

Be the Connection: 5 Weeks of Action for Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month

September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, and we need your voice to make a difference. Each week, we'll provide you with 1-2 ready-to-share social media posts to spread awareness, education, and spark important conversations. We will also share some specific actions you can take each week to support our suicide prevention efforts. If you have any questions, please contact Len Cattan-Prugl, Samaritans Marketing & Communications Manager, at lcattanprugl@samaritanshope.org

Table of Contents

Message for Loss Survivors	2
Week 1 (September 1-7)	4
- Follow Samaritans and our community partners on social media.	
Week 2 (September 8-14)	7
- Support Hey Sam and youth mental health.	
- Join us at the Red Sox game for Suicide Prevention Day.	
Week 3 (September 15-21)	10
- Register for and promote the 5K.	
Week 4 (September 22-28)	11
- Help us say “thank you” to the people who power our services.	
- Join us at the 26 th Annual 5K Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention.	
Week 5 (September 29 and 30)	13
- Keep the conversation going.	
- Register for the Community Gathering on Suicide Prevention: Samaritans Annual Meeting to get more involved with our community.	
General Education: How to Talk About Suicide	15

To Those Who Have Experienced the Pain of Suicide Loss,

We know that words can never fully capture the depth of your grief or the complexity of your journey. Losing someone to suicide is an unimaginable pain, and the path to healing is often long and difficult. This month may bring up difficult emotions for you. Samaritans is here to offer suicide loss survivors nonjudgmental listening and peer support.

[Samaritans SafePlace meetings](#) are caring support groups for suicide loss survivors that offer the chance to give and get support through the long process of grieving. Meetings are facilitated by trained volunteers who have also lost a loved one to suicide.

Virtual SafePlace meetings for all loss survivors:

- Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evening
- 6:30 am – 8:00 pm ET
- [Register to receive the Zoom link.](#)

NEW! Virtual SafePlace meetings for the LGBTQ+ community:

- Tuesday, September 10, 2024 (2nd Tuesday of every month)
- 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm ET
- [Register to receive the Zoom link.](#)

Virtual SafePlace meetings for parents and guardians who have lost a child to suicide:

- Thursday, September 5, 2024 (1st Thursday of every month)
- 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm ET
- [Register to receive the Zoom link.](#)

In Person SafePlace meetings for parents and guardians who have lost a child to suicide:

- Saturday, September 21, 2024 (3rd Saturday of every month)
- 11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET
- Ben Speaks Office, 360 Woodland St, 2nd Floor, Holliston, MA 01746

If you're not ready to attend a suicide grief support group or if you need some extra time outside of SafePlace meetings, our volunteers are available to offer support in person or virtually.

[Request a Survivor-to-Survivor Visit.](#)



Please know that you are not alone. Your strength, courage, and resilience in the face of such profound loss are truly remarkable. Your loved one's memory is a part of you, and their impact continues through the love and light you share with others.

With heartfelt sympathy and support,

Sissi O'Shaughnessy

Senior Director of Suicide Grief Support Services

Week 1: Be the Connection

September 1-7

How do you prevent suicide?

You may not realize it, but your everyday actions likely play a role in suicide prevention. It's not just about crisis services like our 24/7 Helpline and Hey Sam – it's also about fostering connections. It's being kind to a stranger, thanking your bus driver, or hosting a potluck with friends. Whether at work or in your personal life, any effort you make to promote community and connection contributes to a safer, more supportive environment for everyone.

To learn more about how you can make a difference and stay informed about what is happening at Samaritans, follow us on your preferred social media channels.

 [Samaritans, Inc. on Facebook](#)

 [@samaritanshope on Instagram](#)

 [@samaritanshope on Twitter](#)

 [Samaritans, Inc. on LinkedIn](#)

 [@textheysam on Instagram](#)

 [@textheysam on TikTok](#)

Thank you to our community partners!



This month, we are partnering with [Goodness Gracious](#) to raise awareness of our lifesaving services. Every order from Goodness Gracious will include an informational card from Samaritans. The card includes information about warning signs that someone may be considering suicide, and how to get support.

[Learn more about how our community partners prevent suicide this month and every day.](#)

Take Action:

- 1) [Schedule a free suicide prevention workshop](#) for your school, workplace, or community.
- 2) Save the 988 Lifeline in your phone in case you ever need it, and encourage one person in your network to do the same.

Upcoming Events:

Thursday, September 5:

Michael Davis, Community Outreach and Partnership Manager, and Kiara Hernandez, Helpline Training Coordinator, will join the Java with Jimmy podcast with Boston community leader James “Jimmy” Hills. Tune in at 9am ET on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).

Saturday, September 7:

Samaritans will be tabling at the [Boston Roller Derby](#) in Wilmington, MA, from 4:00pm-10:00pm. Come by and say hello!

Share:

(Click to download)



Caption:

September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, and I would like to highlight the lifesaving suicide prevention work that Samaritans has been doing for 50 years—education, crisis services, and grief support. Follow [@samaritanshope](#) and [#BeTheConnection](#). You never know who might be struggling. [#SuicidePreventionMonth](#)

(Click to download)



Caption:

If you are feeling suicidal, lonely, or depressed, you are not alone. Call or text 988 anytime, for any reason, to receive nonjudgmental support. The @samaritanshope 24/7 Helpline is anonymous and free. #BeTheConnection #SuicidePreventionMonth

Week 2: Support Youth Mental Health *September 8-14*

This week, we are focusing on promoting Hey Sam, our mental health text support line for youth, by youth. People under 24 can text Hey Sam at 439-726 9am-12am (midnight) ET if they are feeling depressed, overwhelmed, or having thoughts of suicide.

We will be posting content created by young people on the Hey Sam Instagram every day this week. Help us amplify the incredible work our young people are doing to support each other!

Take Action:

- 1) Make sure you are following [Hey Sam on Instagram](#) and share our posts every day.
- 2) Save Hey Sam (439-726) in the phone of a young person in your life.
- 3) Print this [Hey Sam poster](#) and hang it in your school, workplace, or community to spread awareness and show young people they are not alone.
- 4) Wear your Hey Sam or Samaritans swag on National Suicide Prevention Day—Wednesday, September 10—to start a conversation about Samaritans and the work we do.

BONUS: Share a photo of you in your Samaritans swag on social media! Don't forget to tag us and use the hashtag #SuicidePreventionMonth

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, September 10

For National Suicide Prevention Day, Samaritans will be at the Red Sox game to spread awareness of our suicide prevention services. Join us at Fenway Park, or tune in at home.

Friday, September 13

Join Samaritans and a panel of local experts for an essential talk on mental health awareness in our community. **Be the Connection: Understanding and Preventing Suicide in Boston** will take place from noon to 1pm. [Register to receive the Zoom link.](#) This webinar is free and a copy of the recording will be sent to all who registered.

Share:

(Click to download)



Suicide Prevention & Awareness Month:
Be the Connection

Caption:

Asking about suicide can be scary, but it is very important to find out how much danger someone may be in. Many people are afraid to talk about their suicidal thoughts. They fear that others will react with blame, fear, panic, or guilt. Research shows that asking about suicide will not suggest the idea to someone.

If you think someone might be considering suicide, listen with care and encourage them to share their feelings.

Asking about suicide isn't easy, but noticing someone's pain can be the first step toward saving a life. Learn more at samaritanshope.org/get-help. @SamaritansHope #BeTheConnection #SuicidePreventionMonth



Caption:

On World Suicide Prevention Day, take a moment to think about how you can be the connection someone might desperately need. Remember these three steps if you think someone may be struggling.

Reach out: Many people are afraid to talk about suicide, but it is often a great relief to someone thinking about suicide to know that you have noticed their pain. Often, people struggling with depression or having suicidal thoughts give clues to how they're feeling.

Listen: After you have listened for a while, ask directly: "I'm concerned about you. Are you thinking about killing yourself?" If the answer is yes, keep listening and show the person you care.

