

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

We Can All Take Action to Prevent Suicide



If you or someone you know
is in crisis, call or text 988.

Suicide is a serious public health problem with one death occurring every 11 seconds (CDC). Everyone can play a major part in preventing suicides. Every day, people are helping others get through dark moments and proving that interventions can make a difference. Keep the following tips handy so that you can be the one to save a life.

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HEALTH

Did You Know?

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for 10-14 and 20-34 year olds.
- Males make up 78% of all people who die by suicide.
- The overall suicide rate has increased 35% since 1999.
- Suicide is the tenth leading cause of U.S. deaths.
- Firearms are the most common method used.
- Most suicidal individuals give warnings of their intentions, but their loved ones are sometimes unaware of the significance or how to respond.
- Talking about suicide does not trigger suicide.

Suicidal thoughts are typically temporary and will eventually pass, but it is important in these moments to ask the right questions and ensure the individual's safety. Recognizing the signs and symptoms is the first step to knowing when and what questions to ask.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Risk Factors

The following are characteristics that make it more likely that an individual will consider, attempt, or die by suicide:

- Prior suicide attempt(s)
- Family history of suicide or exposure to suicidal behavior in others
- Mood disorders such as depression or bipolar disorder
- Life stressors and losses such as relationship problems, divorce, recent loss of a job or unemployment, serious financial or legal problems, or death of a loved one
- Substance use
- History of trauma, abuse, or being bullied
- Chronic pain
- Access to lethal means such as firearms in the home or access to medications
- Social isolation

Warning Signs

If you notice any of the following, seek help by calling or texting 988.

- Talking about wanting to die
- Talking about great guilt or shame
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Making comments about feeling hopeless, worthless, trapped, or having no reason to live
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, such as researching ways to die or buying a gun
- Increase in alcohol or drug use
- Behaving recklessly such as driving too fast
- Displaying dramatic mood swings; Acting extremely sad, more anxious, agitated, or full of rage
- Withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, giving away items, or making a will
- Eating or sleeping more or less

Source: American Psychological Association

If someone you know is in emotional pain, whether or not they have any of the risk factors or warning signs above, follow the 5 steps below to ensure their safety.

Five Action Steps for Suicide Prevention

- 1** **Ask.** Directly ask “are you thinking about killing yourself?” This communicates that you are open to being non-judgmental and supportive. You are opening the door to talk and offering help.
- 2** **Be There.** Just being present with someone, either in-person or over the phone can help them through the moment. Feeling a sense of connection and belonging has been shown to be a protective factor in preventing thoughts from turning into action.
- 3** **Keep Them Safe.** If the individual indicates they have been thinking about killing themselves, you will want to ask more specific questions. Find out the following:
 - Have you tried to kill yourself before?
 - Have you thought about what you would do?
 - Have you thought about when you would carry this out?

If they have a plan to imminently harm themselves, **call 911**. A previous suicide attempt increases their level of risk. Call 988 together if they have a plan for how or when. If they are talking about following through sometime in the future, you can reduce access to their plan by taking away lethal means, such as firearms and medications.

Putting time and distance between an individual and their plan has been shown to be highly effective in reducing suicide.

- 4** **Help Them Connect with a Professional.** Encourage and assist the individual with finding a trained professional to discuss what they’re experiencing, act as a safety net, and address underlying issues. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a perfect resource, as trained counselors are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and can make immediate referrals.
- 5** **Stay connected and follow up.** Continue to show you care and are a supportive resource. Call, text, schedule a time to get together, and/or leave a supportive message. These actions increase feelings of connectedness and demonstrate that you care and are there to help.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health

If you know someone who is struggling, be the one to ask the difficult questions and follow these steps to keep them safe. If you aren’t sure what to do or need help, please call your EAP today. Suicide is preventable and it is important that everyone does their part to assist those who need help. If you are struggling yourself, reach out to your EAP for free, confidential help twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. You are not alone, and help is available.

Emergency Helpline

National Crisis Lifeline
Dial or text **988**



References & Resources

#Bethe1To

www.bethe1to.com

Learn more about the five action steps

National Institute of Mental Health

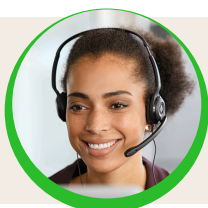
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention>

Latest research and other resources

Speaking of Suicide

www.speakingofsuicide.com

Information for loved ones, those in need of help, and survivors



Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issues, consider contacting your EAP for guidance and support. The EAP offers confidential, no-cost, professional counseling with a licensed mental health professional. Reach out to your human resource department for the toll-free number today.