

September 2024 Mental Health First Aid Newsletter

Dates & Events:

- National Suicide Awareness Month
- National Self-care Awareness Month
- National Self-Improvement Month

- National Guide Dog Month

- 21st World Gratitude Day
- 26th Remember Me (Shelter pets)



Signs of Pain

Educating owners about pet pain then enables pets to live happier

Month

Elanco has a variety of pain management options for our canine and feline friends.

Decreased activity Not going up or down stairs Reluctance to jump up onto surface Difficulty standing after lying down Decreased appetite Over grooming or licking a particular area

Signs of Pain



National Guide Dog Month

Elanco is a proud supporter of dogs, inc (previously Southeastern Guide Dogs). For more information: https://dogsinc.org

In honor of National Guide Dog Month, find an organization to support in your community.



September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Suicide is a difficult topic to think about, let alone talk about. As uncomfortable and awkward as it might be for you to ask someone

about suicide, it is nothing compared to the pain and suffering of someone having suicidal thoughts. Asking someone, "Are you thinking about suicide" or "Are you thinking about killing yourself," can save a life. Those questions can shine a light in the dark place, letting that person know that they are not alone and that there is hope for recovery and relief from their situation. There are many warning signs for suicide. Each person has their own set of signs. Letting someone know that you noticed something shows them

you care about them and that they matter. Signs include talking about

or making plans for suicide, acting anxious or agitated, behaving recklessly, talking about being a burden to others, talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain, giving away possessions (including pets), increasing the use of alcohol or drugs, talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live, sleeping too little or too much, withdrawing or feeling isolated, showing rage or talking about seeking revenge or displaying extreme mood swings. It is estimated that there are currently more than 700,000 suicides per

more people. Suicide remains a critical global issue, affecting individuals and communities worldwide.1 "Changing the Narrative on Suicide2" is the theme for this year's suicide awareness month.

"Changing the narrative means fostering empathy and compassion for

year worldwide, and we know that each suicide profoundly affects many

those who are struggling. It means understanding that suicidal thoughts and feelings are a sign of immense pain and- distress but talking about suicidal thoughts does not increase their presence or occurrence. It means listening without judgment, offering support, and guiding individuals towards help."3 What you can do: (1) ask, (2) be there, (3) help keep them safe, 4) help

them connect, and (5) follow up.1 **Veterinary medicine** has a higher-than-average rate of suicide than

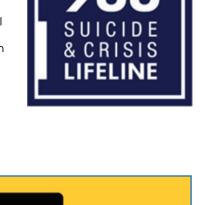
the general population. It is NOT the profession with the highest rate of suicide. We need to be honest and open about this issue. There are

many reasons for the pain and suffering that we feel and that can lead to mental health issues, including suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Data shows that students entering the profession already have significant depression and anxiety. Add onto that, what we deal with everyday plus the lack of training in how to manage ourselves for resiliency, the outcome is sad indeed. Yet, it does not have to be this way. As a profession, we must prioritize and standardize our own self-care rather than stigmatize it. Only then, when we care about the caregiver, can we save ourselves. There are many resources to help yourself and to help others, i.e., AVMA, your State VMA, QPR training, MHFA, and The Betterinary Series.

988 is confidential, free, and available 24/7/365, connecting

available through every land line, cell phone, and voice-over internet device in the United States and call services are available in Spanish, along with interpretation services in over 150 languages.3 Other resources are NAMI, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), and SAMHSA.

those experiencing a mental health, substance use, or suicidal crisis with trained crisis counselors. Access is

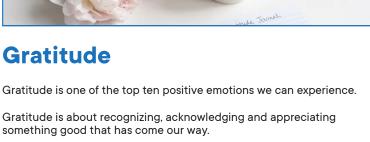




MHFA was founded in Australia and has since been adopted in over 30 countries. This training helps you understand The signs and symptoms of someone struggling with a mental health challenge or crisis, including suicide.

Elanco supports this training for its employees. If you are interested in certification, you can sign up for a course by contacting Dr. Heidi Hulon. To date, over 200 US employees and veterinary customers have been

Mental Health FIRST AID from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING



This simple act has significant impact on our wellbeing as it can increase happiness by 25%! This is due to the release of serotonin in our brains

Expressing gratitude could shift someone's day from bad to good. That could change a day and a life.

Positive Thinking

Use positive affirmations. No negative self-talk or criticism. Be optimistic and realistic where appropriate.

THANK YOU for all that you do!

Seek the Good. Our minds are programmed to focus on the negative. Retrain them to see the good around you. Give to others and share some positive emotions - compassion,

worry about the future or lament on the past.

- love, joy, amusement and gratitude. Be Mindful of the Moment. Focus on the here and now - don't
- Support yourself with people that lift you up in good and in difficult times.

SELF-CARE!

It is unique to each person and is not something we should feel guilty

Self-care refers to activities that aid in a person's overall wellbeing and

Standardize not Stigmatize!

resiliency.

This month find ways to practice self-care in all 8 dimensions of wellbeing: Emotional, Physical, Mental, Social, Spiritual, Financial, Occupational, Environmental

- National Friendship Month
- Animal Pain Awareness Month
- Happy Cat Month
- 9th R U OK Day
- 10th World Suicide Prevention Day
- 13th Positive Thinking Day
- 28th World Rabies Day

Ref:

2.

https://www.iasp.info/wspd/

https://irp.cdn-website.com/9b3cab55/files/uploaded/IVAPM-Signs -of-Pain-Poster_Photo-2019_final-8-6-19.pdf https://afsp.org/national-suicide-prevention-week/ https://www.iasp.info/2024/05/15/worldsuicidepreventionday2024/

#:~:text=Suicide%20remains%20a%20critical%20global,Changing%2

https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/suicidal-behavior

https://suicidepreventionmessaging.org/988messaging/framework

https://www.thehealthsite.com/photo-gallery/world-gratitude-dayhow-gratitude-can-help-you-stay-mentally-healthy-1012167/worldgratitude-day-2022-1012172/

https://www.ruok.org.au/r-u-ok-day

Othe%20Narrative%20on%20Suicide%E2%80%9D.

- https://content.app-sources.com/s/1747980659508095/uploads/Bl oom_Logo/Gratitude_Blog-5115067.png?format=webp
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