



Did You Know?

September 2021

Suicide Prevention Month: September is Suicide Prevention Month. This month long initiative is full of awareness opportunities such as National Suicide Prevention Week and World Suicide Prevention Day. The International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) shares that, “one in every 100 deaths worldwide is the result of suicide. It can affect every one of us. Each and every suicide is devastating and has a profound impact on those around them.” Throughout September we have been sharing various resources and materials to raise awareness and fight the stigma associated with suicide. Whether you have lost a loved one to suicide, you are struggling with suicidal thoughts, or if you are a support person for another who may be struggling, know that you are not alone.

What You Should Know:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that more than 47,000 people died of suicide in 2019 and that there is one suicide death every 11 minutes.
- Each year 12 million people seriously think about suicide, 3.5 million individuals make a plan for suicide, and 1.4 million attempt suicide.
- Mental Health America (MHA) shares that:
 - Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the US.
 - Suicide is the second leading cause of death among people ages 15-24.
 - More years of life are lost to suicide than to any other single cause except heart disease and cancer.
 - 40% of persons who complete suicide have made a previous attempt.
 - Those with substance abuse disorders are six times more likely to complete suicide.
 - The rate of completed suicide among men with alcohol/drug abuse problems is 2-3 times higher than among those without a problem. Women who abuse substances are at 6-9 times higher risk of suicide compared to women who do not have a problem.
 - Eight out of ten people considering suicide give some sort of warning sign of their intentions.
- Warning signs of suicide include but are not limited to: mood or personality changes, verbal threats or expressions of hopelessness, gifting prized possessions away, disinterest in future or goals, partaking in unusual or risky behavior, and previous attempts of suicide/self-harm.
- Protective factors that can decrease the risk of suicide include: a sense of community, family support, friendships, and easy access to healthcare, mental health services and preventative programming.

What You Can Do:

- **Reduce Access:** If you or someone you know begins having suicidal thoughts, remove access to items like drugs, firearms, or other instruments of self-harm. Creating barriers to these items can drastically reduce a completed suicide. Include a support person to help maintain restricted access during a period of suicidal thoughts.
- **Check-In As Much As Possible:** Take time to talk and connect with those in your social circle. Ask people daily about how they are feeling and the happenings of their lives. Take time to invest in others, but also share how YOU are feeling. The more we talk about our feelings and emotions, the less stigma there will be around mental health.
- **Have An Escape Route:** When life seems too heavy to bare alone, or you begin witnessing warning signs of suicide in yourself or others, get help. Contact Crisis Services (716-834-3131), the Nationwide Suicide Crisis Hotline (1-800-273-8255), or JustTellOne (716-245-6581.)

Information obtained from: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov); [iasp.info](https://www.iasp.info); [mhanational.org](https://www.mhanational.org)

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The Prevention Council of Erie County, publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs -- America's #1 public health problem. The Prevention Council • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • www.thepreventioncouncil.org