

Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet

Warning Signs of Suicide¹

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 Factors²: 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

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

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

Risk & Protective Factors³

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 Trained⁴** 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, share the signs that prompted you to ask and **ask directly about suicide** (“Are you thinking about suicide?”).
- **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	
Nevada County Local Crisis Line:	530-265-5811
National Suicide Lifeline:	800-273-8255
CA Youth Crisis Line:	800-843-5200
Crisis Text Messaging	
Crisis Text Line:	Text “HOME” to 741741
Teen Crisis Text Line:	Text “TEEN” to 839863 (6-9pm PST)
Trevor Project LGBTQ+ Youth Crisis Text:	Text “START” to 678678
24/7 Crisis Chat	
National Suicide Lifeline Chat:	https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/
Youth Crisis Chat:	https://calyouth.org/chat-with-a-crisis-counselor/
Online Suicide Prevention Resources	
Let’s Talk Nevada County:	http://www.letstalknevadacounty.org
Suicide Prevention Resource Center:	https://www.sprc.org/
Know the Signs:	https://www.suicideispreventable.org
Safety Planning Apps	
My3 App:	https://my3app.org/

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

⁴ Nevada County Public Health currently offers free [Know the Signs](#) training to the Nevada County community.