


Know the Signs;  
Find the Words;  
Answer the Call!



A Suicide Awareness Toolkit



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JUNE IS MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

- Leading Reasons Men Die in Alabama
  - Heart Disease
  - Cancer
  - COVID-19, Influenza & Pneumonia
  - Unintentional Injuries
  - Stroke
  - Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
  - Alzheimer's Disease
  - Diabetes
  - Nephritis (Kidney Disease)
  - Septicemia
  - Suicide



<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/men/index.html>

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SUICIDE DEATHS, PLANS AND ATTEMPTS IN THE UNITED STATES

 <p>Over <b>49,000</b> people died by suicide in 2023</p>	<p>Many adults think about suicide or attempt suicide</p> <p><b>12.8 million</b> Seriously thought about suicide</p> <p><b>3.7 million</b> Made a plan for suicide</p> <p><b>1.5 million</b> Attempted suicide</p>
 <p><b>1</b> death every <b>11</b> minutes</p>	

<https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/data.html>

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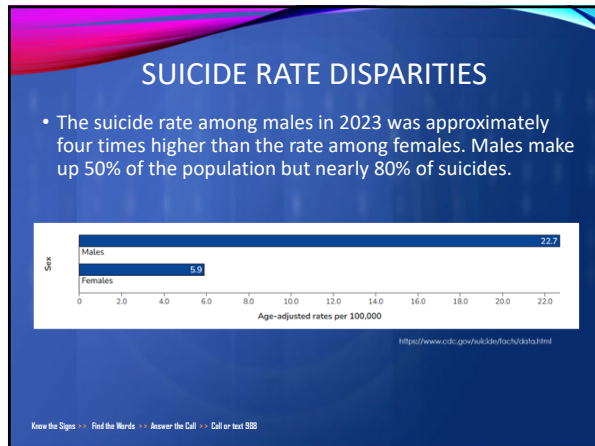
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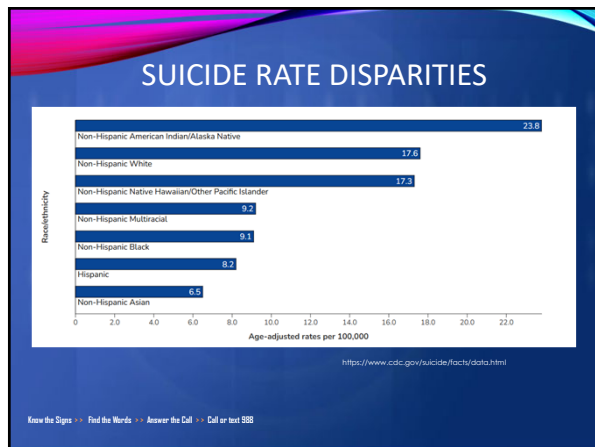
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### Some Groups Are At Higher Risk for Suicide

**Veterans**  
Veterans have an adjusted suicide rate that is 37.3% greater than the non-veteran U.S. adult population.

**Tribal Populations**  
Suicide is the 9th leading cause of death among AI/AN people.

**Adults**  
Adults (35-64 years) account for almost half of all suicides in the U.S.

**LGBT Youth**  
High school students identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual attempt suicide at a rate five times higher than heterosexual students.

**Certain Industries & Occupations**  
Suicide rates are highest among men working in certain industries (Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction) and occupations (Construction and Extraction).

**People with Disabilities**  
Adults with disabilities are three times more likely to report suicidal ideation compared to adults without disabilities.

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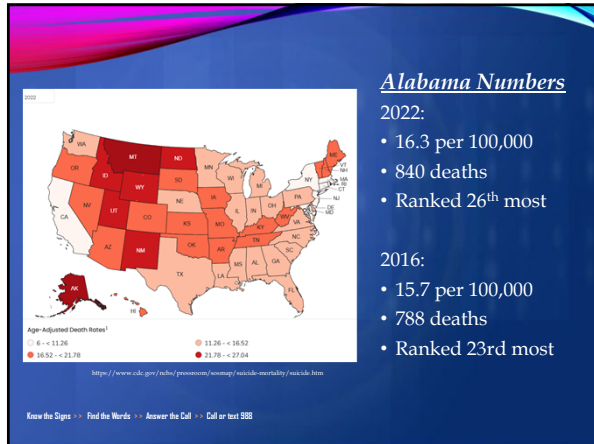
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**TOP 10 STATES DEATH RATE BY SUICIDE**

Data Table

Location	Death Rate (Click for Rankings)	Deaths
Montana	28.7	329
Alaska	27.6	200
Wyoming	25.6	155
New Mexico	24.7	525
North Dakota	22.5	169
Idaho	22.2	444
Utah	22.1	718
South Dakota	21.6	192
Oklahoma	21.4	857
Colorado	21.1	1,293

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/ssmmap/ssmmap-suicide-mortality/suicide.htm>

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**Test Your Suicide Awareness Knowledge**

What are the three critical warning signs of suicide?