Get help: A suicidal person needs a lot of support – more than any one person can give. Whether they have a plan or not, connect with professional resources like counselors or crisis centers. You don't have to handle it alone—support is available.

If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts, you can find resources at [samaritanshope.org/get-help](https://www.samaritanshope.org/get-help). You can also always call 988 for free, non-judgmental support.

@Samaritanshope #BeTheConnection #SuicidePreventionMonth

Week 3: Promote the 5K *September 15-21*

Since 1974, Samaritans has helped people find hope in human connection. In 1999, we held our first 5K to raise funds for suicide prevention and bring our community together. Proceeds from this event support the free, lifesaving programs provided by Samaritans—education, crisis services, and suicide grief support.

Take Action:

- 1) [Register for the 5K](#) if you haven't already, and encourage one person in your network to do the same.
- 2) [Sign up as a volunteer](#) to help make this special day possible.
- 3) Earn prizes by [fundraising for the 5K](#).

Upcoming Events:

Wednesday, September 18

Samaritans President & CEO Kathy Marchi will be speaking on a panel moderated by Dr. Jordan Smoller from 10:05-11:00am. [Register for the webinar](#) to learn more about our partnership with Harvard MGB to support suicide attempt survivors following discharge from inpatient hospitalization or an ER visit.

Share:

You can easily show your support for the 5K by sharing on your preferred social media platforms with our [5K social media pack](#). You can also just share a photo of your team from a previous year. Make sure to tag Samaritans and use the hashtag #Samaritans5K.

Week 4: Give Thanks *September 22-28*

The lifesaving work we do could not be possible without our incredible Samaritans community, and this week, we would like to say thank you! Thank you to our dedicated volunteers and staff who ensure our phone and text lines are available to whoever needs a listening ear 24/7. To our Grief Support volunteers, who have used their personal experience moving through the difficult experience of suicide loss and use that experience to help others. Thank you to our board and council, who provide vital guidance and support to ensure our organization's mission and goals are met effectively. Thank you to our community partners, who are preventing suicide every day through the work they do.

Take Action:

- 1) Say “thank you” to someone whose services you appreciate—your bus driver, delivery driver, mailperson, etc...
- 2) Show your support for our [New York City Marathon team](#), who will be taking on 26.2 miles for suicide prevention in November.

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, September 28

Join us at the 26th Annual 5K Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention to mark our 50 years of impact, honor loved ones lost to suicide, and support those who are struggling.

Proceeds from this event support the free, lifesaving programs provided by Samaritans—education, crisis services, and suicide grief support.

[Get involved](#) in whatever way is meaningful to you. Register as an individual. Start a team with your friends and family. [Sign up as a volunteer](#) to make this special day possible.

Share:

(Click to download)



Caption:

Expressing my gratitude today for @samaritanshope, who ensure that anyone in need always has a listening ear. From the volunteers and staff who keep the phone and text lines running 24/7, to the SafePlace facilitators providing peer support to loss survivors, and to everyone who has lent a hand at community events—your unwavering dedication makes it possible to provide crucial support and safe spaces for those who need it most. Thank you! #SuicidePreventionMonth #BeTheConnection

(Click to download)



Caption:

Asking someone if they are having thoughts of suicide may feel scary, but it is often a relief when someone who is struggling knows that you have noticed their pain. If you're concerned that someone you care about may be suicidal, call or text 988 anytime. It's anonymous and free, and a compassionate listener can help you think through strategies for how to best offer support.

Week 5: Keep the Conversation Going *September 29-30 (and beyond!)*

As Suicide Prevention and Awareness month comes to an end, it is important to remember that our efforts don't end here. Every day is an opportunity to make a new connection that may be life-changing, introduce someone to a Samaritans program that might be helpful to them, and break the stigma of talking about mental health and suicide.

