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Holistic Public Policy Can Save Lives by Preventing Suicide

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At the age of 17, I lost my older brother, David, to suicide. As a gay man in his early 20s, David struggled with mental health conditions and social isolation. His loss affected my family, his friends and me forever. It was then that I decided to dedicate my life to suicide prevention.

His loss and the loss of so many others makes the recent data showing that the suicide rate in the United States has increased by 1.4 percent even more upsetting. Michigan's suicide rate has increased by over 33 percent since 1999, and among young people ages 10 to 24, the rate has climbed by 56 percent since 2007, making it the second leading cause of death for that age group.