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# **Suicide Prevention and Self-Care**

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# Trauma-Informed Disclosure



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We will discuss the topic of suicide prevention.

You are invited to take breaks as needed during the presentation. Additionally, call or text the **Suicide and Crisis Line at 9-8-8** or text the Crisis Text Line by texting "**TX**" to **741741** in the event you become distressed and need support.

# Learning Objectives



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- Identify at least one warning sign and one risk factor of suicide risk.
- Identify at least one protective factor from suicide risk.
- Identify at least one self-care strategy to engage in going forward.

# What is Suicide Care?

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- Systems approach to comprehensive suicide prevention that includes:
  - ▶ Prevention;
  - ▶ Intervention;
  - ▶ Treatment; and
  - ▶ Postvention.
- A continuous and trauma-sensitive approach to care.



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# Language Matters - Death

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## Unsafe:

- Completed suicide
- Successful suicide
- Committed suicide

## Safe:

- Died by suicide
- Death by suicide
- Survivors of suicide loss
- People bereaved by suicide

# Language Matters - Attempt

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## Unsafe:

- Failed attempt
- Parasuicide
- Serious attempt
- Suicide gesture
- Manipulative act
- Nonfatal suicide
- Suicide threat

## Safe:

- Attempted suicide
- Low or high lethality attempt
- Survivors of suicide attempt
- People with lived experience
- Aborted or interrupted attempt
- Thoughts of suicide

