

LEARN Saves Lives: Suicide Prevention Training

W FOREFRONT
SUICIDE PREVENTION

*Please complete the
pre-training survey here:*

https://redcap.link/gen_LEARN_pre



*Please download the
participant packet here:*

https://redcap.link/parent_docs



Parent/Caregiver Training
Charlene Ray
Northshore School District
May 9, 2024



Today's Trainer



Charlene Ray
MSW, LICSW

- Forefront Trainer

Forefront's Mission

Forefront Suicide Prevention is a Center of Excellence at the University of Washington.

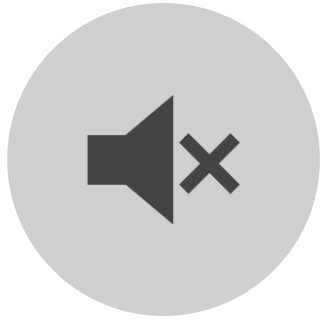
Our mission is to help people take action to prevent suicide in their communities.



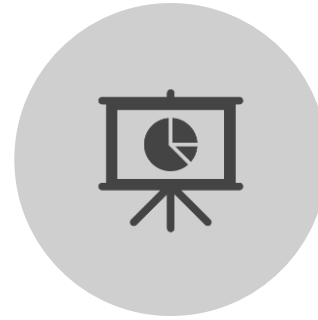
LEARN



Today's virtual training



Participants are muted but can engage in the chat.



Slides will be sent out in PDF form after the presentation.



This training will take approximately 60 minutes.



Questions? Let us know in the chat!

Take care

- This topic can be emotionally challenging
- Feel free to step away for a moment if you need to take a break
- Keep any personal information shared today to yourself
- Take care of yourself following this training



Learning objectives



1

Explain the public health issue of youth suicide and why young people may consider suicide

2

Identify, understand, and be ready to support someone who may be at risk for suicide

