

# Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet

## Warning Signs of Suicide<sup>1</sup>

The warning signs of suicide listed below are of particular concern when they are unusual for a person or they represent a change in that person. *Critical warning signs of suicide require immediate action*, such as calling the Nevada County Crisis Line or Suicide Lifeline (see resources).

### Talking about death or suicide.

- Statements might be subtle or vague (i.e. “I can’t take it anymore,” “Soon you won’t have to worry about me,” etc.)
- Statements may be direct or even literal (i.e. “I am going to kill myself.”)
- Thoughts may be reflected in something written or draw

### Changes in mood.

- Uncharacteristically sad or depressed
- Unusually happy or content after a period of significant depression
- Uncontrolled anger

### Changes in behavior.

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Reckless behavior
- Stops talking to and doing things with others
- Stops doing activities they once enjoyed

### Expressions of hopelessness, desperation & pain.

- Don’t see how their situation or life could get better
- Don’t see a way out of their situation
- Statements hint at life being pointless

### Putting affairs in order.

- Giving away prized or favorite possessions
- Rush to complete or revise a will

**Precipitating Factors**<sup>2</sup>: Precipitating factors are stressful events that can trigger a suicidal crisis in a vulnerable person.

- End of a relationship or marriage
- Death of a loved one
- An arrest
- Serious financial problems.

### Critical Warning Signs of Suicide

1. Talking about death or suicide
2. Seeking methods of self harm, such as searching online or obtaining a gun
3. Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live

- Expresses or acts in a way that reflects hostility, bitterness, resentment or rage
- Talks about seeking revenge

- Sleeps more or can’t sleep, seems restless
- Appears anxious, shaken or worried
- Neglect of personal appearance, hygiene, basic grooming

- Talks about being a burden to others (family, friends, society)
- No sense of purpose
- Complain of physical pain, often related to emotions (head, stomach)

- Giving away their passwords to social media, gaming personas, other prized online activities

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Know the Signs: <https://www.suicideispreventable.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Taken from Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <https://www.sprc.org/about-suicide/risk-protective-factors>

## Risk & Protective Factors<sup>3</sup>

**Risk Factors:** Risk factors are characteristics of a person or their environment that increase the likelihood that they will die by suicide (i.e. suicide risk).

- Prior suicide attempt(s)
- Misuse and abuse of alcohol/drugs
- Mental health disorders, particularly depression and other mood disorders
- Access to lethal means
- Knowing someone who died by suicide, particularly a family member
- Social isolation
- Chronic disease and disability
- Lack of access to behavioral health care

**Protective Factors:** Protective factors are personal or environmental characteristics that help protect people from suicide.

- Effective behavioral health care
- Connectedness to individuals, family, community, and social institutions
- Life skills (including problem solving skills and coping skills, adaptability)
- Self-esteem and a sense of purpose or meaning in life
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs that discourage suicide

### How to Help

- **Get Trained<sup>4</sup>** in suicide prevention best practices.
- **Know the signs of suicide** and be alert to them in your life.
- If you are concerned someone might be thinking about suicide, express concern, **ask directly about suicide** (“Are you thinking about suicide?”) and share the signs that prompted you to ask.
- **Listen** to their story, express concern and offer to help by connecting them to a trained helper.
- **Connect** the person with thoughts of suicide to trained helpers and suicide resources.
- If a suicide attempt is underway, is medically necessary or you fear for your own safety, **call 911**.

### Resources

24/7 Crisis Hotlines	
<b>Nevada County Local Crisis Line:</b>	530.265.5811
<b>National Suicide Lifeline:</b>	1.800.273.8255 (press 1 for Veterans Crisis Line)
<b>Trevor Project LGBTQ+ Youth Lifeline:</b>	1.866.488.7386
24/7 Crisis Text Messaging	
<b>Crisis Text Line:</b>	Text “HOME” to 741741
<b>Veteran Crisis Text Line:</b>	Text “838255”
<b>Trevor Project LGBTQ+ Youth Text Line:</b>	Text “START” to 678678
24/7 Crisis Chat	
<b>National Suicide Lifeline Chat:</b>	<a href="https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/">https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/</a>
<b>Veteran Crisis Chat:</b>	<a href="https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat">https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat</a>
<b>Trevor Project LGBTQ+ Chat:</b>	<a href="https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/">https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/</a>
Online Suicide Prevention Resources	
<b>Suicide Prevention Resource Center:</b>	<a href="https://www.sprc.org/">https://www.sprc.org/</a>
<b>Youth.gov Suicide Prevention:</b>	<a href="https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-suicide-prevention">https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-suicide-prevention</a>
<b>Make the Connection (Veterans):</b>	<a href="https://maketheconnection.net/">https://maketheconnection.net/</a>
<b>Each Mind Matters:</b>	<a href="https://www.eachmindmatters.org/">https://www.eachmindmatters.org/</a>

<sup>3</sup> Taken from Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <https://www.sprc.org/about-suicide/risk-protective-factors>

<sup>4</sup> Nevada County Public Health currently offers [Know the Signs](#) and [LivingWorks' safeTALK](#) and [ASIST](#) trainings.