

# Suicide Risk and Prevention (SRP)



## Suicide Risk and Prevention

Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States and a major public health concern. Prevention efforts focus on reducing risk factors, strengthening protective factors, and recognizing warning signs early.

### What Are Risk Factors?

Risk factors are influences that make it more likely a person may experience mental health challenges or suicidal thoughts. They can be individual, family, or community related.

Individual Risk Factors	Family Risk Factors	Community Risk Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health conditions (for example, depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety)</li> <li>• Alcohol or other substance use</li> <li>• Major loss (death, relationship, job, status)</li> <li>• Poor impulse control</li> <li>• Hopelessness or desperation</li> <li>• History of trauma or abuse</li> <li>• Prior suicide attempt</li> <li>• Fascination with death or violence</li> <li>• Bullying or interpersonal violence</li> <li>• Conflict about sexual orientation or identity</li> <li>• Extreme perfectionism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family history of suicide</li> <li>• Parent with depression or suicidal thoughts</li> <li>• Parent with substance use disorder</li> <li>• Family disruption (death, divorce, remarriage, relocation)</li> <li>• Financial difficulties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to lethal means</li> <li>• Stigma about seeking help</li> <li>• Limited access to services</li> <li>• Loss of family, friends, or role models to suicide</li> <li>• Anniversary of a suicide or other death</li> <li>• Incarceration, loss of freedom, or legal trouble</li> </ul>

### What Are Protective Factors?

Protective factors are influences that make it **less likely** a person will experience suicidal thoughts or behaviors. They build resilience and help reduce risk.

Individual Protective Factors	Family Protective Factors	Community Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding alcohol and other drugs</li> <li>• Help-seeking behavior</li> <li>• Supportive friends and trusted adults</li> <li>• Hope for the future</li> <li>• Personal goals</li> <li>• Connection to others or pets</li> <li>• Problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Attention to health and treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong family and adult relationships</li> <li>• Family cohesion</li> <li>• Parental presence at key times</li> <li>• Beliefs that support self-preservation</li> <li>• Ability to cope with crises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe, stable environment</li> <li>• Access to effective mental, physical, and substance use care</li> <li>• Access to counseling or a trusted adult</li> <li>• Restricted access to lethal means</li> <li>• Opportunities to contribute at school or in the community</li> </ul>

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## Warning Signs

Warning signs are changes in a person's behavior, feelings, or beliefs that may signal increased suicide risk. If someone shows warning signs, ask directly about suicide and connect them with a qualified medical or mental health professional right away.

### Warning signs may include:

Behavioral Signs	Emotional Signs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talking about or threatening suicide</li><li>• Seeking firearms, drugs, or other lethal means</li><li>• Talking or writing about death or suicide</li><li>• Reckless or high-risk behavior</li><li>• Increased alcohol or drug use</li><li>• Withdrawing from others</li><li>• Sleeping too little or too much</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No sense of purpose or reason for living</li><li>• Dramatic mood changes</li><li>• Feeling anxious or agitated</li><li>• Feeling hopeless</li><li>• Rage, anger, or revenge-seeking</li><li>• Feeling trapped</li></ul>

## If You See Warning Signs, Take Action

- Ask directly about their suicidal feelings. Talking about suicide is the first step to preventing suicide!
- Let them know you care.
- Keep them away from anything that may cause harm such as guns, pills, ropes, knives, vehicles.
- Stay with them (eyes on at all times) and get a professional involved.
- Offer a message of hope—let them know you will assist them in getting help.

Connect them with help	
<p><b>988 Suicide &amp; Crisis Lifeline:</b> Call or text 988 for 24/7, free, confidential support. Chat is available at <a href="https://988lifeline.org/">https://988lifeline.org/</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Veterans can press 1</li><li>• LGBTQI+ people under age 25 can call 988 and press 3, or text PRIDE to 988.</li></ul> <p><b>NH Rapid Response Access Point:</b> Call, text or chat 833-710-6477. <a href="https://nh988.com/">https://nh988.com/</a></p>	<p><b>Other immediate options</b></p> <p>Visit your local community mental health center or emergency department.</p> <p>For an emergency, call <b>911</b>.</p>

## Download the Warning Signs Flyer

To learn more about recognizing warning signs, review the NAMI NH Warning Signs Flyer: <https://www.naminh.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/National-Recognize-the-Warning-Signs-Poster-2022.pdf-2.pdf>

## Learn More

Education about suicide risk, warning signs, and prevention can save lives.

- New Hampshire Suicide Prevention Council: <https://preventsuicidenh.org/>
- NAMI New Hampshire: <https://www.naminh.org/suicide-prevention/>
- NAMI NH CONNECT Program: <https://theconnectprogram.org/>
- NH Coalition for Suicide Prevention: <https://zerosuicidesnh.org/>
- The DHHS The Suicide Prevention Council: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/about-dhhs/advisory-organizations/suicide-prevention-council>
- National Institute of Mental Health: <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention>