



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
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Suicides spike over Thanksgiving week heightening awareness for prevention *Arapahoe County reminds citizens help is available during Christmas and New Years*

Littleton, Colo. – The Arapahoe County Coroner's Office received four suicides during the Thanksgiving holiday week making the total number of suicides in the County 94 so far this year. In 2013, there were 106 suicides in Arapahoe County.

As we get closer to the Christmas and New Year's holidays, Arapahoe County would like to remind citizens to be vigilant and check on your neighbors, family members and friends who may be dealing with severe depression or mental illness.

Through the County's Suicide Prevention Awareness campaign, citizens can now go to the County's website and access important resources, such as suicide hotlines and information about where to go to get help or to help another.

"My office deals directly with people who commit suicide and their surviving family and friends," said Arapahoe County Coroner Kelly Lear-Kaul. "Many of the deaths that we investigate are preventable. I review medical and psychiatric records and read suicide notes in these deaths in hopes of identifying intervention opportunities for others. Suicide can have a lasting impact on loved ones so we are actively involved in this campaign to let people know that help is out there."

If you or someone you know is in emotional distress or suicidal crisis, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phone number is 1800-273-TALK (8255). This 24-hour, toll-free, confidential suicide prevention hotline is available to anyone who needs help dealing with severe depression or suicidal thoughts. Calls are routed to the nearest crisis center where crisis counseling and mental health referrals are provided day and night.

"Suicide is a serious public health issue and we are unfortunately seeing an increase in suicides among veterans," said Arapahoe County Commissioner Bill Holen. "We all should take part in supporting this initiative because you can potentially save a life just by learning how to read the signs of the people around you like a colleague, family member, or neighbor who may be severely depressed."

Informational panel cards and wallet inserts with tips on how to read the warning signs are available in the lobbies of County buildings for the public. The panel cards provide links with information for specific groups including Veterans, youth and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer.

For more information on Arapahoe County's Suicide Prevention Awareness campaign look for Suicide Prevention Awareness under County Services at www.arapahoegov.com or <http://www.arapahoegov.com/index.aspx?NID=1388&ART=4184&ADMIN=1>.

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