IDAHO: Idaho Launches Statewide Suicide Prevention Program

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In collaboration with suicide prevention advocates, Idaho lawmakers have passed legislation to establish a state Office of Suicide Prevention and allocate funding to implement a statewide suicide prevention plan. The legislation marks a coordinated effort to reduce the state’s suicide rate, which is among the highest in the country. According to data collected in 2014, Idaho’s suicide rate was 46 percent higher than the national average, which Office of Suicide Prevention Director Kim Kane attributed to lack of access to behavioral health services, a cultural aversion to help-seeking, and issues related to the safe storage of guns. The new office will be responsible for providing financial support to the state’s suicide prevention hotline, offering suicide prevention programming in schools, and carrying out a public awareness campaign. Said Kane, “I think we’re really making a commitment. It requires a comprehensive approach—it’s difficult. This gives us our first real opportunity to begin that chapter.”

Spark Extra! Read more about suicide prevention in Idaho.

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