

# Suicide Prevention Month Programming Ideas

## Online

### Post Regularly on Social Media

Goal: To teach members of your network that suicide is preventable and there are things they can do to help prevent these tragedies in the future.

Utilize the social media resources at [www.ActiveMinds.org/SuicidePrevention](http://www.ActiveMinds.org/SuicidePrevention) to regularly post to your organization's social media accounts. We encourage you to post at least once per week during Suicide Prevention Month.

Utilize the media literacy guide from the [Active Minds Postvention Guide](#) for sample social media posts for suicide prevention month.

Follow our official Active Minds account on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) to easily share/repost our messaging and graphics.

### #ReasonsISpeak

Goal: To personalize and normalize mental health issues and publicly demonstrate advocacy for speaking up and seeking help.

Throughout September, Active Minds, Inc. social media will support and repost tweets, images, videos, and other content posted with #ReasonsISpeak. The aim of the campaign is to get people talking about why they are mental health advocates and why other people should be, too.

### Contribute to the Active Minds Blog

Goal: To personalize mental health disorders and issues related to suicide by sharing the stories of people who live with them.

Beginning in August, Active Minds will collect blog contributions from our network and feature the voices of folks who have been touched by mental health disorders and suicidality. More information on how to submit is at <http://www.activeminds.org/SuicidePrevention>

### Take the Mental Health Unity Pledge

Goal: To demonstrate solidarity around issues of mental health and suicide prevention.

Let those who are struggling know there's a community that cares by going to [www.ActiveMinds.org/Unity](http://www.ActiveMinds.org/Unity) and taking the Mental Health Unity Pledge. When you provide your address, we'll send you a sticker you can use to identify yourself as a mental health ally.



## In-Person

### Storysharing Monologue Events and Panel Discussions

Goal: To foster a safe space and encourage others to verbally share their mental health stories with an audience and expand the conversation about suicide prevention initiatives.

See examples of monologue events from [Tufts University](#) and the [University of Maine](#) and utilize their tips for minimizing triggers and empowering participant voices.

When planning panel discussions, invite a local counseling professional, a scholar who studies suicide or mental health, and/or community leaders to sit on a panel and answer questions from attendees.

Utilize the Active Minds Panel Discussion Guide located at [www.ActiveMinds.org/SuicidePrevention](http://www.ActiveMinds.org/SuicidePrevention) to help prepare your organization and panelists for the event.

### Self-Care Activities

Goal: To promote self-care through interactive and instructional activities.

You could organize an arts and crafts event, have a yoga session, bring therapy dogs to a central space, make stress balls, pop bubble wrap, and/or distribute self-care kits (see kit examples from [Denison University](#) & [UCLA](#)), to name a few ideas!

### #ReasonsI Speak Tabling

Goal: To involve the campus community in the online #ReasonsI Speak suicide prevention campaign.

Make signs with powerful reasons to speak out against suicide, or get a dry-erase board and let people write their own, and table on your campus to raise awareness. Make sure to take plenty of pictures of all the great reasons people give!

### Active Minds Speakers Bureau

Goal: To address stigma surrounding mental health disorders through peer-to-peer story sharing.

Active Minds Speakers Bureau features highly-trained young people who share first-hand stories of resilience and recovery. Through the Active Minds Speakers Bureau, tens of thousands of young adults hear messages of hope and empowerment every year. Click on the link above to see how you can bring a member of our Speakers Bureau to your suicide prevention events.



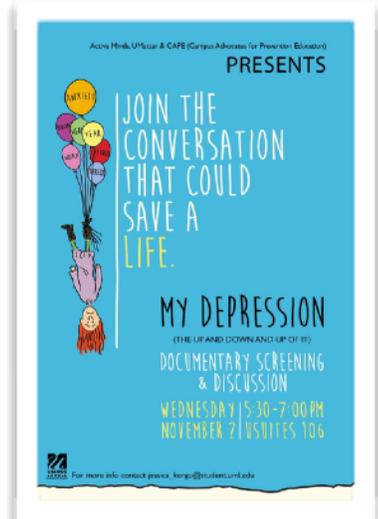
## Movie or Documentary Screening

Goal: To stimulate conversation about media presentations of mental health and suicide (if a movie) and/or to demonstrate how mental health and suicide affect people across the country and around the world (if a documentary).

Click [here](#) for a list of short documentaries you could share at an event.

Click [here](#) for a list of films you could screen to the community.

