



For immediate release:  
May 5, 2022

## **SCETV kicks off “Facing Suicide” initiative with community listening session** *Initiative will include regional town halls, workshops, screenings and a digital campaign*

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – South Carolina ETV (SCETV) kicked off an initiative to address concerns around rising suicide rates of adolescents in South Carolina with a virtual community listening session on April 18, 2022 in partnership with the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) Mid-Carolina](#). The listening session is the first event funded by a grant from [Twin Cities PBS \(TBT\)](#) to support a multi-platform production and community engagement initiative to inform, illuminate and activate suicide prevention strategies for vulnerable populations.

In February 2022, TPT [awarded a total of \\$165,000 in grants](#) to 10 PBS stations to create suicide prevention initiatives in their communities. The grants will empower stations to work with local and national partners to share evidence-based suicide prevention approaches and resources with their communities and will amplify the messages of the *Facing Suicide* documentary, which will premiere nationally on PBS in 2022.

Funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Facing Suicide initiative will harness the power of public media to destigmatize the topic of suicide and equip friends and family to take appropriate action when someone close to them may be at risk. Grant recipients will share suicide prevention practices and will amplify the documentary’s messaging around awareness, help, and hope.

Continuing SCETV’s successful and Emmy-winning endeavors on health, the station will collaborate with community-based partners and statewide organizations to produce multiplatform content that will inform, illuminate, and activate South Carolina citizens around the topics of suicide.

Throughout 2022, this initiative will leverage existing partnerships and foster new ones to create a safe space for dialogue and engagement around suicide prevention:

- Listening sessions will be hosted across the state in collaboration with local partners to hear community perspectives on the topic and will be facilitated by local universities, K12 stakeholders, and health-care experts. The primary emphasis will be rural communities where suicide rates are the highest.
- In Summer 2022, Town Halls will be held at two of the SCETV regional stations. Town Halls will be held in person and will also be livestreamed via social media to engage with communities across the state. In conjunction with the Town Halls, a series of workshops will also be held for families and youth in rural communities around suicide prevention.
- In September 2022, SCETV will host a panel discussion around suicide prevention for multi-platform broadcast. The panel will be produced as part of a screening event from SCETV headquarters in Columbia.
- A campaign around suicide prevention featuring prominent South Carolinians will be created and shared via digital and on-air platforms.

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in South Carolina. Nationally, the state ranks 24th in the nation for deaths by suicide. Additional data from the Centers for Disease Control indicate that suicide is highest among the most rural communities in the state and was the third leading cause of death among those aged 10-24.

If you or someone you know are in crisis, or experiencing thoughts of suicide, text the [Crisis Text Line](#) (text HELLO to 741741), or call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Both services are free and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For more information on the Facing Suicide Initiative, visit the [Facing Suicide page of the SCETV website](#).

#### **QUOTES:**

"Sadly, suicide is too prevalent in South Carolina, especially in our rural communities. SCETV is proud to serve as a platform to promote awareness about this issue and provide resources for friends and family to take appropriate action." –**SCETV President and CEO Anthony Padgett**

"This funding from TPT and the CPB will help SCETV collaborate with partners on essential suicide prevention initiatives in our South Carolina communities. We hope to engage and start a dialogue with our youth and their support network around this important topic." –**SCETV Assistant General Manager Stephanie Frazier**

#### **FAST FACTS:**

- SCETV kicked off an initiative to address concerns around rising suicide rates of adolescents in South Carolina with a virtual community listening session on April 18, 2022
- The grant from TPT will amplify the messages of the "Facing Suicide" documentary, which will premiere nationally on PBS in 2022
- In Summer 2022, listening sessions, regional Town Halls and workshops will be held for families and youth in rural communities around suicide prevention
- In September 2022, SCETV will host a panel discussion and screening event around suicide prevention for multi-platform broadcast
- A campaign around suicide prevention featuring prominent South Carolinians will be created and shared via digital and on-air platforms

#### **About South Carolina ETV and Public Radio**

South Carolina ETV is the state's public educational broadcasting network. Using television, radio and diverse digital properties, SCETV's mission is to enrich lives by educating children, informing and connecting citizens, celebrating our culture and environment and instilling the joy of learning. SCETV currently presents *By The River*, *Carolina Classrooms*, *How She Rolls*, *Expeditions*, *Making it Grow*, *Palmetto Scene*, *Reel South*, *This Week in South Carolina*, *Yoga in Practice* and *Live from Charleston Music Hall* on public television in addition to the national radio production, *Chamber Music from Spoleto Festival USA*.

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