

CCYP HAPPENINGS

SEPTEMBER '22

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Center for Child & Youth Psychiatry



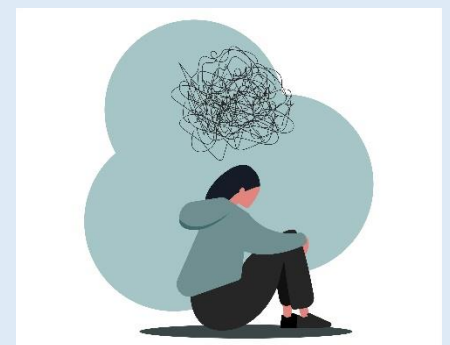
SUICIDE-PREVENTION

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. Just imagine if we could walk together toward a world without suicide. While suicide prevention is important to address year-round, Suicide Prevention Awareness Month provides a dedicated time for people, organizations, and communities to join their voices to broadcast the message that suicide can be prevented, and healing is possible. Everyone has a role to play to save lives and create healthy and strong individuals, families, and communities. We can come together to reduce factors that increase the risk for suicidal thoughts and behavior, and increase the factors that help strengthen, support, and protect people from suicide. If you know someone struggling with despair, depression or thoughts of suicide, you may be wondering how to help. Most Americans recently surveyed say that they understand that suicide is preventable and that they would act to help someone they know who is at risk.

Yet many of us are afraid to do the wrong thing. In fact, you don't have to be a trained professional to help, says Doreen Marshall, a psychologist and vice president of programs at the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. "Everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention," she says. But "most people hold back. We often say, 'Trust your gut. If you're worried about someone, take that step. And that first step starts with simply reaching out, says Marshall. It may seem like a small thing, but survivors of suicide attempts and suicide experts say, it can go long way.

Newsletter Insights

- ✚ Suicide Prevention Month
- ✚ How to help a suicidal loved one
- ✚ National Hispanic Heritage Month
- ✚ Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month
- ✚ Acculturation



Here are some things you can do that can make a difference.



1. Recognize the warning signs

The signs of suicidal ideation may not always be apparent in people. However, there are some signs a person can present with that could infer an individual is suffering from suicidal ideations. Take note of the following if you suspect a friend or loved is battling this kind of inner turmoil:

Behavioral symptoms:

- *Temperament changes
- *Engaging in risky behaviors
- *Threats of self-injury
- *Self-harm
- *Use or abuse of drugs and/or alcohol
- *Talking or writing about death and dying
- *Social withdrawal or isolation
- *Decline in interest of things or activities that were once enjoyed

Physical symptoms:

- *Inability to experience pleasure
- *Panic attacks
- *Insomnia or hypersomnia
- *Weight loss or gain
- *Poor hygiene
- *Hopeless or helpless feelings

Psychosocial symptoms:

- *Depressed mood
- *Agitation
- *Elevated anxiety
- *Irritability

Cognitive symptoms:

- *Memory impairment
- *Lack of focus
- *Inability to concentrate
- *Intrusive thoughts about death

2. Reach out and ask, "Are you OK?"

So, what do you do when you notice someone is struggling and you fear they may be considering suicide? Reach out, check in and show you care. When someone reaches out and offers support, it reduces a person's sense of isolation, he explains. Questions like "Are you doing OK?" and statements like "If you need anything, let me know" are simple supportive gestures that can have a big impact on someone who's in emotional pain, explains Julie DeGolier, a medical assistant in Seattle and a survivor of suicide attempts. It can interrupt the negative spiral that can lead to crisis.



3. Be direct: Ask about suicide

Listen without making judgments. See the situation through the other person's eyes. One of the most basic emotional needs of human beings is to be heard and feel important.