True or false: You should never ask someone if they are thinking about suicide.

What are three ways to help someone who is having thoughts of suicide?

Name at least two suicide prevention resources that are available 24/7.

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- Is suicide preventable?
- How do I know someone might be suicidal?
- What can I do to help if I am concerned about someone?
- What resources are available to support someone in crisis?

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### What “causes” suicide?

- The causes of suicide are complex.
- Suicide is not caused by any one factor.
- Most people who experience risk factors do not die by suicide.



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### When Hope is Hard Work



- Suicide is often surrounded by stigma, making it less likely someone will seek help, and harder to know when someone really needs help.
- People who are suicidal do not want to die, as much as they do not want to go on living with their pain.
- The more we understand about suicide prevention the more we can help the people we care about who are struggling.

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What can be done to prevent suicide?

- Know the warning signs
- Ask directly: "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- Make a safety plan and reduce access to lethal means
- Connection to MH professional trained in suicide prevention treatments
- Create systems to respond to suicide risk in least restrictive (least traumatizing) way

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## Warning Signs & Risk Factors

Warning signs: Specific behavioral or emotional clues that may indicate suicidal intent.

Risk factors: Conditions or circumstances that may elevate a person's risk for suicide.

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## Risk Factors for Suicide

Percentage	Factor
42%	Had a relationship problem
29%	Had or Were Going to Experience a Crisis
28%	Had a Substance Abuse Problem
22%	Had a Physical Health Problem
16%	Had Problems With Jobs or Finances
9%	Dealing with Criminal Legal Issue
4%	Experienced Loss of Housing

- ▶ 42% had a relationship problem
- ▶ 29% experienced or were going to experience a crisis in the preceding or following two weeks
- ▶ 28% had a substance abuse problem
- ▶ 22% had a physical health problem
- ▶ 16% had problems with their jobs or finances
- ▶ 9% were dealing with a criminal legal problem
- ▶ 4% had experienced a loss of housing

<https://therehab.com/learning/mental-health-suicide-risk>

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## Mental Health Disorders & Suicide



**Depression**  
50% of those who commit suicide have experienced depression

**Anxiety**  
70% of those with an anxiety disorder have at least one suicide attempt

**Borderline Personality Disorder**  
80% of those diagnosed have at least one suicide attempt

**Bipolar Disorder**  
20-50% diagnosed will typically have one suicide attempt

**Schizophrenia**  
40% diagnosed will typically have one suicide attempt

► 54% of people who died by suicide did not have a diagnosed mental health issue.

► It is estimated that 90% of people who commit suicide are struggling with a mental health disorder or substance abuse problem.

► Having an underlying mental health disorder can increase the chances of suicidal thoughts.

<https://thehub.com/learning/mental-health-suicide-risk/>

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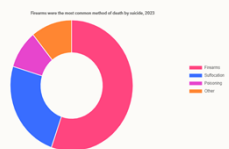
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## Additional Facts about suicide in the United States



Percentages based on the top 10 causes of death by suicide, 2022

► The age-adjusted suicide rate in 2022 was **14.21 per 100,000 individuals**.

► In 2022, **men died by suicide 3.85 times more than women**.

► White males accounted for **68.46% of suicide deaths in 2022**.

► In 2022, **firearms accounted for 54.64% of all suicide deaths**.

► **94% of adults surveyed in the U.S. think suicide can be prevented.**

<https://atp.org/suicide-statistics/>

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## What Groups are Most Impacted by Suicide?

Statistically, the following population groups are disproportionately affected by suicide risk:

- Males
- American Indian/Alaska Natives and Whites
- Older adults
- Veterans
- Those living in rural areas
- LGBTQ youths and adults



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## Protective Factors

- **Access** to effective behavioral health care
- **Connectedness** to individuals, family, community, and social institutions
- **Life skills**, including problem solving skills and coping skills, ability to adapt to change
- **Self-esteem** and a **sense of purpose** or meaning in life
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs that discourage suicide



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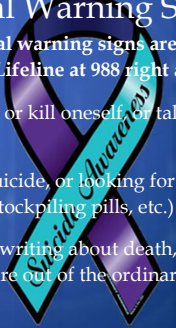
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## Critical Warning Signs

If any of these critical warning signs are present, call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988 right away:

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself, or talking of wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Making plans for suicide, or looking for ways to kill oneself (purchasing a gun, stockpiling pills, etc.)
- Talking, posting or writing about death, dying, or suicide, when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person



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## What are some other warning signs for suicide?

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**Additional Warning Signs**

- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Extreme mood swings
- Withdrawal, isolation
- Fear of becoming a burden
- Sudden uplift in mood, without a reason
- Preoccupation with death or a lack of concern about personal safety
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Increasing use of substances, especially alcohol

These additional warning signs may not indicate an immediate crisis, but are also cause for concern, *especially when the behavior is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.*

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**Suicide Warning Signs for Adults**

Risk is greater if a behavior is new or has increased, and if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Talking about or making plans for suicide.
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated.
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
- Displaying extreme mood swings.

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available.

Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org, or reach out to a mental health professional.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

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**If your home suicide-proof?**

Simple steps can help you suicide-proof your home and possibly save a loved one's life.

- SUPPORT
- FIREARMS
- MEDICATIONS

Call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org

**Every day someone suffers in silence**

Although the warning signs may be hard to recognize, they are there. Recognize the signs.

- Know how to speak the words.
- Know where to get help.
- Talking about suicidal thoughts can save a life.

Call or text 988

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

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## Having the Conversation: Getting Ready

*You don't have to have all the answers. The most important thing you can do is listen.*

- Take a deep breath
- Create a safe environment
- Give yourself plenty of time (don't rush)
- Be prepared with resources and also for their response (yes or no)
- Listen more than you talk
- Make sure to have your own supports in place

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## 988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE SIGN

### WASHINGTON DC

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## Starting the Conversation



Dad, I've noticed some changes in you recently that are worrying me. You used to spend time at the barbershop with your buddies, but you haven't had a haircut in a long time. Lately it seems like you aren't enjoying all the things you used to like doing.

Joe, it's not like you to avoid your friends. And I heard you say something earlier today about not being around to see how the next football season goes.

Honey, I'm worried about you. You just don't seem yourself lately. I think your appetite is off and it looks like you're losing weight.

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Are you thinking about suicide?

## It's OK to be Direct

Talking about suicide does not increase suicidal behavior.

By talking openly and directly, you are sending the message that you care and want to help.

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Is someone you love not acting like themselves?

- Are you thinking about suicide?
- Have you thought about how you would do it? *Have you made a plan?*
- When do you feel the most pain?
- What happens before that leads to you thinking about suicide?
- What have you done in the past to stop you from making an attempt?

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If They Say "No"

- Encourage them to talk about how they are feeling
- Support their coping and resiliency. Ask what helps them feel better.
- Encourage them to reach out to resources such as the Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- Remind them that you are there for them
- Listen without lecturing or judgment
- Be vigilant about the behaviors you are noticing and continue to check in with them on a regular basis.

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### If They Say "YES"

- Take it seriously
- Remain calm
- Thank them for their honesty and openness
- Encourage them to talk about the reasons they feel this way and listen
- The most important action you can take is to listen...really listen
- Encourage them to reach out for help; offer to make the call with them

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## Recap: What You Can Do

- If you sense something is wrong, don't delay in getting help!
- Find the Words to have this difficult conversation.
- Express your concern, mention specific things you have noticed
- Ask directly if they are thinking about suicide

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## Plan for Safety

- Ask them if they have access to weapons or medications, and work with them to safely store those items
- Help them identify signs of crisis and things they can do to help take their mind off their problems.
- Make a list of who they can call when they are in a crisis
  - Trusted individuals, professionals, crisis lines

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## Reach Out

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)  
Behavioral Health Systems (BHS)  
800-245-1150  
Behavioralhealthsystems.com  
Employer ID: DORM

- Call Employee Relations
- HR Director
- Call Legal
- Call Law Enforcement

**BHS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEMS**  
Behavioral Healthcare Programs for Business & Industry Since 1989

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There is hope. If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org

**988 LIFELINE**

You are not alone. There are resources available 24/7 to help.

