



Preventing Suicide Among Public Safety Professionals

U.S. suicide rates have risen nearly 30 percent since 1999. In 2017, suicide was the second leading cause of death among people ages 10 to 34, and the fourth leading cause of death among people ages 35 to 54. Research shows that public safety professionals are more likely to die by suicide than in the line of duty.

EDC is a National Leader in Suicide Prevention

For decades, EDC has offered evidence-based support and resources to prevent and address violence, suicide, and trauma across the U.S. and around the world. EDC houses several leading centers and institutes focused on suicide prevention:

National Action Alliance
for Suicide Prevention



Suicide Prevention
Resource Center



Zero Suicide Institute



Drawing on this expertise, EDC leads initiatives and consults with national and local law enforcement agencies and departments in examining the complex issues underlying suicide among public safety workforces, identifying threats, and designing proactive and comprehensive solutions.

EDC works with public safety professionals across a variety of initiatives. We bring extensive program development expertise, quantitative and qualitative



research skills, and training and curriculum development experience. We provide content expertise in suicide prevention, violence prevention, trauma-informed approaches, and substance use.

The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention's Public Safety Task Force supports efforts to prevent suicide among all public safety professionals. The task force's video and facilitation guide, *Breaking the Silence: Suicide Prevention in Law Enforcement*, are helping start the conversation on suicide prevention and officer wellness. Their *Firefighters Coping with the Aftermath of Suicide* video explores the effects of suicide on firefighters and first responders.

EDC also supports families of public safety professionals, guiding grief-focused programming for fire service families who have lost a member in the

line of duty, designing evaluations to assess service provision, and developing virtual support programs.

Project Spotlight

EDC, in partnership with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), works to move the field of suicide prevention among law enforcement forward. With support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance's National Officer Safety Initiatives (NOSI), EDC and the IACP launched and lead the National Consortium on Preventing Law Enforcement Suicide. The Consortium is raising awareness of law enforcement suicide, developing national recommendations to define key needs for the field, and creating the first national online toolkit with resources to support law enforcement officer suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

About the Consortium

The Consortium includes public safety leaders, mental health and suicide prevention specialists, and representatives from academia, federal government, policymakers, and families. Together, they are working to deepen understanding of the complex issues surrounding law enforcement suicide and to identify systemic solutions. Members are available to provide consultation to departments and districts nationwide.

Toward New National Recommendations

The Consortium's recommendations will address policy and procedure best practices, effective

messaging, and best practices for prevention and intervention. The recommendations will also include guidance on how to engage families in suicide awareness and prevention at all phases of an officer's career, from cadet to retirement.

In addition, EDC is spearheading a robust qualitative research program to provide new insights into the mental health and well-being needs of officers from diverse populations. The findings from this research will ensure all voices are heard, incorporated into the recommendations, and used to inform new approaches to move the field forward.

First National Online Toolkit

EDC is working with the IACP to develop an online resource toolkit that will proactively meet the field's needs. The toolkit will provide a wide array of evidence-informed guidelines, policy examples, and suicide prevention programming recommendations to facilitate the creation of custom and effective programs by agencies. The toolkit will also include appropriate messaging for command staff to utilize after a suicide loss.

Contact Us

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