

# Suicide Prevention

## Program Practice Considerations



The information and activities contained within this toolkit are designed to support the primary prevention of suicide by bolstering protective factors and resilience.

In advance of activity implementation, it will be important to review and be familiar with organizational positions, policies, and procedures related to helping/responding to a young person who may be in crisis.

Below you will find guidance from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) about how to help someone in crisis.

### **5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain<sup>1</sup>**

1. **Ask:** “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” It’s not an easy question but studies show that asking at-risk individuals if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.
2. **Keep them safe:** Reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal items or places is an important part of suicide prevention. While this is not always easy, asking if the at-risk person has a plan and removing or disabling the lethal means can make a difference.
3. **Be there:** Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling. Findings suggest acknowledging and talking about suicide may in fact reduce rather than increase suicidal thoughts.
4. **Help them connect:** Save the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s number in your phone so it’s there when you need it: 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You can also help make a connection with a trusted individual like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.
5. **Stay Connected:** Staying in touch after a crisis or after being discharged from care can make a difference. Studies have shown the number of suicide deaths goes down when someone follows up with the at-risk person (e.g. phone calls, etc.).

**If You Know**  
**Someone in Crisis**

**NATIONAL**  
**SUICIDE**  
**PREVENTION**  
**LIFELINE**<sup>TM</sup>

**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**Or Call HopeLine NC at**  
919-231-4525 or 877-  
235-4525.

### **Additional Resources on Organizational Suicide Prevention Best Practices**

- <http://www.togethertolive.ca/policies-and-protocols>
- <http://www.togethertolive.ca/best-practices-risk-management>
- See page 41 for a complete list of resources

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml#part\\_153220](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml#part_153220)