4. **Listen and offer hope**

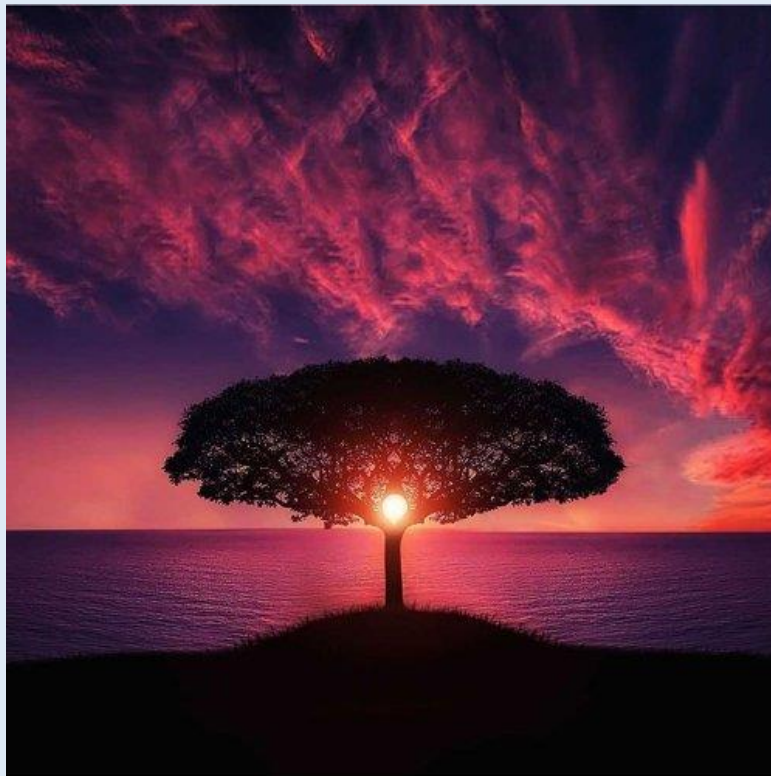
Allow your loved one time to finish their thoughts. With emotionally difficult topics, there may be brief periods of silence. If you are unsure, it is better to wait rather than speak too soon and interrupt their answer. If they are having a hard time opening up about a painful topic, it's okay to provide a little encouragement to help them continue speaking. Remember to do so gently, as you don't want to rush or push too hard. Don't let your friends or family go through it alone. When in doubt, reach out. Ask the difficult questions. Follow-up and follow-through.



5. **Help them tackle the mental health care system**

When someone is in urgent crisis mode, it's often not the best time to try to navigate the mental health care system. But to prevent a future crisis, offer to help your loved one connect with a mental health professional

to find out whether medications can help them and to learn ways to manage their mood and suicidal thinking. A kind of talk therapy called dialectical behavior therapy, or DBT, has been shown to be effective in reducing risk of suicide. It teaches people strategies to calm their minds and distract themselves when the suicidal thoughts surface.



“Nature has given us all the pieces required to achieve exceptional wellness and health, but has left it to us to put these pieces together.”—Diane McLaren



NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Acculturation is the process of assimilating to a different culture and is associated with a higher rate of depression among Hispanic people. This may be a result of losing their Hispanic identity over time in the U.S., facing discrimination, or losing their support network. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, there were significant unmet mental health needs across the nation and within the Latinx community. Addressing these needs and eliminating health disparities among all racial and ethnic groups is essential and should be included in policy and community efforts as we recover. Evidence suggests that more than 16%, or approximately 10 million people, in the U.S. Latinx community report having a mental health condition. Research also indicates that serious mental health conditions among the Hispanic population are increasing.



Here are some ways to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

- *Support Hispanic or Latinx-Owned Business.
- *Cook your own Latin-inspired meal.
- *Enjoy a Hispanic cocktail.
- *Make a playlist of Hispanic artists.
- *Take a Dance Class.
- *Check out a museum exhibit.
- *Take a Spanish class.
- *Listen to a Latinx podcast.



RESOURCES

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is now: 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
Or Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Psychiatric Emergency Response Team 9-1-1

NAMI San Diego 619-543-1434