



CASP CANADIAN ASSOCIATION
FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

ACPS ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR
LA PRÉVENTION DU SUICIDE

Changing the Narrative on Suicide

#Start the Conversation

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY TOOLKIT

FREE ONLINE EVENT FOR WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

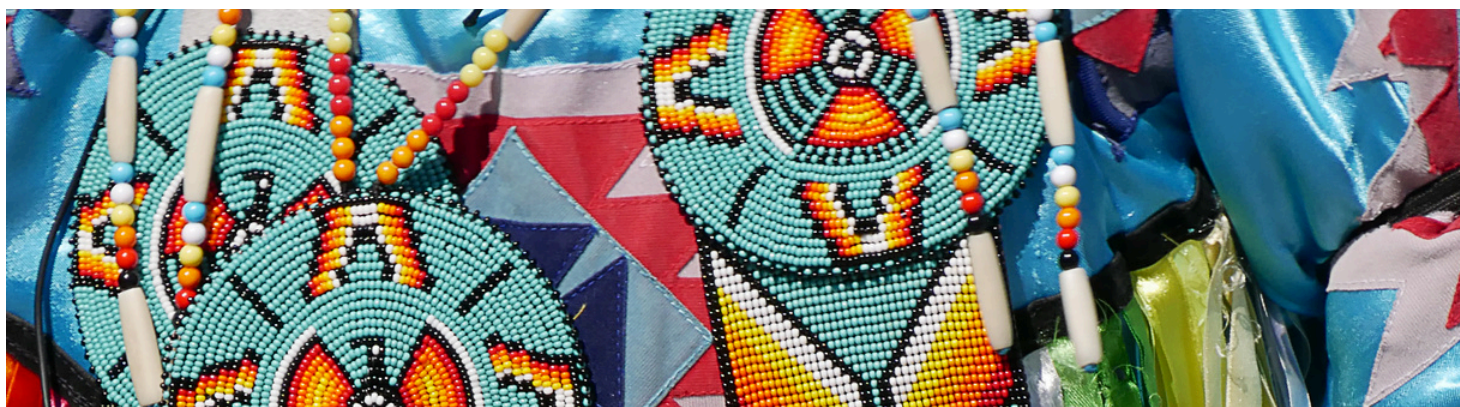
Save the Date for CASP's upcoming World Suicide Prevention Day event Wednesday, September 10th from 12:00-1:30 PM EDT, free virtually via Zoom.

This year's WSPD event will explore how Indigenous Life Promotion practices are Changing the Narrative on Suicide in Canada and around the world.

Please stay tuned for more details on our [website](#) or register for our free [newsletter](#) to be updated.

TOOLKIT CONTENTS

Free Event for World Suicide Prevention Day	02
Year Two of "Changing the Narrative on Suicide"	03
Stories Reflecting the IASP's Principles for Changing the Narrative on Suicide.	06
How Wise Practices is a Pathway to Life Promotion and Wellness for First Nations Youth	09
Wise Practices for Action	09
Examples of Successful Community Initiatives	10
Changing the Narrative on Suicide Together	11
Start the Conversation Online with our Social Media Shareables	13
Light a Flame of Hope National Candlelight Vigil	13
About CASP	14



TURN AWARENESS INTO ACTION, [CLICK HERE](#)
TO SUPPORT CASP'S LIFE SAVING WORK THIS
WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION: YEAR TWO OF "CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ON SUICIDE"

CASP supports the International Association for Suicide Prevention's (IASP) advocacy for changing the narrative around suicide.

