



WHAT TO KNOW...

Facts

Suicide is the leading cause of violent death in Wisconsin.

Firearms are the most common method used in suicide, followed by hanging and poisoning.

A previous suicide attempt or the loss of a loved one or friend to suicide can increase the risk.

Spur-of-the-moment behavior appears to play an important role in suicide. Suicide prevention experts believe that if deadly methods are not readily available when a person decides to attempt suicide, he or she can delay the attempt. If delayed, it may allow for the possibility of later deciding not to attempt suicide, or using less deadly methods, allowing for greater possibility of medical rescue.

From the South Central Idaho SPAN Chapter, Steps to Prevent Suicide brochure



WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

Warning signs

- Talking about suicide or wanting to die
- Recent crises, losses, stress; they can be financial, personal, relationships, illness and pain
- Untreated mental illness and alcohol/drug abuse
- Access to methods of suicide: firearms, poisons, suffocation/hanging

Feelings

- No reason for living
- Hopelessness/helplessness
- Trapped/no way out
- Anger, rage
- Anxiety, agitation
- Extreme mood changes
- Heavy guilt

Behaviors

- Big changes in eating and/or sleeping
- Risk-taking behaviors
- Impulsiveness
- Alcohol/Drug use/abuse
- Withdrawing from family/friends/usual activities
- Making final arrangements; giving away prized possessions
- Planning and preparing for suicide

If you see these changes in yourself or someone else call:

1-608-280-2600 Crisis Line available 24/7
1-800-273-8255 (TALK)



WHAT TO DO...

Firearms

- Remove all firearms (shotguns, handguns, hunting rifles) from the home. Ask extended family and/or friends to store them
- Contact your local police about safe gun storage
- Get and use cable gun locks
- Lock gun cabinet or safe, store all keys in a separate location from the gun
- Keep all bullets separate from gun(s)
- Store gun(s) unloaded

Medications/Poisons

- Destroy unused and outdated medications
- Fill drug prescriptions in small quantities
- Buy over the counter medications in small quantities
- Store all medications and poisons in a secure place

Hanging/Suffocation

- Many items in the home can be used for suicide by hanging or suffocation
- Be alert to the risk factors and warning signs of suicide

Alcohol/Drugs

- Monitor alcohol and drug use; as they can increase impulsivity and make symptoms worse



Resources

For emergency help if someone is in immediate risk of suicide

CALL 9-1-1

Call 1-800-273-8875 (TALK)
Press 1 for those who are a Veteran

For additional information:

Dane County residents:

Call 608-280-2600 Crisis Line (available 24/7)
Mental Health Center of Dane County

Dane County Access to Services Map at
www.safercommunity.net

HOPES – Helping Others Prevent and Educate
About Suicide at www.hopes-wi.org

Mental Health America of WI at
www.mhawisconsin.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

You may download and print this brochure for your
personal and professional use, and if used in part,
attribute content to Suicide Prevention Task Force of
Safe Communities, Madison, WI.

Safe Communities
P.O. Box 6652, Madison, WI 53716-0652
Phone: 608-256-6713
www.safercommunity.net

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**Suicide is often preventable with education,
treatment and support.**

**60–90% of people that die by suicide have
a treatable mental illness or alcohol/drug
abuse problem.**

Sources

AFSP – American Foundation of Suicide
Prevention at www.afsp.org

AAS – American Association of Suicidology at
www.suicidology.org

**Suicide Prevention Task Force of Safe
Communities at www.safercommunity.net**
WI-DHFS, Division of Public Health, Injury
Prevention Program – WI Violent Injuries and
Death Report at www.dhfs.wisconsin.gov/wish/
Youth Suicide Steps to Prevent Suicide, South
Central Idaho SPAN Chapter at
www.spanidaho.org

Partners

Dane County Sheriff's Office
HOPES
Madison Police Department
Mental Health America of WI
Mental Health Center of Dane County
Public Health - Madison and Dane County
SAFE KIDS/American Family Children's Hospital
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Wm. S. Middleton Veterans Affairs Hospital

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Preventing Access to Methods of Suicide:

Firearms
Poisoning
Suffocation/Hanging

