

S U I C I D E

THE FACTS

general

ON AVERAGE, 132 AMERICANS DIE BY SUICIDE EVERY DAY

~10.3% OF AMERICANS HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT SUICIDE AND ~54% HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY SUICIDE

WOMEN ARE 1.4X MORE LIKELY TO ATTEMPT SUICIDE THAN MEN, BUT MEN DIE BY SUICIDE 3.56X MORE OFTEN THAN WOMEN

ACCORDING TO THE CDC, RESTRICTING ACCESS TO LETHAL MEANS IS LIKELY THE MOST PROMISING & UNDERUSED PREVENTION STRATEGY

WHAT'S THIS?

"Restricting access to lethal means" means getting rid of or locking away potentially dangerous items in the home. This includes any items that one may use to hurt oneself such as razors, knives, guns, rope, pills, etc.

teens

SUICIDE IS THE 2ND LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS ARE RARE AMONG CHILDREN, BUT THE PREVALENCE RAPIDLY INCREASES FOR TEENAGERS. ~20-24% OF TEENAGERS REPORT THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE, AND BETWEEN 3-8% REPORT TRYING TO KILL THEMSELVES

AS WITH ADULTS, INDIGENOUS YOUTH ARE MOST LIKELY TO DIE BY SUICIDE. ALTHOUGH BLACK YOUTH ARE LESS LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE SUICIDAL THOUGHTS, THERE IS A RECENT TREND OF INCREASING RATES OF SUICIDE ATTEMPTS AND DEATHS AMONG BLACK CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

LGBTQ+ YOUTH SERIOUSLY CONSIDER SUICIDE AT ALMOST 3X THE RATE OF CISGENDER HETEROSEXUAL YOUTH & ARE ALMOST 5X AS LIKELY TO HAVE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE COMPARED TO HETEROSEXUAL YOUTH

THE MYTHS

PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE ARE DOING IT FOR ATTENTION

Most people who talk about wanting to kill themselves do so because they are thinking about suicide and they are looking for help and support. If someone tells you they are suicidal, listen to them nonjudgmentally and empathetically.

SUICIDE ATTEMPTS ARE IMPULSIVE

"Impulsive" suicides are not the norm, it is likely those considering suicide have told someone in the past.

IT'S DANGEROUS TO TALK ABOUT SUICIDE & INCREASES THE LIKELIHOOD THAT SOMEONE WILL ACT ON THEIR SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Research shows the opposite to be true; talking about suicide can be helpful for making the person feel less alone, and it can be an important first step in seeking treatment

PEOPLE WHO FEEL SUICIDAL CANNOT BE STOPPED

Feeling suicidal can be temporary, so support is crucial. With the person's permission, collaboratively reach out to friends and family and help them build a support system to get through the tough time. Encourage them to focus on self-care through things like eating, sleeping, bathing, etc.

SUICIDE ONLY AFFECTS THOSE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION

Many individuals with mental illness are not affected by suicidal thoughts and not all people who attempt or die by suicide have mental illness. Any major life stressor can be associated with suicidal thoughts and behaviors

ONCE SOMEONE IS SUICIDAL, THEY ALWAYS WILL BE

Suicidal thinking can look really different for different people. It's important to know that, for most people, these thoughts come and go in waves

THOSE WHO THINK ABOUT AND/OR DIE BY SUICIDE ARE SELFISH

People who think about and die by suicide are often experiencing extreme pain, whether due to mental illness or to major life stressors. Often, people who think about and/or die by suicide think that they are a burden on others, and seek to end their lives to help those around them

ONCE SOMEONE HAS ATTEMPTED SUICIDE, IT'S UNLIKELY THEY WILL TRY AGAIN

Whereas some only attempt suicide once, others try to kill themselves several times across their lives

PEOPLE THAT TALK ABOUT KILLING THEMSELVES WILL NEVER DO IT

Most people who talk about wanting to kill themselves do so because they are thinking about suicide and they are looking for help and support. If someone tells you they are suicidal, listen to them nonjudgmentally and empathetically

