

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Be The One

Building and Creating Suicide Prevention Initiatives

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Compassion Fatigue & Support

// Talking about suicide is not easy. Some of us may be trauma survivors or attempt survivors. Please monitor yourself closely, feel free to take a break or seek help if needed.

Compassion fatigue is real. We must care for ourselves to effectively care for others.

Words Matter: The Language of Suicide

Instead of this...	Say this...	Why?
"Commit suicide"	Died by suicide / Lost their life	"Commit" implies a sin or crime.
"Successful" or "Unsuccessful"	Died by suicide / Survived attempt	Frames a tragic outcome as an achievement.
"The mentally ill" or "Addicts"	People with mental illness / People with addiction	Person-first language shows respect.
"Name is suicidal"	Name is facing/thinking of suicide	Do not define someone by their experience.

A Legacy of Prevention

1921

●
Neuropsychiatric
Awareness: First
recognition of "shell
shock".

2009

●
Resolution 51: First Legion-
wide referral program.

2019

●
Resolution 18: Launched
"Buddy Checks" as a
national program.

2022

●
"Be The One": Redefined
as a peer-to-peer mission.

2023

●
STRONG Veterans Act: Gov
adoption of Buddy Checks.

The Prevention Toolkit



VA S.A.V.E.

Online, free of charge. Veteran-specific suicide prevention training.

30-60 Minutes



MH First Aid

Deep dive for Service Officers and Leadership teams.

8 Hours



ASIST

For those on the "front lines" of crisis intervention.

2 Days



QPR

Question, Persuade, Refer. Training for life-saving conversations.

90-120 Min

The Columbia Protocol (C-SSRS)

Identifying risk through the Lighthouse Project model.

- ✓ Directive enough for immediate risk level identification.
- ✓ Flexible enough for clinical judgment modifications.
- ✓ Evidence-based features utilized from parents to psychiatrists.
- ✓ Color-coded for easy triage in any setting.



THE COLUMBIA
LIGHTHOUSE
PROJECT

IDENTIFY RISK. PREVENT SUICIDE.

Identifying High Risk Signs



Severity of Ideation

A "YES" to Question 4 or 5 in the past month indicates high risk.

- Intent to act
- Plan for action



Behavioral Warning

Any "YES" to behaviors in the past 3 months requires immediate action.

- Acquiring means
- Saying goodbye
- Self-destructive acts

Any "YES" behavior indicates immediate healthcare referral.

The Purpose of QPR



Offering Hope through Action

QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) is not intended to be a form of counseling or treatment.

Key Objective:

To act as a gatekeeper and offer hope through direct, positive intervention when someone is in crisis.

Suicide: Myths vs. Facts

Myth #1

Only experts can prevent suicide.

FACT:

Suicide is everyone's business, and anyone can help prevent tragedy.

Myth #2

Once decided, nothing can stop them.

FACT:

Suicide is the most preventable kind of death; positive action saves lives.

Myth #3

People keep their plans secret.

FACT:

Most communicate intent during the week preceding an attempt.

Suicide: Myths vs. Facts (Cont.)

Myth #4

Those who talk about it, do not do it.

FACT:

People who talk about suicide may attempt an act of self-destruction.

Myth #5

Asking will only make them angry.

FACT:

Directly asking lowers anxiety, opens communication, and lowers risk.

Nationwide Services

- ✓ **988 Veterans Crisis Line:** Dial 988, then Press 1.
- ✓ **Vets Center:** Confidential community-based counseling.
- ✓ **VA Mental Health Services:** Comprehensive treatment options.
- ✓ **Wounded Warrior Project:** Family-inclusive mental health programs.
- ✓ **Stop Soldier Suicide:** Veteran-focused prevention advocacy.

You are not alone. Support is available 24/7.



Iowa Action & Resources

Local Iowa Resources

- ✓ YSS & John Thomson
- ✓ District level local contacts
- ✓ AmericanLegion.org tools

What are your plans?

Organize Post and District level events to bring "Be The One" to your local community.



Together, we can Be The One to save a life.

Image Sources



<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/988-logo-stacked-navy.png>

Source: www.samhsa.gov



<https://cssrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/themes/sage-8/dist/images/logo.png>

Source: cssrs.columbia.edu



<https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/5533c618e4b0e276c293c601/1752782433675-JJYYQ91ZT2IP340G3T2U/QPR+training+image.png>

Source: www.thespeedyfoundation.org



https://hthgse.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/67518_Fimage-1024x536.jpg

Source: hthgse.edu



https://static.vecteezy.com/system/resources/previews/065/964/216/large_2x/diverse-hands-coming-together-in-unity-and-support-outdoors-photo.jpeg

Source: www.vecteezy.com