Their approach focuses on shifting from stigma and silence to hope, connection, and action. Here's a summary of their core ideas and examples of strategies that promote understanding, compassion, and proactive prevention efforts: (continued on next page)

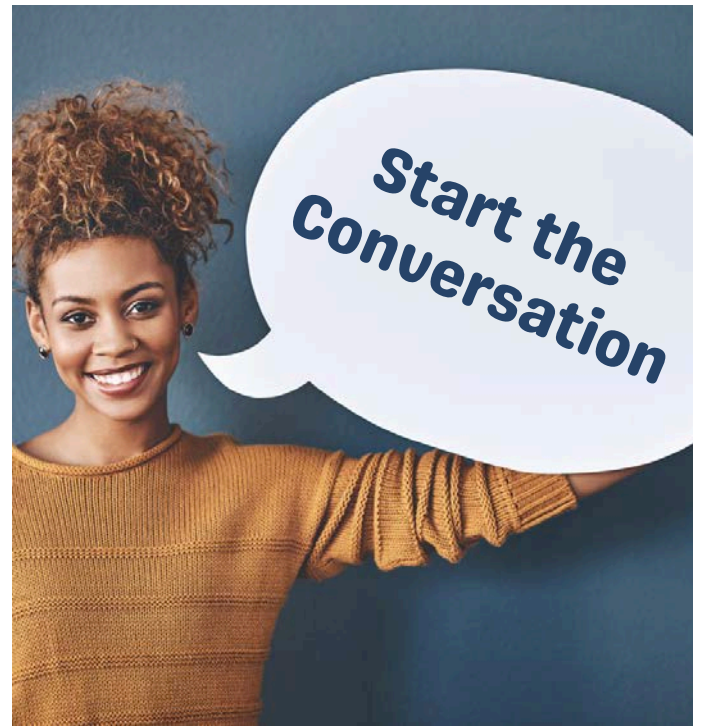
1. Move From Stigma to Understanding

Core Idea:

The IASP emphasizes the need to destigmatize suicide and mental health by encouraging open conversations, reducing shame, and replacing judgment with empathy.

Examples:

- [Media Guidelines](#): Encourage responsible reporting on suicide to avoid sensationalism and reduce the risk of contagion.
- Campaigns: World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) often includes stories of lived experience to humanize the issue and foster public empathy.



2. Highlight Hope and Recovery

Core Idea:

Instead of focusing solely on death, the narrative should spotlight survival, recovery, and help-seeking. The goal is to show that suicidal thoughts can pass and that people can and do recover.

Examples:

- Personal Stories: Sharing experiences of people who have survived suicidal crises can inspire hope. View [guidelines](#) for sharing experiences with suicide.
- Support Pathways: Promoting access to crisis lines, peer support, and therapy shows that help is available and effective.



3. Focus on Connection and Belonging

Core Idea:

Suicide is often linked to feelings of isolation and burdensomeness. IASP stresses the need to create environments where people feel seen, heard, and valued.

Examples:

- Community-Based Programs: Initiatives that build community networks, especially for vulnerable groups like 2SLGBTQIA+ youth or Indigenous populations.
- Social Media Campaigns: Campaigns like #StartTheConversation invite users to share messages of support and connection.

4. Shift from Individual Blame to Societal Responsibility

Core Idea:

Suicide prevention isn't just a personal matter. It's a public health and social justice issue. The IASP encourages recognizing the role of structural factors such as poverty, discrimination, and trauma.

Examples:

- Policy Advocacy: Supporting mental health funding, access to care, and social protections.
- Means Restriction: Promoting safe environments, such as installing barriers on bridges or regulating firearm access.



5. Empower People with Lived Experience

Core Idea:

People who have lived through suicidal ideation or loss by suicide offer critical insights. They should be actively included in prevention strategies and conversations.

Examples:

- Lived Experience Councils: IASP includes people with lived experience in the design of programs and policy recommendations.
- Peer Support Roles: Integrating lived experience peers in mental health services and crisis teams.



6. Promote Culturally Sensitive Narratives

Core Idea:

Narratives should be inclusive and culturally informed. Suicide prevention must reflect the diverse realities of different populations.

Examples:

- Indigenous-Led Programs: Supporting culturally rooted approaches that integrate traditional practices and community healing.
- Language Awareness: Using language that is respectful, such as “died by suicide” instead of “committed suicide.”



7. Encourage Action Oriented Messages

Core Idea:

Narratives should not just raise awareness but also encourage action—whether checking in on someone, volunteering, or learning about warning signs.

Examples:

- Call to Action Campaigns: IASP's messaging often includes tangible steps individuals can take, such as reaching out to someone in distress.
- Training Programs: Promoting suicide prevention training like Mental Health First Aid or gatekeeper training in schools and workplaces.

Conclusion

The IASP's approach to changing the narrative around suicide is centred on hope, inclusivity, connection, and shared responsibility. By shifting the focus from fear and silence to understanding, support, and empowerment, they aim to create a world where fewer people feel like suicide is their only option—and more people feel they can ask for and receive help.

STORIES REFLECTING THE IASP'S PRINCIPLES FOR "CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ON SUICIDE"

Here are six sample narratives that reflect the IASP's principles for changing the narrative around suicide. Each one highlights a different aspect: hope, connection, destigmatization, cultural sensitivity, societal responsibility, and lived experience. They are versatile tools suitable for awareness campaigns, educational resources, and community conversations.



1. Narrative of Hope and Recovery

Principles: Hope, Recovery, Help-Seeking, Empowerment

“

“There was a time when I couldn't see tomorrow. I felt like the pain would never end. But after reaching out to a therapist and slowly opening up to my friends, things began to shift. It wasn't instant—healing took time—but I'm still here. And now, I help others who feel like they're drowning. I want them to know: it gets better, and you're not alone.”

”



2. Narrative Emphasizing Connection

Principles: Connection, Community Healing, Family Support

“

“When my brother died by suicide, it shook our whole family. At first, we didn't know how to talk about it. But over time, we started sharing memories, crying together, and finally talking honestly. We realized how much isolation hurts—and how connection heals. Now, we check in on each other more, even just to say, 'I'm thinking of you.' It makes a difference.”

”



3. Narrative Destigmatizing Mental Health

Principles: Stigma Reduction, Empathy, Open Conversations



“

"I used to be ashamed of my depression. I thought admitting I had suicidal thoughts meant I was weak. But when I finally told a friend, she just hugged me and said, 'Thank you for trusting me.' That moment changed everything. Now, I speak up because I know silence can be deadly. Mental health struggles are human—not a flaw."

”

4. Narrative with Cultural Sensitivity

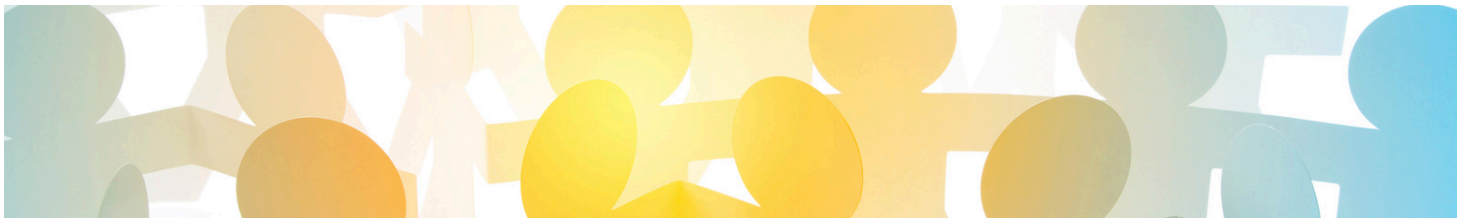
Principles: Cultural Context, Belonging, Traditional Healing Practices



“

"In my community, we don't talk about mental health openly. But I remember my grandmother's words: 'To heal the mind, you must gather your people.' So, I reached out to an elder and joined a cultural support circle. Through stories, ceremonies, and shared grief, I found strength I didn't know I had. Healing is not just personal—it's collective."

