

THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION - AND WHY IT MATTERS



Suicide doesn't just affect individuals—it impacts families, workplaces, schools, and entire communities. Preventing a suicide isn't the responsibility of one profession or agency. It takes a coordinated, compassionate effort across society. That's the idea behind the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* — a roadmap designed to guide the country toward reducing suicide and promoting mental well-being for all.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION?

The National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP) is a 10-year, comprehensive, whole-of-society approach to suicide prevention that provides concrete recommendations for addressing gaps in the suicide prevention field.



The strategy is based on decades of research and lived experience. It outlines a vision of a country where fewer people die by suicide and more people feel connected, supported, and valued.



The strategy seeks to prevent suicide risk; identify and support people with increased risk through treatment and crisis intervention; prevent reattempts; promote long-term recovery; and support survivors of suicide loss.



The strategy provides a shared response to this deeply personal issue, helping us move from crisis response to prevention and resilience-building.

Check out the next page for more.

WHAT'S IN THE STRATEGY?

The updated 2024 strategy lays out four core strategic directions and multiple action steps that span prevention, intervention, and recovery. Here's a simplified breakdown:

1. Empower Individuals, Families, and Communities

- Make it easier for people to talk about mental health and suicide.
- Promote programs that reduce stigma and increase awareness.
- Equip community members—teachers, coaches, faith leaders, coworkers—to recognize warning signs and take action.

2. Address Upstream Risk Factors

- Tackle root causes like poverty, discrimination, trauma, and loneliness.
- Increase access to safe housing, quality healthcare, and social support.
- Strengthen protective factors like cultural identity, connection, and purpose.

3. Improve Access to Care and Crisis Services

- Expand 988—the national Suicide & Crisis Lifeline—and ensure follow-up services.
- Train more mental health professionals and peer support specialists.
- Integrate mental health care into schools, primary care, and senior centers.

4. Use Data and Research to Drive Progress

- Track suicide trends to understand what's working and where gaps remain.
- Support community-level data collection and evaluation.
- Prioritize funding for suicide prevention in underserved populations.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You don't have to be a mental health professional to make a difference. Suicide prevention happens in everyday conversations, in how we show up for others, and in how we advocate for better systems of care. Here are a few ways to start:

- **Learn the signs of suicide risk**—and don't be afraid to ask someone directly if they're thinking about suicide.
- **Take a gatekeeper training** like QPR, ASIST, or safeTALK.
- **Support local initiatives** that build connection and reduce isolation—especially for veterans, older adults, LGBTQ+ individuals, and rural communities.
- **Share resources**, like the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988).
- **Talk about mental health openly**, at work, at church, in your family, and on social media.

And if you're someone who's struggling yourself: you matter. Help is available, and you don't have to go through this alone.

WE CAN HELP.

Our hospital-based outpatient program is designed to meet the unique needs of older adults experiencing depression and/or anxiety related to life changes that are often associated with aging or a chronic diagnosis. Anyone can make a referral to our program, including self-referrals, provider referrals, or community consultations.

Call us today at