

# COVID-19 and Suicide Prevention:

Staying Connected and  
Promoting Resources

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# Objectives

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- ▶ Define the Protective Factor of Connectedness
- ▶ Review Digital Resources for DBHR Approved Programs
- ▶ Review Safe Messaging Guidelines for Social Media
- ▶ Identify ways people can connect while social distancing

# Mindful Pause

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Let's take a moment to truly transition to this time together



# Risk and Protective Factors

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# Risk Factors

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Individual	Relationship	Community	Societal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pervious attempts</li><li>• History of mental disorders, particularly clinical depression</li><li>• History substance use disorders</li><li>• Feeling of hopelessness</li><li>• Impulsive or aggressive tendencies</li><li>• Loss</li><li>• Illness and disability</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Family history of suicide</li><li>• Family history of child maltreatment</li><li>• Isolation, a feeling of being cut off from other people</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local epidemics of suicide</li><li>• Barriers to accessing mental health treatment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Easy access to lethal methods</li><li>• Cultural and religious beliefs (e.g., belief that suicide is a noble resolution of personal dilemma, or belief that older people have little value to the community)</li><li>• Unwillingness to seek help because of the stigma</li></ul>

WA State Suicide Prevention Plan, 2015

# Protective Factors

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Individual	Relationship	Community	Societal
Skills in problem solving, conflict resolution and nonviolent handling of disputes	Strong connections to family and community support  Support through ongoing medical and mental healthcare relationships	Effective clinical care for mental, physical and substance use disorders  Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions and support for help seeking	Restricted access to highly lethal means of suicide  Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support self-preservation

WA State Suicide Prevention Plan, 2015

# What is Connectedness?

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“The connections a person has among family, friends, peers, and community; how connected people are to health and social services; and how well services collaborate.”

WA State Suicide Prevention Plan, 2015

# Connectedness

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- ▶ Individuals (e.g., friends, neighbors, co-workers)
- ▶ Family members
- ▶ Community organizations (e.g., schools, faith communities)
- ▶ Groups (e.g., minority groups) to their cultural traditions and history

Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices.  
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Center for Disease Control.



# Connectedness Means

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- Developing relationships between youth and positive adults
- Building positive attachments between families and organizations in the community
- Increase youth social networks and connections

Strategic Direction for the Prevention of Suicidal Behavior. Promoting Individual, Family, and Community Connectedness to Prevent Suicidal Behavior.

# CDC Suicide Prevention Strategies

Preventing Suicide	
Strategy	Approach
Strengthen economic supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen household financial security</li> <li>Housing stabilization policies</li> </ul>
Strengthen access and delivery of suicide care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coverage of mental health conditions in health insurance policies</li> <li>Reduce provider shortages in underserved areas</li> <li>Safer suicide care through systems change</li> </ul>
Create protective environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce access to lethal means among persons at risk of suicide</li> <li>Community-based policies to reduce excessive alcohol use</li> </ul>
Promote connectedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer norm programs</li> <li>Community engagement activities</li> </ul>
Teach coping and problem-solving skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parenting skill and family relationship programs</li> </ul>
Identify and support people at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gatekeeper training</li> <li>Crisis intervention</li> <li>Treatment for people at risk of suicide</li> <li>Treatment to prevent re-attempts</li> </ul>
Lessen harms and prevent future risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postvention</li> <li>Safe reporting and messaging about suicide</li> </ul>

Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices.  
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Center for Disease Control.

# Outcomes

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Increases in:

- ▶ Healthy coping attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ Referrals for youth in distress
- ▶ Help-seeking behaviors
- ▶ Positive perceptions of adult support

Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices.  
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Center for Disease Control.

# Programs

Community-based Mental Health Promotion/Suicide Prevention Services (MHPSP) grantees

# Sources of Strength Response to COVID-19

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- Daily Activities
- Journal
- Self Care Resources
- Peer Leader Meetings
- Classroom Resources
- Games

# QPR's Response to COVID-19

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- ▶ Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention
  - ▶ Teleconference or Webinar
- ▶ Electronic versions of the booklet and card

# Coping and Support Training Response to COVID-19

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- ▶ Digital access to materials for current customers



# COVID-19 Physical Distancing

What can organizations do?



# What can we do?

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- ▶ Education on:
  - ▶ Know the Signs
  - ▶ Finding the Words
  - ▶ Reach Out
  - ▶ Wellness
  - ▶ Connection
  - ▶ Stigma

Pain Isn't Always Obvious Know the Signs, Suicide is Preventable.  
How to Use Social Media for Suicide Prevention. User Guide.

