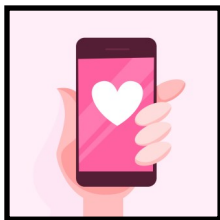




## Top stories in this newsletter



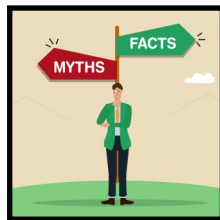
Talking Points:  
Statewide Peer Warm-  
line



NC AFSP Upcoming  
Events and Out of the  
Darkness Campus Walk



State-level Updates:  
New Data Product



Suicide Myths & Facts

## Talking Points: Statewide Peer Warmline 1-855-PEERS NC (1-855-733-7762)

### What is the Statewide Peer Warmline?

The statewide Peer Warmline is a phone line staffed by Peer Support Specialists who offer non-clinical support and resources to those in crisis. Their unique expertise helps reduce stigma while strengthening overall engagement in care.

### What are Certified Peer Support Specialists (CPSS)?

Certified Peer Support Specialists (CPSS) are highly trained individuals with lived experience who can help you with your mental health and substance use recovery. They are people with personal lived experience that may be just like yours. Certified Peer Support Specialists:

- Meet you where you are without judgment
- Help you navigate the system for treatment, employment, housing, and relationships
- Teach you how to advocate for yourself and work with your treatment plan

To learn more about Certified Peer Support Specialists click [here](#)

### How does the Statewide Peer Warmline differ from the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline?

The Statewide Peer Warmline gives callers the option to speak with a Peer Support Specialist. Peer Support Specialists (or “peers”) are people living in recovery with mental illness and/or substance use disorder who provide support to others who can benefit from their lived experience. Like 988, North Carolina’s peer warmline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

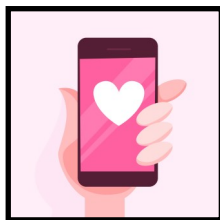
### How can the Statewide Peer Warmline help?

Warmlines have also been shown to improve outcomes for people in crisis by reducing hospitalizations and emergency department visits, reducing the recurrence of behavioral health symptoms, and increasing communication and collaboration between clinical care teams, individuals in crisis and their families.

### Does the Statewide Peer Warmline have text and chat capabilities?

At present, the Statewide Peer Warmline does not offer text or chat capabilities. However, the service hopes to expand these features in the future. If a community member is more comfortable conversing over text and chat, they can do so at [988Lifeline.org](https://988Lifeline.org).

Information and language pulled from [NC DHHS Press Release](#), [NC DHHS Certified Peer Support Specialist](#) and supplemented by Hannah Harms



## American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) —North Carolina Chapter, Upcoming events:

**March 6, 2025** at 4PM EST – AFSP NC Chapter Presents: It’s Real Teens & Mental Health-High School. Register to attend here: [AFSP NC Presents It’s Real Teens & Mental Health-High School](#)

**March 11, 2025** 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM – [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention | 2025 North Carolina Advocacy Action Day](#)

AFSP Advocacy Action Days bring together passionate volunteers to advocate for state policy changes that will improve mental health and prevent suicide. We will meet with our state public officials as part of the event to:

- Share with them why suicide prevention is important to YOU and to your community
- Educate them about the work being done in your community to prevent suicide
- Teach them what more must be done to prevent suicide.

**March 20, 2025** 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM – [CALM \(Conversations on Access to Lethal Means\) Training for First Responders at Rowan Cabarrus Community College](#)

**March 29, 2025** 3:00PM – [WCU Out of the Darkness Campus Walk](#) – Register or Donate

**March 30, 2025** 1:30PM – [Elon Out of the Darkness Campus Walk](#) – Register or Donate

Information provided by Maureen (Mo) Gould

American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention

# AFSP Out of the Darkness Campus Walk

## What is Out of the Darkness Campus Walk?

Out of the Darkness Walk is an annual event organized in collaboration with American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) to bring communities together in the fight against suicide. These walks provide a space for people to remember loved ones, support those who are struggling, and raise awareness about mental health and suicide prevention.

## Who Takes Part?

The walk welcomes anyone affected by suicide—survivors of loss, individuals with lived experience, friends, families, and advocates. Mental health professionals, community organizations, and local businesses also take part, showing their support for the cause.

## Why Fundraise?

Fundraising is a key part of the event because it helps AFSP continue its work in suicide prevention. Donations fund education, advocacy, research, and support programs that make a real difference in communities across the country.

## Where Does the Money Go?

The money raised supports AFSP's efforts, including:

- Funding research to better understand and prevent suicide
- Providing resources for survivors of suicide loss and those struggling
- Offering training programs to help people recognize and respond to mental health crises
- Advocating for mental health policies at the local, state, and national levels

## How to Get Involved

There are several ways to take part in the walk:

- [Register](#) as an individual or form a team with friends, family, or coworkers
- [Donate](#) to support AFSP's programs
- [Volunteer](#) to help organize or run the event
- Spread awareness by sharing personal stories and information about suicide prevention
- Host a campus or community walk

## Types of Walks

- [Community Walks](#) – Open to the public and held in cities across North Carolina
- [Campus Walks](#) – Hosted by schools and universities to engage students and faculty
- [Overnight Walks](#) – A powerful nationwide event where participants walk through the night, symbolizing the journey from darkness to hope

To learn more or find a walk near you, visit [AFSP's website](#).

Additionally, Our NC chapter offers a variety of programs to provide suicide prevention education and awareness to the diverse communities within our state.

To request a program: [North Carolina Chapter Program Request Form](#)

Written by Maureen (Mo) Gould and Grace Lutter

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## State-level Updates: New Data Product

NEW! The NCDHHS Injury and Violence Prevention Branch has released a new data product! The Firearm-related Emergency Department (ED) Visit Surveillance Report (NC-FASTER) for 2024 Quarter 3 provides a snapshot of trends in ED visits for firearm-related injury, including information on intent, demographics, and comparisons for both county and public health region.

- Click [here](#) to view

Information provided by Anne Geissinger



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## Text Suicide Myths & Facts



**Myth:** Asking someone about suicide will plant the idea in someone's mind.

**Fact:** Research shows that it is not dangerous to ask about suicide (Bender et al., 2019). If someone is experiencing suicidal thoughts, discussing it can provide an opportunity for support. If they are not, the conversation does no harm.

Written by Lisa Zhu; References:

Bender, T. W., Fitzpatrick, S., Hartmann, M. A., Hames, J., Bodell, L., Selby, E. A., & Joiner Jr, T. E. (2019). Does it hurt to ask? An analysis of iatrogenic risk during suicide risk assessment. *Neurology, Psychiatry and Brain Research*, 33, 73-81.

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Stay tuned for new and exciting developments! In future newsletters you can expect information on funding opportunities, new research findings, upcoming trainings, local suicide prevention initiatives, and more.

If you would like to share information in a future edition (questions, events, team spotlight), please reach out to Grace Lutter and Hannah Harms at [SPI@unc.edu](mailto:SPI@unc.edu).