

Please return this signed form to SPAN-California for inclusion in our "Statement to Sacramento" campaign.

Mail to:

SPAN-California
Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network - California

P.O. Box 235260
Encinitas, CA 92023

or send via Fax to:
760/753-4565

We encourage you to COPY this form and have others sign it as well. Nothing is more powerful than the voices of Californians.

Can anything prevent suicides?

With Focused Attention Suicide Can Be Prevented

Suicide is largely preventable. Research shows that up to 90% of the suicides studied are people who were depressed or had another psychiatric disorder. The stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness and suicide cause many people not to seek treatment.

Some suicides occur without warning, but 75% present one or more warning signs. Imagine how people could help each other if they recognized the problem and knew what to do. For a list of warning signs of suicide, refer to the SPAN-California "Suicide Prevention" brochure or our website.

There are many things that can be done to prevent suicide. Education, outreach, awareness, and screening are all powerful tools in the fight against suicide.

SPAN-California is encouraging lawmakers to implement consistent policies in each county and community to reduce this tragic loss of life.

What about a state plan?

In Its "Call to Action to Prevent Suicide," the Federal Government Has Challenged Each State

Yes, there is now a *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention*, published in 2001, and a *Call to Action* has been issued, but it is up to each state government to develop, fund and implement its own plan.

SPAN-California is working with policymakers to implement a state plan and earmark funds specifically for suicide prevention. A taskforce will oversee the activities of the plan within each county.

Each year, every day, more people choose suicide as their only option. This can and must be changed. Mental illness is treatable and suicide is preventable.

SPAN-California would like to thank Region IX, Office of Public Health and Science, US Department of Health and Human Services for funding the development of this brochure.

SPAN-California
P.O. Box 235260
Encinitas, CA 92023
(760) 753-4565 • www.span-california.org

Span-California is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization of concerned citizens and professionals dedicated to the prevention of suicide through statewide and community partnerships.



SPAN-California
Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network - California

A Voice for Suicide Prevention in California

Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network (SPAN)-California was founded in 1999 as a force for suicide prevention, an arena for collaboration among agencies, and a voice in our state capitol.

We are the lead sponsors of the California Strategy for Suicide Prevention. We advocate through our SPAN REPORT newsletter, our website and our *Statement to Sacramento* campaign. By signing these letters (inside) you can make your voice heard.

Its members and board of directors are dedicated to igniting change in California public policy and erasing the stigma associated with suicide.

www.span-california.org

Make a Statement to Sacramento

Is suicide really a big problem?

Suicide is a Leading Cause of Death in California

As surprising as it may seem, suicide is a huge problem in our state. Over 3,000 Californians die each year by their own hand*. In fact, there are three suicides for every two homicides* and twice as many suicides as HIV/AIDS deaths*. It occurs among all socio-economic, cultural and ethnic groups.

The American Association of Suicidology says the suicide attempt rate is at least 25 times greater than the death rate, meaning there are over 75,000 suicide attempts each year in California. The state has estimated a cost of \$275 million for hospital inpatient charges for suicide attempters.

Nationally, it is a leading cause of death for people age 15-34[†], and the fourth cause of death for kids age 10-14[†]. The elderly account for one fifth of all suicides[†].

Both the California Senate and Assembly declared suicide a state-wide public health problem and its prevention a state priority.

*Source: National Vital Statistics Report, 1999, CDC
†Source: National Center for Health Statistics, 1999. Produced by: CDC

Statement to Sacramento

Nothing is as powerful as your voice!

ONE Individual Should Complete All Three Letters On This Page. Return to SPAN-California.

Let Your Voice Be Heard



Advocates the development of a proven, effective suicide prevention program

SPAN-California
P.O. Box 235260
Encinitas, CA 92023

California State Senator:

COMPLETE NAME

I petition you to please...
Direct resources to implement Suicide Prevention Programs as called for in the Surgeon General's National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and promote accessible and affordable Mental Health Services for all Californians.

Printed Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

Date _____ Thank You!

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California Assemblymember:

COMPLETE NAME

I petition you to please...
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California Governor:

COMPLETE NAME

I petition you to please...
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Printed Name _____

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City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

Date _____ Thank You!

Your comments are important: _____
