



September 2014 Newsletter

Suicide Prevention: What You Can Do in the Workplace

September 10th, 2014 is National Suicide Prevention Day. Suicide and suicidal behavior is complex and frightening. Every 14 minutes, someone dies by suicide in the United States, taking approximately 37,000 lives each year. In 2011, 204 Maine citizens, 4 each week, died by suicide. Suicide occurs in all socio-economic groups and at all educational levels. The impact of a death by suicide is devastating to family, friends, co-workers, businesses and entire communities. Suicide attempts significantly outnumber deaths.

Seek help by contacting a Mental Health Professional or call the **Maine Crisis Hotline at 1-888-568-1112** if you notice anyone exhibiting one or more of these behaviors:

- Hopelessness
- Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- Acting reckless/engaging in risky activities
- Feeling trapped (like there is no way out)
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends, family or society
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep/sleeping all the time
- Dramatic changes in mood
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide

Promote Suicide Prevention in the Workplace

You can play an active role in suicide prevention by creating a work environment that fosters communication, a sense of belonging, and respect for an employee who may be at risk for suicide. Feeling connected to a community promotes emotional well-being and can decrease risk for suicide.

Consider establishing a workplace suicide prevention program. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and/or HR Department can provide assistance and support in this effort. The key components of a comprehensive suicide prevention program include:

- Policies and procedures to help employees at risk and in crisis
- A plan for responding to a suicide attempt or death in your workplace
- Education and training on mental health, suicide prevention, and stigma reduction for employees
- Specialized suicide prevention training for the workplace's EAP providers and/or HR staff. Established relationships with mental health professionals in the local community
- A referral guide to resources in your community that offer support and/or treatment for problems related to suicide
- A work environment that values its employees, promotes respect, open communication, a sense of belonging and emotional well-being, that encourages people to seek help when needed, and to support each other.

For more information:

[Maine Suicide Prevention Program](#)
[The Role of Co-Workers in Preventing Suicide in the Workplace](#)
[The Role of Managers in Preventing Suicide in the Workplace](#)

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September Health Observances

- ◆ [Fruits and Veggies– More Matters Month](#)
- ◆ [Healthy Aging Month](#)
- ◆ [National Food Safety Education Month](#)
- ◆ [National Preparedness Month](#)
- ◆ [Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [Prostate Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [Whole Grains Month](#)
- ◆ [National Suicide Prevention Week](#) (7-13)
- ◆ [World Suicide Day](#) (10)

October Health Observances

- ◆ [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [Eye Injury Prevention Month](#)
- ◆ [Health Literacy Month](#)
- ◆ [National Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- ◆ [Mental Health Awareness Week](#) (6-10)
- ◆ [National Depression Screening Day](#) (9)
- ◆ [Bone & Joint Health Awareness Week](#) (12-20)



Paul R. LePage, Governor

Maine Center for Disease
Control and Prevention
An Office of the
Department of Health and Human Services

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

For more information or support with your worksite wellness program contact Meredith Backus at 207-287-5364 or meredith.backus@maine.gov.

September is Fruit & Veggies- More Matters Month

September is a great time to begin eating more fruits and veggies. Nearly every Maine crop is in season. We've all heard that we need to eat more of them but most Mainers eat about one fruit and vegetable a day. Ideally, filling half of your plate with fruits and veggies at each meal would equal the recommended 4 cups each day.

This September take the [Fruit & Veggie Pledge!](#) Add just one fruit or veggie to your meals. Do this until you build up to 4 cups each day- getting there is what matters, not how long it takes. (A piece of fresh fruit is about 1 cup and 1 cup of vegetables is about the size of a fist.)

Ask your family, staff and coworkers to join you in the pledge. To make being successful fun ask them which of the **September Fruit and Veggie Celebration Ideas** below they'd like to try. Or ask if they have some ideas for adding one more fruit or vegetable to their day. Need a reason to take the pledge?

Eating fruits and veggies– especially 4 cups a day:

- Helps with blood pressure control
- Lowers the risk for some types of cancer
- Enables you to reach and maintain a healthy weight
- Helps keep the body strong and active
- Nutrients are easily absorbed in this form
- Can save money in long term health care costs by lowering risk of illness and disease

September – Fruit and Veggie Celebration Ideas

- Host a homegrown vegetable exchange or a taste test
- Bring in fruits and veggies to share in the break room
- Create a recipe swap- tomatoes, zucchini, cabbage, apples are everywhere
- Have a variety contest- see who can eat the most variety of fruits or veggies each week, or the most local varieties each week
- Throw a salad social- It's easy- each person brings a fruit or veggie to add to a salad and you toss them together and enjoy

Focus on Fruits and Veggies All Year

After September you will be in the habit of eating more fruits and veggies. Try one or all of these ideas to keep that habit strong.

- Replace the candy dish with a fruit bowl
- Bring in a different veggie or fruit to share each month
- Have a fruit or veggie smoothie recipe taste testing
- Create guidelines for the foods offered at meetings with customers and/or staff
- Look into a [Community Supported Agriculture](#) for your worksite this fall.



Additional Resources



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Department of Health and Human Services
 Maine People Living Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives
 Paul R. LePage, Governor Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner