

Resolution in Support of Suicide Prevention Efforts

- WHEREAS:** National Mental Health Awareness Month provides us an opportunity to address trauma, fight stigma, and provide support for our neighbors; and
- WHEREAS:** This Council recognizes that trauma that is not transformed is transferred; and
- WHEREAS:** A significant portion of Somerville Middle and High School students, particularly children of color and genderqueer children, reported experiencing depression, intentionally self-harming, experiencing suicidal ideation, and attempting suicide in a 2021 health survey; and
- WHEREAS:** Suicide prevention experts note that the way that we speak about suicide as a society can change perceptions, alert community to warning signs, and facilitate help-seeking behavior; and
- WHEREAS:** Suicide prevention experts further note that coping skills, support, and treatment successfully prevents suicide for most people who have experienced suicidal ideation; and
- WHEREAS:** The National Suicide Prevention Hotline, which will continue to use the number 1-800-273-TALK (8255) to answers millions of calls a year, will fully redirect all calls to 988 to their 170 crisis centers by July 16, 2022; and
- WHEREAS:** The 988 number is already available to all residents in Somerville and those experiencing suicide ideation or thoughts of self-harm should seek out help; and
- WHEREAS:** This Council recognizes suicide as a preventable, public health issue that should be worked on proactively; **THEREFORE, BE IT**
- RESOLVED:** That this Council urges the Administration to do all that it can to prevent suicides in our community, including by publicizing the changes to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline both through a public statement and on the front page of the City of Somerville's website by July 16th; **AND BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** That this Council urges the Administration to create a page on its website that provides resources for those struggling with mental health, including the number to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, the Crisis Text Line, information about the warning signs of suicidal ideation as well as how to get involved with organizations like Samaritans that work on suicide prevention, and messages of hope and recovery for those struggling with their mental health, which shall be directly hyperlinked to the front page notification about changes to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline.