

Asking for Help

Asking for help may not always feel easy. Maybe our fear is in the way, or we may think it makes us weak. But, when we ask for help, it can make us stronger, strengthen relationships, and lead to new perspectives. Here are some useful phrases to try so you can begin to feel better and supported.

- "When you get a chance can you contact me? I feel really alone and suicidal, and could use some support."
- "I don't want to die, but I don't know how to live. Talking with you may help me feel safe. Are you free to talk?"
- "This is really hard for me to say but I'm having painful thoughts and it might help to talk. Are you free?"

Your life is always worth a phone call and every option is preferable to suicide. Call 988.

Resources

- Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988 (text, chat, call)
- Veteran's Crisis Line. 988, press 1 (text 838255)
- 988 y en español: Press 2
- LGBTQ+: Press 3 or The Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386
- [Teen Crisis Line](https://www.teenline.org/): 415-621-2929
- Friendship Line (60+): 888-670-1360
- OD Free Marin: odfreemarin.org
- Marin Gun Safety Collaborative: www.maringunsafetycollaborative.org
- Felton Institute Survivors of Suicide Attempt Support Group and Youth Loss Survivor Support Group: sbalestreri@felton.org
- Buckelew Programs Allies of Hope Support Group: SOSinfo@Buckelew.org
- Find Your Way Youth Resource Guide: helpcompass.marin9to25.org

Everyone Needs Hope

"Suicide can be an isolating event. The Collaborative provides a powerful connection through this isolation by building a caring community, providing resources--and hope."

~ Sophia Balestreri, Loss Survivor and LOSS Team Program Coordinator, Felton Institute

Strategic Plan

Strategy 1. Establish infrastructure to provide leadership, oversight, and accountability to the strategic plan

Strategy 2. Develop a coordinated system of care and support to promote suicide prevention and wellness

Strategy 3. Implement public campaigns to raise awareness about warning signs, promote available resources, and increase help seeking

Strategy 4. Provide evidence-based suicide prevention trainings and education to Marin County residents

Strategy 5. Provide outreach, engagement, and support to all residents with targeted efforts to groups disproportionately affected by suicide

Strategy 6. Foster safe and healthy environments on all school campuses

Strategy 7. Reduce access to lethal means for those at risk of suicide

Training and Education

With our community partners, trainings are provided in suicide prevention, Gun Violence Restraining Order, Counseling for the Assessment of Lethal Means, Narcan, and safety planning.

Contact: Kara.Connors@MarinCounty.gov

Marin County Suicide Prevention Collaborative

<https://prevention.marinbhers.org>



Marin County Department of Public Health
Division of Behavioral Health
Recovery Services

Marin County BHRS Access Line:
888-818-1115

Marin County Crisis Stabilization Unit:
415-473-6666

Hope & Help.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Call. Text. Chat. 24/7



Marin County
Suicide Prevention
Collaborative

Suicide Can Be Prevented

Everyone can be a helper by learning the facts, having a conversation with someone we are concerned about, and connecting them to safety. Talking about suicide will not cause someone to take their life. In fact, by not talking about it, a person remains at risk.

- **Know the signs.** Most people in distress express warning signs through **feelings, words or actions**, including: feeling burdensome or trapped, experiencing chronic pain, changes in substance use, lacking reasons for living, talking about suicide, feeling rejected, having access to lethal means, etc. Any warning sign is a door opener for a conversation.
- **Ask directly.** “Sometimes people experience thoughts of suicide when they lose hope/are sad/withdrawn. Are you thinking of suicide? Can we store your firearm/ammunition (or substances) until your feelings are resolved and you can stay safe?”
- **Listen.** “I’m sorry you’re in this much pain. I’m here to listen and support you.”
- **Connect.** “I’ll sit with you. I want to make sure that you stay safe. Let’s call 988 (or therapist, parent, etc.) together for support.”
- **Follow up.** Foster belonging and support while they get stronger and connect by a phone call, text, or in-person, etc.

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. The Public Perceptions of Suicide survey, July 18-20, 2020. Accessed: 12/28/23. <http://tinyurl.com/36875s4m>

Join the Collaborative!

Suicide is a complex health issue that is often difficult to understand. When we first learn of a suicide in our community or on the national news, a common reaction is shock, anguish, confusion, anger, and grief. Compounding these emotions are questions that we struggle with to try and understand the unimaginable.

The Marin County Suicide Prevention Collaborative is one resource in our community that helps create a pathway to compassion, understanding, and connection, especially after sudden loss and grief.

The Collaborative launched in 2020 following the Board of Supervisor’s approval of the Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan. The Collaborative is comprised of public and private agencies and individuals, including allies, loss survivors, providers, advocates, crisis specialists, educators, students, and more. The focus of the Collaborative is to implement the strategic plan through a comprehensive public health framework. The Collaborative meets bi-monthly and hosts trainings, presentations, and events throughout the year.

Sign up today!

Kara.Connors@MarinCounty.gov



What We Know

In our country, there are over 48,000 people who die by suicide. In Marin County, 202 friends, neighbors, and family members have died by suicide over the past five years (2019-24). For every loss, it is estimated that 150 people are impacted.

While these are painful statistics, **we know that suicide can be prevented.** The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention reported that most people want to help someone who may be struggling and are interested in learning how to have a conversation with them. Nearly 90% of the time first responders negotiated with someone at the Golden Gate Bridge, they are successfully led to safety. **This is promising news.**



By participating on the Collaborative, you can:

- Help prioritize specific goals and activities related to the strategic plan
- Share emerging trends, data, and/or issues experienced in your community and those you serve
- Elevate the voices of those with lived experience and are bereaved by suicide
- Act as an ambassador of the Collaborative by sharing information, social media, etc.
- Participate on a Community Action Team