



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline celebrates 2nd anniversary by achieving 24/7 phone response.

ISPH now recruiting for January/February 2015 Volunteer class

BOISE, ID. (November 24, 2014)

The Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline (1-800-273-TALK), a program of Mountain States Group, Inc. reaches its second anniversary of operations *and* expands hours to 24/7 phone response this Wednesday November 26, adding Sunday days and Sunday-Thursday overnight to its existing hours.

With round the clock local phone response beginning this Wednesday, trained Idaho phone responders field even more calls from Idahoans who are in crisis or suicidal —and connect them with key resources in their local communities. The hotline also offers follow-up calls to individuals seeking help.

Says hotline Executive Director John Reusser: “It’s been a long, challenging but incredibly rewarding journey the past 2 years to achieve 24/7 suicide hotline response in Idaho. We couldn’t have done it without the support of our amazing funders and community partners, and our dedicated team paid staff, volunteers and interns.”

Support during critical times

The hotline offers callers:

- Emotional support
- Assessment of suicide risk
- Crisis intervention to those in imminent danger
- Links to local services
- Follow-up for those who exhibit suicide risk factors

Addressing a statewide problem

- Idaho is tied for the 8th-highest suicide rate in the U.S.
- Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for adolescents and young adults in Idaho.

After multi-sector collaboration throughout the Gem State, the ISPH opened in November 2012 — providing much-needed support for individuals at risk for suicide.

Getting involved

The ISPH team trains volunteers — laypersons or professionals — to become trained crisis phone workers. The next training class begins January 31, 2015. Informational sessions for prospective volunteers are ongoing in January. Retired mental health professionals are encouraged to consider becoming volunteer Phone Room Supervisors. ISPH also needs non-phone worker volunteers to help with outreach, fundraising, event planning, etc.

ISPH provides great training and experience in a supportive environment for its Volunteer Phone Workers. Says volunteer Jennie Rylee: “...never in my life have I felt more worthwhile, more valuable, more needed than I do on the Suicide Prevention Hotline. We save people’s lives in a very real and very personal sense. Besides being a mom and grandma, it’s by far the best thing I’ve ever done.”

Volunteer Phone Responders receive 40+ hours of training and apprenticeship and commit to one 4 ½-hour hotline shift per week for one year.

To learn more or make a donation, visit the [ISPH webpage](#). To volunteer as a phone responder call Nina Leary at 258-6992 or email <nleary@mtnstatesgroup.org>

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