

Message from Mayor Bernie Ash...

Nationally, suicide is one of the most disruptive and tragic events a family and a community can experience. Public awareness of this terrifying problem is the key to preventing further suffering and loss of life; and the risk for human self-destruction can be reduced through awareness, education and treatment.

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network is a grassroots collaboration of Tennesseans and organizations working to eliminate the stigma of suicide, educate the community about the warning signs of suicide, and ultimately reduce the rate of suicide in our state.

**“Hope** is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness in today’s society. Darkness is prevalent in our home, jobs, schools, politics, etc. **Hope** is the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burdens behind us.” *Lt. Scott Moore, Wilson County Sheriff’s Office.*

Suicide doesn’t distinguish between the young and the old; the rich and the poor; male or female. Lives are never lived, among the youngest of suicide victims; and families are forever changed. Among the suicide victims for whom life has been lived; suicide is a sad close to productive lives.

The causes of suicide are many and complex. Among the causes are depression, financial worries, bullying, social isolation, health issues, a perception of inferiority, fear, homelessness, post-traumatic stress disorder; and, holidays that should be joyful trigger angst and sadness.

Do you know the warning signs?

- Threatening or talking about wanting to hurt or kill him/her self.
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide.
- Displaying hopelessness.
- Expressing rage or uncontrolled anger.
- Acting in a reckless manner; or engaging in risky activities.
- Feeling of being trapped-no way out.
- Exhibiting anxiety and/or agitation.
- Disturbances in sleep patterns.
- Dramatic mood changes.
- Giving away prized possessions.
- Having a history of previous suicide attempts.

**“Education of one of the biggest keys to suicide prevention as the more eyes we have watching and the more ears we have listening-the more suicides we can prevent.”**

*Brenda Harper  
Former Director  
Cumberland Mental Health*

Take the time to observe and communicate with your family and friends; or, someone you trust. Unlike any other time in the history of our country, the use of technology has an impact on every phase of our lives. Be vigilant and be aware of trends and threats to our community through the internet. If you're a novice with the internet, ask questions of those more experienced with navigating the internet.

For a lifeline to resources and support during a crisis call:

**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**“You lose your license to judge.”**

*James Hambrick  
Chief of Police, Mt. Juliet*

**“Are you a friend or a true friend?”**

*Michael McPherson,  
Veterans Service Director  
Wilson County*

**“Don't hesitate to call for help.”  
“Don't postpone joy.”**

*Patti Watts, Director  
Senior Citizen Center Lebanon*

**To echo President Reagan's message to Mr. Gorbachev “tear down this wall.”**

*Tanya Graham, Executive Director  
Mt. Juliet Senior Activity Center*

**“Help is there; just ask.”**

*Nathan Miller, Director  
Cumberland Mental Health*

Locally, Cumberland Mental Health Services ([www.vbhcs.org](http://www.vbhcs.org)) serves the community for help to gain better mental health. Professionals are available, with a mobile crisis unit, to respond to adult suicide situations seven days a week; 24 hours a day. **Call: 1-877-567-6051.** Crisis services for children and adolescents are not part of VHHCS. **Call: 1-866-791-9221** for assistance.

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) is “saving lives in Tennessee.” TSPN is a national model for suicide prevention. TSPN offer a wide range of resources tools and training for suicide awareness and prevention; and, for survivors of suicide loss. Contact:

**615-297-1077**  
[www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org)  
**Text: TN 741 741**  
[www.tspn.org](http://www.tspn.org)

### **QPR- Question, Persuade, Respond**

QPR training is provided through TSPN. The QPR mission is to save lives and reduce suicidal behaviors by providing innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training. Quality education empowers all people, regardless of their background to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know.

**“There’s not a secret you want to keep.”**

*Chuck Whitlock  
School Health Coordinator  
Wilson County Schools*

**“Young people want to be heard.”**

*Concerned Student  
Lebanon High School*

Our veterans have served and sacrificed for our Nation. Veterans may have special needs; and there are resources, for assistance, through Vet Centers. Vet Centers provide readjustment services in an environment of understanding, compassion and confidentiality. If you’re experiencing feelings of guilt, isolation, rage, depression, anxiety, lack of structure, relationship problems; or medical or financial hardship the Vet Center can help. Contact:

**1-877-WAR-VETS (927-8387)**

The above hot line number is staffed by combat veterans and spouses with 24 hour a day/365 days a year access. In Middle Tennessee, the Vet Center is located at:

Airpark Business Center I

1420 Donelson Pike  
Nashville, TN 37217  
(615) 366-1220

“At the end of the day, remember to have hope, be strong, laugh loud, play hard, live in the moment, smile often, dream big. Remember you are loved and never give up. **H**ope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies.” *Lt. Scott Moore, Wilson County Sheriff's Office*

Annually, more than 30,000 lives are lost, and it is estimated that for every suicide there are 8-25 attempted suicides. These figures are staggering. Please share this information. We can make a difference.

Mayor  
Bernie Ash