



August 28, 2018

Re: September 2018 Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month

Dear Kalama City Council Members,

We are deeply aware of the impact that suicide has made on our community. Recent data has shown a 25-30% increase in the number of suicides occurring throughout our region over last year. In observance of National Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month in September 2018, NAMI SW WA has developed a positive, community-based program asking individuals to pledge to ASK about suicide.

Our ASK campaign invites people of all ages in our community to make a pledge to:

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| <u>A</u> sk | Ask a direct question about suicide when I am concerned about someone
Ask for help when I feel overwhelmed, hopeless or suicidal |
| <u>S</u> upport | Offer or seek non-judgmental support |
| <u>K</u> indness | Be kind to myself and others; Lift Up Life |

We believe this message and pledge will have a profound impact on our community.

Those who sign the pledge will be given a pin/button with the ASK logo to represent their commitment to the ASK pledge. They will also receive information and resource cards about crisis services and suicide prevention in the community.

Events in observance of Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month include an evening information session, art show and silent auction, painted rocks with suicide prevention information placed throughout the community, and many outreach opportunities for individuals to sign the ASK pledge.

The purpose of NAMI SW WA is to offer education, support, and advocacy to all individuals in our community that are affected by mental illness. We provide a broad range of educational and supportive services to individuals living with a mental illness diagnosis as well as to family members who provide care and support to their ill relatives. Over 60,000 individual services in support of mental wellness were provided by our organization in 2017, and we are on track to exceed that number in 2018.

We request your demonstration of support for this important issue in our community by proclaiming September 2018 as Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month in the City of Vancouver. Attached is a draft of the proclamation we would like to see made. Representatives from NAMI SW WA can be present at the meeting when the proclamation is made to provide ASK pins to the members of the Council so that they may also individually show their support of suicide prevention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Peggy McCarthy'.

Peggy McCarthy, MBA
Executive Director