

# 2014 NALC Convention

## EAP Presentation





# Preventing Suicide

# Take a Moment and Reflect:



- For many people, suicide is the end result that *begins with a thought*: “I could kill myself.”
- Without intervention, some suicidal people continue on a deadly *journey of tunnel vision*: suicide starts to become the only viable option
- For the great majority, the desire for death isn't the main focus; rather, it is the *need to stop unimaginable pain*

# Take a Moment and Reflect:



**Unresolved stress can result in serious physical and psychological issues. One such issue can be suicide ideation. No one is exempt.**



# Facts About Suicide

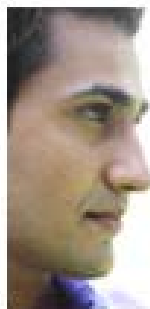


- Every minute, someone in the United States attempts suicide.
- Every 16 minutes, someone dies by suicide.
- Worldwide, more people die by suicide than killed by war and homicide *combined*.
- Women *attempt* suicide twice as often as men.
- Men *die by* suicide 4 times as often as women.

# Facts About Suicide



- More than 90% of completed suicides have a contributing factor of a mental disorder.
  - Most commonly depression and/or alcohol abuse
- Each suicide intimately affects at least 6 people.



**IT'S COURAGEOUS TO ASK FOR HELP.**

**Treatment works.**

If you or someone you know is in a suicidal crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK.



# What Can You Do



- Know the warning signs and red flags.
- Take them seriously.
- If you see the signs in yourself, get help
- If you see them in someone else: Engage the person in getting help.



**You do not need to diagnose or understand the reasons.**

**Just seek assistance from a professional.**



# Know the Signs



- Always sad
- Purposelessness
- Constant low mood
- Withdrawal
- Desperation
- Sleep problems
- Anxiety
- Weight loss/gain
- Pessimism
- Increase alcohol/drug use
- Impulsive/risky behavior
- Talk of suicide
- Giving away possessions
- Unexpected rage or anger



# Listen to What is Said



Someone contemplating suicide may give early indications that should be heard and taken seriously:

- I wish I were dead.
- No one would miss me if I were gone.
- If it weren't for my family, I would just kill myself.
- It isn't worth it anymore.

**Take any threat of suicide  
*seriously.***



# Question to What is Said



Just because someone exhibits these signs, does not mean they are thinking of suicide.

And, someone who *is* thinking of committing suicide may not display any of these signs.

So ... what *do* you do?

**ASK**

# Discussing Suicide



Suicide is a difficult subject to talk about with anyone – family, friends, co-workers ...

But it *is* a conversation that could



**SAVE A LIFE**

# Why It's So Hard to Talk About

- It's personal.
- It's none of my business.
- I would not know what to say.



It is a difficult subject to talk about, whether you are a co-worker talking with a peer, a manager/supervisor talking with an employee, or a union steward/member talking with another employee.

But, it is a conversation that must happen if someone is thinking about suicide.

We all need to connect and take the time when we see the need.

# What to Do?



- **Q**uestion
  - Ask the person **if they are having thoughts** about suicide. Open up a conversation that may lead you to...
- **P**ersuade
  - Encourage and support the person to **seek professional help** so you can...
- **R**efer
  - Get them to local resources or call **the EAP**, or 1-800-Suicide for prevention and an evaluation.

# Start the Conversation



**Listen to what the person says and encourage them to open up and talk.**



# The Do's and Don'ts



## Don't

- Judge
- Give ultimatums
- Be sworn to secrecy
- Lecture
- Act shocked
- Give advice
- Abruptly leave

## Do

- Let them know you care
- Take them seriously
- **Help get to resources**
- Say you will follow up and then follow up
- Take action
- Be direct
- Be persistent



# Offer the EAP



- Let them know that the EAP is available.
  - “Have you ever called the EAP?”
  - Make a room with a phone available

## HOWEVER

**If the person expresses desperate thoughts or a threat of suicide, *call 911.***

# Let's Review – Remember QPR



- **Q**uestion
  - Ask the person **if they are having thoughts** about suicide. Open up a conversation that may lead you to...
- **P**ersuade
  - Encourage and support the person to **seek professional help** so you can...
- **R**efer
  - Get them to local resources or call **the EAP**, or 1-800-Suicide for prevention and an evaluation.

# Don't Wait



As with any illness, early detection and treatment is vital in helping to ensure better outcomes and more lives saved.

**Q P R**

**Early recognition of the warning signs and immediate intervention with **QPR** can get the person the help they need before the need for a 911 call arises.**

# Prevention



**Substantial evidence supports the view that connectedness between persons **reduces risk of suicidal behavior.****

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**  
**Many resources exist to help.**

If you or someone you know is in a suicidal crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK.

