resources pertaining to suicide prevention, and ways to support suicide prevention, visit:

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Inland Empire and Desert Cities chapter: <https://afsp.org/chapter/afsp-inland-empire-and-desert-cities/>
- It's Up to Us (a program of Riverside County Behavioral Health): <http://up2riverside.org/> or 951-686-HELP (4357)
- American Association of Suicidology: <http://www.suicidology.org/about-aas/national-suicide-prevention-week>

If you are in crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text TALK to 741-741. You can also visit the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

About HARC

HARC, Inc. (Health Assessment and Research for Communities) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing research and evaluation services related to health and wellness. HARC is funded in part by grants, donations, and the consulting services they offer. HARC is located on the University of California, Riverside Palm Desert Center. More information can be obtained by calling HARC at (760) 404-1945, or visiting the organization's website at www.HARCdata.org.