



## News Release

Communication Services  
5334 South Prince Street  
Littleton, Colorado 80120  
Phone: 303-795-5467  
Fax: 303-734-5470  
[www.arapahoegov.com](http://www.arapahoegov.com)

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Contact:

**CAITLIN WILSON**

*Communication Services Specialist II*

Direct: 720-874-6507

Mobile: 303-263-1617

Email: [cwilson@arapahoegov.com](mailto:cwilson@arapahoegov.com)

### **Tie a yellow ribbon on World Suicide Prevention Day Sept. 10**

*Arapahoe County call to action to help promote suicide awareness and prevention.*

**Littleton, Colo.** – Arapahoe County will be observing World Suicide Prevention Day, Sept. 10, during National Suicide Prevention Week Sept. 10-16 in hopes of raising awareness and sending the message that there is hope and help.

Arapahoe County recognizes suicide is a serious public health issue that can have lasting harmful effects on family, friends, co-workers and the community.

Suicide is a public health concern in our state, with Colorado ranking ninth in the nation for the highest suicide rates (latest complete data available); in 2015 the total number of suicide deaths in Colorado exceeded the number of homicide and motor vehicle crash deaths combined. In 2016, there were 115 deaths by suicide in Arapahoe County, accounting for 19 percent of all deaths certified by the Arapahoe County Coroner's Office last year. So far in 2017 there have been 71 suicide deaths through August, according to the Arapahoe County Coroner's Office. Of these 71 suicides, the largest current categories are men between the ages of 40 – 49 and 50 to 59 years of age.

Arapahoe County has hung banners and tied yellow awareness ribbons at the administration building in Littleton, the Human Services building in Aurora and the Sheriff's Office in Centennial. They will remain visible through September to raise awareness. Employees and citizens also are encouraged to wear a yellow ribbon for awareness throughout the month.

"We continue to be actively involved in this campaign to let people know that help is out there," said Arapahoe County Coroner Dr. Kelly Lear. "My office deals directly with people who have died by suicide and their families and see that many of the deaths that we investigate are preventable. In reviewing medical and psychiatric records and reading suicide notes in these deaths, we consistently seek to identify intervention opportunities for others."

If you or someone you know is in emotional distress or suicidal, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phone number is 1-800-273-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 counseling and mental health referrals are provided day and night. Colorado Crisis Services also provides 24-hour hotline assistance at 1-844-493-TALK (8255) and walk-in centers throughout the state.

Information tables with resources are set up in the lobbies of County buildings. Resources include panel cards and wallet inserts with tips on how to read the warning signs. The panel cards provide links with information for specific groups including Veterans, youth, seniors and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations.

Citizens also can visit the County's website and access important resources including suicide hotlines and information about where to find help. For more information on Arapahoe County's Suicide Prevention Awareness campaign, visit [www.arapahoegov.com/suicideprevention](http://www.arapahoegov.com/suicideprevention).

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