10th Annual ‘Break the Silence’ Walk to End Suicide September 22nd

Coeur d’Alene, ID. – Join the Region 1 Suicide Prevention Action Network (SPAN) at their 10th annual ‘Break the Silence’ 5k walk to end suicide and raise awareness on September 22nd. The walk is in remembrance of those lost to the completion of suicide and an effort to raise awareness to prevent suicide.

“The walk brought out 455 people last year and we are hoping to exceed that goal this year,” said Lora Whalen, Region 1 SPAN Co-Chair and Panhandle Health District Director. “This walk is an opportunity for our North Idaho community to come together, share stories of strength and survival and continue to see the stigma reduced surrounding mental health and suicide.”

Suicide continues to be the 2nd leading cause of death for Idahoans age 15-34 and for males up to age 44. Idaho is also consistently in the top 10 states with the highest suicide rates, 60% of suicides in Idaho involve a firearm. The Region 1 SPAN chapter is trying to change those statistics by educating and advocating for our community.

“We realize so many people in our communities have been affected by suicide and we want to help by providing resources that can prevent future risk,” said Catherine Perusse, Region 1 SPAN Co-Chair and mental health counselor. “The SPAN walk is a way that people can connect with each other and also connect with evidence-based resources where they can learn skills to prevent suicides.”

Suicide is a major challenge to public health. It contributes to premature death, morbidity, lost productivity and health care costs. Unfortunately, suicide reflects only part of the problem. There is a larger amount of people who are hospitalized as a result of non-fatal suicidal behavior. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated lifetime cost
associated with non-fatal injuries and deaths caused by self-directed violence amounted to $93.5 billion in the U.S. in 2013.

Like most public health problems, suicide is 100% preventable. Suicide has no single determining cause but has several risk factors. That is why when approaching suicide prevention, it is important to take the same approach and focus on the several factors that could contribute to someone’s self-injury. One thing that everyone can do is if they suspect someone may be considering suicide, ask them: “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”. As direct as that may seem, you could be saving a life by opening up the conversation and encouraging that person to seek help.

**EVENT DETAILS:**

10th Annual ‘Break the Silence’ Walk

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 22, 2018 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.
Registration opens at 8:30 am

**WHERE:** Riverstone Park
1805 Tilford Lane
Coeur d’Alene, ID 83815

Participants will receive a commemorative t-shirt with their $25.00 registration fee or anyone can walk for free. We do ask that everyone registers.

For more information or opportunities to get involved, contact Jill Ainsworth at (208) 415-5103. To learn more about SPAN’s suicide prevention efforts in North Idaho, visit: [www.spanidaho.org/region-1-coeur-dalene](http://www.spanidaho.org/region-1-coeur-dalene)

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**About SPAN Idaho:**

SPAN Idaho’s mission is to eradicate suicide in Idaho through statewide advocacy, collaboration and education in best practices. SPAN has created statewide regional chapters to carry out prevention efforts at the local level, and regularly conduct training conferences for with nationally recognized speakers.

Idaho has consistently been among the top ten states with the highest suicide rates in the nation. Suicide is a complex and difficult problem and solutions developed in other parts of the country may not address Idaho's needs. We continue working with the citizens and communities across the state to develop and implement strategies to reduce suicide and suicidal behavior.