

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Everyone Plays a Part in Suicide Prevention

What seems to transcend age, gender, socio-economic, and educational levels? Suicide, and it is something to talk about and everyone can help play a part to prevent it!

Suicide is a major public health concern. It is the 9th leading cause of death overall and in 2017, on average 1 person in Kansas died by suicide every 16 hours. Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it is often preventable. Knowing the warning signs for suicide and how to get help can help save lives.

There are steps you can do to help someone in emotional pain. National Institute of Mental Health provides the following steps to help guide you:

1. **ASK:** Asking the question “Are you thinking about suicide?” communicates that you’re open to speaking about suicide in a non-judgmental and supportive way. It’s not an easy question, but studies show you don’t give a suicidal person morbid ideas by talking about suicide. The opposite is true—bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do. Other questions you can ask include, “How do you hurt?” and “How can I help?”
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. This could mean being physically present for someone, speaking with them on the phone when you can, or any other way that shows support for the person at risk. An important aspect of this step is to make sure you follow through with the ways in which you say you’ll be able to support the person – do not commit to anything you are not willing or able to accomplish. Being there is life-saving because it increases someone’s connectedness to others and limits isolation which is a protective factor against suicide.

4. **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.
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.

Save the following Resources:

Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline \(Lifeline\)](#) at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, or text the Crisis Text Line (**text HOME to 741741**). Both services are free and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All calls are confidential.

Manage Farm and Ranch Stress with K-State Research and Extension and Farm Bureau find help and resources at www.fb.org/land/fsom or Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center at www.farmstress.org, 1-800-447-1985.

The [Veterans Crisis Line](#) connects Service members, Veterans in crisis, and family as well as with qualified, caring Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) responders. Dial 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1 to talk to someone or send a text message to 838255 to connect with a VA responder.

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