

## September: National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

The topic of suicide is taboo to some and is often stigmatized, resulting in people not talking about it. However, not talking about suicide isn't going to prevent it nor will it make suicide go away. Talking about suicide, talking about causes of suicide and talking about suicide prevention is how all of us can come together to raise awareness and work towards ending suicide.



Suicide is the 8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in Minnesota and 10<sup>th</sup> nationally. Each year, thousands of people die by suicide and many attempt suicide. Suicide affects everyone- all ages and backgrounds, all racial and ethnic groups, and in all parts of the county. However, suicide is not inevitable for anyone. By having a conversation, providing support and helping those who need it, together we can prevent suicide and save lives.

So how can we do this? Here is some helpful information:

### Know The Warning Signs

- Threats or comments about killing themselves, also known as suicidal ideation, can begin with seemingly harmless thoughts like "I wish I wasn't here" but can become more overt and dangerous
- Increased alcohol and drug use
- Social withdrawal from friends, family and the community
- Dramatic mood swings
- Talking, writing or thinking about death
- Impulsive or reckless behavior

### Is There Imminent Danger?

Any person exhibiting these behaviors should get care immediately:

- Putting their affairs in order and giving away their possessions
- Saying goodbye to friends and family
- Mood shifts from despair to calm
- Planning, possibly by looking around to buy, steal or borrow the tools they need to complete suicide, such as a firearm or prescription medication

### Risk Factors For Suicide

Several things may put a person at risk of suicide, including:

- A family history of suicide.
- Substance abuse. Drugs and alcohol can result in mental highs and lows that exacerbate suicidal thoughts.
- Intoxication. More than one in three people who die from suicide are found to be currently under the influence.
- Access to firearms.
- A serious or chronic medical illness.
- A history of trauma or abuse.
- Prolonged stress.

- Isolation.
- Age. People under age 24 or above age 65 are at a higher risk for suicide.
- A recent tragedy or loss.
- Agitation and sleep deprivation.

## **Y-CARE: HOW YOU CAN HELP A SUICIDAL PERSON**

You are never alone. You are not responsible for anyone who chooses to take their own life. As friends, family and loved ones, all you can do is listen, support and assist the person in getting the help they need.

### **YOU -**

**CONNECT** the person to resources and to a supportive, trusted adult.

**ACCEPT** and listen to the person's feelings and take them seriously.

**RESPOND** if a person has a plan to attempt suicide and tell someone you trust.

**EMPOWER** the person to get help and to call The Trevor Lifeline (866-488-7386).

If you or someone you know has been impacted by suicide, there are resources available. Some online resources include:



- Suicide.org: <http://www.suicide.org/support-groups/minnesota-suicide-support-groups.html>
- Suicide Prevention Resources for Survivors of Suicide Loss: <http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/resource-program/Survivors.pdf>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/find-support/ive-lost-someone/find-a-support-group/>
- If you are outside of the Central MN Suicide Prevention's six county area, follow the link to find the local mental health crisis number for your county: <https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/adults/health-care/mental-health/resources/crisis-contacts.jsp>

Additional mental health resources can be found at: [www.mnmentalhealth.org](http://www.mnmentalhealth.org)

## References

Minnesota Department of Health. (2019). Suicide prevention: Data and reports. Retrieved from: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/suicide/data/suicidedata.html>

National Alliance on Mental Illness. (2017). Suicide prevention awareness month. Retrieved from: <https://www.nami.org/suicideawarenessmonth>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center. (n.d.) Suicide is preventable. Retrieved from: [www.activeminds.org](http://www.activeminds.org)

## Suicide Prevention and Crisis Services and Resources that serve the Central MN Suicide Prevention Coalition's catchment area include:

<h1>Suicide Prevention 24/7</h1> <p><u>Central MN Mental Health Center Crisis Services</u> Serving: Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright</p> <p>CRISIS PHONE (800) 635- 8008</p> <p>Mental Health Resources can be found here: <b>mnmentalhealth.org</b></p>		
<p><b>MINNESOTA FARM &amp; RURAL HELPLINE</b> 833-600-2670 <i>Free. Confidential. 24/7.</i></p> <p><b>NEED TO TALK?</b> Are you struggling with feeling alone, sad, stressed, or worried and feel like you have no one to turn to? <b>CALL US.</b></p> 	<p><b>Crisis Text:</b> Text "MN" to 741741 For free, 24/7 crisis support in Minnesota</p>	
<p><b>NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE™</b> 1-800-273-TALK <a href="http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org">www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org</a></p>	<p><b>RED NACIONAL de PREVENCIÓN del SUICIDIO</b> 1-888-628-9454 <a href="http://prevenciondelsuicidio.org">prevenciondelsuicidio.org</a></p>	<p><b>Veterans Crisis Line</b>  1-800-273-8255 <b>PRESS 1</b></p>
<p> <b>Woodland Center Mobile Crisis Response</b> Serving: Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Meeker, Renville, Swift, and Big Stone CRISIS PHONE (800) 432- 8781</p>	<p><b>Crisis Line and Referral Service</b> Serving: Crow Wing, Aitkin, Cass, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena CRISIS PHONE (800) 462 - 5525</p>	<p><b>MN Warm Line Peer Support Connection</b> Call or Text: 844-739-6369</p> 