



WORLD FEDERATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

2006 World Mental Health Day Campaign

“Building Awareness – Reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide”.

The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) has a **World Mental Health Day (October 10th)** each year to focus attention on a mental health issue and to promote mental health. This year the focus is on suicide. The 2006 World Mental Health Day Campaign is entitled: *“Building Awareness – Reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide”.*

The WFMH has initiated an awareness and educational campaign that highlights the role that mental illness (including substance abuse and dependence) can play in risk for suicide. An important part of this campaign is the educational and informational package that the WFMH has prepared. The campaign packet includes a range of background summaries, fact sheets and reproducible handouts that can be used in preparing community-based awareness and education programmes and workshops. These materials cover a number of important sub-topics of the WFMH campaign, including:

- Mental illnesses and suicide across the lifespan;
- Reducing risk of suicide for people with mental illnesses;
- Key suicide indicators and risk factors;
- Efficacy of mental health care and promotion in reducing risk of suicide;
- Cultural and religious contexts and variation in addressing suicide and mental illness.

The campaign packet also includes material directed at two critical and related issues to which the WFMH suggest mental health organizations need to give special attention: i. the effect of stigma and misunderstanding that continue to serve as barriers to the early recognition and treatment of mental illnesses, and, ii. the importance of responsible media coverage of mental illness and suicide. These campaign materials are available and can be downloaded at the WFMH website: <http://www.wfmh.org/wmhd2006.htm>

The International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and the WFMH are collaborating to jointly promote **World Suicide Prevention Day (September 10th)** and **World Mental Health Day (October 10th)**. IASP and WFMH believe that this collaboration will add to the impact and benefit of both these global awareness days, and will increase the value that each day has in improving public awareness, reducing stigma and discrimination, and promoting service and policy advocacy to address the global impact that suicide associated with mental illnesses has on the global burden of disease.