# Language Matters - Lethal Means

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**Unsafe:**

Means restriction

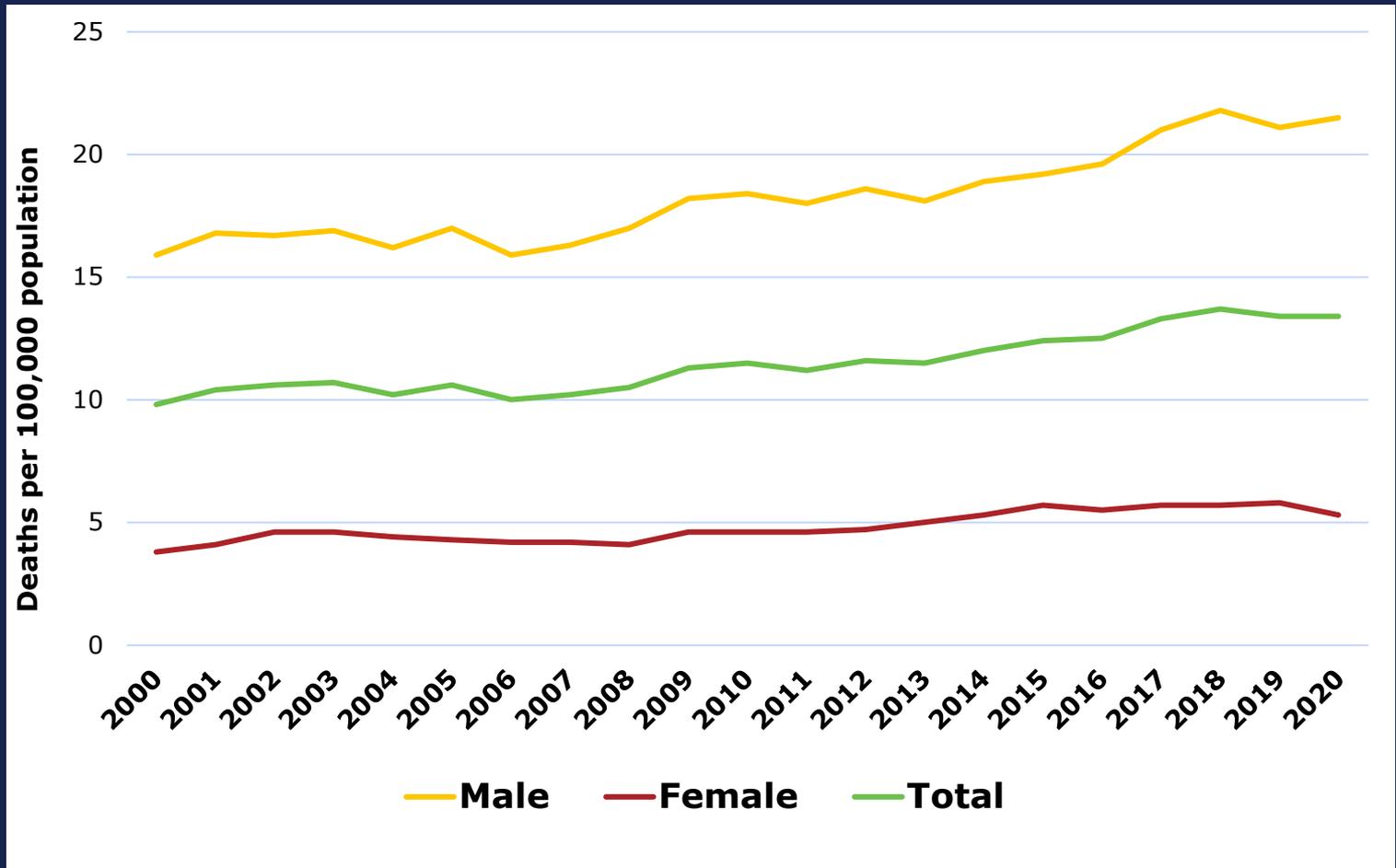
**Safe:**

Means safety

# Texas Suicide Mortality by Sex\*



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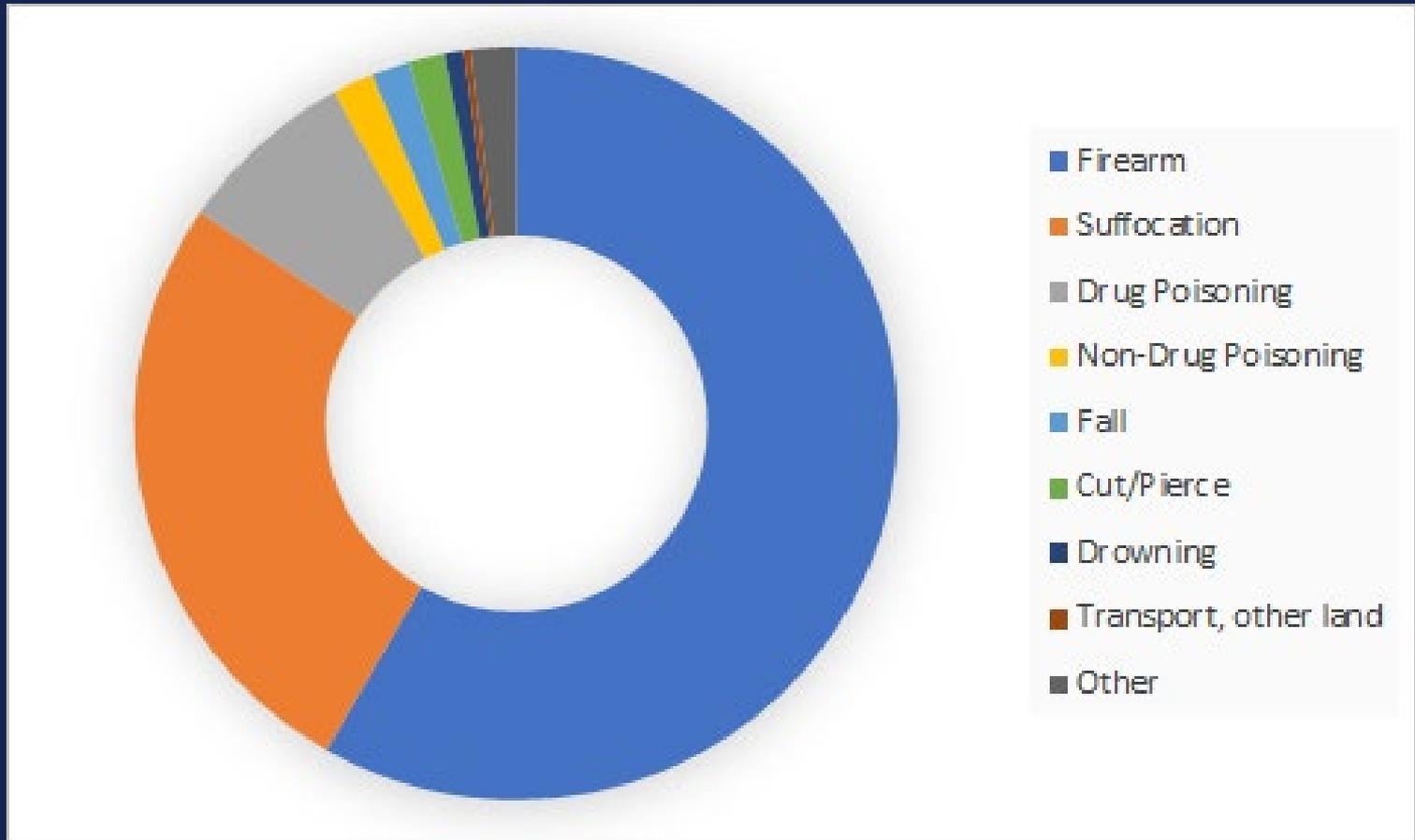