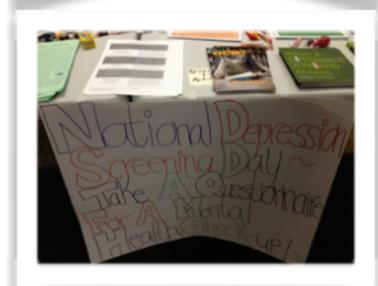
Have a mental health professional facilitate a Q & A after the screening and address any major themes or takeaways.



## Depression Screenings (Assessments)

Goal: To identify people in need of prevention or intervention for depression and suicide and provide them with resources for help seeking.

Ask your Counseling Center or local mental health provider if they offer these one-on-one assessments, and if so, work with them to advertise and incentivize the screenings during your campaign.



## Fundraising

### Sports Tournament or Improv Comedy Show

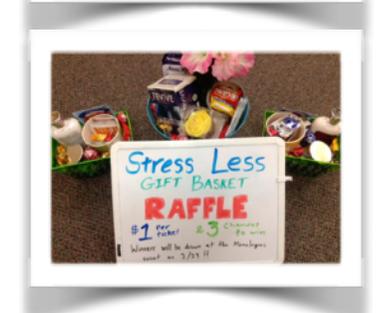
You can charge entry/cover fees for attendees, charge participants for team registration, sell food and drinks at a concession stand, and/or take donations at the event. Gauge your community climate to determine whether a sports tournament or an improv show might be more successful, and from there, remain as inclusive as possible of all gender identities, cultural backgrounds, abilities, etc. in your planning.

### Sell or Raffle Mental Health-Related Products

Ask creative volunteers to make mental health-inspired art for an auction, assemble a self-care basket with items like a portable massager, tea, candles, and fuzzy socks to raffle off, or sell suicide prevention-themed T-shirts to the community to raise awareness while raising funds.

### Sell Food or Drinks

Definitely pay mind to the weather – if September brings cooler weather to your area, try selling warm drinks and food, like hot chocolate or coffee. If the weather is warm, lemonade or ice pops might sell better. (Pizza is a good choice year-round!)



## Fundraiser at a Local Restaurant

Many restaurants can donate a portion of profits from a designated time period (usually dinner hours) to organizations. Call the restaurant a few months in advance to secure a date and time. Make a social event out of it by scheduling the fundraiser right after a meeting or event and encourage your network to carpool to the restaurant together!



## Raise Money at [MyActiveMinds.org](http://MyActiveMinds.org)

Create a fundraising page at [www.MyActiveMinds.org](http://www.MyActiveMinds.org) in honor of Suicide Prevention Month in person and on your personal social media.

## Tips for Suicide Prevention Month Programming

If possible, start planning for your fall suicide prevention programming in July or August at the latest.

Partner with as many community or student organizations, faculty members, prominent community members, and other allies as possible.

To increase event turnout, advertise heavily on social media with colorful images, advertise on campus with large banners and flyers, provide free food and drinks, offer door prizes, and/or collaborate with organizations to get more people involved.

Share [trigger warnings](#) for your suicide prevention event.

- Suicide can be a touchy subject. Use or modify the pre-written trigger warnings in the link above to prepare a flyer to share online and around campus before and during your suicide prevention programming. This allows people the option to circumnavigate your events if need be.

**For more details and tips on executing a successful suicide prevention campaign, check out our video overview of the campaign as well as the template presentation for chapter members.**

*For chapters: The chart below outlines a sample week of events. You don't need to replicate these, but it could be a helpful starting point for your planning.*

*Need more ideas? Check out our [Program Bank](#) for suicide prevention programs submitted by other chapters that you could bring to your campus.*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
ALL WEEK LONG				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Display/table with facts and resources in highly trafficked area               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•How to help a friend, warning signs of suicide, counseling services, national hotlines</li> </ul> </li> <li>•Hang flyers/posters around campus with resources and facts, and to advertise your events</li> <li>•Have flyers, resources, and club info (meeting dates and times) available at all of your events</li> <li>•#ReasonsISpeak social media campaign</li> </ul>				
<b>Tabling</b> Leave footprints using paint on a banner to represent solidarity in suicide prevention ("stand up to suicide")	<b>Story-Sharing Event</b> Member of the Speakers Bureau, panel discussion, or Mental Health Monologues-type presentation	<b>Film Screening &amp; Discussion</b> Suicide/depression film screening followed by a town hall discussion/Q & A with counseling staff and campus administrators	<b>Sports Tournament</b> Partner with your recreation center for a campus-wide tournament (dodge ball, flag football, kickball). Earn proceeds from registration fees, concessions, or on-site donations.	<b>Self-Care Event</b> Crafts, therapy dogs, meditation, stress-ball making, yoga, or a combination of all of these and more in a highly-trafficked area on campus