**The ‘connections’ in our life are those that are family and extended family, friendships, work relationships, community involvement, neighbors, schools, universities, etc.**

# What is CONNECTEDNESS?



- **Connectedness** is the means by which people come together, relate, and interact.
- Relationships are where connectedness is practiced.
- The connectedness developed in our relationships hold the potential to save lives

# Prevention



**It is important that all of us have an understanding of how we can help ourselves and others.**

**Our work connects us.....**



# YOUR FIRST RESPONSIBILITY



- **Take care of YOURSELF**
  - Go back to self-care basics
  - Learn a new skill/hobby
  - Practice meditation
  - Have a yearly mental health check up
  - Connect to the people in your life



# Watch out for others



- Learn the names of the people in your life
- Look at people in the eye
- When you ask a question - wait for an answer
- State your observations
- Ask relevant questions
- Show genuine appreciation or concern
- Manage conflict in the moment

# The overall value of CONNECTEDNESS



- **Reduces risk of suicidal behavior**
- **Found to be protective against suicidal thoughts and behaviors**
- **Important to the prevention of both suicidal behavior and interpersonal violence**
- **Reduces stress**
- **Improved overall health (increased disease resistance)**
- **Discourages maladaptive coping**
- **Positive influences lead to positive choices**

# Q&A





# Understanding and Managing Stress

# STRESS



Stress is a reaction to a stimulus that disturbs our physical or mental equilibrium.

**STRESS**

**EUSTRESS**

(good stress)

# Acute vs. Chronic Stress



- A little bit of stress, known as “acute stress,” can be exciting—it keeps us active and alert.
- But long-term, or “chronic stress,” can have detrimental effects on health. You may not be able to control the stressors in your world, but you can alter your reaction to them.

# Stress



Whether we're late for work, stuck in the wrong line at the store, pushing to meet a deadline, or facing a growing pile of bills ...

... we're all well acquainted with stress.

**It's a normal part of life  
that we can't escape.**



# Impact on Body and Mind



- Higher blood pressure and heart disease
- Insomnia and fatigue
- Headache and indigestion
- Backaches, muscle tension, leg cramps
- Decreased functioning of your immune system
- Emotional and behavioral consequences
  - Depression
  - Anger/irritability
  - Feelings of helplessness
- Alcohol/substance abuse
- Relationship problems
- Eating disorders

# Too Much or Too Little



- Too much causes health and relationships problems
- Too little causes boredom, lack of performance, and carelessness

**The key is finding the stress level that is “optimal” for you.**



# Stress management plan



- You can't always anticipate stressful situations so it's a good idea to have a release strategy that you know works for you



# Dealing with Stress



- Planning for major changes
- Learning to be flexible
- Prioritizing
- Setting attainable goals
- Allowing yourself time to adapt to change
- Making good nutrition and regular exercise a part of your daily routine
- Staying social
- Seek professional help



# Video

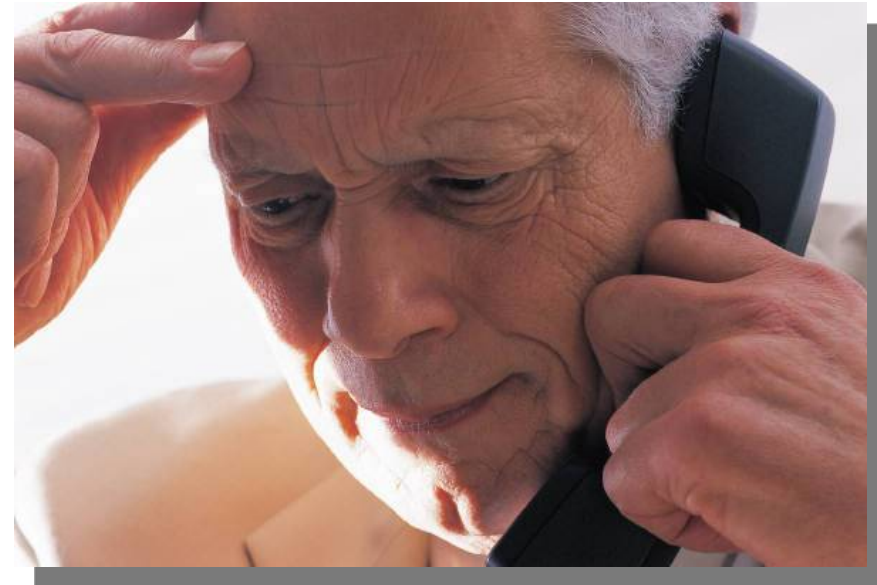


# The EAP for You



If you know someone who you are concerned about, the EAP is also available for *you*.

- You can call to
  - Discuss your concerns
  - Learn ways to approach the person
  - Find ways to cope with the feelings you may have about the situation



# Q&A





# The EAP for You



USPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

*A Program You Can Trust*



**800-327-4968**

(800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 877-492-7341

[www.EAP4YOU.com](http://www.EAP4YOU.com)