\*Source: CDC WONDER

# Texas Suicide Mortality by Method (2020)\*



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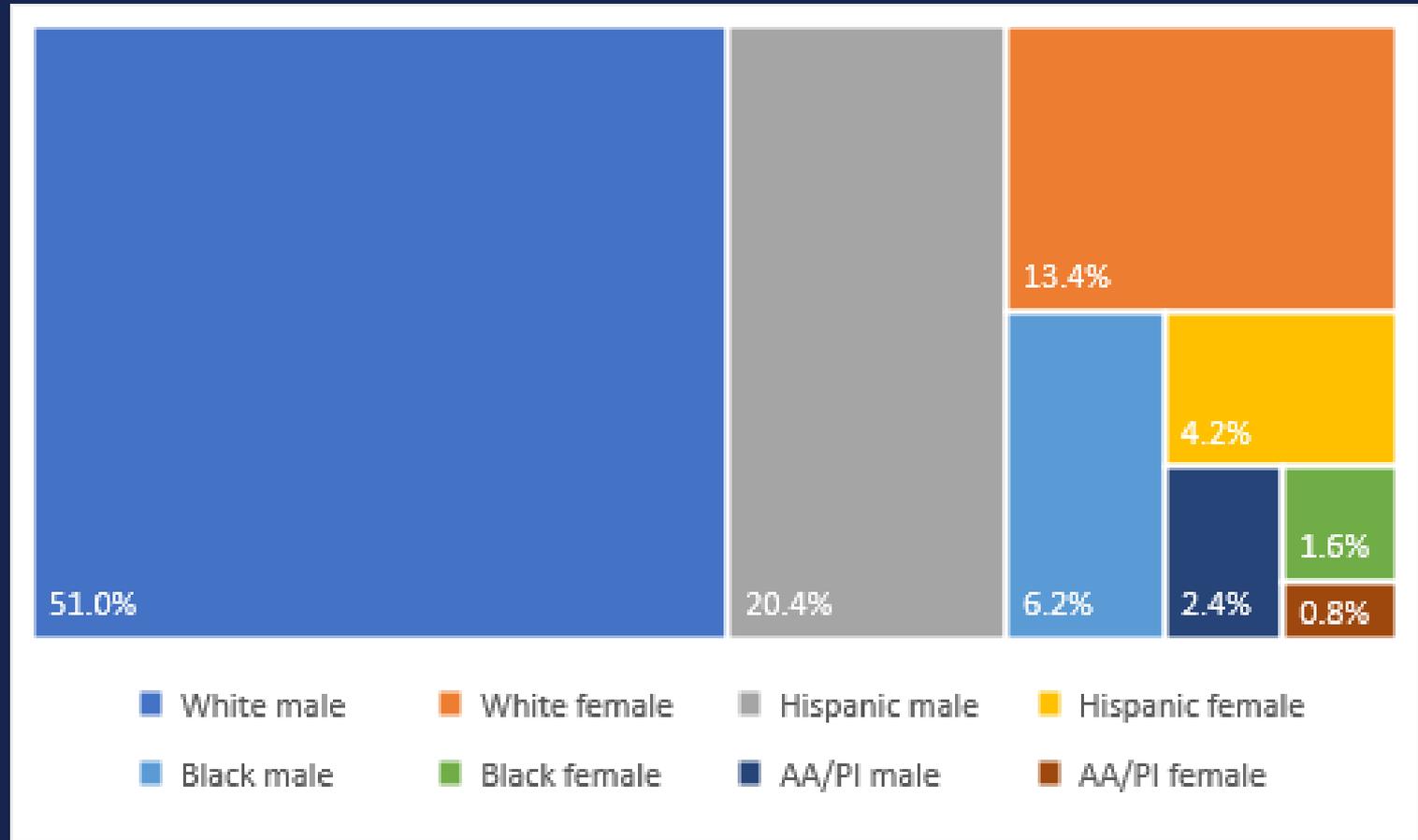


