

# HOPE BELONGING MEANING PURPOSE



centre for  
suicide prevention

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

## Hope, belonging, meaning, and purpose

We are in extraordinary times, to be sure.

Centre for Suicide Prevention has had an accomplished year but like many others, our successes have been eclipsed by the pandemic and we have been reminded anew of the magnitude of our work. In March 2020, when COVID-19 descended upon us, many people wondered: What will the psychological impacts of this global pandemic be? Will they contribute to more people dying by suicide? How can we support people at this time?

'Protective factors' – things that help people endure dark times or contribute to their wellness – do not get nearly the same visibility as risk factors, and yet, protective factors are what insulate us from suicide. What are these factors? They run the gamut from maintaining positive relationships to exercising to engaging in spirituality. What do they have in common with each other? Distilled down, all protective factors have a basis in hope, belonging, meaning and purpose – universal human needs.

Western research and culture examine hope, belonging, meaning and purpose as individual entities. Some Indigenous ways of knowing are based on all four of them, the way they interact amongst each other, and how they bring balance in life. The First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum, a framework developed by Thunderbird Partnership Foundation with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners including Health Canada, describes and explains these four aspects in action, and how aligning them brings wholeness.

What brings us meaning? What drives our purpose in life? What gives us hope and where do we find a sense of belonging? These are the questions we need to be asking. This is suicide prevention during extraordinary and ordinary times.



Mara Grunau  
*Executive Director*



Carmelle Hunka  
*President, Board of Directors*

## Our people

community and nature. It is evident through the love,  
"Belonging is connectedness – relationships with family  
kindness, and respect we feel from others."<sup>1</sup>



1945-2020

This year we said goodbye to an integral member of our team, Brenda Ann Taylor. As Communications Director, Brenda Ann led many CSP communications initiatives during her 11 years with us, but none was as close to her heart as the annual report: an opportunity to illustrate the hope, belonging, purpose and meaning of suicide prevention in a creative, approachable, *hopeful* way. This year's annual report is dedicated to her.

### STAFF

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*Events Coordinator*

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Hilda de Boer  
*Workshops Coordinator*

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Miriam Groot  
*Trainer Liaison*

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*Office Assistant*

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Karin Lavoie BMus, MLIS  
*Reference Librarian*

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Robert Olson BA, MLIS  
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Hannah Ratz BA  
*Registrar*

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*Education Director*

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Crystal Walker BCS  
*Communications Lead*

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Diane Yackel BScN, MA  
*Executive Advisor*

### ASSOCIATES

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Priscilla Lalonde BSW, RSW

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Tim Loblaw EdD

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Dave MacLeod MSc, RPsych

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Suzanne McLeod PhD

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Shelly Qualteri RSW, MA

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Scott Rodda BA

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Marlene Deimert

—  
Merle Deimert

+ 168 Trainers

## Subject matter expertise

As leaders in suicide prevention, we know that it is collaborative, multi-faceted work. We cannot do this work in isolation. In addition to seeking input from experts outside our organization to inform our work, we provide subject matter expertise and work alongside several committees and organizations including:

National Collaborative for Suicide Prevention · Canadian Mental Health Association Alberta Division Rural Mental Health Advisory Committee · Canadian Institute for Health Information · City of Calgary Community Action on Mental Health and Addiction, Prevention Action Table · Canadian Suicide Prevention Coordinators' Network Government of Alberta (Health, Children's Services) · Living Hope: City of Edmonton's Suicide Prevention Plan, Leadership and Steering Committees · Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement · Calgary Council of Addictions and Mental Health Agencies · Canadian Mental Health Association National, Divisional and Regional offices University of Calgary Suicide Awareness and Prevention Advisory Committee · Health Standards Organization (Accreditation Canada) · University of Calgary Mathison Centre for Mental Health Community Connections Committee

## Key partners

Every year, more partners join us in preventing suicide. Slowly, the stigma surrounding suicide is fading, and suicide is being recognized as the major issue it is. This year, our work was supported through generous grants and contracts from:



Max Bell  
Foundation

## CONCEPT

The concept of this year's annual report: Hope, Belonging, Meaning and Purpose was borrowed with permission from the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum, a framework developed by Thunderbird Partnership Foundation with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners including the Assembly of First Nations and Health Canada. This document describes and explains these four aspects in action and how aligning them brings wholeness.

We are grateful to the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation for granting us permission to use this concept. To find out more about hope, belonging, meaning and purpose, visit

[thunderbirdpf.org/fnmwc-full](http://thunderbirdpf.org/fnmwc-full)

1. Adapted from "First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum," Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and Health Canada, 2015

## We educate for life

“Purpose creates an understanding that every person is sacred, that the physical body is ‘home’ for the spirit, heart, and mind, all of which are interconnected to the other and work inseparably.”<sup>1</sup>

Our purpose is to educate people with the information, skills and knowledge to respond to people at risk of suicide. We educate online, in print, and interactively. Our library of over 47,000 items informs the work we do.

