

# First Responder Suicide



Call or text the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#)

## Fire Chaplain Support

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## What is suicide?

- Suicide is a major public health concern.
  - In 2020, suicide was the 12th leading cause of death overall in the United States,
    - claiming the lives of over 45,900 people.
- Suicide is complicated and tragic,
  - but it is often preventable.
- Knowing the warning signs for suicide
  - and knowing how to get help can help save lives.

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## What are the warning signs of suicide?

- Talking about wanting to die or wanting to kill themselves
- Talking about feeling empty or hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or feeling that there are no solutions
- Feeling unbearable emotional or physical pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Withdrawing from family and friends

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### Warning signs continued

- Giving away important possessions
- Saying goodbye to friends and family
- Putting affairs in order, such as making a will
- Taking great risks that could lead to death, such as driving extremely fast
- Talking or thinking about death often
- Displaying extreme mood swings, suddenly changing from very sad to very calm or happy

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### Other serious warning signs

- Making a plan or looking for ways to kill themselves, such as searching for lethal methods online, stockpiling pills, or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling great guilt or shame
- Using alcohol or drugs more often
- Acting anxious or agitated
- Changing eating or sleeping habits
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge

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### Action steps you can take to Be The 1 To help someone in emotional pain

**5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain**

 <b>ASK</b> "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"	 <b>KEEP THEM SAFE</b> Reduce access to lethal items or places.	 <b>BE THERE</b> Listen carefully and acknowledge their feelings.	 <b>HELP THEM CONNECT</b> Call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline number (988).	 <b>STAY CONNECTED</b> Follow up and stay in touch after a crisis.
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[nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention](http://nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention)

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## ASK:

- ▶ “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”
- ▶ It’s not an easy question,
  - ▶ but studies show that asking at-risk individuals
    - ▶ if they are suicidal
      - ▶ It does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.

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## KEEP THEM SAFE:

- Reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal items or places
  - ▶ is an important part of suicide prevention.
- ▶ While this is not always easy,
  - ▶ asking if the at-risk person has a plan
  - ▶ and removing or disabling the lethal means can make a difference.

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## BE THERE:

Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling.

- ▶ Research suggests
  - ▶ acknowledging and talking about suicide
    - ▶ may reduce
      - ▶ rather than increase suicidal thoughts.

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## HELP THEM CONNECT:

- Save the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline number (call or text 988)
  - in your phone so they're there if you need them.
- You can also help make a connection
  - with a trusted individual like a family member,
  - friend,
  - spiritual advisor,
  - or mental health professional.

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## STAY CONNECTED:

- Staying in touch after a crisis
  - It can make a difference.
- Studies have shown
  - the number of suicide deaths goes down
    - when someone follows up with the at-risk person.

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## What are the risk factors for suicide?

- Depression, other mental disorders, or substance use disorder
- Chronic pain
- Personal history of suicide attempts
- Family history of a mental disorder or substance use
- Family history of suicide
- Exposure to family violence, including physical or sexual abuse
- Presence of guns or other firearms in the home
- Having recently been released from prison or jail

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**FindTreatment.gov**  
<https://findtreatment.gov/locator>  
 This is a government website for facilities in your area

- Daymark Recovery Services Wilkes County
  - 336-667-5151
  - <http://www.daymarkrecovery.org>
  - 1400 Willow Lane, West Park, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
- Focus Behavioral Health Services LLC Caldwell Day Treatment
  - 828-439-8191
  - <http://www.focusbhslc.com>
  - 1889 Dudley Shoals Road, Granite Falls, NC 28630
- Daymark Recovery Center Outpatient Facility
  - [More info](#)
  - 336-372-4095
  - 23.88 miles
  - <http://www.daymarkrecovery.org>
  - 1650 Highway 18 South, Sparta, NC 28675

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**Find treatment page**

The screenshot shows the homepage of FindTreatment.gov. It includes a navigation menu with links for Home, Search For Treatment, State Agencies, Facility Registration, FAQs, Help, About, and Contact Us. The main heading is "Search For Treatment" with a subtext: "Confidential and anonymous resource for locating treatment facilities for mental and substance use disorders in the United States and its territories." Below this is a "Search Results" section featuring a map of the United States and a "Your Location" input field. The input field has a placeholder "Enter your address, city, zip code, or facility name" and radio buttons for "State", "County", and "Distance 25 miles". A "Search" button is located at the bottom right of the search area.

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**Additional resources**

- Help Resources
  - 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
    - Call or text 988
  - Disaster Distress Helpline
    - Immediate crisis counseling related to disasters, 24/7
    - 1.800.985.5990
  - National Helpline
    - Treatment referral and information 24/7
    - 1.800.662.4357

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### Additional Training

- SafeTalk
  - 3.5 hour session
- Assist
  - Is a two day session
- These sessions are offered by Chaplain Millard Shepard,  
Winston Salam FD

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