Lead

Issues on which AFSP will play a leadership role – developing the policy position, marshaling support, and generating advocacy activity:

• Implement and support funding for comprehensive K-12 school mental health and suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention initiatives

• Uniformly implement and enforce Mental Health Parity laws and regulations, and include reporting and oversight provisions within state laws

• Increase the number of health professionals who receive regular trauma- and evidence-informed education and training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management *

• Increase and sustain adequate state and local funding for crisis lines and crisis services, and expand the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network of local crisis intervention centers in all states

• Implement risk-based firearm removal laws when voluntary removal is unsuccessful or impossible and suicide risk is imminent (e.g., extreme risk protection orders, gun violence restraining orders, and related court orders)*

• Increase funding for, and assist in the implementation and evaluation of, state suicide prevention initiatives and plans to prevent suicide across the lifespan

Collaborate

Issues on which AFSP will work as part of a coalition or group, providing active support to achieve these important policy objectives:

• Support higher education policies and programs that promote mental health and provide suicide prevention tools and resources to students, faculty, and staff

• Oppose the use of conversion therapy or sexual orientation change counseling as treatment for LGBTQ individuals

• Expand the behavioral healthcare workforce and address provider shortages in underserved areas through loan forgiveness and related programs

• Minimize barriers to telehealth access for mental health care and ensure coverage for those services

• Promote the construction of and funding for barriers to prevent suicide from bridges and other jumping sites

• Promote policies and programs to improve access to mental health care and prevent suicide in correctional facilities*

Continued >
• Promote policies that seek to identify Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Post Traumatic Stress Injury (PTSI) suffered by a first responder as a compensable injury or occupational disease, and establish employee assistance programs and training programs related to job-related stress management and suicide prevention

• Implement and support funding for policies and programs that include suicide prevention education as a basic component of firearm safety*

• Train law enforcement officers and other first responders on mental health and suicide prevention awareness, including recognizing mental health conditions and behavioral health disorders, techniques for crisis de-escalation, and knowledge of appropriate community services and resources

• Promote initiatives for Veteran and Servicemember suicide prevention, including increased data collection, access to care, and public education and training

• Improve access to culturally informed, evidence-based quality mental health care for diverse and minority populations and underserved communities

Support

Issues related to AFSP’s mission that will advance public understanding of suicide prevention:

• Increase access to effective mental health and suicide prevention resources for farming and rural communities

• Increase funding for and dissemination of Mental Health First Aid programs

• Fully implement the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) in all 50 states and the District of Columbia

• Increase funding to address substance use disorders, including opioid and alcohol use, through research, education, prevention, and treatment

• Support bullying prevention legislation, policies, and programs that promote safe messaging around bullying and suicide

Explore

Issues that require further exploration or policy research/analysis and are not yet AFSP policy proposals:

• The role peer support programs can play in reducing suicide risk and attempts

• Research and policies on assisted death (other common terms include physician assisted suicide or Death with Dignity laws)

• Firearms policies as a means to mitigate suicide risk and reduce suicide including safe storage, temporary transfers, and waiting periods*

• Policies and programs that promote mental health and prevent suicidal behavior in the workplace

Please note: Issues within each category are not listed in priority order

*Indicates a policy related to the four critical areas within AFSP’s Project 2025, see [afsp.org/project2025](http://afsp.org/project2025)