”



5. Narrative Showing Societal Responsibility

Principles: Social Determinants, Public Health, Policy Change

“

"I work with youth in underserved neighbourhoods. I see every day how poverty, violence, and discrimination take a toll on mental health. It's not enough to tell someone to 'just reach out'—we need safe housing, trauma-informed care, and school counsellors. Suicide prevention is not just about individuals. It's about justice."

”



6. Narrative from a Survivor with Lived Experience

Principles: Lived Experience, Peer Support, Recovery-Oriented Care

“

"After my suicide attempt, I felt ashamed and broken. But the hospital connected me to a peer support group—and that saved me. Talking to others who truly understood gave me hope. Now, I work as a peer support worker myself. My story doesn't end with that dark chapter. It continues with purpose, connection, and helping others write their next page."

”

Each of these narratives reflects how we can create a world where suicide is no longer hidden in shame, but instead met with support, understanding, and action. They are adaptable for use in awareness campaigns, educational materials, and community discussions.

HOW WISE PRACTICES IS A PATHWAY TO LIFE PROMOTION AND WELLNESS FOR FIRST NATIONS YOUTH



The Wise Practices initiative, hosted at wisepractices.ca, is a powerful, community-driven resource designed to support life promotion and mental wellness among First Nations youth in Canada. Rooted in Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural teachings, the initiative shifts the narrative from crisis response to one of hope, healing, and empowerment.

At its core, Wise Practices is about celebrating life. Rather than focusing solely on suicide prevention, it embraces a "language of life"—a strengths-based approach that emphasizes belonging, meaning, purpose, and hope. This philosophy aligns with the [First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework](#), which recognizes that wellness is deeply connected to culture, land, spirituality, and community.

The initiative was developed in response to the urgent need for culturally relevant tools that reflect the lived realities of Indigenous communities. It acknowledges that while many communities face challenges, they also possess resilience, wisdom, and traditions that can guide youth toward wellness.

Wise Practices for Action

One of the cornerstone resources is the [Wise Practices Action Guide](#), a flexible tool that encourages communities to:

- Draw on local strengths and cultural teachings
- Foster intergenerational relationships
- Support youth through land-based and spiritual practices
- Promote self-determination and community-led healing

The guide includes stories, reflective questions, and practical tools that communities can adapt to their own contexts. It encourages a holistic view of wellness—emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual.

Another key resource is [A Life Promotion Toolkit by Indigenous Youth](#) developed for and by Indigenous youth from across Turtle Island, promoting life promotion through multi-media and supporting youth to aspire to live long and good lives.

The [System-level Change Guide](#) is for those in decision-making positions, and other system influencers, who wish to reduce service barriers and amplify the good work that is going on in many First Nations communities.



Examples of Successful Community Initiatives

Several First Nations communities have implemented inspiring initiatives that embody the Wise Practices philosophy:

- **Gwich'in Outdoor Classroom (Northwest Territories):** This program uses land-based education to reconnect children aged 6–12 with traditional knowledge. It addresses issues like school disengagement, mental health, and lack of community role models through outdoor teachings and cultural activities.
- **Eskasoni Community Mental Wellness Model (Nova Scotia):** A comprehensive, community-led model that includes a 24/7 crisis line, youth resource centre, and culturally grounded therapeutic services. It integrates Western and Indigenous approaches to mental health and supports residential school survivors.
- **Natoaganeg Community Food Centre (New Brunswick):** This initiative brings Elders and youth together to grow food, share meals, and learn about traditional food systems. It strengthens intergenerational bonds and promotes food security through cultural practices.



These stories show that life promotion looks different in every community, but the common thread is a deep connection to culture, land, and collective healing.

Ultimately, Wise Practices is more than a website—it's a movement. It invites communities to reclaim their stories, celebrate their strengths, and walk together on a path of healing and life promotion. By centering Indigenous knowledge and leadership, it offers a hopeful, empowering vision for the future of First Nations youth.

