

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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***An Innovative Collaboration among the Sports and Suicide Prevention Sectors to Advance Social Change in the U.S.***

*Announcing a partnership to harness the power of sport to prevent suicide and promote mental wellness*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#) (Action Alliance) – the nation’s only public-private partnership aimed at advancing the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* – announced a unique partnership with [Beyond Sport](#), a global organization that promotes, supports and celebrates the use of sport to drive sustainable social change in communities around the world. [Research shows](#) that a range of social impacts are associated with both culture and sport engagement. This innovative collaboration brings together a leading sports partner and a national suicide prevention partner to leverage the power of sport to promote suicide prevention and mental wellness.

Suicide rates in the U.S. have increased sharply between 1999 and 2016 across all age, gender, race and ethnicity—unlike many other top causes of death which have declined. Given the suicide rates have significantly increased over the past 17 years, using outside-the-box approaches to address mental wellness and suicide prevention is more pressing now than ever.

Beyond Sport and the Action Alliance will bring together the U.S. sporting industry with national suicide prevention experts to share best practices for suicide prevention and mental health promotion, and to leverage the positive cultural influence of sports to promote mental wellness and advance suicide prevention. Sports organizations involved in this effort will be able to:

- strengthen and develop their own mental health initiatives;
- learn about additional potential partners, issues, and solutions;
- connect with suicide prevention experts; and
- support national efforts aimed at driving innovation in mental wellness and suicide prevention.

To better address the root causes of suicidal behavior and mental health challenges requires innovative and ground-breaking collaborations. Additionally, working together, this partnership aims to change the national conversations about mental wellness and suicide prevention from ones that in the past focused heavily on death and despair to ones that instead highlight stories of hope and healing.

“The good news is that people—athletes included—are starting to talk openly talk about suicide and mental health—just like we talk about physical health issues like cancer, diabetes, or heart disease.” said Colleen Carr, Director of the Action Alliance. “We look forward to partnering with leaders in sport to

further elevate these stories of hope and healing to make an impact in national suicide prevention efforts.”

With its influence and reach, sport has the ability to address many of these issues in communities by sharing a healthy message about help, healing, and prevention.

"We believe that the power sport has can truly make a positive impact on the lives of millions of Americans. In order to save lives in this country, we must convene the right partners and have the right platform to harness that power," said Lex Chalot, Managing Director, Beyond Sport. "So we're thrilled to be working with the Action Alliance to bring together the world of sport to explore how we can best tackle today's most pressing issues."

At the recent Beyond Sport United Conference in New York City, the Action Alliance hosted a roundtable discussion that convened influential leaders from the NBA, MLB, Atlantic57 and mental health related sports organizations to discuss the how the sport industry can support suicide prevention efforts. This one-of-a-kind partnership will build on what is already happening in the sport and suicide prevention sectors so to amplify the power of collaboration and generate a greater impact on suicide prevention and mental wellness efforts in the U.S.

Read more about this initiative and the recent roundtable discussion on this topic [here](#).

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#### **FOR MEDIA PARTNERS:**

Research shows that the media may influence suicide rates by the way they report on suicide. Evidence suggests that when the media tell stories of people positively coping in suicidal moments, more suicides can be prevented. We urge all members of the media working on these stories to refer to the [Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide](#) for best practices for safely and accurately reporting on suicide (such as including the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-TALK \[8255\]](#)). For stories of persons with lived experience of suicidality and finding hope, refer to [www.lifelineforattempt survivors.org](http://www.lifelineforattempt survivors.org).

#### **NATIONAL ACTION ALLIANCE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION:**

*The [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#) is the public-private partnership working to advance the [National Strategy for Suicide Prevention](#) and make suicide prevention a national priority. The [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) provides funding to [EDC](#) to operate and manage the Secretariat for the Action Alliance, which was launched in 2010. Learn more at [actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org](http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org) and join the conversation on suicide prevention by following the Action Alliance on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).*

#### **BEYOND SPORT:**

*Founded in 2008, Beyond Sport is the leading global force for sustainable social change through sport, instilling insight, energy and impact in communities around the world. The organization does this through convening, supporting and advising the worlds of sport, business, government and development on how sport can be used as a tool to achieve both social and business objectives. Since 2009, the Beyond Sport Foundation has provided over \$8 million worth of funding and support to projects across six*

*continents addressing a range of social issues; commissioned six research projects with leading universities, corporations and the United Nations; facilitated ground-breaking action in child protection, girl's education, urban communities, sustainability, STEM education and sports role in supporting refugees; and built sustainable sport courts in disadvantaged communities around the world. Beyond Sport's global network encompasses 2700 organizations in more than 150 countries using sport as a catalyst for change. [beyondsport.org](http://beyondsport.org)*