

FOREFRONT SUICIDE PREVENTION LEARN® SAVES LIVES

LEARN these steps to help someone thinking about suicide.



Look for signs

Warning signs can include thoughts/feelings, behaviors, and experiences. They can be different for different people, so it's best to follow the LEARN steps when you see:

- a change in someone's usual personality, outlook on life; sleep issues, withdrawing from friends/activities.
- increased feelings of hopelessness, anger, depression, shame; or an increase in behaviors like substance use, risk taking, self-harm.
- warning signs appear related to a painful event, loss, or change.



Empathize and listen

- Just listen. Those who have struggled say this helped them the most.
- Offer compassion, not advice. Avoid judgment and accept their feelings.
- Validate their suffering, "I can see you're in a lot of pain. Thank you for telling me."
- Summarize what you heard: "So, you're feeling...(alone, hopeless). This sounds overwhelming."



Ask about suicide

- Asking about suicide will NOT plant the idea in someone's mind.
- Ask calmly, in a straightforward way: "Are you thinking about suicide?" or, "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"
- Another way to ask is: "Sometimes when people feel...(alone, hopeless), they are thinking about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?"



Reduce the danger

- If they say yes, ask "Do you have a plan?"; if they have a plan, ask: "Do you have a way to carry out your plan?"
- Remove or lock up firearms and medications. In crisis, lock up belts, ropes, knives, chemicals. Report concerning [social media](#) posts.
- Remember: putting time and distance between someone thinking about suicide and the means they may use to end their life can help prevent suicide.



Next steps

- Together, call the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (call, text or chat 988) or other resources below. You can also call a faith leader, elder, friend, or family member.
- Stay with the person in crisis if it is safe for you to do so.
- If someone is in imminent danger, calling 911 may be necessary.



Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988

- Press 1: Veteran services
- Press 2: Spanish services
- Press 3: The Trevor Project
- Press 4: Native & Strong (WA)

- Crisis Text Line: Text "HEAL" to 741741
- Trans Lifeline: 1-877-565-8860
- The Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386

LEARN Resources

Crisis Resources – Suicide & Mental Health

National (USA)

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): **988 (24/7)**

(ESPAÑOL) **(VETERAN)** **(LGBTQIA+)** **(BIPOC)**

Press 1 for Veterans services

Oprima 2 para servicios en español

Press 3 for the Trevor Project

Press 4 for Native and Strong (WA only)

[Crisis Text Line](#): 741741 (Text HEAL) **(24/7)**

(ESPAÑOL)

Mande AYUDA para servicios en español

[Trans Lifeline](#): 1-877-565-8860 **(24/7)**

(ESPAÑOL) **(LGBTQIA+)**

Oprima 2 para hablar con unx operadrx en español

[The Trevor Project](#): 1-866-488-7386 **(24/7)**

(LGBTQIA+)

Washington State

[Crisis Connections](#) (King County): 1-866-427-4747 **(24/7)**

[Teen Link](#): 1-866-833-6546 **(TEENS)**

[Crisis phone lines by county](#)

Crisis Resources – Other Crisis Lines

National (USA)

[Addiction Hotline | SAMHSA](#): 1-800-662-4357 **(24/7)**

[Disaster Distress Helpline | SAMHSA](#): 1-800-985-5990 **(24/7)**

[National Domestic Violence Hotline](#): 1-800-799-7233 **(24/7)**

[Sexual Assault Hotline | RAINN](#): 1-800-656-4673 **(24/7)**

Washington State

[Recovery Help Line](#): 1-866-789-1511 **(24/7)**

RESOURCE KEY

(24/7) This resource is available 24/7.

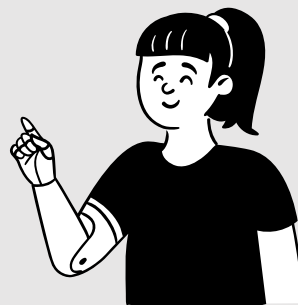
(BIPOC) This resource has specific services for black, indigenous, people of color.

