



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**WALKERS TAKE TO THE STREETS TO FIGHT SUICIDE
IN SECOND ANNUAL OUT OF THE DARKNESS WALK**

*Chatham Township Walk Scheduled for Saturday, September 23rd
To Support the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention*

CHATHAM TOWNSHIP, NJ – August 14, 2017 – [The Chatham Township Committee](#) today announced that in its continuing efforts to raise awareness of suicide prevention it will host its 2nd Annual [Chatham Township Out of the Darkness Community Walk](#) on Saturday, September 23rd at 4:30 PM to benefit the [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) (AFSP). The event will take place, rain or shine, at Cougar Field located at 320 Shunpike Road in Chatham Township. Participants can register as an individual, or as a team, by visiting www.afsp.org/chathamtwp. Individuals are also encouraged to ‘Like’ the Walk’s Facebook page at <http://bit.ly/29SsLI9>

[Mayor Curt Ritter](#), speaking on behalf of the Committee, said, “Suicide does not discriminate and is preventable. We know that it’s not a topic that is often discussed, but we believe our efforts to shed light on this important issue through our annual Out of the Darkness Walk and community forums on suicide awareness and prevention can make a difference. Last year’s inaugural Walk attracted more than 500 walkers and raised in excess of \$75,000 for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. We would like to do better this year, and I encourage all residents to consider participating in this important event and support our efforts to help prevent suicide.”

Individuals and local businesses that have an interest in sponsoring the Chatham Township Out of the Darkness Community Walk learn more at <http://bit.ly/2ftkx1u>.

Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States, and the 11th leading cause of death overall in New Jersey. The School District of the Chathams has reported that four percent of middle school students and eight percent of high school students have thought about suicide.

“These walks are about turning hope into action,” said AFSP CEO Robert Gebbia. “Suicide is a serious problem, but it’s a problem we can solve. The research has shown us how to fight suicide, and if we keep up the fight the science is only going to get better, our culture will get smarter about mental health, and we’ll be able to save more people from dying from depression and other mental health conditions.”

The Chatham Township Out of the Darkness Walk is one of more than 375 Out of the Darkness Community Walks being held nationwide this year. Hundreds of individuals from throughout Morris, Essex, and Union Counties are expected to participate in the walk, which will support the AFSP’s local and national education and advocacy programs and its bold goal to reduce the annual rate of suicide 20 percent by 2025.

Earlier this year, the Chatham Township Committee hosted a community forum, “Talk Saves Lives,” in conjunction with the AFSP. Individuals can view a replay of the presentation at <http://www.chathamtownship-nj.gov/talk-saves-lives>.

Editor’s Note:

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Register for *Alert Chatham Township Now! (ACT Now!)* the Township’s Emergency & Community Alert system at chathamtownship-nj.gov.

About The American Foundation For Suicide Prevention

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention is dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide. AFSP creates a culture that’s smart about mental health through education and community programs, develops suicide prevention through research and advocacy, and provides support for those affected by suicide. www.afsp.org

About Chatham Township

Chatham Township is located in Morris County New Jersey. It has approximately 11,000 residents and nearly 4,000 households. Individuals interested in receiving emergency and community alerts can visit www.chathamtownship-nj.gov/resident-

[communications](#) and can learn more about Chatham Township at www.chathamtownship-nj.gov

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