\*Source: CDC WISQARS

# Texas Suicide Mortality Data by Sex, Race and Ethnicity (2020)\*



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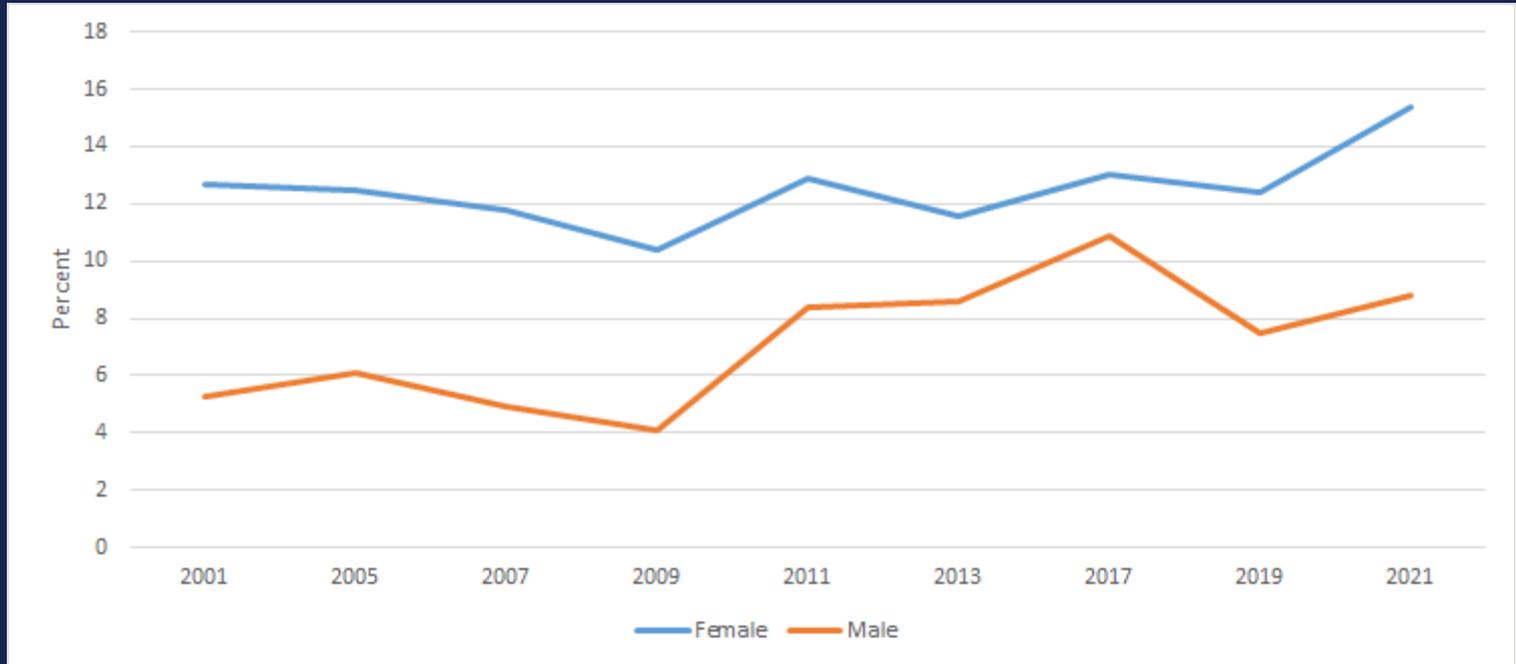


\*Source: CDC WISQARS

# Texas High School Students Who Attempted Suicide in the Past 12 Months by Sex\*



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\*Source: Texas Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2001-2021

# Suicide Prevention

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A collection of efforts to reduce the risk of suicide. These efforts can be at the:

- person,
- relationship,
- community, or
- society level.



