

TEEN LIFELINE

# Suicide Prevention and How to Talk to Adolescents

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# Teen Lifeline's Services

## Peer Crisis Hotline

- 24/7, 365 days per year
- Free, Anonymous, Confidential
- Peer Counselors 3pm-9pm
  - Partnership with CRN
- AAS Accredited

## Prevention

- Workshops to community

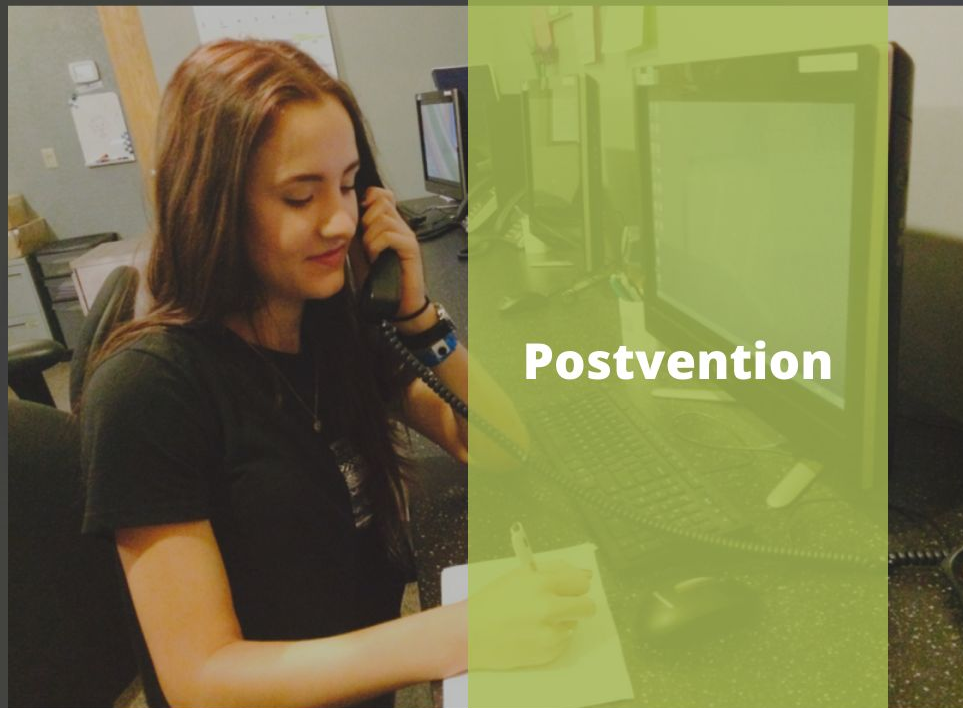
## Life Skills Development

- Training for Peer Counselors

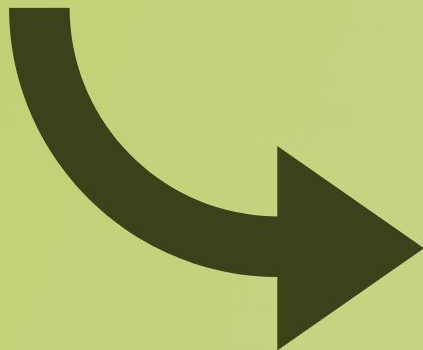
**I.D. Initiative**

**Postvention**

**TSPA Month**



# THE WAY WE TALK ABOUT SUICIDE MATTERS



DIED BY SUICIDE **OR**  
KILLED THEMSELVES



~~COMMITTED SUICIDE~~



SUICIDE DEATH



~~SUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT~~



SUICIDE ATTEMPT



~~UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT~~



# How to Identify At-risk Youth



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## Risk Factors

Factors that suggest a person may be at a heightened risk for suicide, but **not necessarily in crisis.**

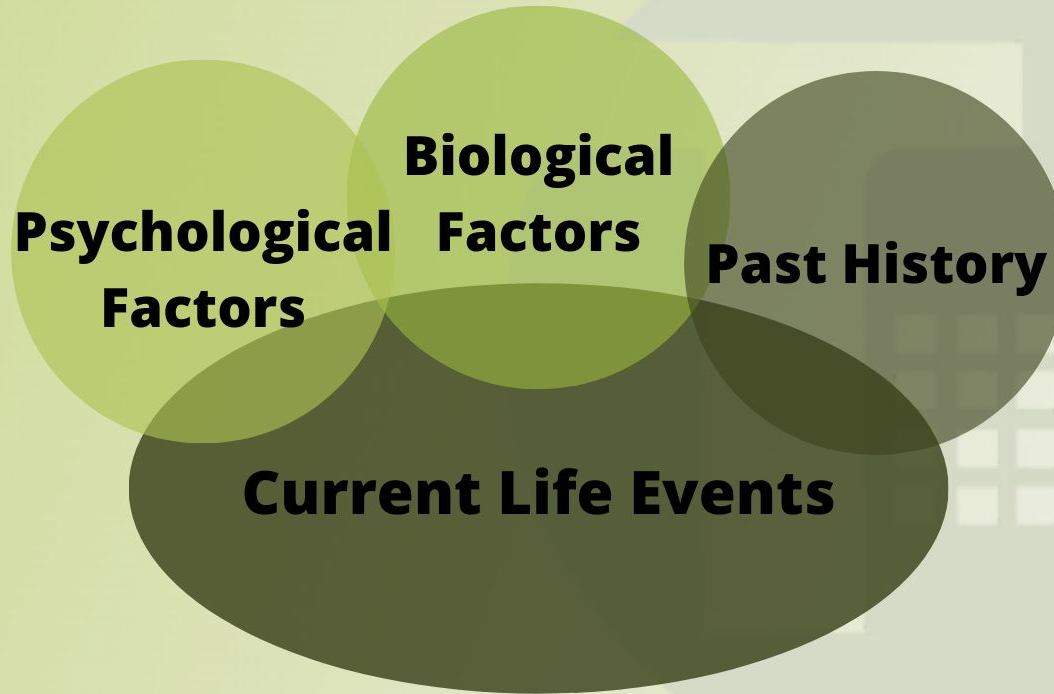
VS

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## Warning Signs

Signs that indicated **immediate risk** of suicide.

# Risk Factors



**A person thinking  
about suicide will have  
more than one risk  
factor**



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You're not alone. Call: 602-248-TEEN (8336)

Teen Lifeline. 2020



# Risk Factors

**Factors that may contribute to a child's vulnerability to suicide**

- Undiagnosed, untreated or ineffective treatment of mental health challenge
- Biological factors
  - Temperament- optimist vs. pessimist, low threshold for stress vs. high threshold for stress
- Past history: trauma or suicide
- Domestic violence, abuse, assault
- Past suicide attempt or knows someone who has died by suicide
- Current life event(s)
  - History of family discord, school-related issues
- Loss (Death, divorce, break up, move etc.)
- Drug or alcohol use
- Persistent harassment or bullying
- Illness of self or family member
- Expectations

# Warning Signs

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Signs of distress that **invite help**

**Anything** the person at risk says or does that makes you feel like they may be thinking of suicide

Will be individual, and **signal immediate risk**

A diagram consisting of four large, olive-green circles arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each circle contains one of the four warning signs. The circles are set against a light green background that features a faint, larger-scale grid pattern.

**Actions**

**Physical**

**Words**

**Feelings**





# Actions

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## WITHDRAWAL

From school, family, friends, work

## ISOLATING FROM FRIENDS OR FAMILY

## LOSS OF INTEREST

In hobbies, leisure activities, previously  
important events/engagements

## IMPULSIVE/RECKLESS BEHAVIOR

## INCREASED ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE

## INTERNET SEARCH HISTORY

Looking for ways to end their life

## INCREASED AGGRESSION

Getting into fights

## FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

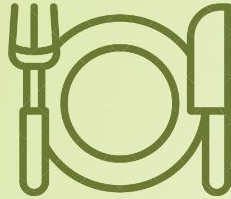
Giving away prized possessions

Saying goodbye

# Physical Changes



CHANGE IN  
APPEARANCE  
+/-



CHANGE IN  
APPETITE/  
WEIGHT  
+/-



CHANGE IN  
SLEEP  
+/-



PHYSICAL  
HEALTH  
COMPLAINTS  
+/-

# Words

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If a person talks about:

- Killing themselves
- Feeling like a burden on others
- Being in unbearable pain
- Feeling trapped
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Giving up

**This signals  
immediate risk!**

## Direct Statements

"I want to kill myself"

"I want to die"

## Indirect Statements

"I don't want to be here  
anymore"

"I wish I could disappear"

"There is nothing left"

**ALWAYS TAKE THE THREAT  
SERIOUSLY**

# Feelings

People who are thinking about suicide often express feeling:

**Lonely**  
**Numb**



**Unexplained**  
**Happiness**

**Helpless**  
**Hopeless**  
**Desperate**

**Depressed**  
**Worthless**

**Humiliation**  
**Guilt**

**Irritability**  
**Loss of**  
**Interest**



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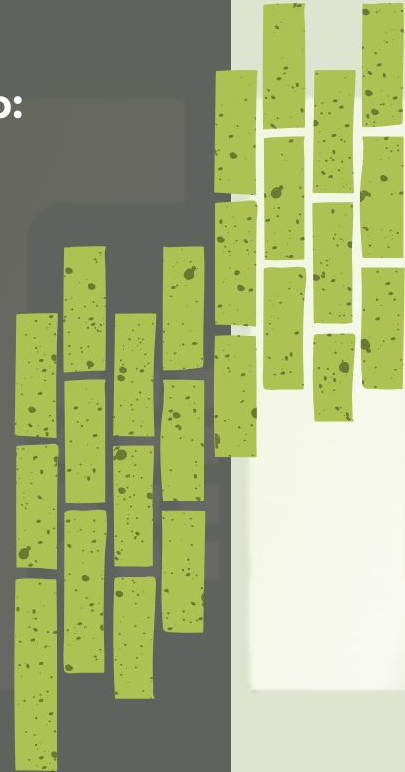
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# Barriers to Help

There are many reasons teens may not reach out for help:

- Neither teens nor the adults who are close to them recognize the symptoms of their treatable illness
- Fear of what treatment would involve
- Believe nothing can help
- They don't see help-seeking as a sign of strength
- They are embarrassed
- Believe that adults won't understand
- Are scared of disappointment or anger
- Worried about family finances



# How to Intervene





# Mandated Reporting & The Mitch Warnock Act

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## Mandated Reporting:

*ARS 13-3620: Required to report any action that may cause imminent physical injury*

The hand-off:

- Immediate
- Student never left alone
- Introduction is made by staff member
- Administration responsible for next steps

## Mitch Warnock Act:

*This law mandates that all school staff who interact with students in grades 6 through 12 must receive suicide prevention training at least once every three years.*



# How to Talk to Teens

## Watch

Actions, physical health, and words for warning signs

Don't wait to act

1

## Ask

Be specific about your concerns

Ask the direct question:  
"Are you thinking about suicide?"

Take it seriously

2

## Listen

Remain calm

Avoid trying to fix it-  
There are no magic words and advice is not helpful

Avoid minimizing their feelings- "Everything will be okay"

Validate their feelings and let them know you care

Thank them for having the courage to tell you

3

## Get Help

Reassure them that help is available and you are going to help them get it

Include them in the help-seeking process

4

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# What Can Parents Do?

# Protective Factors

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- Effective treatment for mental, physical and substance abuse disorders
- Access to resources
- Connectedness
- Problem solving and conflict resolution skills
- Academic or extracurricular success
- Resiliency
- Healthy coping skills



# Building Resiliency



## Competence

- Focus on strengths
- Empower teens to make their own decisions
- Avoid comparison of siblings

## Confidence

- Acknowledge individual qualities
- Praise a job well done
- Avoid unrealistic expectations

## Control

- Teach problem solving skills
- Help teens to understand that actions produce outcomes

## Coping

- Teach healthy coping skills
- Role model positive ways you cope

## Character

- Teach empathy

## Contribution

- Create opportunities for teens to contribute

## Connection

- Create a sense of security and safety at home
- Encourage teens to talk to someone when they have a problem
- Create opportunities for teens to connect to one another
- Help build connections to healthy adults outside of home



# Additional Resources



## **Teen Lifeline**

602-248-8336

## **Crisis Response Network**

602-222-9444

## **Arizona Child Abuse Hotline**

1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445)

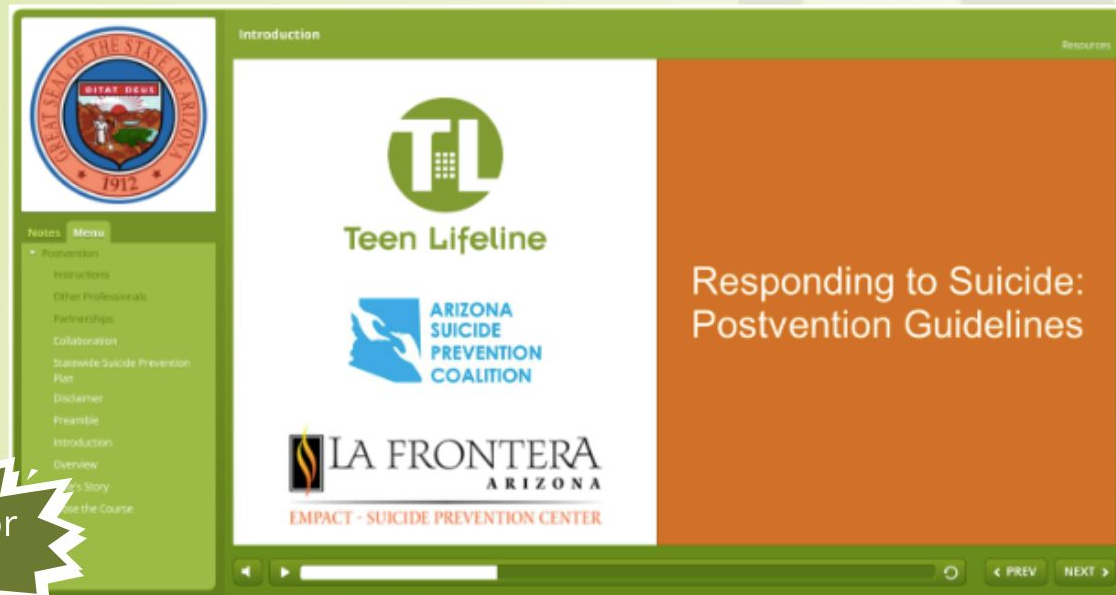
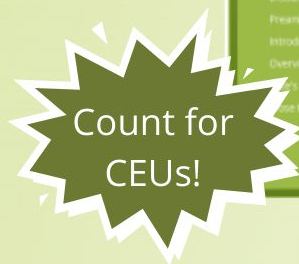




# Additional Resources

## Teen Lifeline eLearning Courses:

- Intervention
- Postvention
- Self Care for Educators





# Additional Resources



## Teen Lifeline Postvention Services:

Teen Lifeline assists schools in providing crisis counseling services whenever students and/or staff members are exposed to trauma or suicide

Empact Support Groups: Survivors of Suicide (SOS)





# Additional Resources



## Teen Lifeline I.D. Initiative:

Students who feel stressed out about school, sports, family-life, or anything in-between have easy access to Teen Lifeline's crisis hotline and the Peer Counselors who have been trained to connect their peers to resources that will save their life.



# QUESTIONS?

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**602-248-8337**



**FACEBOOK**

@TeenLifeline



**TWITTER**

@602248TEEN



**INSTAGRAM**

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**Teenlifeline.org**

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