



TRIGGER WARNING...

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Do you know of anyone who has died by suicide? Tried? Are you concerned about anyone? Yourself?

Suicide is not inevitable for anyone. By starting the conversation, providing support, and directing help to those who need it, we can prevent suicides and save lives. Evidence shows that providing support services, talking about suicide, reducing access to means of self-harm, and following up with loved ones are just some of the actions we can all take to help others. By offering immediate counseling to everyone that may need it, local crisis centers provide invaluable support at

critical times and connect individuals to local services.¹

Iowa ranked as the 21st highest suicide rate among all U.S. states in 2019 (AAS, 2020). In 2020, suicide was the eighth leading cause of death among all ages and the second leading cause of death among those aged 15-34 in Iowa. Suicide is many times more common than homicide in Iowa, with each suicide affecting the whole community (IDPH, 2022). As the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) describes, "Each person who dies by suicide leaves behind 135 people who knew that person." (SAMHSA, 2022)²

But did you know? At Iowa State University, Well-Being³ is an integral part of WorkLife balance. There are several components to Well-Being that one can participate in from Adventure2 to Workshops to Rec Services. Iowa State even has a Walk for Well-being⁴ resource!

Walking for Your Mind. Countless research studies show that walking has a significant impact on not only our bodies but also our emotional, intellectual and mental well-being. Here are benefits from walking that research says about regular walking and stress:

- Reduces stress and improves ability to cope
- Releases feel-good brain chemicals like endorphins
- Decreases depression
- Alleviates symptoms of premenstrual syndrome in women
- Enhances relaxation
- Decreases tension and worry
- Boosts brain power and creates new brain cells
- Improves cognitive functioning
- Enhances memory
- Keeps brain young, decreases symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's disease
- Reduces, treats and prevents anxiety and panic attacks
- Helps manage anger and feelings of hostility
- Boosts your mood: increases joy, happiness and sense of well-being

¹ <https://988lifeline.org/how-we-can-all-prevent-suicide/>

² chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnbpcajpcgiclfndmkaj/https://publications.iowa.gov/43681/1/suicide_data%20brief.pdf

³ <https://worklife.hr.iastate.edu/wellbeing>

⁴ <https://www.wellbeing.iastate.edu/walk-well-being>

Don't Hesitate! As a person who is medicated for anxiety and depression, I do not take well-being for granted. If you or someone you know needs help, call anytime - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 800-327-4692 (TTY 877-542-6488). Iowa state partners with Employee Assistance Program and is available at no charge to all benefit eligible employees.⁵

---Submitted by Sara K Harris-Talley (MBA'98), P&S Council 2024-2027, Peer Advocacy and Policy Committee, 7AUG2024

⁵ <https://hr.iastate.edu/employee-assistance-program>