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**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FROM OREGON  
PARTNERSHIP\*\*\***

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**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK  
BEGINS AMIDST TROUBLING YOUTH  
TRENDS**

**Oregon Partnership calls for more awareness, saying suicides  
can be prevented.**

(Portland, Oregon) More than 30,000 people die by their own hands in the United States, compared to an average of 18,000 homicides. And Oregon has the 6<sup>th</sup> highest suicide rate in the nation.

Despite these shocking statistics, the subjects of suicide and suicide prevention are too often ignored.

During National Suicide Prevention Week – September 9<sup>th</sup> through Septembers 15<sup>th</sup> – Oregon Partnership is calling attention to ways to prevent suicide, especially in light of the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC reported this week that suicide among youth between the ages of 15 and 24, jumped 8 percent. That reverses a 28 percent decline for that age group that began in 1990.

The suicide rate among preteen and young teen girls increased dramatically by 76 percent, a spike federal health officials are a loss to explain.

“This latest data shows that we need to do more in the way of public education about suicide prevention,” says Leslie Storm, director of the Oregon Partnership crisis lines.

Oregon Partnership, a statewide non-profit providing alcohol and drug prevention education, operates four crisis lines, 24 hours a day 7 days a week. “Lifeline,” a suicide help line, has helped some six thousand callers in the past year.

The help line at 1-800-273-TALK is the only suicide line in Oregon certified by the National LifeLine Network and serves as a national suicide intervention model.

“Our staff and volunteers are trained in crisis counseling, suicide prevention, and motivation counseling,” says Storm. “Each caller asking for assistance is offered a return call by staff member to insure that the crisis has de-escalated.”

While the details of his hospitalization are still sketchy, comedy actor Owen Wilson’s apparent suicide attempt, may bring much-needed attention to the issue. Most of those who die by suicide give warning signs: They suffer from depression or another diagnosable mental illness.

“Few people take their lives without first letting someone know how they feel,” says Storm. “Those considering suicide often tell their peers of their thoughts and plans. Most seek out someone to rescue them.”

“Most suicidal individuals don’t want death. They just want the pain to stop.”

The American Association of Suicidology recommends the following actions after identifying suicidal warning signs in another person:

- \* Be direct. Talk openly about suicide.
- \* Be willing to listen. Allow expression of feelings and accept them.
- \* Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- \* Do not be sworn to secrecy. Seek help and support.
- \* Get help from persons or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention, such as a community mental health center, counselor, mental health professional or clergy.

**About Oregon Partnership:**

Oregon Partnership is a statewide nonprofit that has worked to promote healthy kids and communities for well over a decade by raising awareness about drug and alcohol issues, providing prevention education in classrooms, and 24-hour crisis lines for people needing help. To learn more, visit [www.orpartnership.org](http://www.orpartnership.org).

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