



## STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

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### **Family Service of RI and BHDDH to host screening of “Moving America’s Soul on Suicide”**

**(Sept. 18, 2025)** — Family Service of Rhode Island and the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) will host a movie screening next Thursday that offers a message of hope to people who have struggled with thoughts of suicide.

“Moving America’s Soul on Suicide” weaves together firsthand stories from people who experienced suicidal thoughts but ultimately found help. The list includes a Marine whose life was never the same following a plane crash, a woman whose idyllic childhood was shattered by family trauma as she entered her teenage years, a man who was tormented at a young age by thoughts that he could not control, and a woman who so lacked the will to live that she thought she would never grow up.

Along the way, the movie adds commentary and observations from Dr. Thomas Joiner, a professor of psychology at Florida State University, who talks about what leads to suicidal thoughts and the importance of shining light on the topic – to provide hope, and to reduce the stigma, so that more people will seek help.

“All of us have the potential to be filled with thoughts of despair and think there is no hope, but as the personal stories in this movie show us, there is hope,” said Richard Leclerc, Director of BHDDH, who will be among a group of panelists who speak following the screening. “Each person sharing their story in the film feels alone in their circumstances, but the truth is, many others have gone through similar circumstances, and there are many people who can offer help.”

The screening is free and open to the public and is being presented by Family Service of Rhode Island and BHDDH as part of National Suicide Prevention Month. It will be held on Thursday, Sept. 25, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Rhode Island College’s Gaije Hall.

"Family Service of Rhode Island is proud to partner with BHDDH and our community partners to bring ‘Moving America’s Soul’ on Suicide to Rhode Island,” said Sarah Kelly Palmer, Family Service

of Rhode Island's Chief of Behavioral Health. "This film is a powerful reminder that healing and hope are possible, and that by working together, we can break down stigma and strengthen the supports available to individuals and families. We look forward to the important conversations this screening will spark across our community."

The panelists will also include Rebecca Adams, Founder of the Matt Alsfeld Memorial Fund; Kerrie Constant, Area Director of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention; Christine Gallo, Board Member and Prevention Education Committee Chair of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Rhode Island Chapter; and Ben Weiner, Chief Operating Officer of Family Service of Rhode Island, who will serve as moderator.

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Information and resources to help prevent suicide and support those in crisis are available at <https://preventsuicideri.org/>.

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