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# Suicide Prevention

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## What can you do to help?

- Know the warning signs that someone may be thinking of suicide.
- Know the risk factors that make someone at higher risk of suicide.
- Know the protective factors that make it less likely someone will make a suicide attempt.
- Be willing to ask clearly and directly if someone is having thoughts of suicide.



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# Risk Factors (1 of 3)

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## What is a risk factor?

- Risk factors are characteristics or conditions that increase the chance someone may attempt suicide.
- One way to better understand suicide prevention is to understand risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.



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# Risk Factors (2 of 3)

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- Suicide of loved one
- Chronic physical illness or pain
- Divorce or separation
- Loss of employment or financial problems
- Legal problems or arrest
- Victim of crime or abuse
- Witness to violence



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# Risk Factors (3 of 3)

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- Lack of social support
- Use of alcohol or other substances
- History of or current mental illness (not always diagnosed)
- Feelings of being a burden
- Previous attempt(s)
- History of trauma



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# Warning Signs (1 of 3)

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## Difference Between a Risk Factor and a Warning Sign?

Warning signs are indicators that a person may be in acute danger and needs help urgently.



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# Warning Signs (2 of 3)

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- Loss of interest in activities usually found enjoyable;
- Verbally talking or writing about suicide;
- Decreased social interaction, self-care, and grooming;
- Feeling hopeless or worthless; or
- Putting affairs in order, giving things away, making changes in will.



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# Warning Signs (3 of 3)

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- Stock-piling medication or obtaining other lethal means;
- Increased use of alcohol or other substances; or
- Dramatic change in mood – **most significant indicator.**



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# Protective Factors (1 of 3)

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## What is a protective factor?

Protective factors are characteristics, traits, or supports that make a person less likely to attempt suicide.



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# Protective Factors (2 of 3)

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- Access to effective mental health treatment;
- Family and community support;
- Healthy coping strategies;
- Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide;



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# Protective Factors (3 of 3)

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- Protection from lethal means;
- Having a sense of purpose or meaning in life;
- Hope for the future; or
- Having a sense of responsibility for others (kids, spouse, pets, etc.).



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# Things to Consider (1 of 2)

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- Warning signs, risk factors, and protective factors are not cumulative. That is, 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 warning signs, risk factors, and protective factors.



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# Things to Consider (2 of 2)

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



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# What Can You Do?

## (1 of 3)

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If someone you know is exhibiting warning signs, you should:

- Ask clearly and directly about suicide.

Examples of clear and direct questions include: "Are you thinking about suicide?" or "Have you been thinking about killing yourself?"

- It is important to avoid the use of the term "harm yourself."



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# What Can You Do?

## (2 of 3)

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If the person is having thoughts of suicide:

- Listen and be non-judgmental – let them know you care.
- Believe what they say – take words and actions seriously.
- Offer hope – help them think of reasons to live or ways to keep safe.
- Get help – stay with them until help is available.



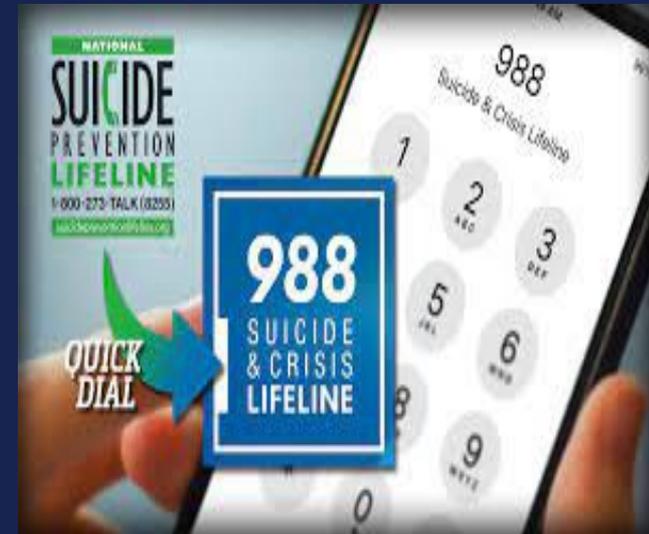
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# What Can You Do? (3 of 3)



