



NEWS RELEASE

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Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition Announces New App to Help Prevent Youth Suicide

Lincoln, NE (February 1, 2022) – The Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition is proud to announce the release of a new app to help prevent youth suicide. *My Companion* is designed to help young people cope with mental health issues and prevent suicide.

My Companion has a variety of features divided into four primary tabs: reflections, connections, resources and emergency. Users will be able to log daily reflections, input contacts who could be reached in an emergency, access resources, submit anonymous tips and easily reach hotlines.

"The application allows youth to communicate their feelings in a journal-like format and to create a support system and crisis system, including warning signs of suicide and access to emergency resources," said Dr. Dave Miers, founder of the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition and director of behavioral health services at Bryan Medical Center.

Work on *My Companion* began in July 2018 and was created in collaboration with Don't Panic Labs and Boys Town National Hotline. It was modeled after a similar app released in Utah under the name *SafeUT*.

According to the 2020 *SafeUT* annual report, over 800,000 students accessed the app between August 2019 and May 2020. During that time, there were over 500 lifesaving interventions initiated because of the app. *SafeUT* also promotes several examples of success stories from users. The creators of *My Companion* hope to see similar success in Nebraska.

"Suicide is preventable and there is hope, there is help and there are resources," said Dr. Miers. "This app is a great way for youth to interact in a positive, healthy way and have this resource available if needed. Connectedness saves lives and this app will make a difference."

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Nebraskans between ages 15 and 24. Overall, it is the 10th leading cause of death in the state.

To download *My Companion* from the Apple App Store, visit <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/my-companion-journal/id1558734264>

To download *My Companion* from Google Play, visit <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.nsp.companion>