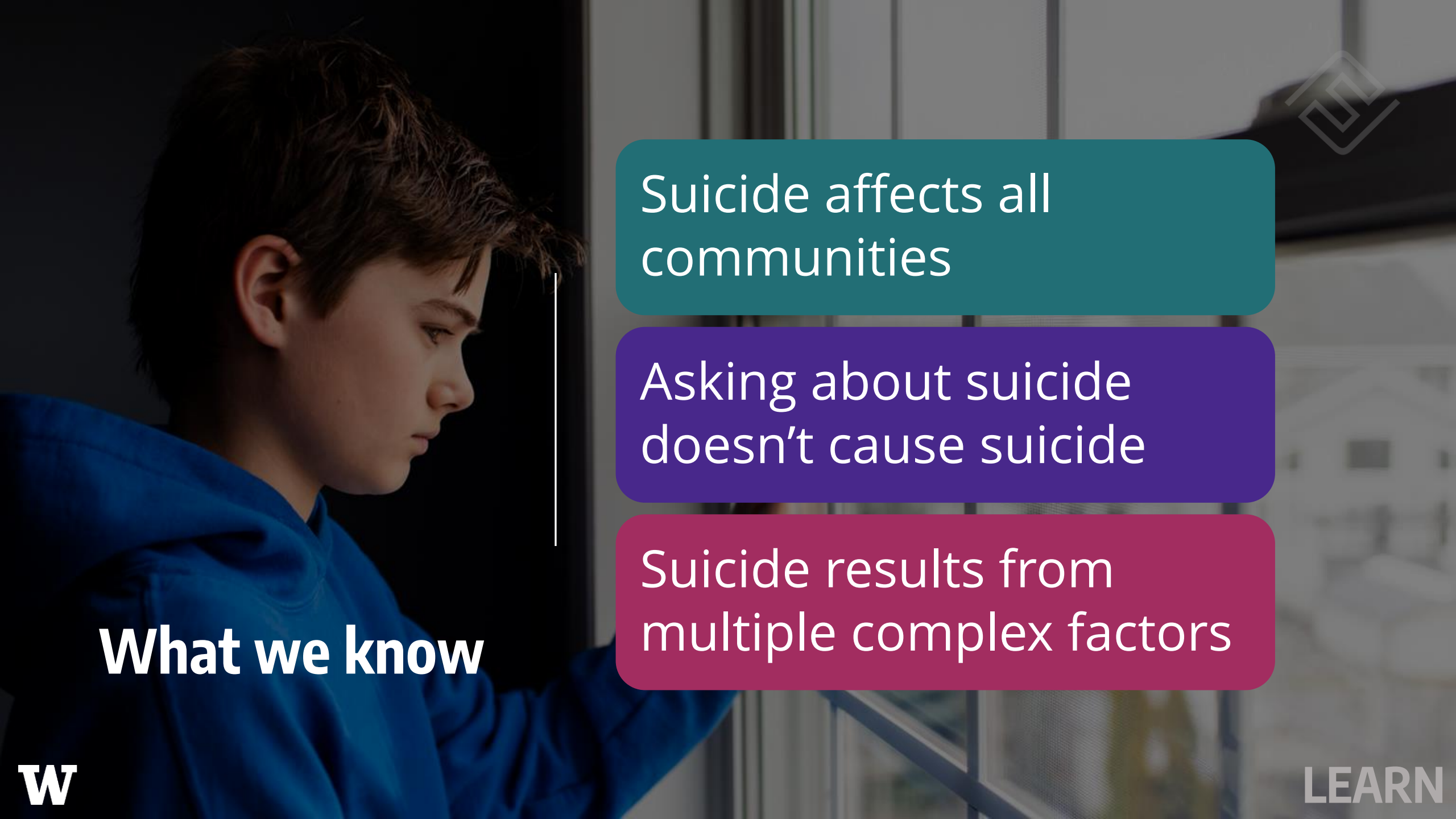
3

Apply the LEARN steps in a practice scenario



Learning objective 1:

Explain the public health issue of suicide and why young people may consider suicide.



Suicide affects all communities

Asking about suicide doesn't cause suicide

Suicide results from multiple complex factors

What we know

What protects against suicide?

- Connections to friends, family, culture, and community
- Limited access to lethal means (e.g., firearms, medications)
- Coping and problem-solving skills
- Access to physical and mental health care