(ESPAÑOL) This resource has services in Spanish.

(LGBTQIA+) This resource has specific services for LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and others) communities.

(TEENS) This resource has specific services for adolescents, teenagers, and young adults.

(VETERAN) This resource has specific services for veterans, service members, and their families.



Mental Health & Wellbeing

Long-term support

[Asian Counseling & Referral Service \(BIPOC\)](#)

[Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator | SAMHSA](#)

[Consejo Counseling & Referral Service \(BIPOC\) \(ESPAÑOL\)](#)

[Find A Therapist | Psychology Today](#)

[Multicultural Counselors \(BIPOC\)](#)

[National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color Network \(BIPOC\) \(LGBTQIA+\)](#)

[Zencare](#)

Grief & Loss

[Eluna Resource Center \(TEENS\)](#)

[Loss support groups | American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

[Support After Suicide | Crisis Connections \(King County, WA\)](#)

[The Dougy Center \(TEENS\)](#)

[The Healing Center Seattle](#)

Wellbeing

[COVID & Mental Health \(BIPOC\) \(LGBTQIA+\) \(TEENS\)](#)

[Mindfulness for Teens \(TEENS\)](#)



Other Community Resources

National

[Drug Take Back Locations](#)

[Find other support | American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

[Give an Hour \(VETERAN\)](#)

[Irreverent Warriors \(VETERAN\)](#)

[Love is Respect \(24/7\) \(LGBTQIA+\) \(TEENS\)](#)

[Mission 22 \(VETERAN\)](#)

[Vet Self Check \(VETERAN\)](#)

[Washington State / Pacific Northwest / West Coast Harborview Abuse & Trauma Center](#)

[Ingersoll Gender Center \(LGBTQIA+\)](#)

[Lambert House \(LGBTQIA+\) \(TEENS\)](#)

[Native & Strong \(WA\) \(BIPOC\)](#)

[Odyssey Youth Movement \(LGBTQIA+\) \(TEENS\)](#)

[The NW Network \(LGBTQIA+\)](#)

[Therapy Fund Foundation \(BIPOC\)](#)

[We R Native \(BIPOC\) \(TEENS\)](#)

[Where to Turn for Teens \(TEENS\)](#)

Learn More About Suicide Prevention

[Forefront Suicide Prevention & Safer Homes, Suicide Aware](#)

[American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

[Conversations Matter](#)

[Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)

Visit us at: inthe forefront.org



Forefront Suicide Prevention is a Center of Excellence at the University of Washington. Our mission is to help people take action to prevent suicide in their communities.

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SUICIDE PREVENTION

FIS SCENARIO – ALEX

Instructions

It is time to apply the LEARN steps in a practice scenario. You'll be in small groups of 2-3 for this activity. To start, let's go through the profile of the (fictional) person we'll be helping today.

Meet Alex



Alex is withdrawing and isolating from friends and family, including increased absences at school. Alex is struggling with the increased demands of school. Alex also has easy access to large quantities of medication.



In your groups, one person will be the person supporting Alex (in other words, the person asking the question about suicide), and the other person will be playing Alex. If you are playing Alex, be who you are in real life - for example, if you use he/him pronouns and/or are male, play Alex as a male.

After you have identified roles, practice having the LEARN conversation once using some of the warning signs you see on the slide/handout. After you have done so, or after about five minutes, switch roles.

If you find yourself running low on time, we recommend making sure you at least practice the A step. The more you practice asking "are you thinking about suicide?" the more confident you will be when you need to use that phrase with someone you care about.

Reminders & Helpful Hints

Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps

Four components of empathy

1. Try to see the world as others see it
2. Be non-judgmental
3. Validate another's feelings
4. Communicate that understanding

How to ask:

*"Sometimes when people ____, they're thinking about suicide.
Are you thinking about suicide?"*