

# 2014 NALC Convention

EAP

Presentation





# Preventing Suicide

# Take a Moment and Reflect:



- For many people, suicide is the end result that *begins with a thought*: “I could kill myself.”
- Without intervention, some suicidal people continue on a deadly *journey of tunnel vision*: suicide starts to become the only viable option
- For the great majority, the desire for death isn't the main focus; rather, it is the *need to stop unimaginable pain*

# Take a Moment and Reflect:



**Unresolved stress can result in serious physical and psychological issues. One such issue can be suicide ideation. No one is exempt.**



# Facts About Suicide

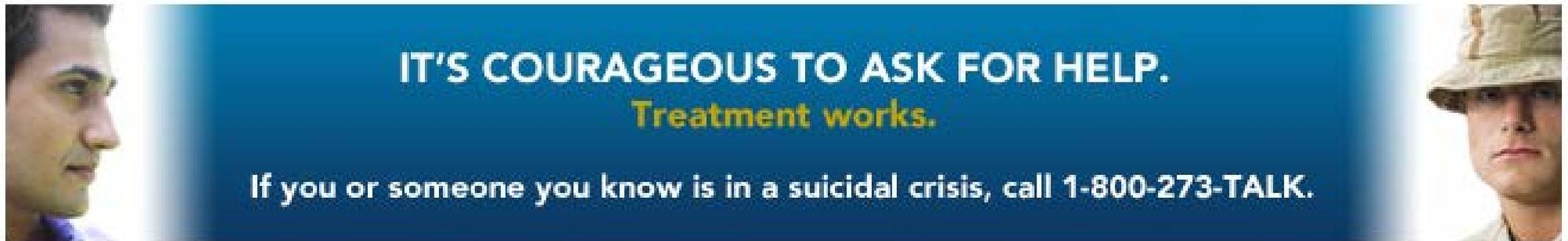


- Every minute, someone in the United States attempts suicide.
- Every 16 minutes, someone dies by suicide.
- Worldwide, more people die by suicide than killed by war and homicide *combined*.
- Women *attempt* suicide twice as often as men.
- Men *die by* suicide 4 times as often as women.

# Facts About Suicide



- More than 90% of completed suicides have a contributing factor of a mental disorder.
  - Most commonly depression and/or alcohol abuse
- Each suicide intimately affects at least 6 people.



**IT'S COURAGEOUS TO ASK FOR HELP.**  
**Treatment works.**

If you or someone you know is in a suicidal crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK.

The banner features a solid blue background. On the left and right sides, there are partial portraits of men. The man on the left is shown in profile, looking towards the right. The man on the right is wearing a tan bucket hat and looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The text is centered and uses a mix of white and yellow colors for emphasis.

# What Can You Do



- Know the warning signs and red flags.
- Take them seriously.
- If you see the signs in yourself, get help
- If you see them in someone else: Engage the person in getting help.



**You do not need to diagnose or understand the reasons.  
Just seek assistance from a professional.**

# Know the Signs



- Always sad
- Purposelessness
- Constant low mood
- Withdrawal
- Desperation
- Sleep problems
- Anxiety
- Weight loss/gain
- Pessimism
- Increase alcohol/drug use
- Impulsive/risky behavior
- Talk of suicide
- Giving away possessions
- Unexpected rage or anger

# Listen to What is Said



Someone contemplating suicide may give early indications that should be heard and taken seriously:

- I wish I were dead.
- No one would miss me if I were gone.
- If it weren't for my family, I would just kill myself.
- It isn't worth it anymore.

**Take any threat of suicide  
*seriously.***



# Question to What is Said



Just because someone exhibits these signs, does not mean they are thinking of suicide.

And, someone who *is* thinking of committing suicide may not display any of these signs.

So ... what *do* you do?

**ASK**

# Discussing Suicide



Suicide is a difficult subject to talk about with anyone – family, friends, co-workers ...

But it *is* a conversation that could



**SAVE A LIFE**

# Why It's So Hard to Talk About

- It's personal.
- It's none of my business.
- I would not know what to say.



