

# Keynote Speaker

Nicole Gibson, Senior Director of State Policy & Advocacy,  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention



# Supporting Suicide Prevention in the States

**Nicole Gibson, AFSP Senior Director of State Policy & Advocacy**

**Women in Government National Legislative Conference**

**June 8, 2023**

**afsp.org**



**American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention**



**Our Mission**

**Save Lives and Bring Hope to  
Those Affected by Suicide**



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Prevention**

# Core Strategies

AFSP creates a culture that's smart about mental health by engaging in the following core strategies:

Funding scientific research

Educating the public about mental health and suicide prevention

Advocating for public policies in mental health and suicide prevention

Supporting survivors of suicide loss and those affected by suicide in our mission



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## AFSP is Dedicated to Reaching Out To:

- Those impacted by suicide
- Those who have lost someone to suicide
- Those who are at risk



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AFSP is a single not-for-profit organization with a nationwide network of **chapters** in all 50 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico.

Headquartered in New York City,  
**Public Policy Office in D.C.**



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**Suicide is a  
health issue.**



**Suicide can  
be prevented.**



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# Public Policy Priorities





# 2023 – 2024 AFSP Policy Priorities

## Research, Surveillance, Data Collection, & Infrastructure

- State infrastructure
- Architectural barriers and structures
- Federal funding

## Access to Care & Services

- 988 and crisis services
- Telehealth
- Mental health parity
- Workforce expansion

## Diverse, Underserved, & Disproportionately Impacted Communities & Populations

- First responders, corrections staff, and frontline healthcare workers
- LGBTQ individuals and communities
- Veterans, Servicemembers and their families
- Children, teens, and young adults

## Project 2025

- Corrections
- Healthcare systems
- Emergency Departments
- Firearms

# State Priorities Highlight



# 988 and Crisis Services

- **Increase diverse and sustainable funding and support for the full continuum of crisis response, including:**
  - *Someone to call* (crisis call centers)
  - *Someone to respond* (mobile crisis teams)
  - *Somewhere to go* (crisis stabilization centers)



# Children, Teens, and Young Adults

- **Implement and support comprehensive K-12 school mental health and suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention initiatives and policies, including requirements for:**
  - Personnel training
  - Student education
  - Caregiver education
  - Excused mental health absences



# Children, Teens, and Young Adults

- **Require higher education policies and procedures to:**
  - Include how to support students experiencing a behavioral health condition or suicidal crisis
  - Require schools to make policies and related resources widely known and available to all students, faculty, and staff



# First Responders, Corrections Staff, & Frontline Healthcare Workers

- **Identify PTSD/PTSI as a compensable, work-related injury**
- **Extend eligibility for life insurance benefits to families of those who die by suicide**
- **Establish Employee Assistance, peer-support, and training programs**
- **Provide privacy protections**



# State Infrastructure

- **Increase funding for and assist in the implementation and evaluation of state suicide prevention initiatives and plans to prevent suicide across the lifespan**
  - Visit [sprc.org/state-infrastructure](https://sprc.org/state-infrastructure) for recommendations, state examples, templates, and other tools



# Issues to Keep an Eye On

**PRIORITIZE  
MENTAL  
HEALTH**

- **Medicaid “Unwinding”**
- **Workforce Expansion**





# Using AFSP as a Resource



# AFSP Policy Team Can Provide:

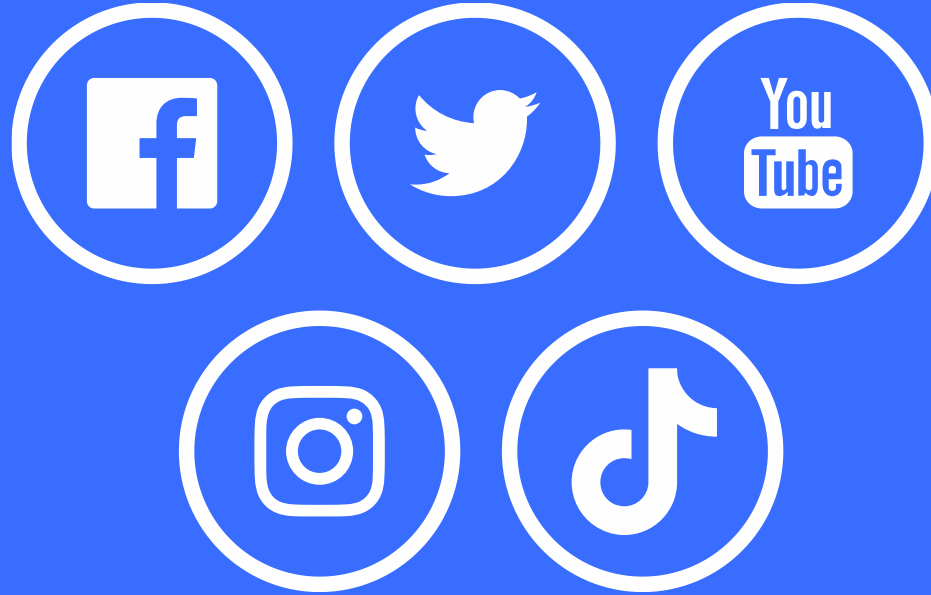
- **Access to the latest research, programs, experts in the field**
- **National perspective, informed by what is happening across all 50 states and D.C.**
- **Advocacy support**
- **Connections to local chapters, staff, volunteers**



# Contact Us & For More Info

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  - [afsp.org/statebills](https://afsp.org/statebills)





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