For more information on Wise Practices, visit www.wisepractices.ca

Foundational Resources and Further Reading

[Thunderbird Partnership Foundation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework](#)

[We Belong: Life Promotion to Address Indigenous Suicide Discussion Paper](#)

[Wise Practices in Life Promotion wisepractices.ca](#)

[Foundation: Choosing Life Special Report on Suicide Amongst Aboriginal People Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1995](#)

CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ON SUICIDE TOGETHER

We invite communities to take action on World Suicide Prevention Day by raising awareness about suicide prevention and life promotion and by honouring all those whose lives have been touched by suicide.

Activities that educate and bring people together tend to have the greatest impact. Here are a few ideas to help you launch your own local initiative.

If you're an Organization, you can get Involved by:

- **Host an event:** Offer a suicide awareness or intervention workshop, seminar, public lecture, or panel to educate your community.
- **Make it official:** Hold a press conference or share an announcement in your workplace, classroom, or team meeting to highlight World Suicide Prevention Day.
- **Encourage leaders:** Ask health officials and politicians to release supportive statements, new policies, or press releases for WSPD.
- **Launch something new:** Use WSPD to roll out new programs, resources, booklets, or books that promote hope and prevention.



- **Distribute resources:** Share fact sheets, posters, or toolkits in schools, workplaces, and public spaces. Many resources can be found on our [website](#).
- **Engage employees:** Offer training on recognizing warning signs, safe conversations, and mental wellness support. Share our [Suicide Prevention Flyer and Tear sheet](#).
- **Fundraise for impact:** Plan a walk, run, challenge, or other fundraiser to support suicide prevention programs. Create an online fundraiser to support CASP's suicide prevention efforts in just minutes at [CanadaHelps](#)
- **Recruit volunteers:** Invite your community to volunteer with your organization or other mental health initiatives.
- **Spark creativity:** Collect and share stories, poems, or artwork that inspire hope and connection.
- **Run a social media campaign:** Encourage people to connect and share how they are changing the narrative on suicide. [Download](#) our shareable social media banners.

If you're an Individual, or Group of Individuals, you can get Involved by:

Every action, big or small, can help change the narrative on suicide and remind people they're not alone.

If you're an individual or a group of individuals, here are some meaningful ways to get involved:

- **Host a gathering:** Organize a cultural, spiritual, or community event to bring people together and start conversations about suicide prevention.
- **Connect with local businesses:** Reach out to shops, cafés, or community organizations that might want to display posters, share resources, or show support in other visible ways.
- **Light a Flame of Hope:** Join others across Canada on World Suicide Prevention Day by lighting a candle in your time zone at 8pm.
- **Distribute resources:** Share fact sheets, posters, or toolkits in schools, workplaces, and public spaces. Many resources can be found on our [website](#).
- **Decorate your space:** Display posters or window signs at home, school, or work to share resources and show your support.



- **Volunteer:** Offer your time to a local mental health group or community support network.
- **Fundraise for impact:** Plan a walk, run, challenge, or other fundraiser to support CASP's suicide prevention efforts in minutes at [CanadaHelps](#).
- **Spread the word online:** Download and share our Changing the Narrative on Suicide and Flame of Hope World Suicide Prevention Day social media graphics to amplify awareness. These graphics are available for download at (website link)
- **Reach out:** Call, text, or invite a friend, colleague, or family member for coffee. Remind them they matter and they're not alone.
- **Practice kindness:** Dedicate yourself to at least five acts of kindness on World Suicide Prevention Day and carry that kindness forward all year long.
- **Start a conversation:** Use social media, your book club, your faith group, or your workplace to talk about how you're changing the narrative on suicide.

#START THE CONVERSATION ONLINE

Want to help change the narrative on suicide online this World Suicide Prevention Day? It's simple, meaningful, and only takes a few clicks. [Download](#) our World Suicide Prevention Day social media graphics and share them on your feeds to spread awareness and show your support.

Our Changing the Narrative banner is ready in English and French. If you'd like to share it in another language, just fill out our quick [request form](#). We're here to help you reach your community in the words that matter most.

