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PUBLIC FORUM ON TEENAGE SUICIDE PREVENTION SLATED OCT. 6

A public forum on suicide prevention will be held Wednesday, Oct. 6, 6:30-9 p.m., at the Reed Conference Center, 5800 Will Rogers Rd. in Midwest City.

The event is co-sponsored by the Oklahoma Mental Health Consumer Council, and the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, in conjunction with the annual Oklahoma Mental Health Consumer Conference.

Dr Paul Weaver, president and chief executive officer of the Kentucky Center for Mental Health Studies, will talk about his experience losing a teenage son to suicide only 10 days after his son's high school graduation. As a memorial to his son, Weaver has started a campaign, "A Contract for Life," speaking to teens and parents about the reality and seriousness of teenage depression and suicide, particularly in young men.

In addition to his role as CEO of the Kentucky Center for Mental Health Studies, he also is director of graduate education and associate professor of education at Indiana Wesleyan University-Kentucky, and pastor of the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church in Louisville. He has served on more than 100 national, state and local boards, councils, task forces and committees.

The forum, which is free, is open to anyone interested in attending. Also, 2.25 hours of continuing education credit are available.

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The event will focus on recognizing and assessing the signs and risk factors associated with suicide, especially for those in daily contact with youth, elderly, the disabled and minorities, such as teachers, counselors, ministers, families and friends.

After the program, participants will be able to recognize and assess those at risk; utilize coping skills; restate principles relating to grief and anger management for groups and individuals; describe how to appropriately intervene with those at risk; and learn how to continue living after the death by suicide of a loved one.

Registration is from 6-6:30 p.m., with a segment on suicide awareness from 6:30-7:45 p.m., followed by a 15-minute break. Prevention of teenage suicide will be discussed from 8-8:4 p.m., followed by a question-and-answer session from 8:45-9 p.m.

Interested participants are asked to register by Oct. 4 as seating is limited. To register, or for more information, call 405-604-6975 or toll-free 1-888-424-1305.

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