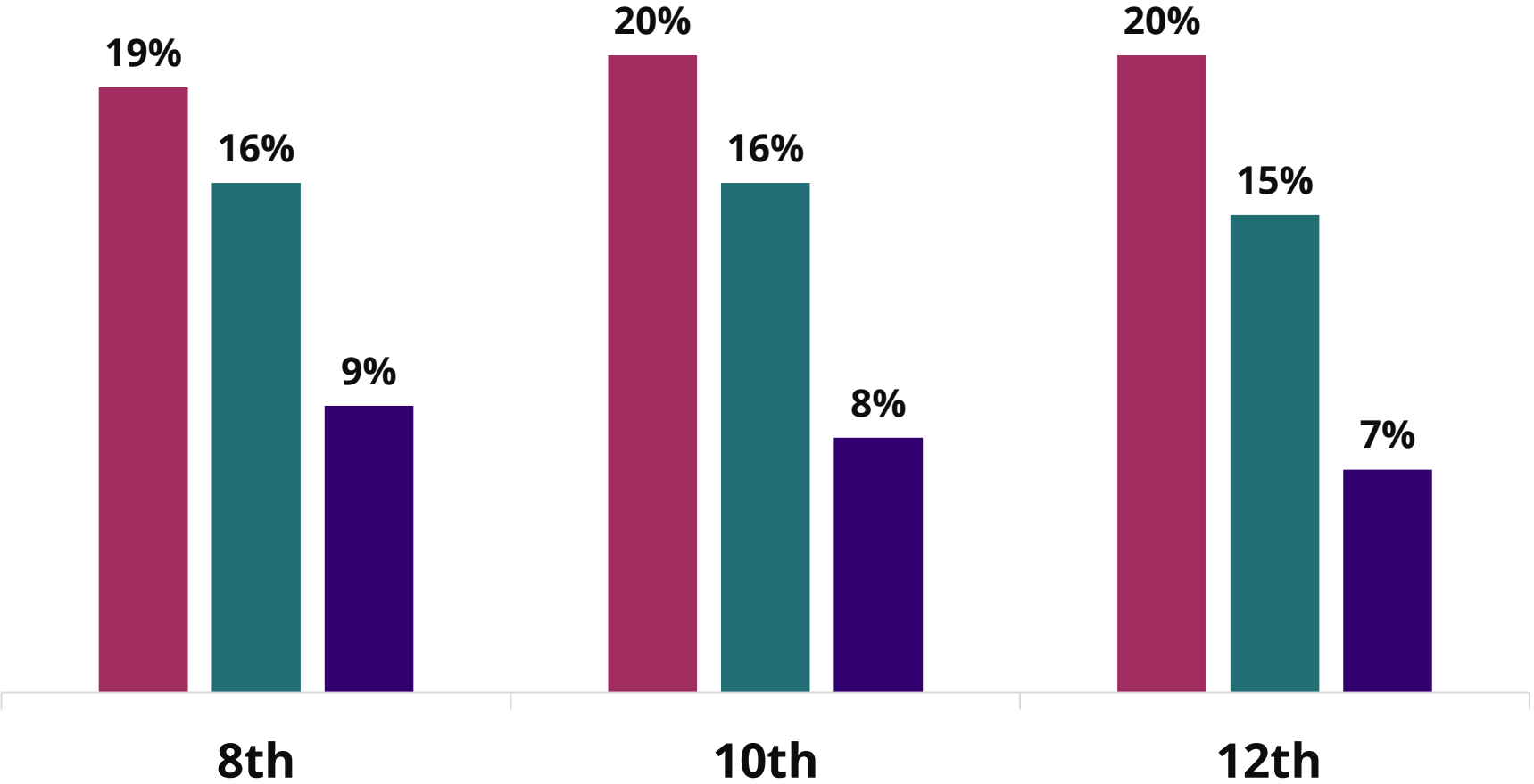


Youth in the US, 2021

Suicide is the
2nd leading cause
of death among
those ages 10-24

Youth suicides
account for
15% of all suicides

What Washington youth are saying



HYS: Suicidal Feelings and Actions

- Considered suicide
- Made a plan for suicide
- Attempted suicide



Suicidal thinking

Suicide isn't always about wanting to die.

It's about wanting to end overwhelming pain.





What's my role as a parent?



Language matters



Instead of saying
“committed suicide”,
Let’s say **“died by suicide”**
or **“took their own life”**





Learning objective 2:

Identify, understand, and be ready to support someone who may be at risk for suicide.



Our model:

Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps



Look for signs

Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps



Look for warning signs



**Emotions,
Feelings**

**Actions,
Behaviors**

Experiences



Look for warning signs



Emotions, Feelings

- Depression, anxiety
- Anger, irritability, agitation
- Unusual mood swings
- Feeling hopeless/helpless
- Loneliness
- Shame, humiliation
- Emotional/physical pain
- Sudden unexplainable joy after a period of depression

Actions, Behaviors

- Withdrawing
- Isolating
- Substance use
- Giving away prized possessions
- Acquiring lethal means
- Risky/reckless behavior
- Joking/frequent statements about death
- Self-injury
- Threats against self or others

Experiences

- Significant life changes or loss
- Bullying, harassment
- Discrimination linked to sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or race/ethnicity
- Personal and/or historical trauma
- Previous suicide attempts or family history of suicide
- Access to lethal means

Hidden warning signs

- Some teenagers hide their plans or maintain normal behavior for fear that others will learn about suicidal ideation
- Teenagers are more likely to share with an adult that they are having thoughts of suicide if they trust that person





Empathize & Listen

Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps



Brené Brown on empathy



Your child tells you they are struggling. Which is the best way to demonstrate empathy?

1. Offer solutions to fix the problem – after all, you don't want to see them hurting.

2. Share a story about a time that something similar happened to you.

3. Sit with them and say, "It sounds like you're going through a lot right now."

4. Pull up a funny video on your phone to help cheer them up.



Components of empathy

Helpful things to say:
I'm so glad you told me.
Tell me more, I'm listening.



Try to see the world as others see it



Be non-judgmental



Validate another's feelings



Communicate understanding

Empathic things to say

- I'm so glad you told me
- Tell me more, I'm listening
- You must really be hurting
- It's okay to be honest
- I'm here to help
- I love you no matter what



Scenario



Your teen is getting behind in schoolwork and has been noticeably absent from friend groups and other activities they normally love to do. They've spent several weekends mostly sleeping instead of texting/hanging out with friends.

What are some signs?

What could you say to show empathy?





Ask about suicide

Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps



When do I ask?

- Multiple signs
- Big changes in a person's life or behavior
- When your gut tells you to

**Concerned?
JUST ASK**



Hard conversations

Prepare yourself emotionally and mentally:

- If possible, plan where/when you might have the conversation
- Practice the LEARN steps
- Make sure you have resources available
- Think about your own support system



Ask directly

- Be courageous and direct
- Avoid vague language

**Are you thinking
about suicide?**

**Are you thinking
about killing
yourself?**



How do I ask about suicide?



