



World Suicide Prevention Day – 10 September 2017

MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THE TRUE EXTENT OF SUICIDE, SURVEY FINDS

Most people have no idea about the numbers of people who die by suicide every year in the UK, a survey for World Suicide Prevention Day has revealed today.

91 per cent of those who took part in the YouGov survey for the National Suicide Prevention Alliance (NSPA) either under or overestimated how many people take their own lives each year in the UK, or simply didn't know. Between 6,000 and 7,000 people die by suicide every year, that's someone dying by suicide every 90 minutes, so it's vital that we raise awareness and save lives.

The NSPA is asking everyone to *Take a Minute to Change A Life* for World Suicide Prevention Day. The organisation's 160 members and supporters (along with Samaritans, MIND, Rethink Mental Illness, CALM, STORM and Network Rail) will be working together to galvanise action across the country to make suicide prevention a priority in the run up to the day on **Sunday 10 September**.

The YouGov survey also found that over a quarter of people who responded (26%) said that not knowing what to do and/or feeling worried that talking about suicide would increase the risk of it happening, would prevent them reaching out to someone.

The NSPA wants to change this by getting people to take simple actions to connect with others* on World Suicide Prevention Day, and by showing how easy it can be to make a difference.

Former England captain and Rugby League player Danny Sculthorpe said: "I felt suicidal after my back injury brought my playing career to an end. I lost my job, I felt I couldn't support my family, and we lost our house. I felt as if I wanted to take my own life.

"It is hard for men to speak about how they feel. My mum and dad and my wife had? noticed a change in my behaviour and got me to talk about how I was feeling. Their calling me out saved my life. It was the best thing I ever did. Speaking out is a strength, not a weakness."

For five years Danny has been a trainer for NSPA member State of Mind, helping players, fans and businesses develop coping mechanisms and mental fitness. "I love it, helping other people makes me feel good," he said.

Tracy, 28, was in the process of taking her own life when her friend Jade held on to her and talked to her. She was able to help her to change her mind. "Jade saved my life," said Tracey. "It was a pivotal moment in our relationship."

Jade said: "Suicide does not end the pain, it just passes it on to someone else."

Neil Laybourn, who was able to talk to Jonny Benjamin when he was about to make a suicide attempt, and convince him to get help, said: “Jonny was clearly in a lot of pain but I was able to talk to him and get his attention. Once I had done that – it only took a minute – I was able to keep talking to him and persuade him to move out of danger.

“Johnny and I are determined to campaign to let people know there is action you can take that is easy, simple and makes all the difference.”

Co-Chair of the NSPA Ruth Sutherland said: “The results of the survey underline the fact that many people don’t realise the numbers of suicides in the UK, and aren’t confident in talking about it. Suicide is everybody’s business and this is why the NSPA hopes to raise awareness of simple actions we can take in order to reach out to others, while campaigning for effective suicide prevention”.

For further information:-

<https://iasp.info/wspd2017>

<http://www.nspa.org.uk/>