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NEVADA REACHES OUT TO ADULTS AND TEENS IN CRISIS

-Department of Health and Human Services establishes Suicide Prevention Program-

December 13, 2005 (*Carson City*) – Misty Allen has been named Statewide Coordinator for the Suicide Prevention Program in the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Working together with local advisory groups and community coalitions, Allen will provide oversight and leadership to launch this newly established program.

The Suicide Prevention Program will: facilitate the development of a statewide plan for suicide prevention consistent with the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention; broaden crisis services in Nevada; provide training in assessment and intervention to individuals who have regular contact with persons who may be at risk of suicide; and improve surveillance systems, data collection and evaluation of factors related to suicide.

Allen's background includes extensive experience in community outreach for suicide prevention and education. Most recently, Allen served as the Crisis Lines Coordinator for the Crisis Call Center in Reno. During her tenure, Allen established Nevada's first certified statewide suicide prevention hotline, and worked to integrate suicide prevention efforts throughout the state.

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Allen holds a master's degree in Counseling and Educational Psychology, and is affiliated with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the Nevada Coalition for Suicide Prevention. The Suicide Prevention Program is located in the Director's Office at DHHS in Carson City.

The state's Suicide Prevention Program was established by the 2003 Nevada Legislature (SB 49), and was funded \$334,000 from the state general fund through the DHHS FY05-07 budget by the 2005 Legislature. Additional funding was received through the DHHS Division of Child and Family Services in a federal grant of approximately \$1.2 million over three years, which will enable the program to expand suicide prevention services and outreach to troubled youth statewide.

The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services promotes the health and well-being of Nevadans through the delivery and facilitation of essential services to ensure that families are strengthened, public health is protected and individuals achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency. Under Director Michael J. Willden, each of the Department's agencies is committed to being accessible and responsive to the public it serves.

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