



Suicide Rates Increase

The Salish area continued to see comparatively high rates of suicide in 2018, and the problem appears to be worsening. Jefferson and Clallam counties had 44 self-inflicted deaths in 2018, making the average deaths 41 per 100,000, compared to 14.8 per 100,000 statewide. While the number of self-inflicted deaths in Kitsap was not readily available, the county tends to be around the state average, which is also climbing.

The most commonly used suicide method was by firearm, claiming nineteen lives in Clallam, eight lives in Jefferson, and thirteen lives in Kitsap in 2018. Hangings were the second most common method. In recent months, most media coverage has been given to victims of suicide via jumping off bridges, yet this public form of suicide only represents a small number of the whole.

Clallam County Health Officer Dr. Allison Berry Unthank suggests a few reasons for the high rate of suicide in the area, including high gun ownership, isolation, and substance abuse. Untreated mental health problems and poverty also have historically been linked to higher rates of suicide in the population.

Self-inflicted death rates have been rising in the state and country as well, nation-wide causing more deaths than homicide, by a two to one margin. Many public health experts refer to the issue as a crisis. If you or someone you know may be suicidal, contact crisis services at 1-800-843-4793.

Upcoming Events

- Salish Monthly FYSRPT meeting at Port Orchard Library, 3-5, February 25
- Special Education Workshop at ESD 114, Bremerton, 2-4, February 28
- Clallam County Homeless Connect at Vern Burton Gym in PA, 9-3, March 1
- Statewide FYSRPT in Lacey, 9:30-3, March 6
- Salish Monthly FYSRPT meeting at Jefferson County Library, 3-5, March 25

See details and more events at salishfysprt.com/calendar

Peer Mentorship Opportunity

Are you between the age of 18 and 26? Has your life been touched by substance challenges personally and/or via a family member? Do you enjoy helping others by finding resources, listening to help another tell/share their story, and use social media to share information? If any of these qualities describe you, we hope you will apply for this part-time (10 hours a week) position! The Salish FYSRPT Youth Mentor will help youth with Behavioral Health/Substance Use Disorder needs in Kitsap, Jefferson, and Clallam Counties.

The Youth Mentor will work with two other key staff, the Family to Family Health Information Center (F2FHIC) Director and the Salish FYSRPT Program Coordinator, to share current Salish FYSRPT information and with program activities (e.g. meetings, trainings, events, etc.). The Youth Mentor will be part of a team assisting youth (and their families) in Kitsap, Jefferson, and Clallam Counties to access services and share their stories. Youth with lived experience, persons with disabilities, and/or those from underserved communities are strongly encouraged to apply. Visit www.salishfysprt.org for full information.