Take Action:

- 1) RSVP for the [Community Gathering on Suicide Prevention: Samaritans Annual Meeting](#) on October 24, 2024. Invite one person in your network as your guest.
- 2) Start thinking about next year's Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month! What can you do in your community? What would you like to see from Samaritans? It's never too early to start planning.
- 3) Keep being kind! EVERYTHING is suicide prevention: from smiling at a stranger to holding the door open for someone, small gestures can make a big impact in someone's life.

Share:

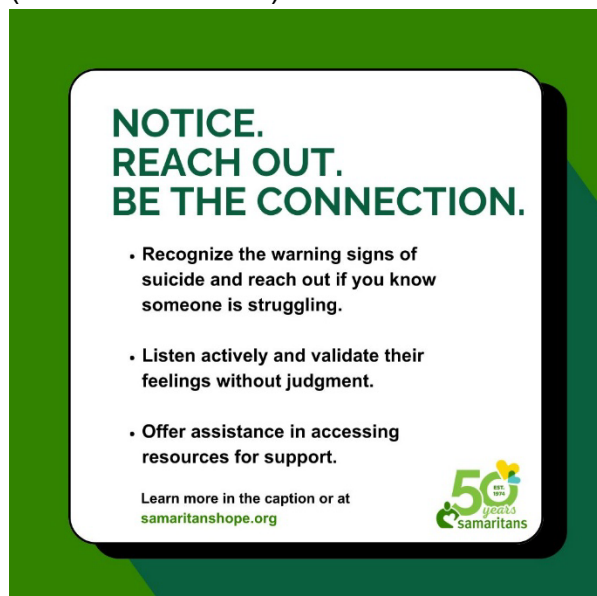
(Click to download)



Caption:

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month is a start, not a finish. Our commitment to suicide prevention continues year-round. Everyday matters, and every action makes a difference. @SamaritansHope #BeTheConnection #SuicidePreventionMonth.

(Click to download)



Caption:

How can you be the connection for someone who may be struggling?

First, learn about the risk factors and warning signs of suicide.

If you think someone may be struggling, reach out. It's okay to ask directly: "I'm concerned about you. Are you thinking of killing yourself?"

Regardless of the answer, listen actively and validate their feelings without judgment.

Share resources such as the ones provided by @samaritanshope, and offer help navigating them. You can call or text 988 together.

Stay in touch regularly, and let them know you are here for them.

Learn more about how to help a friend at samaritanshope.org.

#BeTheConnection #SuicidePreventionMonth

General Education: How to Talk About Suicide

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month is a critical time to raise awareness and educate communities about suicide prevention and mental health. Here are some guidelines and best practices for education efforts during this month:

1. **Promote Awareness:** Use the month to raise awareness about the warning signs of suicide, risk factors, and available resources for support. [Learn how to help someone who is struggling.](#)
2. **Reduce Stigma:** Address misconceptions and stigma surrounding mental health and suicide. Foster an environment where open discussions about mental health are encouraged.
3. **Targeted Education:** Samaritans is here to teach communities how to recognize warning signs of suicide and provide support. [Get in touch with us](#) about providing a free, tailored suicide prevention workshop for your school, workplace, or organization.
4. **Discuss Suicide Safely:** Refer to these [best practices](#) when writing about or otherwise discussing suicide.
5. **Provide Resources:** Ensure people know about the services Samaritans offers:
[24/7 Helpline](#) – You can call or text 988 whenever you need to talk.
[Hey Sam](#) – People up to 24 years old can text a trained peer 9am-12am (midnight) ET at 439-726.
[Suicide Grief Support](#) – Everyone is welcome to join our virtual and in person SafePlace meetings for suicide loss survivors at any time after their loss. You can also request a Survivor to Survivor visit, where trained suicide loss survivor volunteers will meet with you privately.
[Suicide Prevention Workshops](#) – Building expertise to prevent suicide is critical to our mission. We're here to teach communities how to recognize warning signs of suicide and provide support. Our **free** suicide prevention workshops are delivered to middle and high schools, colleges and universities, workplaces, elder care facilities, and community organizations.