# How can we do it?

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- ▶ Take advantage of technology
- ▶ Webinars/Meetings
- ▶ Programs provided virtually
- ▶ Social Media Awareness Campaign

# Social Media Guidelines

Safe Messaging and Crisis Response Plan

# Safe Messaging Guidelines

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- ▶ Emphasize help-seeking behaviors
- ▶ Provide info on finding help
- ▶ Emphasize prevention
- ▶ List the warning signs
- ▶ List protective factors
- ▶ Highlight effective treatment

Safe and Effective Messaging for Suicide Prevention. Suicide Prevention Resource Center.

# Unsafe Messaging

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- ▶ **DON'T** glorify suicide or people who have died by suicide
- ▶ **DON'T** normalize suicide
- ▶ **DON'T** present suicide as a result of stress only
- ▶ **DON'T** focus on personal details
- ▶ **DON'T** present the method of suicide

Safe and Effective Messaging for Suicide Prevention. Suicide Prevention Resource Center.

# How to know someone is at risk online

# Warning Signs in a Comment

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- ▶ Talking about wanting to die, kill or injure oneself
- ▶ Looking for information about methods of suicide
- ▶ Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- ▶ Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain

# Warning Signs in a Comment

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- ▶ Talking about being a burden to others
- ▶ Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- ▶ Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- ▶ Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- ▶ Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge

Support for Suicidal Individuals on Social and Digital Media.  
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.



# Warning Signs in a Comment

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- ▶ Displaying extreme mood swings
- ▶ Expressing a heightened fixation with death or violence

Support for Suicidal Individuals on Social and Digital Media.  
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

# 10 Social Media Tips

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1. Key team member(s) to be the voice
2. Set media policies and guidelines
3. Crisis response plan

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How to Use Social Media for Suicide Prevention. User Guide.

# Crisis Response Plan

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## Crisis response plan

1. Who will monitor
2. How often
3. What resources
4. What support

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How to Use Social Media for Suicide Prevention. User Guide.

# Crisis Response Plan

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- ▶ "If you are in crisis, please call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or visit [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org). This page is not monitored 24/7 and is not intended for crisis intervention."

Pain Isn't Always Obvious Know the Signs, Suicide is Preventable.  
How to Use Social Media for Suicide Prevention. User Guide.

# Crisis Response Plan

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- ▶ “If you feel that life is not worth living, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). The call is free and confidential, and crisis workers are there 24/7 to assist you. To learn more about the Lifeline, visit [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).”

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# Crisis Response Plan

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- ▶ “We are concerned for your safety and would like to offer help. The trained counselors at the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are available 24/7 by calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255). The call is free and confidential. We hope that you can remain safe and continue to reach out. Please do not do anything to hurt yourself. To learn more about the Lifeline, visit [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).”

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How to Use Social Media for Suicide Prevention. User Guide.

# Crisis Response Plan

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- ▶ “Thank you for reaching out and caring about your suicidal friend. Feel free to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) yourself so that you can find out what resources are available in your area. Most importantly, please encourage your friend to call us.”

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How to Use Social Media for Suicide Prevention. User Guide.

# 10 Social Media Tips Cont.

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4. Platform reaches your target population
5. Fresh and engaging content
6. Track posts and responses
7. Speak in laymen's terms

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# 10 Social Media Tips Cont.

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8. Engage with users
9. Monitor post engagement
10. Monitor effectiveness

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# Tips for Connecting

While Social Distancing

# Tips for Connecting

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- ▶ Connect with Family/Friends/Neighbors
- ▶ Connect with Culture
- ▶ Connect with Yourself
- ▶ Staying Active and Engaged

Coronavirus Resources & Tips for Parents, Children & Others.  
Prevention Child Abuse America.

# Connecting with Family/Friends

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## WHAT IS A SHARED FAMILY TREE?



- ▶ Video calls
- ▶ Look at photo albums and discuss family heritage
- ▶ Create a family tree
- ▶ Write letters to/create cards for relatives

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Prevention Child Abuse America.