Invite friends, neighbours, local businesses, and community groups to share how they're changing the narrative on suicide. Tag the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention #CASP in your posts, stories, and videos to help your message reach even further.

Together, every share, repost, and comment helps break down stigma, spark hope and open the door for real conversations. Use these hashtags: #StartTheConversation #WSPD #WSPD2025

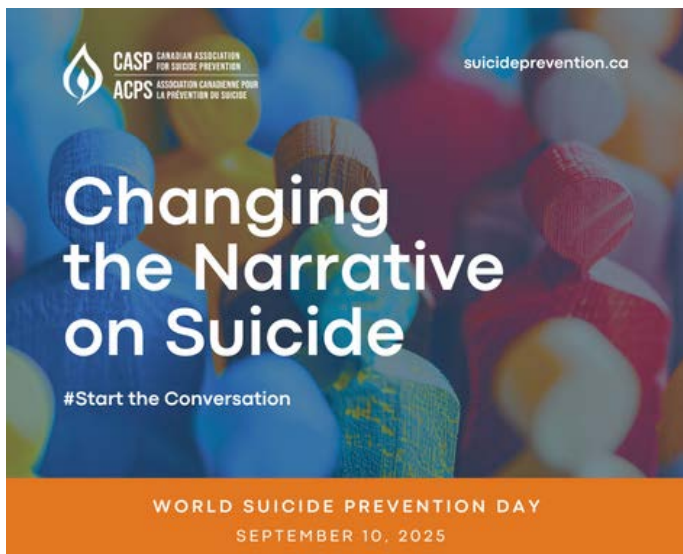


Light a Flame of Hope: National Candlelight Vigil September 10th at 8 PM

Join the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention by lighting a candle in your window on September 10 at 8 PM in your local time zone.

The Light a Flame of Hope National Candlelight Vigil is a moment to mark World Suicide Prevention Day and honour all lives touched by suicide. Those we have lost, those who grieve, and those who keep fighting for tomorrow.

We invite you to help spread this light even further: share our Flame of Hope social media graphic to your timeline, take a photo of your candle, and tag us to show how you're keeping hope alive. [Download](#) our shareable social media graphics.





About CASP

The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) is a pan-Canadian registered charity at the forefront of suicide prevention, intervention, postvention and life promotion initiatives for more than 40 years.

CASP envisions a Canada without Suicide and a world in which people enjoy an optimal quality of life, are long-living, socially responsible and optimistic about the future.

Governed by a dedicated Board of Directors, CASP is supported by several dynamic committees, advisory and working groups. Since 1990, CASP has convened a national suicide prevention conference annually in a different Canadian region.

From Conversations to National Change, it all Starts with your Support

Your support fuels everything we do. From life-saving resources to national events and advocacy, it's all driven by the commitment of donors and community fundraisers in every corner of Canada.

Fundraise for Impact

Want to make an even bigger difference? Rally your friends, family, or coworkers by creating your own fundraiser for CASP! Plan a walk, run, bake sale, birthday fundraiser, or workplace challenge, whatever gets people talking about suicide prevention. Big or small, every dollar raised fuels vital programs, resources, and advocacy across Canada.

It's easy to get started: set up your online fundraiser through [CanadaHelps](#) in just minutes or click below to make a one-time or monthly gift to CASP.



More Ways to Support Suicide Prevention

- Follow us on social media and share our posts - help spread the word about CASP's work, events and resources.
- Give your family, friends, students and colleagues a CASP high-quality, vinyl [sticker ribbon](#) and help them quickly find resources for suicide prevention and bereavement support.
- Join the CASP Community for FREE by signing up to our [newsletter](#) and gain access to tools, resources, events, volunteer opportunities and more.



TURN AWARENESS INTO ACTION, [CLICK HERE](#) TO SUPPORT CASP'S LIFE SAVING WORK THIS WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY