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CDC Report Outlines State Suicide Rates Kansas ranks 19th overall, experiencing dramatic increase

TOPEKA – Suicide is a tragic reality in our state and throughout the rest of the country. Today, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released its latest [Vital Signs](#) series, which addresses a single, important public health topic each month. This month's edition looks at suicide rates across the United States. The report details a dramatic increase in incidents of suicide in Kansas, particularly among females. **The state ranked 19th overall, and fifth for overall change.** The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) also tracks this cause of death through its division of Vital Statistics. This information is shared with our federal partners for reports such as this.

"Many of us have been personally impacted by this unfortunate reality," said Dr. Greg Lakin, KDHE Chief Medical Officer. "It's important that everyone, whether it's a medical professional, family, friends or co-workers, take an active role in offering help before it's too late."

The CDC report indicates the following:

- In 2016, nearly 45,000 suicides occurred in the U.S. among people 10 years and older.
- From 1999-2016, suicide rates increased in nearly every state, with 25 states experiencing increases of more than 30 percent each.
- Data from 27 states participating in the National Violent Death Reporting System in 2015 indicate that more than half of people who died by suicide did not have a known mental health condition.
- A range of factors contributes to suicide beyond mental health conditions alone, including relationship, substance use, physical health, job, financial and legal problems.

The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) offers programs and services to address suicide. It also heads the Governor's Behavioral Health Services Planning Council, that produced the [Kansas Suicide Prevention Subcommittee 2017 Annual Report](#), which outlines steps the State is taking to regarding this issue.

"Too many Kansans are lost to suicide each year," said KDADS Secretary Tim Keck. "It's imperative that we continue to make suicide prevention a top priority, by promoting public awareness of the issue, evaluating risk factors and encouraging appropriate treatments and interventions."

Suicide warning signs include the following:

- Feeling like a burden
- Being isolated
- Increased anxiety
- Feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Increased substance use
- Looking for a way to access lethal means
- Increased anger or rage
- Extreme mood swings
- Expressing hopelessness
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Talking or posting about wanting to die
- Making plans for suicide

Suicide has risk and protective factors similar to other behavioral health issues. Kansas has many resources available, ranging from prevention and behavioral health promotion strategies to guidance in responding effectively to suicidal thoughts, plans, and actions. Learn more about how to support friends, family, and neighbors after a suicide attempt. To learn more, visit the [Kansas Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#). You can also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline for Kansas at 785-841-2345, or 800-273-8255. Free and confidential crisis counseling is available 24/7. Other resources include Kansas chat, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and [Lifeline Chat](#).

For behavioral health, mental health or medical resources in your area, please visit the [Local Resources](#) page of [KansasSuicidePrevention.org](#) or dial 211. KDADS also offers [training regarding suicide prevention](#). The next session will take place June 28, in Hays.

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