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**SUICIDE IS PREVENTABLE WITH YOUR HELP**

**ABOUT ALABAMA SUICIDE & PREVENTION COALITION**

Originally a taskforce of individuals chosen to help the Alabama Department of Public Health in suicide prevention strategy, the Alabama Suicide Prevention and Resources Coalition is now a fully fledged non-profit organization educating people within the state of Alabama in basic suicide prevention techniques and strategies.

LEARN MORE

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Should You Call 911?

- If you have ever been in this position, you know how difficult it can be.
- The fear of saying or doing the wrong thing, or not doing enough, can be overwhelming.
- The safest response might seem like calling 911. While this is true in some situations, in most situations, a less drastic response may be more helpful.
- **Instinct and compassion: two tools you can always count on.** There is no foolproof process for knowing exactly the right thing to do. Trust your instinct if it tells you something is wrong.

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When Should You Call 911?

- Calling 911 connects the situation to first responders, such as law enforcement, firefighters and EMT. If you suspect someone is about to or has already harmed themselves and requires medical attention, or if you are in danger, you should call 911.
- Crisis lines are equipped to deal with crisis situations. Crisis line counselors quickly assess the level of risk get the caller to the appropriate services if risk is imminent. They also counsel the person over the phone to reduce their risk. Crisis lines can also be helpful if you are concerned about someone else.

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Take Care of Yourself

- Exercise
- Healthy eating
- Sleep
- Time off
- Get outside
- Laugh
- Practice mindfulness
- Talk with a friend

Steps to Self-Care

Restoring balance in our life requires dedication and practice. Incorporating a dose of self-care into our daily habits can have a strong impact on our mental health. **Everyday** take a moment (or more) to take care of yourself.

Exercise

Exercising 3 days a week decreases stress, increases energy levels and improves happiness.

Eat Healthy

People who eat meals high in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fish, and nuts are 38% less likely to develop depression.

Sleep

40% of adults sleep less than the recommended 7 to 9 hours a night. Sleep plays a major role in our overall health—improving emotional regulation and management of anxiety.

Time Off

64% of people feel refreshed and excited to get back to work after a vacation.

Get Outside

On average, Americans spend 93% of their time indoors—get outside—nature and sunlight improve our mood, restore the spirit, and improves focus and clarity.

Laugh

Laughter increases the release of “feel-good” endorphins and can lower blood pressure.

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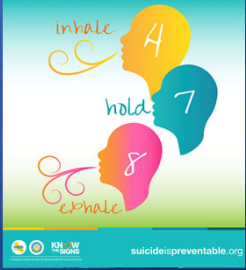
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## Breathe

Breathing exercises can shift your current feelings, connect you more deeply with your body, calm your nervous system and decrease stress! There are a variety of different breathing exercises, allowing you to find one or a few that work for you.



KN-W 988  
suicide@preventable.org

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## Test Your Suicide Prevention Knowledge

What are the three critical warning signs of suicide?	True or false: You should never ask someone if they are thinking about suicide.	What are three ways to help someone who is having thoughts of suicide?	Name at least two suicide prevention resources that are available 24/7.
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• , A semicolon is used when the author could've chosen to end their sentence but chose to go on.



KN-W 988

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## Thank you!

Sources:  
Alabama Department of Public Health. Alabama Suicide Fact Sheet. <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/suicide/>  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, <https://afsp.org/get-help/>  
America's Health Rankings. <https://www.america'shealthrankings.org/explore/measures/Suicide>  
California Department of Public Health, Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, Office of Suicide Prevention, <https://www.suicideispreventable.org/>  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Rural Health Policy Brief: Preventing Suicide in Rural America. [https://www.cdc.gov/rural-health/php/policy-briefs/suicide-policy-brief.html?CDC\\_AAref\\_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/ruralhealth/suicide/policybrief.html](https://www.cdc.gov/rural-health/php/policy-briefs/suicide-policy-brief.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/ruralhealth/suicide/policybrief.html)  
South Alabama. Understanding Suicide. (N.D)  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Help Prevent Suicide. <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource-search/988>  
Suicide Prevention Resource Center, <https://sprc.org/>  
U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. Mental Health - Suicide Prevention. Annual Report and Archive Reports. [https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/data.asp](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/data.asp)  
Suicide Is Preventable, <https://www.suicideispreventable.org/>

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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