Suicide is a leading cause of non-natural death for all ages in San Diego County, second only to motor vehicle crashes. In 2010, a total of 372 San Diegans died by suicide; approximately one per day. On average, one suicide affects the lives of at least six other people, causing considerable grief, social stigma, and in some cases, elevated risk of additional suicides. Suicide also carries an economic toll, which is borne by social services, hospitals, primary care, and education sectors.

In 2010, the County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) launched a suicide prevention action planning process, which was informed by the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and the California Strategic Plan on Suicide Prevention. Both advocate for a strong public health approach to suicide prevention, as well as the creation of local strategies based on the input of a diverse, representative group of stakeholders. The purpose of the **Suicide Prevention Action Plan** for San Diego County is to propose strategies that will enhance efforts to increase understanding and awareness of suicide, decrease stigma associated with suicide, and ultimately reduce the number of suicides in San Diego County.

A comprehensive needs assessment and planning process that involved stakeholders from multiple sectors throughout San Diego County was conducted to gather input from and develop *local* prevention strategies. The strategies were organized around three prevention elements: universal, selective, and indicated strategies.

Designed to influence everyone, **universal strategies** are targeted to the general public and reduce suicide risk by strengthening protective factors. **Selective strategies** focus on at-risk groups that have a greater probability of becoming suicidal, and aim to prevent the onset of suicidal behaviors. **Indicated strategies** target high risk individuals that exhibit early signs of suicide potential.

As a result of this community-wide effort, stakeholders are continuing to work together to implement the recommendations in the Action Plan through the San Diego County Suicide Prevention Council (SPC). The SPC meets from 10:00am – 11:30am on the fourth Tuesday of every month at the Community Health Improvement Partners’ offices. For more information about the Suicide Prevention Council, including our 3-year strategic work plan, go to [www.sdchip.org/spap.aspx](http://www.sdchip.org/spap.aspx), or contact Yeni L. Palomino at 858-609-7969. For a copy of the San Diego County Suicide Prevention Action Plan, go to [www.Up2SD.org](http://www.Up2SD.org), and click on “Suicide Prevention Resources.”