**Let’s Talk Customizable Press Release**

*The following page contains the current press release for members of the Let’s Talk campaign for May 2019.*

*Areas highlighted in RED (contact person, the quote and spokesperson, etc.) may be changed to suit each organization using the release. Please not that if the spokesperson is changed to someone other than John Douglas, the quote must also be changed.*

*Thank you for your continued partnership with Let’s talk, and please feel free to contact Anne Smith* *anne@becausemessagematters.com* *or Tom Skelley* *tom@becausemessagematters.com* *with any questions.*

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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**Mental Health Experts Focus Their Efforts on Men**

*Let’s Talk Campaign Highlights Challenges Men Face to Positive Mental Health*

DENVER – DATE*,* 2019 – Citing a gender gap in outcomes and a call to action from Colorado’s State Innovation Model (SIM), a coalition of mental health experts and advocates is addressing the unique challenges men face with mental health.

“We are changing the mental health dialogue in Colorado to bring more men into the conversation,” said John M. Douglas Jr., MD. “Men don’t seek care at the rate women do, even though numbers show they suffer from depression, anxiety and other obstacles to their well-being the same as everyone else.”

Douglas is executive director of Tri-County Health Department, the central organization in the [Let’s Talk Colorado](https://letstalkco.org/) campaign. Comprising more than 20 public and private health organizations, the campaign works to reduce mental health stigma by encouraging Coloradans to talk openly about their mental health when they or someone they know is struggling.

Statistics illustrate disproportionate impacts for men dealing with mental health challenges:

* Across the Unites States, 6 million men report experiencing depression ([Mental Health America](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/infographic-mental-health-men)).
* Of the 1,175 Coloradans who died from suicide in 2017, almost 900 were men, according to a report from the [Colorado Health Institute](https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/research/suicides-colorado-reach-all-time-high).
* In the United States, men account for 78 percent of completed suicides, making men almost four times as likely to die from suicide as women, [according to the CDC.](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/suicide-datasheet-a.pdf)

Individuals who want to support a man they know who seems like he’s depressed, grieving, stressed or just not himself are encouraged to try the following steps:

* Spend time with him doing a favorite activity.
* Check in regularly and ask how he’s doing. Don’t accept dismissive statements like “I’m fine” for an answer.
* Listen, patiently and actively, when he does tell you how he’s feeling. Don’t try to “fix” the problem or change the subject. Many men report feeling that they weren’t listened to or believed when they have tried to talk to someone about their mental health.

[Let’s Talk Colorado](https://letstalkco.org/) is a community-driven coalition of organizations including:

AllHealth Network, Aurora Mental Health Center, Boulder County Public Health, Broomfield Public Health, Centura, Children’s Hospital Colorado, Community Reach Center, Denver Public Health, Doctors Care, Douglas County Government, Jefferson Center for Mental Health, Jefferson County Public Health, Kaiser Permanente, Mental Health Center of Denver, Metro Community Provider Network, SCL Health, Tri-County Health Department and UC Health.

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