



PR#454

## PRESS RELEASE

### **MOHW Observes World Suicide Prevention Day 2021**

*Belmopan, September 9, 2021. 3:30 p.m.*

On September 10, the Ministry of Health & Wellness will join the global community in observing World Suicide Prevention Day, under the theme “Creating Hope through Action,” to raise awareness about suicide prevention.

This year’s theme reminds us that our actions, no matter how big or small, may provide hope to those who are struggling and calls us to work collectively to address this global public health issue.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people aged 15 to 29. In 2020, Belize recorded 32 deaths by suicide — nine females and 23 males — and 96 suicide attempts by 50 females and 46 males.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, all aspects of people’s lives have been negatively impacted and will continue to be affected for some time. As the pandemic continues, rates of anxiety, depression and suicide continue to increase. It is, therefore, important that mental health and suicide prevention remain priorities.

The ministry continues to discourage social stigma by promoting hope to create a more compassionate society. Persons are encouraged to visit the mental health clinics located at the nearest public hospital to set up an appointment or to call the 0-800-MOH-CARE (0-800-664-2273) hotline for assistance.

As a part of the activities, which include educational activities and social media campaigns, the Ministry of Health & Wellness today raised the World Suicide Prevention Day Flag in all districts. The public is also invited to light a candle near a window on September 10 at 8:00 p.m. to show support for

suicide prevention, to remember a lost loved one and for the survivors of suicide.

Suicides are preventable. We can all do our part by reaching out to one another and in our communities. It takes one person, one small act and one minute to make a difference.

## **Ends**

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