



For Immediate Release
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Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition Receives Over \$1M for Project LIFE

WILMINGTON- Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition (DSPC), in cooperation with the Office of Prevention and Early Intervention (OPEI), was awarded the Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The grant will provide almost \$500K per year for three years (a total of nearly \$1.5 million) to Project LIFE, a program aimed at youth suicide prevention.

Project LIFE- Living Is For Everyone, is a comprehensive, statewide suicide prevention initiative that targets youth between the ages of 10 and 24. This project was developed to prevent suicidal behaviors by enhancing resiliency, reducing the impact of suicide and suicidal behaviors on individuals, families, and communities, and improving access to and availability of prevention services for vulnerable, high-risk youth. Currently, suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds.

“Teen suicide is an epidemic that we as a community need to alleviate,” said Henry Smith, Cabinet Secretary of the Delaware Children’s Department. “I congratulate OPEI and DSPC for their hard work and receiving this grant.”

In a typical Delaware high school classroom of 30 students, four will seriously consider suicide and at least one will attempt suicide. Fifty-four Delaware youth have taken their lives since 2001, a rate which has increased 35 percent since 1990.

“We are extremely pleased to receive this award,” said Dana Sawyer, OPEI administrator. “This is going to make a huge difference, giving us the ability to expand our prevention practices through gatekeeper training, social marketing, peer-to-peer programming and a 24/7 crisis lifeline, among other tactics.”

The Office of Prevention and Early Intervention is the first step in the fight to help at-risk children. OPEI’s services works with children, youth, families, schools, and the community to prevent child abuse, dependency, neglect, juvenile delinquency, mental health disorders, tobacco, drug, and alcohol abuse.

Our Mission: The Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families provides leadership and advocacy for all of Delaware’s children, while endorsing a holistic approach to enable children to reach their fullest potential.

For more information, please visit www.kids.delaware.gov.

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