

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1708

TITLE: Resolution Commemorating World Suicide Prevention Day at the University of Florida

AUTHOR(S): Senator Gabriela Prieto, Senator Krystal Felix, Senator Maximo Toledo, Senator Priya Majethia, Senator Arshan Falasiri, Senator Lucas Rodriguez, Senator Matthew Bravo, Senator Andrew Sabadash, Senator Cole Bennett, Majority Party Leader Julia Seifer

SPONSOR(S): Deputy Majority Party Leader Freddi Rappoport, Senator Aleah Henely, Judiciary Chairman Aaron Rubaii, Senator Danny Weinberger, Minority Party Leader Anamika Naidu, Senator Austin Britton

WHEREAS, September 10th is internationally recognized as World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD). WSPD focuses on raising awareness, reducing stigmas, and gaining attention on suicide and its effects. The singular message that WSPD aims to advocates for is that suicides are preventable [1]; and,

WHEREAS, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the United States, at a crude death rate of 14.8 per 100,000 individuals in 2022. Crude death rate is calculated using number of deaths divided by population and multiplied by 100,000 individuals [2]; and,

WHEREAS, the suicide death rates in 2022 were the highest they have been in the US since 1941, which was right after the Great Depression and during World War II [3]; and,

WHEREAS, in 2020, suicide was the second leading cause of death for ages 10-14 and 25-34, third leading cause of death for age group 15-24, and fourth leading cause of death for age group 35-44 [4]; and,

WHEREAS, in 2022, the suicide rate in the United States was calculated to be one death every 11 minutes. The age demographic of 85 years old and older had the highest rates of suicide [5]; and,

WHEREAS, the percentage of adults with serious mental illness was highest among young adults aged 18 to 25 in 2021 [6]; and,

WHEREAS, University of Florida researchers have previously identified white males from ages 15-20 to be a demographic at a greater risk of suicide, further emphasizing the importance of suicide awareness among college students [7]; and,

WHEREAS, suicide is a major public health problem with far-reaching social, emotional and economic consequences [8]; and,

WHEREAS, on-campus institutions centered around the promotion of student mental health at the University of Florida include the Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC), aiming to “assist UF students cultivate their mental health and well-being in support of their personal, educational, and career development.” [9]; and,

WHEREAS, UF Health, specifically the UF Health Psychiatric Hospital, does valuable and life-saving work, offering confidential and effective treatment to all patients [10]. This is another valuable resource students can rely upon; and,

WHEREAS, there are warning signs that can indicate suicidal thoughts, so by being able to identify such warning signs, students can do their part in supporting their friends and family, combatting mental health crises, and directing individuals to appropriate resources [11]; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate emphasizes the importance of mental health awareness.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate hopes to share with any individual experiencing suicidal thoughts that there is hope, that we care about their well-being and are always here to support them, and that they can find help at the Counseling and Wellness Center or through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline 24/7,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for increased education on suicide prevention among the student body.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the importance of World Suicide Prevention Day as it pertains to the continued promotion of mental health on campus.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Senior Vice President for Health Affairs David R. Nelson, Executive Director of the CWC Ernesto Escoto, Interim Director of the CWC Rosa West, and Associate Director of Crisis and Emergency Resource Center Shinlay Rivera.

- [1] <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-suicide-prevention-day/2023>
- [2] <https://wonder.cdc.gov/controller/datarequest/D158;jsessionid=F7EF9723CDAEF66A43C0DA4C1D0E>
- [3] https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/nchs_press_releases/2023/20231129.htm
- [4] <https://sprc.org/about-suicide/scope-of-the-problem/suicide-by-age/>
- [5] <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/data.html>
- [6] <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt39443/2021NSDUHFFRRRev010323.pdf>
- [7] <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/epidemiology-and-psychiatric-sciences/article/age-patterns-of-suicide-with-different-methods-for-us-whites-apc-modelling-analysis-of-the-19992017-national-data/11E37F0E86F49BC851605586FAED556F>
- [8] <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-suicide-prevention-day/2023>
- [9] <https://counseling.ufl.edu/services/crisis/>
- [10] <https://ufhealth.org/locations/uf-health-psychiatric-hospital>
- [11] <https://988lifeline.org/>



Monish Vijayaraghavan
Senate President

10/2/24

Date