



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAN FRANCISCO SUICIDE PREVENTION AND FELTON INSTITUTE MERGE TO AUGMENT SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – San Francisco Suicide Prevention has now merged into Felton Institute, uniting two of the most enduring mental health and crisis intervention agencies in Northern California. This innovative merger places suicide prevention in a broad continuum of care and extends the reach of both agencies to serve communities in need.

"Our agencies are coming together with the opportunity to expand capacity of our service continuum. As we integrate, we bring our unique experiences, unified around a shared commitment to save and improve lives. San Francisco Suicide Prevention and Felton Institute have long traditions of executing life-enhancing programs that strengthen communities, and we anticipate that our combined resources will have even greater impact," said Al Gilbert, President and CEO of Felton Institute.

Felton Institute, named for its maverick executive director Kitty Felton, is celebrating 130 years of providing over 50 transformative mental health and social service programs to children, youth, families, adults, and seniors. San Francisco Suicide Prevention, a pioneer in community-based crisis intervention founded by Bernard Mayes in the Tenderloin 57 years ago, today receives more than 300 calls a day, saving lives with 24/7 hotlines, outreach and trainings, and support services for those affected by suicide.

"Our two organizations share values and missions. As anchors in the San Francisco mental health provider community, Felton and San Francisco Suicide Prevention serve the same populations, and this merger allows us to serve them even better," noted Peter Rojo, Chairman of the Board for San Francisco Suicide Prevention.

San Francisco Department of Public Health's Director Dr. Grant Colfax states, "The merger of San Francisco Suicide Prevention and Felton Institute will strengthen and preserve crucial prevention, outreach, case management, and crisis intervention services for San Franciscans with mental illness and substance use issues, benefitting people who are experiencing homelessness and people who are housed. These two organizations have strong track records of providing quality services to those in need, and it is great for San Francisco that they are joining forces."

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About Felton Institute:

Founded in 1889, Felton Institute responds to human needs by providing cutting edge, evidence-based mental health and social services that transform lives. Offering more than 50 acclaimed and honored programs that address homelessness, mental health, prenatal, adolescent, adult and senior needs, Felton Institute provides services in San Francisco, Alameda, San Mateo, Marin, and Monterey counties. Felton is named for its social services pioneer and executive director Dr. Katharine "Kitty" Felton who was called the "conscience of San Francisco" and was committed to ensuring that children and families in crisis have access to social services and resources in order to help them build upon their inherent strengths and develop self-sufficiency. www.felton.org

About San Francisco Suicide Prevention:

Founded in 1962, San Francisco Suicide Prevention is the oldest community-based telephone crisis center in the United States. The agency provides emotional support and crisis intervention, answering more than 300 calls a day; has trained over 6,000 youth in the warning signs of suicide and risk-reduction tactics; and helped 200 community members process the loss of loved ones, ensuring that all members of the community are empowered with tools to help each other through moments of crisis. San Francisco Suicide Prevention has several 24-hour crisis hotlines. www.sfsuicide.org