IF SOMEONE SAYS THEY ARE SUICIDAL, IT'S TO GET OUT OF DOING SOMETHING OR TO RECEIVE SPECIAL TREATMENT

When someone says they are thinking about about suicide or that they want to die, take it seriously. Ask them follow up questions, tell them that you care and want to support them, and come up with a plan to start/continue therapy and to keep themselves safe

WE CAN USUALLY PREDICT WHETHER AND WHEN SOMEONE WILL THINK ABOUT, ATTEMPT, OR DIE BY SUICIDE

Sadly no. These thoughts and behaviors are complex and we are not able to predict whether or when someone will think about or die by suicide

MOST SUICIDES HAPPEN IN THE WINTER MONTHS

Contrary to this popular myth, suicide deaths are actually highest in the spring. However, this fact on its own will not help you to predict when an individual will attempt or die by suicide.

THE WARNING SIGNS

UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO ACCURATELY PREDICT WHO WILL TRY TO KILL THEMSELVES AND WHO WILL DIE BY SUICIDE. THESE BEHAVIORS ARE EXTREMELY COMPLEX, AND THE REASONS FOR SUICIDE LIKELY VARY FROM PERSON-TO-PERSON, AND EVEN WITHIN PEOPLE ACROSS TIME. THAT SAID, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU TRY TO HELP THOSE AROUND YOU WHO ARE GOING THROUGH A HARD TIME. BELOW, WE LIST SOME SIGNS THAT SOMEONE IS STRUGGLING AND LIKELY IN NEED OF SUPPORT

TALKING ABOUT WANTING TO DIE OR KILL ONESELF

TALKING ABOUT FEELING HOPELESS, HAVING NO PURPOSE, FEELING TRAPPED, BEING IN PAIN

TALKING ABOUT BEING A BURDEN TO OTHERS

COLLECTING PILLS

ACTING ANXIOUS, RECKLESS, OR AGITATED

SLEEPING TOO LITTLE OR TOO MUCH

WITHDRAWING OR SELF-ISOLATING

SHOWING RAGE OR TALKING ABOUT SEEKING REVENGE

EXTREME MOOD SWINGS

INCREASED DRUG OR ALCOHOL USE

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

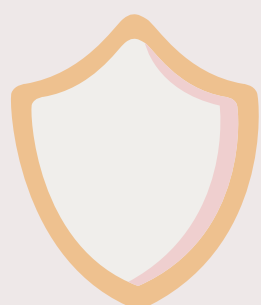


ASK

Even though it may feel scary, awkward, or hard, it's important to ask people directly when you're worried that they might be thinking about suicide. Asking the question, "are you thinking about suicide?" can help to tell the person that you're open and willing to talk about these difficult topics. Do your best to remain nonjudgmental and supportive during these conversations

BE THERE

This could mean being physically present for someone, speaking with them on the phone when you can, or any other way that shows support



COME UP WITH A PLAN TO KEEP THEM SAFE

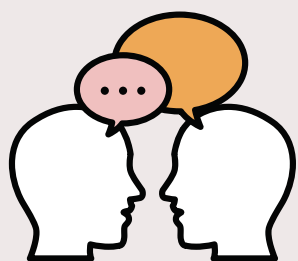
Discuss warning signs, when the urges are strongest, possible ways to restrict access to lethal means, and people they could reach out to when in crisis. Have them write these things down on a safety card

HELP THEM CONNECT

Helping someone with thoughts of suicide connect with ongoing supports can help them establish a safety net for those moments they find themselves in a crisis. These connections can be the Suicide Lifeline, found below, a therapist, or any other mental health professional



FOLLOW UP



After your initial contact with a person experiencing thoughts of suicide, and after you've connected them with the immediate support systems they need, make sure to follow-up with them to see how they're doing

HELPLINES & RESOURCES

For immediate help if you are in crisis or feeling suicidal, call or text a suicide hotline or text line, or go to your nearest hospital, emergency room, or crisis center

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-TALK (8255)
or text HOME to 741741

COLORADO CRISIS LIFELINE

1-844-493-8255
or text TALK to 38255