



EMBRACING LIFE Initiative

Embracing Life Launches App & Website for Suicide Prevention on World Teen Mental Wellness Day!

March 2, 2022

The Embracing Life Initiative has developed a new website and app to provide people in Saskatchewan with resources and information on suicide prevention.

The website and app will launch publicly on Wednesday, March 2, 2022 on World Teen Mental Wellness Day. The Embracing Life app can be downloaded from iTunes and Google Play, and the website is accessible via <http://www.embracinglifesk.com>

The app delivers two distinct types of support:

- How to help others: users are walked step-by-step through the difficult process of how to talk to someone you are worried about;
- How to help yourself: users are encouraged to create their own safety plan, to map out the positive events and relationships in their lives, and to journal their emotional journey. These are commonly recognized tools which people can use to improve their own wellbeing.

The app also provides contacts for resources and counselling.

These contacts are expanded upon on Embracing Life's updated website, which also references other resources for personal and community wellness. In addition, the website publicizes some of Embracing Life's other work, such as the Northern Successes Showcase launched in 2021 to recognize some of northern Saskatchewan's notable people, projects and agencies who are building a better future for the region.

Embracing Life is an alliance of several organizations with the common goal of improving community wellness. It includes representatives from local, Indigenous, provincial and federal governments, not-for-profit organizations, educators, and northern youth and youth workers. Since 2013, much of its work has focused on suicide prevention among northern Indigenous youth, who experience suicide rates many times higher than provincial and national averages.

The inspiration for the app development came from northern youth at a workshop in Prince Albert in late 2019. Many of them said that they struggled with knowing how to help their friends and family at risk; they didn't know how to help or even bring up the subject of suicide. The agency partners hit upon the idea of an app, which can have far greater reach than a workshop or training session, and once downloaded can be accessible no matter where a person is.

While it was initially envisioned for northern Indigenous youth, the planners soon realized there could be far broader appetite for the product. While other resources list help lines and professional contacts, Embracing Life wanted to put immediate tools in users' hands to help themselves and help others. Specific grant funding was secured from a number of sources, including the Saskatoon Kinsmen Club, the Lawson Foundation, Saskatchewan's Ministry of Government Relations, and Indigenous Services Canada.

For more information on Embracing Life, visit their website at <http://www.embracinglifesk.com> or email the table at embracinglifesk@gmail.com.