It is a difficult subject to talk about, whether you are a co-worker talking with a peer, a manager/supervisor talking with an employee, or a union steward/member talking with another employee.

But, it is a conversation that must happen if someone is thinking about suicide.

We all need to connect and take the time when we see the need.

# What to Do?



- **Q**uestion
  - Ask the person **if they are having thoughts** about suicide. Open up a conversation that may lead you to...
- **P**ersuade
  - Encourage and support the person to **seek professional help** so you can...
- **R**efer
  - Get them to local resources or call **the EAP**, or 1-800-Suicide for prevention and an evaluation.

# Start the Conversation



**Listen to what the person says and encourage them to open up and talk.**

# The Do's and Don'ts



## Don't

- Judge
- Give ultimatums
- Be sworn to secrecy
- Lecture
- Act shocked
- Give advice
- Abruptly leave

## Do

- Let them know you care
- Take them seriously
- **Help get to resources**
- Say you will follow up and then follow up
- Take action
- Be direct
- Be persistent

# Offer the EAP



- Let them know that the EAP is available.
  - “Have you ever called the EAP?”
  - Make a room with a phone available

## HOWEVER

**If the person expresses desperate thoughts or a threat of suicide, *call 911.***

# Let's Review – Remember QPR



- **Q**uestion
  - Ask the person **if they are having thoughts** about suicide. Open up a conversation that may lead you to...
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  - Encourage and support the person to **seek professional help** so you can...
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# Don't Wait



As with any illness, early detection and treatment is vital in helping to ensure better outcomes and more lives saved.

**Q P R**

**Early recognition of the warning signs and immediate intervention with **QPR** can get the person the help they need before the need for a 911 call arises.**

# Prevention



**Substantial evidence supports the view that connectedness between persons **reduces risk of suicidal behavior.****

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**  
**Many resources exist to help.**

If you or someone you know is in a suicidal crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK.

**The ‘connections’ in our life are those that are family and extended family, friendships, work relationships, community involvement, neighbors, schools, universities, etc.**

# What is CONNECTEDNESS?



- **Connectedness** is the means by which people come together, relate, and interact.
- Relationships are where connectedness is practiced.
- The connectedness developed in our relationships hold the potential to save lives

# Prevention



**It is important that all of us have an understanding of how we can help ourselves and others.**

**Our work connects us.....**



# YOUR FIRST RESPONSIBILITY



- **Take care of YOURSELF**
  - Go back to self-care basics
  - Learn a new skill/hobby
  - Practice meditation
  - Have a yearly mental health check up
  - Connect to the people in your life

# Watch out for others



- Learn the names of the people in your life
- Look at people in the eye
- When you ask a question - wait for an answer
- State your observations
- Ask relevant questions
- Show genuine appreciation or concern
- Manage conflict in the moment

# The overall value of CONNECTEDNESS



- **Reduces risk of suicidal behavior**
- **Found to be protective against suicidal thoughts and behaviors**
- **Important to the prevention of both suicidal behavior and interpersonal violence**
- **Reduces stress**
- **Improved overall health (increased disease resistance)**
- **Discourages maladaptive coping**
- **Positive influences lead to positive choices**

# Q&A





# Understanding and Managing Stress

# STRESS



Stress is a reaction to a stimulus that disturbs our physical or mental equilibrium.

**STRESS**

**EUSTRESS**

(good stress)

# Acute vs. Chronic Stress



- A little bit of stress, known as “acute stress,” can be exciting—it keeps us active and alert.
- But long-term, or “chronic stress,” can have detrimental effects on health. You may not be able to control the stressors in your world, but you can alter your reaction to them.

# Stress



Whether we're late for work, stuck in the wrong line at the store, pushing to meet a deadline, or facing a growing pile of bills ...

... we're all well acquainted with stress.

