

Steve Marshall
Alabama Attorney General



For media inquiries only, contact:
Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199
Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491
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**Attorney General Steve Marshall Urges the People of Alabama
to Join in Fight to Prevent Suicide**
September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall is calling on Alabamians to join the fight to save lives during National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September. As an ambassador for the Jason Foundation Inc., Attorney General Marshall warns that young people are particularly vulnerable to suicide.

“Suicide is a frightening topic we don’t want to think about and a devastating experience that is hard to speak of, but those are the only ways to break the power of this silent epidemic,” said Attorney General Marshall. “As much as we all want to avoid the thought that we could lose a loved one to suicide, the best way to prevent this heartbreak is to talk about it. It can be even more difficult to imagine the suicide of children and young people. We need to have the difficult discussions, ask the hard questions, accept if the answers are painful, and prepare ourselves to offer meaningful help.”

The Jason Foundation was formed after the suicide of Jason Flatt in 1997, a young man described by his father as an average 16-year-old who appeared to love life. The Jason Foundation shares alarming statistics from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in 2017 that suicide was the third leading cause of death in Alabama for middle and high school children as well as college-aged youth, and it was the second leading cause of death for children aged 10 to 14. The Jason Foundation projected from the CDC’s data that within the last year one of three young people in Alabama experienced depression, one of six seriously considered suicide, one of seven made a plan to attempt suicide, and one of 14 actually attempted suicide.

According to the Jason Foundation, four out of five teens who attempt suicide give some of these warning signs: suicide threats, depression, anger and increased irritability, lack of interest, sudden changes in appetite, sudden changes in appearance, dwindling academic performance, preoccupation with death and suicide, previous suicide attempts, and final arrangements such as saying goodbye or giving away possessions.

Help is available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), which connects to a network of local crisis centers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Jason Foundation offers materials and programs for teachers, parents and students to identify and assist young people who are at risk. More information may be found at www.jasonfoundation.com.

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