



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Mayor Jacobs to Recognize National Suicide Prevention Month**

*KNOXVILLE, Tenn.*— Knox County will observe National Suicide Prevention Month throughout September to continue efforts to increase the awareness and understanding of suicide and mental health in our community.

National Suicide Prevention Month is a time when mental health advocates, survivors, supporters, and the community join to promote suicide prevention awareness.

During the month, World Suicide Prevention Day is September 10 and National Suicide Prevention Week runs Sept. 4 through Sept. 10 this year. Both are a time to share resources and stories and remember those affected by suicide while focusing efforts on directing treatment to those who need it most.

“Suicide is one of the top 10 leading causes of all deaths in the state and in this community,” said Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs. “Even worse, is that it is one of the most common causes of death for 10- to 34-year-olds. It’s incredibly tragic.”

A three-part public service announcement video series begins today and will then run Sept. 13 and Sept. 20. The first PSA will share phone numbers people can contact anonymously for help, the second highlights actions to take to prevent suicide, and the third touches on warning signs and the resources available to help.

Then, on Sept. 27, the mayor and Matt Schaefer, the CEO of East Tennessee Children’s Hospital, discuss suicide among children and teenagers and what steps and resources to help prevent it.

The videos will be posted to the Knox County and Mayor’s social media sites. The media is welcome to run them as well.

“I think the biggest step is just stay engaged,” Schaefer said. “Oftentimes, children are finding themselves isolated. So how do you not feel isolated? You have people asking, how was your day? Tell me what's going on. Having conversation. And then asking questions. There's always an ability to have a different level of conversation. And when something seems off, how do you make sure you reach out to resources that can help? Whether that's care providers already known and established to you and your family, whether that's mental health providers here in the region, whether that school counselors, so that those options and resources are available.”

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