Suicide Rates Highest in Three Decades

According to a study released by the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics on April 22, 2016, suicide rates increased 24 percent from 1999-2014, the highest they have been in three decades. The greatest rate of increase came after 2006, and rates increased for both males and females of all ages. Females aged 10-14 and men aged 45-64 had the largest percent increases in suicide rates, 200% and 43% respectively. These troubling data were released just days before the beginning of Mental Health Month, observed each May for over 60 years. The new CDC report also confirms that "suicide among adolescents and young adults is increasing and among the leading causes of death for those demographic groups."

Suicide is a major concern on college campuses with issues of contagion and ideation at the forefront of challenges facing suicide prevention specialists. The statistics for college students are alarming:

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among 18- to 24-year-olds.
- One in 10 college students has made a plan for suicide.
- There are more than 1,000 suicides on college campuses each year.
- Suicide contagion and clusters are more likely among young people in contained communities such as college campuses.
- Suicidal thoughts, making plans for suicide, and suicide attempts are higher among adults aged 18 to 25 than among adults over the age of 26.

Lifetime thoughts of attempting suicide are reported to occur among 18% of undergraduates. Part of the problem in preventing suicide is overcoming erroneous yet common views about this scourge.

### Common misconceptions about suicide

**FALSE: People who talk about suicide won't really do it.**
Almost everyone who commits or attempts suicide has given some clue or warning. Do not ignore suicide threats. Statements like "you'll be sorry when I'm dead," "I can't see any way out," — no matter how casually or jokingly said, may indicate serious suicidal feelings.

**FALSE: Anyone who tries to kill him/herself must be crazy.**
Most suicidal people are not psychotic or insane. They must be upset, grief-stricken, depressed or despairing, but extreme distress and emotional pain are not necessarily signs of mental illness.

**FALSE: If a person is determined to kill him/herself, nothing is going to stop them.**
Even the most severely depressed person has mixed feelings about death, wavering until the very last moment between wanting to live and wanting to die. Most suicidal people do not want death; they want the pain to stop. The impulse to end it all, however overpowering, does not last forever.

**FALSE: People who commit suicide are people who were unwilling to seek help.**
Studies of suicide victims have shown that more than half had sought medical help in the six months prior to their deaths.

**FALSE: Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.**
You don't give a suicidal person morbid ideas by talking about suicide. The opposite is true—bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do.

If you or someone else is in crisis, contact NOVACares@nvcc.edu, Police Dispatch (703-764-5000) or the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/ or 1-800-273-TALK.
In addition to protecting and serving the NOVA campus community, your NOVA Police are committed to serving our community at large. On June 9, a NOVA Police team, complemented by other NOVA talent, participated in the 2016 Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. The run commenced at the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington. Beginning at seven points across the Commonwealth, more than 2,000 officers carried the Special Olympics Flame of Hope over 1,900 miles across Virginia. NOVA Police received the torch from George Mason University Police and ran over 2.5 miles. In addition to the runners, NOVA Lieutenants John Stasiowski and John DeGurse escorted the teams on their police bicycles and provided traffic control over 20 miles from the Iwo Jima Memorial all the way to Ft. Belvoir.

This year’s NOVA Police team was personally sponsored by the Annandale Campus acting Provost, Charlotte Calobrisi. Ms. Calobrisi’s generous donation and continued support to the NOVA Police Department and the community allowed us to participate in this important event and special athletes to experience success, make new friends, and build confidence through their accomplishments in these sporting events.

Grilling Safety

Three out of five households own a grill, and several NOVA campuses have outdoor grills that are frequently used by NOVA personnel. This translates to a lot of tasty meals, but it also means there’s an increased risk of injuries and fires.

Each year an average of 8,900 home fires are caused by grilling, and close to half of all injuries involving grills are due to thermal burns. While nearly half of the people who grill do it year-round, July is the peak month for grill fires followed by May, June and August. Many of these fires can be prevented with preplanning and maintenance. Follow these 5 simple tips for safe grilling.

5 grilling tips

- **Use propane and charcoal grills outdoors only.**

- **Place the grill well away from your home, deck railings, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.**

- **Establish safety rules for kids.** Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.

- **Clean your grill often,** removing any grease or fat buildup from the grates and in the trays below.

- **Stay next to your grill at all times while cooking,** never leave the area unattended and have a fire extinguisher handy.

Grilling by the numbers...

In 2014, **16,600** patients went to emergency rooms because of injuries involving grills.

**Failure to clean the grill was the leading factor** contributing to the fire in 19% of all grill structure fires. In 17%, something flammable was too close to the grill.

**Leaks or breaks** were the factor in 11% of grill structure fires and 23% of outside and unclassified grill fires.

**Gas grills contribute to a higher number** of home fires overall than their charcoal counterparts.
On June 24, Officer Brian Groft graduated from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy. During his five months at the academy, he mastered various skill sets and information necessary to serve as a police officer in the Commonwealth, including the Virginia legal code, emergency vehicle operations, firearms, defensive tactics, dealing with difficult people, hazmat, emergency childbirth, criminal investigation, traffic enforcement and control, and a host of other key areas. The rigor of the academy curriculum is demonstrated by the fact that graduates are awarded almost a year of college credit for the successful completion of their training. Officer Groft was recognized during the graduation ceremony for having the second highest GPA in his class.

Officer Groft served with the Prince William County Police Department before joining NOVA and formally worked at the AN campus as a traffic control officer. He is assigned to the Loudoun Campus.

Chief Daniel Dusseau with Officer Groft upon the latter’s police academy graduation.
NOVA Police Training and Events

The NOVA Police conduct an active community outreach program and are looking for opportunities to address your class, club, division, or campus at large on any of the following topics:

- Active Shooter Response
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Staying Safe in the Classroom
- Staying Safe on the Campus
- Self-Defense Considerations
- 10 Things Adjuncts (and other faculty) Should Know About Security
- Bomb Threat Response
- Sexual Assault, Crimes Against Women, and/or Bystander Intervention
- Identity Theft
- DUI Awareness
- Narcotics
- Gangs

And more.

If you are interested in scheduling any police training, please contact Lt. John Weinstein, at jweinstein@nvcc.edu or 571-422-9928, to arrange a convenient time.

Call NOVA Police Dispatch 24/7/365
at
703-764-5000

Download NOVA’s free LiveSafe mobile safety app
www.LiveSafeMobile.com