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-  **Scope of the Problem**
-  **Research**
-  **Prevention**
-  **What You Can Do**

 **How** we talk  
about suicide  
matters.

### Language Do's and Don'ts

Avoid	Say
"Committed suicide"	"Died by suicide" "Ended his/her life" "Killed himself/herself"
"Failed" or "successful" attempt	"Suicide attempt" or "death by suicide"




Scope of the Problem



Over  
**800,000**  
people die  
by suicide  
each year.



Someone  
dies by  
suicide every  
**40 seconds.**

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SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM



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SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM



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## SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM



Suicide has an economic impact.  
**\$69 billion per year in the United States.**



## RESEARCH



Why do people take their own lives?  
There is **no single cause**, but rather multiple intersecting factors.

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The large majority of people who die by suicide have a mental health condition contributing to their death.

RESEARCH



1 in 4 people will experience a mental health condition, and most **do not** go on to **die** by suicide.

RESEARCH



### Physical Differences

The brains of people who die by suicide **differ** from those who die from other causes in both **structure** and **function**.

RESEARCH

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RESEARCH



Most people who are suicidal are ambivalent about taking their life.



### The Perspective of a Suicidal Person

- **Crisis** point has been reached
- Desperate to escape **pain**
- Thinking becomes **limited**

RESEARCH



Who is at **risk**?

RESEARCH

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## Risk Factors



RESEARCH

## Health Factors

### Mental health conditions:

- Depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Anxiety disorders
- Eating disorders
- Personality disorders
- Psychosis
- PTSD
- Substance use disorders

RESEARCH

## Other Health Factors

- Serious or chronic health conditions
- Chronic pain
- Serious head injuries

RESEARCH

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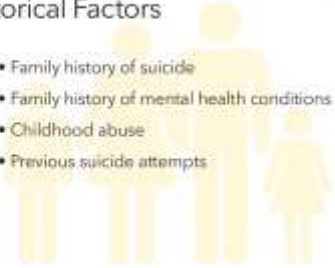
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## Historical Factors

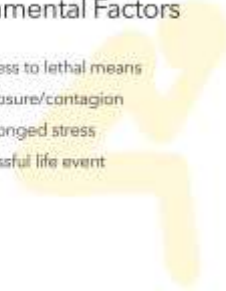
- Family history of suicide
- Family history of mental health conditions
- Childhood abuse
- Previous suicide attempts



RESEARCH

## Environmental Factors

- Access to lethal means
- Exposure/contagion
- Prolonged stress
- Stressful life event



RESEARCH

What others see:



What they may not know:



Genetic risk



Depression



Prolonged stress at work



Drinking more than usual

RESEARCH

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## The Importance of Research


RESEARCH




Prevention

## Protective Factors

PREVENTION

- 
- Mental health care
  - Family and community support
  - Problem-solving skills
  - Cultural and religious beliefs

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PREVENTION



**Mental health care**  
is an important  
ingredient for  
preventing suicide.



We need a  
culture where  
everyone knows  
to be smart  
about mental  
health.

PREVENTION

PREVENTION

## Being Proactive About Mental Health

### **Make mental health a priority.**

- See a doctor or mental health professional
- Get an evaluation
- Discuss treatment options
- Find what works best for the individual

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PREVENTION



The law requires insurance plans to cover **mental health** services the same as **physical health** services.

PREVENTION

### Self Care Strengthens Mental Health



Exercise



Healthy diet



Sleep



Stress management

PREVENTION

**Support** for loss survivors and those with lived experience.



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PREVENTION



The most important thing you can put between a suicidal person and their way of ending their life is **time**.

PREVENTION

**Limiting access to means** prevents suicide.

PREVENTION

### Limiting Access to Means



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Have a Conversation

SUPPORT



Watch for the  
warning signs



Reach out



Seek help

SUPPORT

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## Suicide Warning Signs



SUPPORT

### Talk

- Ending their lives
- Having no reason to live
- Being a burden to others
- Feeling trapped
- Unbearable pain

SUPPORT

### Behavior

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Issues with sleep
- Acting recklessly
- Withdrawing from activities
- Isolating from family and friends
- Looking for a way to kill themselves
- Giving away possessions

SUPPORT

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## Mood

- Depression
- Apathy
- Rage
- Irritability
- Impulsivity
- Humiliation
- Anxiety

SUPPORT

**Trust your gut.**  
Assume you're the  
only one who is  
going to reach out.

SUPPORT

## How to Reach Out

- Talk to them in **private**
- **Listen** to their story
- Express **concern** and **caring**
- **Ask directly** about suicidal thoughts  
– Are you thinking of ending your life?
- Encourage them to **seek mental health services**

SUPPORT

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SUPPORT



**Avoid** minimizing their feelings.

**Avoid** trying to convince them life is worth living.

**Avoid** advice to fix it.

If you think they might make an attempt soon.

SUPPORT



Stay with them



Help them **secure**  
or **remove lethal**  
**means**



**Escort** them to  
mental health  
services

SUPPORT



Suicide Prevention  
Lifeline

**Call 1-800-273-TALK**

Crisis Text Line

**Text TALK to 741741**

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SUPPORT



For  
Emergencies  
**Call 911**

SUPPORT

We can create a culture that's  
**smart** about **mental health** and  
**suicide prevention.**



SUPPORT



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Help us improve our program by  
completing the feedback form.

Visit [afsp.org/TSLparticipant](https://afsp.org/TSLparticipant)



@afspnational

[afsp.org/TSLparticipant](https://afsp.org/TSLparticipant)



AFSP  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention

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