

***FACING SUICIDE*, A POWERFUL AND TIMELY NEW DOCUMENTARY FROM
TWIN CITIES PBS, PREMIERES NATIONWIDE SEPTEMBER 13, PROVIDING CRUCIAL INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND HOPE IN THE FACE OF AMERICA’S SUICIDE CRISIS**

Sweeping National Impact Campaign Also Includes Digital Series,
Community-Based Events, and Support for Engagement by Local Stations

SAINT PAUL, Minnesota, August 15, 2022–Each year tens of thousands of Americans take their own lives—there were more than 45,000 deaths by suicide in 2020 alone—and many more have thoughts of suicide. *Facing Suicide,* a new documentary and impact campaign from Twin Cities PBS, explores the stories of Americans impacted by suicide, and journeys to the frontlines of medical and scientific research to meet those who are working to help people at risk. Timely and informative, the project aims to elevate and destigmatize the topic of suicide, empowering audiences and communities with prevention strategies.

At its center is *Facing Suicide*, a compelling documentary narrated by Josh Charles (*The Good Wife*), premiering Tuesday, September 13 at 9pm ET/8pm CT on PBS. The film shares the deeply personal stories of those directly affected by suicide as well as insights from experts and researchers who are making a difference. A companion digital series,to be releasedon the PBS YouTube channel, works to create a space of understanding, hope, and action for young people whose lives have been touched by suicide. In addition, PBS stations in ten states around the country will provide local coverage and resources to engage their communities around this critical public health issue.

“Suicide touches virtually every demographic group in the U.S., and rates have increased significantly since the late 1990s,” said Michael Rosenfeld, project lead and executive producer of the *Facing Suicide* documentary. “But experts have learned a lot about suicide in the past few years, offering insights that suggest new strategies for prevention. We explore the latest discoveries in our film, woven together with inspiring stories of hope and recovery.”

“Our mission at PBS is to serve communities with the stories and programs that help drive dialogues and engagement around critical issues impacting the nation,” said Bill Gardner, Vice President, Multiple Platform Programming and Development at PBS. “*Facing Suicide* is a program we believe will accomplish this as its subject is pertinent as our nation addresses an unprecedented mental health crisis. To help, we are also distributing content from this program across multiple platforms including PBS Digital Studios to reach a variety of audiences with customized content.”

"One of the best ways to prevent suicide is to promote awareness and equip friends and family to take appropriate action to help those in need,” said Kathryn Washington, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)’s Senior Vice President of Television Content. “By funding the documentary and grants to PBS stations to create suicide prevention initiatives, we hope to destigmatize the topic of suicide and engage and support communities around this critical public health issue.”

The *Facing Suicide* documentary will introduce viewers to a diverse group of Americans who have been affected by suicide, including high school basketball champions on a Native American reservation in Montana, who responded to the suicide crisis in their community with a prevention campaign that went viral; the wife of a Midwestern farmer who is determined that she and her children will live a full and hopeful life after her husband’s death; and a Black woman in Charlotte, NC, who overcame her own mental health challenges to become a suicide prevention advocate. The film also features leading scientists, practitioners, and innovative thinkers whose discoveries in neuroscience, genetics, psychology, and other fields are revealing the true nature of the problem as well as promising solutions.

The reach of the film will be extended by a companion series produced for PBS’s YouTube and streaming platforms. The digital series, premiering September 7th, is hosted by Shani Tran, a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor who has worked with clients dealing with self-harm and suicidal ideation across communities and demographics. Each episode features young adults who have attempted or contemplated suicide describing how they found the support and hope they needed to recover. Through their reflections, they reveal the power of friends and peers to recognize the warning signs, reach out, and help.

National outreach partners for the *Facing Suicide* project are four of the nation’s leading suicide prevention organizations: The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), The Jed Foundation (JED), and Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE). In addition, PBS stations around the country are mobilizing around the *Facing Suicide* mission to reach their own at-risk communities via localized broadcast and online content as well as events, screenings, and expert panel discussions in collaboration with prominent suicide awareness organizations.

*Facing Suicide* is produced for Twin Cities PBS and PBS by Barrat Media, 1904 Media, and JWM Productions. Major funding was provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, and The Pew Charitable Trusts. Additional funding was provided by Eleanor "Ellie" Crosby; Keith and Mary Bednarowski; Peravid Foundation Agency; David and Karen Olson Family Foundation; and public television viewers.

# About TPTTwin Cities PBS (TPT)’s mission is to enrich lives and strengthen our community through the power of media. Established 64 years ago, TPT now operates as a public service media organization that harnesses a range of media tools to serve citizens in new ways — with multiple broadcast channels, online teaching resources, educational outreach and community engagement activities reaching more than 2 million people each month. Over its history, TPT has been recognized for its innovation and creativity with numerous awards, including Peabody Awards and national and regional Emmy® Awards. Find more information at tpt.org.About CPBThe Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation auhtorized by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government’s investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,500 locally managed and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television, and related online services. For more information, visit cpb.org, follow us on Twitter @CPBmedia, Facebook and LinkedIn and subscribe for other updates.

# About PBSPBS, with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 120 million people through television and 26 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’ broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. Decades of research confirms that PBS’ premier children’s media service, PBS KIDS, helps children build critical literacy, math and social- emotional skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality educational content on TV – including a 24/5 channel, online at pbskids.org, via an array of mobile apps and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [www.pbs.org,](http://www.pbs.org/) one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook, or through our apps for mobile and connected devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following PBS Communications on Twitter.

*If you are thinking about suicide or if you or someone you know is in emotional crisis, call or text 988 any time for confidential, free, crisis support.*