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- Be willing to assist the person to reach out for help.
- The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7, free, and confidential support for people in distress.
- The Lifeline also provides free crisis and suicide prevention resources for people, loved ones, or professionals working with people who may experience thoughts of suicide.



# What is 988?

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- The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline offers 24/7 call, text, and chat access to trained crisis workers who can help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, mental health crises, or any other kind of emotional distress.
- People can also contact 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.



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# How Does 988 Work?

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- Made up of over 200 local and state funded crisis centers across the United States.
- Calls and texts are routed to the center closest to the caller by area code of the caller's phone number.
  - ▶ Press "1" for Veterans
  - ▶ Press "2" for the Spanish sub-network
- If the closest center is unable to answer, call is routed to the national back-up network to be answered.



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# Self-Care Strategies



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Small, daily  
acts

Larger, more  
elaborate  
acts

Event-based  
self-care

Crisis self-  
care

# Daily Coping and Self-Care



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Enjoyable

Competent  
and  
effective

Mindfulness

Gratitude

# Self-Care Assessment



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The following slides are from a self-care assessment. Rate how often and how well you are taking care of yourself.

Look for patterns in your responses. Is there anything you would like to do more?

# Physical Self-Care



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- Eat regularly
- Exercise
- Preventative medical appointments
- Massages
- Dance
- Swim
- Wear clothes you like
- Take vacations

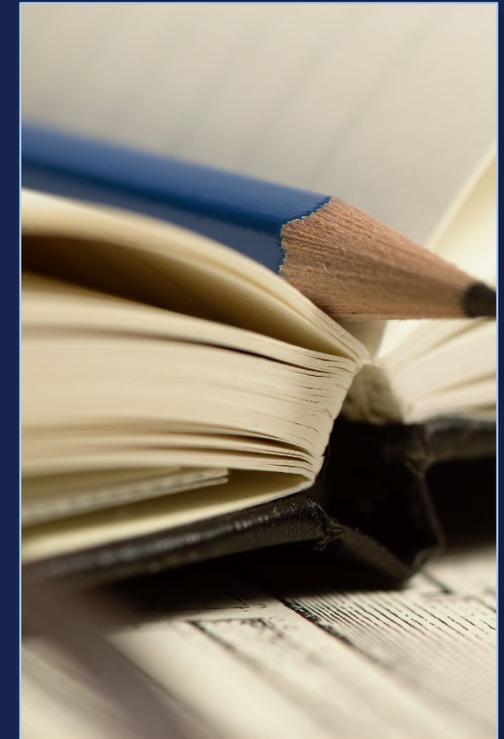


# Psychological Self-Care



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- Make time away from phones and the internet
- Make time for self-reflection
- Write in a journal
- Read literature unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not an expert
- Engage your intelligence in a new area such as art, sports, or theatre
- Be curious





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# Emotional Self- Care

- Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- Stay in contact with important people
- Give yourself positive affirmations
- Re-read a favorite book
- Identify activities that comfort you and seek them out
- Find things that make you laugh





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# Spiritual Self-Care

- Spend time in nature
- Be open to inspiration
- Cherish optimism and hope
- Meditate
- Pray
- Sing
- Have experiences of awe
- Read inspirational literature





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# Workplace Self-Care

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- Take a break during the workday
- Take time to chat with a coworker
- Make quiet time to complete tasks
- Identify projects or tasks that are exciting or rewarding
- Get regular supervision or consultation
- Have a peer support group
- Strive for work-life and workday balance



# Self-Care Activity



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What is one self-care strategy you can use today?



What is one self-care strategy you can use in the next week?



What is one self-care strategy you can use in the next month?



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**QUESTIONS?**



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# Thank You

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