Sometimes when people are...

they're thinking about suicide.

Are you thinking about
suicide?

Insert any warning signs
you see here!

Example:

"Sometimes when people feel like things don't matter anymore and they're isolating from friends, they're thinking about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?"



Let's debrief

How did it feel
to say the word
"suicide?"



If they say **no**...

- Stay neutral and non-judgmental
- Let them know you care
- If you are still concerned, gather more information and ask again. If they still say no, ask:
 - “If you were thinking about suicide, who would you talk to?”
- Move on to the R and N steps



If they say **yes**...

- Stay neutral and non-judgmental
- Take it seriously
- Thank them for their honesty
- Acknowledge the pain they are in
- Move on to the R and N steps
- Get support for yourself next



They ask you not to tell anyone. How can you respond?





IF THEY SAY YES



Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps

Reduce the danger



Important follow up questions



Have you
thought about
how you might
end your life?

Do you have
access to those
methods?

Have you
thought about
when you
might do this?

Remember: Putting time & distance between a suicidal person and the methods they may use can save their life!

What's in your home?



95% of parents don't believe their child would take a prescription drug for misuse



82% of youth suicides by firearm involve a family gun
Suicide is **3 times** more likely in a home with a gun



Youth suicide by suffocation has **more than doubled** from 2000-2020

Make your home safer



LOCK UP TODAY

Firearms
Prescription medications
Over-the-counter medications

LOCK UP IN A CRISIS

Alcohol, drugs
Belts, ropes, plastic bags
Knives, sharps, car keys
Chemicals, pesticides



**SAFER HOMES
SUICIDE AWARE**

Visit saferhomescoalition.org





Next steps

Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps



Next steps to take

During the crisis

- **Do not leave this person alone**
- Ask trusted people to help remove any dangers
- Seek help immediately
- Connect them to a counselor/crisis line

Following the crisis

- Continue to check in and offer support
- Contact pediatrician, elders, relatives etc.
- Speak with school counselors and community organizations about support
- Foster a culture of help-seeking



Protective relationships

Parent connections

- Encourage open communication
- Share/ask about activities and interests

Friendship groups that are close

Trusted adults at school

- Students can find help when they know where to go
- Can reduce the risk of bullying and other harmful behaviors

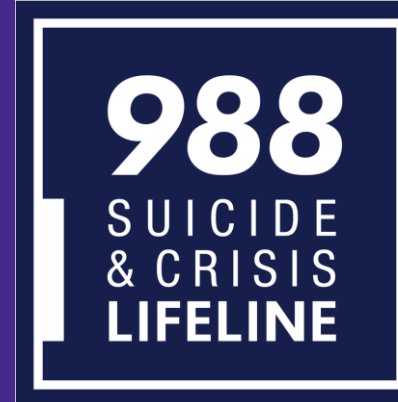


Helpful resources in a crisis



Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:

- Press 1 for veteran services
- Oprima 2 para español
- Press 3 for the Trevor Project
- Press 4 for Native and Strong in Washington



Crisis Text Line: Text "HEAL" to 741741

- Mande AYUDA para español

Trans Lifeline:
1-877-565-8860

TeenLink:
1-866-833-6546



Learning objective 3:

Apply the LEARN steps in a practice scenario.

The LEARN Conversation





The LEARN Conversation

What warning signs were concerning?

How was empathy displayed in the video?

How did they ask directly about suicide?

How did they address removing and reducing danger?

What next steps were taken?



Review: Learning objectives



1

Explain the public health issue of youth suicide and why young people may consider suicide

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Identify, understand, and be ready to support someone who may be at risk for suicide

3

Apply the LEARN steps in a practice scenario.

Action steps you can take today



Use what you've learned to reach out to someone in distress



Say "died by suicide"



Add 24-hour crisis resources into your phone



Make your community safer to help prevent suicide

**Interested in helping us with suicide prevention efforts?
Ask your trainer how you can get involved.**

Thank you!

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SUICIDE PREVENTION

Please complete the post-training survey:

https://redcap.link/gen_LEARN_post



Visit us at: intheforefront.org

   [intheforefrontwa](https://www.instagram.com/intheforefrontwa)

Questions? Concerns?
Email ffront@uw.edu