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Suicide Prevention 101

Jennifer Crutsinger, LPC-S
Office of Mental Health Coordination
Behavioral Health Services
Texas Health and Human Services

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Trauma-Informed Disclosure

- This presentation will cover the topic of suicide care, primarily focusing on prevention strategies.
- In order to create the safest environment possible, we invite you to:
 - ▶ Take breaks during the training if needed; and
 - ▶ Call the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or text “TX” to 741741 if you become distressed and need support.



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Overview



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- Language Matters
- Data Findings
- Risk Factors
- Warning Signs
- Protective Factors
- Things to Consider
- What You Can Do
- Web Resources
- Crisis Lines

Language Matters

Unsafe:

- Completed suicide
- Failed attempt
- Parasuicide
- Successful suicide
- Nonfatal suicide
- Serious attempt
- Suicide gesture
- Manipulative act
- Suicide threat
- Committed suicide
- Means restriction

Safe:

- Attempted suicide
- Died by suicide
- Death by suicide
- Thoughts of suicide
- Survivors of suicide loss
- Survivors of suicide attempts
- People with lived experience
- Low or high lethality attempt
- Means safety



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Data Findings

- About 45,000 people die from suicide each year in the United States.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for people 10 to 34 years old.
- About 4,000 people die by suicide in Texas each year.
- Men die by suicide more often than women.
- Women attempt suicide more often than men.



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Risk Factors (1 of 2)

What are risk factors?

Characteristics or conditions that increase the chance someone may attempt suicide.



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Risk Factors (2 of 2)

- Significant loss or change in life circumstances
- History of attempted suicide
- History of inpatient hospitalization
- Suicide of a loved one
- Part of high-risk group
- Access to means
- Perceived burdensomeness
- Lack of social support
- History of trauma
- Substance use
- Impulsivity
- History of or current mental illness
- Chronic physical illness or pain
- Hopelessness



Warning Signs (1 of 2)

What are warning signs?

Indicators a person may be in acute danger and urgently needs help; may be more transient states than risk factors.



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Warning Signs (2 of 2)



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Talk:

- Talking about suicide or death
- Posting about death
- Saying goodbye
- Feeling trapped
- Having no reason to live
- Being worthless
- Wanting the pain to stop

Behavior:

- Increased use of substances
- Withdrawing or isolating
- Behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Giving away possessions
- Decrease in self-care

Mood:

- Dramatic change in mood
- Guilt
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Anger
- Emptiness
- Hopeless

Protective Factors (1 of 2)

What are protective factors?

Characteristics, traits, or supports that make a person less likely to attempt suicide.



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Protective Factors (2 of 2)

- Connectedness
- Social support
- Access to effective mental health treatment
- Healthy coping skills
- Cultural and religious beliefs
- Willingness to engage in resources
- Protection from chosen method
- Having a sense of purpose or meaning in life
- Hope for the future
- Having a sense of responsibility for others

Things to Consider (1 of 2)

- Risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors are not cumulative (i.e., people may have many protective factors and only one warning sign and still be at high risk).
- There are minimal differences between children, adolescents, and adults regarding, risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.



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Things to Consider (2 of 2)

- Most people thinking of suicide do not want to die; rather, they are experiencing unbearable pain and are unable to see any other options available to stop the pain.
- People experiencing thoughts of suicide often do not have access to positive coping mechanisms.
- Encouraging the person to think of reasons to live and reasons for hope can be very helpful.



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What You Can Do (1 of 4)

- If someone you know is exhibiting warning signs, you should:
 - ▶ Ask clearly and directly about suicide;
 - ▶ Ask “Are you thinking about suicide?” or “Have you been thinking about killing yourself?”; and
 - ▶ Avoid “harm yourself.”



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What You Can Do

(2 of 4)

- If the person is having thoughts of suicide, you should:
 - ▶ Listen, and be non-judgmental;
 - ▶ Believe what they say, and take words and actions seriously;
 - ▶ Offer hope, and help them think of reasons to live or ways to keep safe; and
 - ▶ Get help, and stay with them until help is available.



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What You Can Do

(3 of 4)

- If the person needs to reach out for help, you should:
 - ▶ Be willing to assist; and
 - ▶ Recommend the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, which provides:
 - ◇ Free and confidential support for people in distress; and
 - ◇ Free crisis and suicide prevention resources for those working with people who may experience thoughts of suicide.



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What You Can Do (4 of 4)

Consider additional suicide prevention training opportunities:

- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
 - ▶ <https://livingworks.net/asist>
- Ask About Suicide to Save a Life
 - ▶ <https://texassuicideprevention.org>
- Counseling on Access to Lethal Means
 - ▶ <https://zerosuicidetraining.edc.org/enrol/index.php?id=20>
- Mental Health First Aid
 - ▶ <https://mentalhealthfirstaid.org>



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Web Resources

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
 - ▶ <https://afsp.org>
- Columbia Lighthouse Project
 - ▶ <https://cssrs.columbia.edu>
- Live Through This
 - ▶ <https://livethroughthis.org>
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center
 - ▶ <https://sprc.org>



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Crisis Lines

- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
 - ▶ Call 988
 - ▶ <https://988lifeline.org>
- Crisis Text Line
 - ▶ Text "TX" to 741741
 - ▶ <https://crisistextline.org>
- Trevor Project
 - ▶ Call 866-488-7386
 - ▶ <https://thetrevorproject.org>



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Questions?

suicide.prevention@hhs.texas.gov



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Thank You

Jennifer Crutsinger, LPC-S
suicide.prevention@hhs.texas.gov