**It's a normal part of life  
that we can't escape.**

# Impact on Body and Mind



- Higher blood pressure and heart disease
- Insomnia and fatigue
- Headache and indigestion
- Backaches, muscle tension, leg cramps
- Decreased functioning of your immune system
- Emotional and behavioral consequences
  - Depression
  - Anger/irritability
  - Feelings of helplessness
- Alcohol/substance abuse
- Relationship problems
- Eating disorders

# Too Much or Too Little



- Too much causes health and relationships problems
- Too little causes boredom, lack of performance, and carelessness

**The key is finding the stress level that is “optimal” for you.**



# Stress management plan



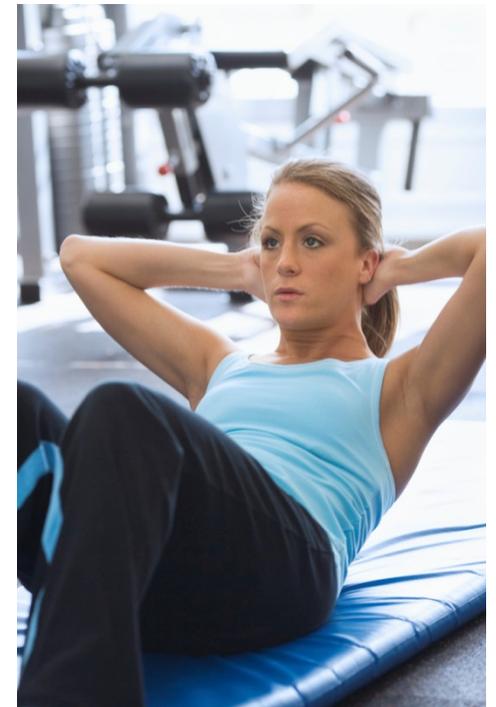
- You can't always anticipate stressful situations so it's a good idea to have a release strategy that you know works for you



# Dealing with Stress



- Planning for major changes
- Learning to be flexible
- Prioritizing
- Setting attainable goals
- Allowing yourself time to adapt to change
- Making good nutrition and regular exercise a part of your daily routine
- Staying social
- Seek professional help



# Video

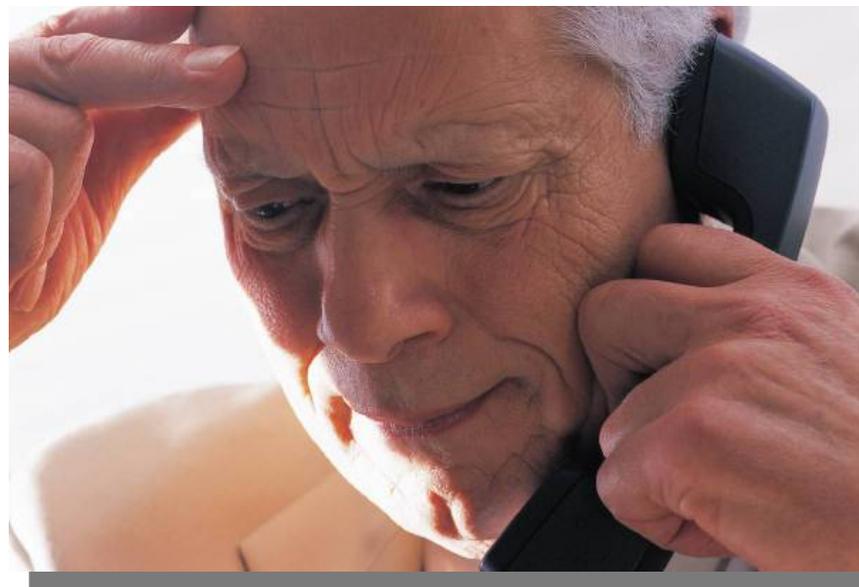


# The EAP for You



If you know someone who you are concerned about, the EAP is also available for *you*.

- You can call to
  - Discuss your concerns
  - Learn ways to approach the person
  - Find ways to cope with the feelings you may have about the situation



# Q&A



# The EAP for You



USPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

*A Program You Can Trust*



**800-327-4968**

(800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 877-492-7341

[www.EAP4YOU.com](http://www.EAP4YOU.com)