Our output numbers  
from April 1, 2019 to  
March 31, 2020:

48  
news stories

3,956  
mailing list subscribers

431  
workshops

25,539  
social media  
followers

27  
presentations

83,926  
workshop learning hours

211  
reference queries

7,894  
workshop participants

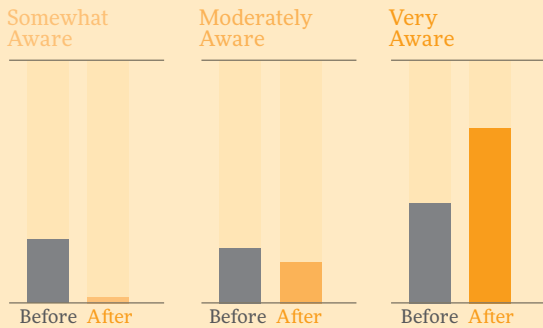
8  
new resource  
publications

376,788  
website visitors

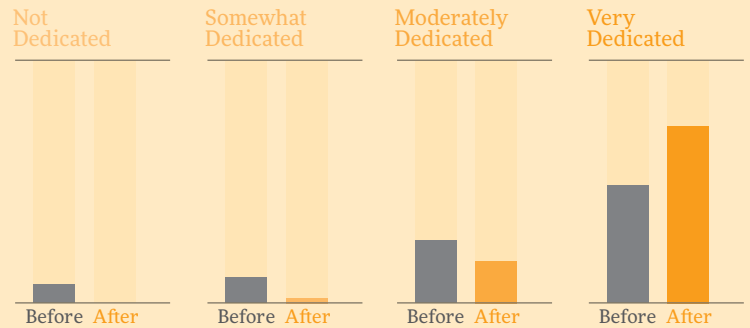
## Our impact numbers from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020:

After reading our resource toolkits:

People are more **aware** of the warning signs of suicide; 78% were very aware.



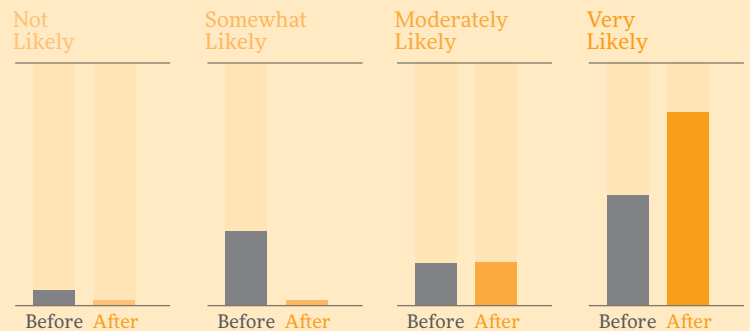
People become better **listeners**; 78% are very dedicated to offering a safe space for listening.



“We need to listen and try to understand. I don’t have answers and they don’t want answers; they just need a friend.”

—Toolkit reader

96% of people are more likely to **reach out** to someone they are worried about.



# Year in review

“Hope drives optimism about tomorrow, of the future of individuals, and of families inseparably.”<sup>1</sup>

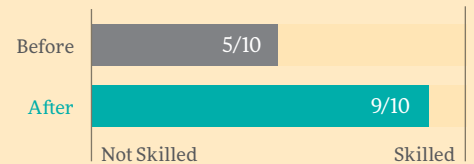
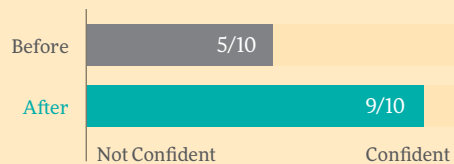
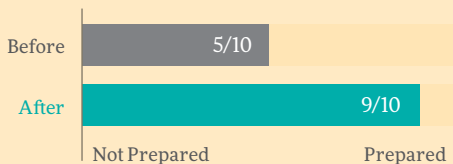
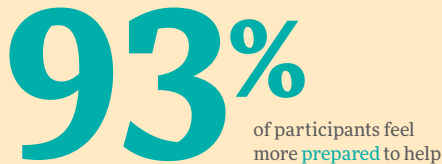
This year, we brought together individuals, researchers, and organizations to collaborate in preventing suicide. We launched a men’s suicide prevention project, co-hosted the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention’s national conference, brought suicide prevention training to student teachers in Alberta, and, together with Knowledge Keepers from across Alberta, co-developed a guide for community-led life promotion plans for Indigenous communities.

## Our outcome numbers from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020:

After taking our workshops, participants feel more equipped to respond to those at risk of suicide. After attending an ASIST workshop, participants felt more ready, willing, and able to help someone at risk of suicide:

“This was an incredibly useful training... I am... more confident than ever before to intervene in a suicide and know where to find the right tools and resources.”

—ASIST participant





People are more **confident** to share information about suicide (93%) and to use nonjudgmental, sensitive language that de-stigmatizes (97%).

93%

of toolkit readers felt **confident** to share information about suicide

6%

of toolkit readers did not feel **confident** to share information about suicide

1% responded with no answer

After attending our other workshops, participants felt more confident to identify and willing to help those at risk of suicide.

These workshops include:

—  
**safeTALK:** suicide alertness for everyone (LivingWorks Education Inc.)

**Straight Talk:** Preventing suicide in youth

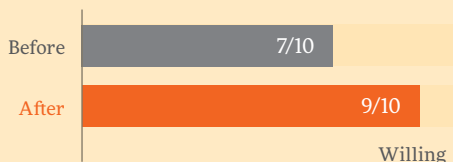
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**Tattered Teddies:** Preventing suicide in children

—  
**Little Cub:** Preventing suicide in Indigenous children

—  
**Walk With Me:** Indigenous Suicide Bereavement

57%

of participants feel more **willing** to help



82%

of participants feel more **confident** to identify



“I recently used my training almost verbatim with a close friend who was in the planning stages of suicide. I was and am so grateful for this training as I had a clear path for intervention.”

—safeTALK participant

# Centre for Suicide Prevention

**“Meaning is created by an attitude towards living.”<sup>1</sup>**

We all have a role to play in preventing suicide. Illuminating this truth and equipping people to respond gives our work deep meaning. Together we can support people who are having thoughts of suicide to identify hope, belonging, meaning and purpose in their lives.

Centre for  
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centre for  
suicide prevention



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
*Mental health for all*