

NORTHWEST MISSOURIAN

SPECIAL ISSUE: SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH

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TRIGGER WARNING: SUICIDE and SELF-HARM

The following stories contain potentially disturbing content pertaining to suicide, self-harm and mental health issues. If someone is struggling with thoughts of suicide or self-harm, please reference the list of resources on A2, or call 911 or 988 for emergencies and immediate help.



GRAPHIC BY JULIANNA LAWRENCE ASST. DESIGN EDITOR

Offer support before it's too late

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. This was first declared in 2008 and has since been a month to recognize and connect to those affected by suicide, with suicidal ideations and raise awareness.

The Northwest Missourian is dedicating this paper to spreading awareness and education about Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and mental health. The news included in the paper is strictly about suicide and mental health.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Between 2021 and 2022, the number of deaths by suicide raised 2.6%, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This national month is also important in Maryville and at Northwest. Mosaic's Behavioral Health Center - Maryville's Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner - Board Certified Kristine Kramer said good mental health is im-

portant for people's overall wellbeing.

"This month is of grave importance to raise awareness of suicide prevention and be a light to individuals that are struggling by providing resources and creating supportive communities to battle against suicide," Kramer said in an email to The Missourian.

Wellness Services' Mental Health Outreach Coordinator Terra Feick said Northwest has a new program to educate students, faculty and staff on suicide prevention called C.A.L.M.

C.A.L.M. stands for create awareness, ask questions, learn resources and manage wellness. This program is different from previous ones because it was built by Northwest counselors and uses statistics and resources geared toward Northwest students.

"We have a survey that goes out every year to our Northwest students and roughly a quarter of the students who completed the survey reported suicidal thoughts," Feick said. "And

over half of the students who were surveyed reported experiencing anxiety or depression."

This program will help educate anyone on campus on how to respond to a crisis. Feick said suicide can be a difficult topic to talk about, but wants students to be prepared to handle it if they have to and to know the resources provided to get someone help.

The first week of October is also National Student Athlete Mental Health Awareness Week. Student athletes can experience a lot of stress and their mental health can be affected.

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month is a time for people to reach out and get help or learn more about suicide prevention. The Editorial Board believes it is important to raise awareness and offer resources before it is too late for someone to get help. We encourage anyone who needs help to reach out to any of the resources and feel like they're not alone in their battle with mental health.

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