# Connecting with Family/Friends

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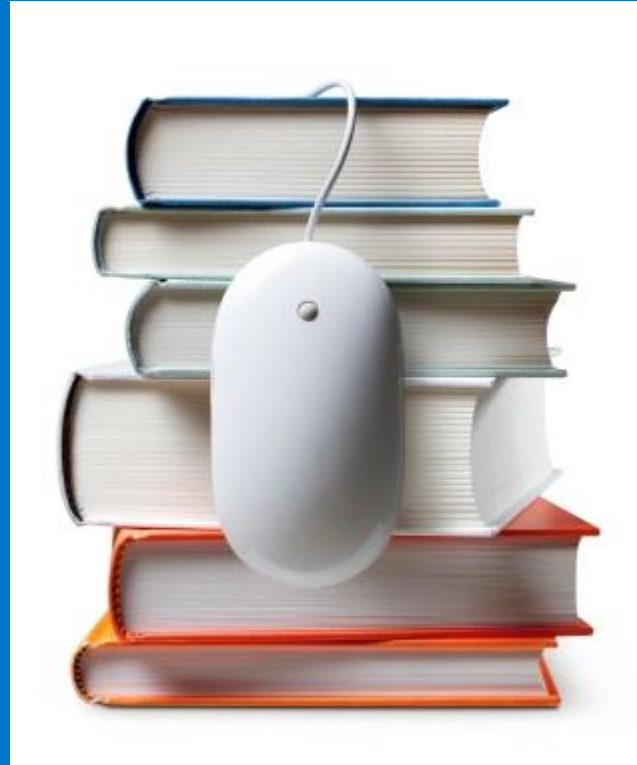
- ▶ Go outside and greet neighbors and passersby from a safe distance
- ▶ Play card and board games
- ▶ Make art or do crafts
- ▶ Write stories and poetry together

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# Connecting with Family/Friends

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- ▶ Read stories virtually
- ▶ Online Bookclub
- ▶ Create and send video's
- ▶ Care packages
- ▶ Virtual dance parties



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# Connecting with Family/Friends

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- ▶ Host a virtual meal
- ▶ Attend a virtual concert (“cloud clubbing”), church service, or exercise or yoga class
- ▶ Play an online game together
- ▶ Watch a movie together

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# Connecting with Culture

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- ▶ Read books about your culture
- ▶ Cook a meal that reflects cultural heritage
- ▶ Play and dance to culturally relevant music
- ▶ Visit museums around the world via [Google Arts & Culture](#)

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# Connecting with Yourself

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- ▶ Meditate or do yoga
- ▶ Journal or read
- ▶ Exercise
- ▶ Adequate sleep
- ▶ Eat healthfully
- ▶ Let light in
- ▶ Have self compassion
- ▶ Stay connected

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# Tips to Manage Stress & Anxiety

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- ▶ Be kind to yourself
- ▶ Routine
- ▶ Stay Informed
- ▶ Learning can be fun
- ▶ Take care of your body



Coronavirus Resources & Tips for Parents, Children & Others.  
Prevention Child Abuse America.

# References

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- ▶ Pain Isn't Always Obvious Know the Signs, Suicide is Preventable. How to Use Social Media for Suicide Prevention. User Guide. [http://eiconline.org/teamup/wp-content/files/13-CALM-0106-Socialmedia\\_Guide\\_FNL.pdf](http://eiconline.org/teamup/wp-content/files/13-CALM-0106-Socialmedia_Guide_FNL.pdf)
- ▶ Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Center for Disease Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/suicideTechnicalPackage.pdf>
- ▶ WA State Suicide Prevention Plan. <http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/Washington631-058-SuicidePrevPlan.pdf>
- ▶ Support for Suicidal Individuals on Social and Digital Media. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. [https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/lifeline\\_socialmedia\\_toolkit.pdf](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/lifeline_socialmedia_toolkit.pdf)
- ▶ Safe and Effective Messaging for Suicide Prevention. Suicide Prevention Resource Center. <https://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/SafeMessagingrevised.pdf>
- ▶ Coronavirus Resources & Tips for Parents, Children & Others. Prevention Child Abuse America. <https://preventchildabuse.org/coronavirus-resources/>
- ▶ Promote Social Connectedness and Support. Suicide Prevention Resource Center. <https://www.sprc.org/comprehensive-approach/social-connectedness>
- ▶ Strategic Direction for the Prevention of Suicidal Behavior. Promoting Individual, Family, and Community Connectedness to Prevent Suicidal Behavior. [https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/Suicide\\_Strategic\\_Direction\\_Full\\_Version-a.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/Suicide_Strategic_Direction_Full_Version-a.pdf)
- ▶ Sources of Strength. <https://sourcesofstrength.org/homebased>
- ▶ QPR Institute. <https://qprinstitute.com/>. Personal Communication
- ▶ Coping and Support Training. <https://www.reconnectingyouth.com/content/our-programs/cast> Personal Communication



# Questions

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## Contact Info

More Information:

<https://www.theathenaforum.org/>

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