

LEARN How to Prevent Suicide

L Look for warning signs

- **Feelings:** Hopeless, depressed, angry, lonely, anxious, burdensome
- **Actions:** Abusing alcohol/drugs, reckless behavior, self-harm/cutting, giving away possessions
- **Changes:** in behavior, personality, academic/work performance, sleep, withdrawing
- **Threats:** Talking about death, concerning statements, making plans for suicide
- **Situations:** Mental health or substance abuse disorder, recent loss, rejection

E Empathize and listen

- **DO:** Listen with compassion, remain calm, avoid judgment, validate feelings
- **DON'T:** Express denial, anger, panic, ask “why” questions, offer quick fixes

A Ask about suicide

- Ask in a way that invites an honest response
- Use the word “suicide” and be prepared to hear a “yes”
- Asking about suicide will NOT put the idea in someone’s head
- Ex. “Sometimes when people are withdrawing from friends, feeling hopeless, and drinking more, they think about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?”

R Restrict lethal means

- How a person attempts suicide plays a significant role in whether they live or die
- Temporarily removing or restricting access to lethal means while a person is at-risk of suicide can be life-saving
- Restrict or remove access to: firearms, medications, belts, ropes, knives, chemicals

N Next level of care

- Do not leave the person alone
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK). They will connect to the local crisis center to conduct a risk assessment and recommend resources
- Offer help in making a connection to resources. Support the person until this connection has been established