Santa Paula Unified School District

Mental Health Matters

September 2025

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Suicide remains one of the leading causes of death in the United States among young people aged 10 to 34 and adults 75 and older. In 2022, over 49,000 individuals died by suicide. That's one death every 11 minutes.

Through awareness, education, and support, it is possible to prevent mental health crises and promote the well-being of students, staff, and families.

Facts

- Men are more than 3 times as likely as women to die by suicide.
- Firearms are used in nearly half of all suicides.
- In 2021, an estimated 1.7 million people attempted suicide.
- 54% of those who died by suicide had no known mental health diagnosis, but many may have been suffering silently.

Risk Factors

Risk factors are characteristics that make it more likely that someone will consider, attempt, or die by suicide. They can't cause or predict a suicide attempt, but they're important to be aware of.

- Previous attempts or family history of suicide
- Depression, bipolar disorder, or substance misuse
- Access to lethal means
- Major losses (breakups, financial/legal problems)
- Chronic illness or pain
- Bullying or social isolation
- Trauma or abuse

Warning Signs

Be attentive to changes in behavior or mood that may indicate someone is struggling. Common warning signs include:

- Talking about wanting to die or kill themselves
- Searching for ways to end their life, such as looking online or acquiring means like a gun
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped, overwhelmed, or in unbearable pain
- Saying they feel like a burden to others
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious, agitated, or behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing from family, friends, or social activities
- Showing intense anger or talking about revenge
- Experiencing extreme or sudden mood swings

If you notice one or more of these signs in someone, it's important to reach out and offer support.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

OPTUM®

Need Mental Health Support?

OPTUM EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) OFFERS **FREE CONFIDENTIAL HELP**

Call toll-free

888-444-8624 any time

OR

Go to www.liveandworkwell.com and browse as a guest using code **CSEBO**



SPUSD

This newsletter is brought to you by the Mental Health Counselors:

Lisa de la O, LMFT:
LdelaO@santapaulausd.org

Kandice Martinez, ASW:
Kmartinez@santapaulausd.org

Deborah Ujfalusy, LCSW:
DUjfalusy@santapaulausd.org

Liset Llerenas, LPCC:
LLlerenas@santapaulausd.org

In case of an Emergency:

- **911 For Immediate Support**
- **Ventura County Crisis Team (866) 998-2243 –(24 hours)**



Protective Factors

Support systems and healthy connections help reduce suicide risk. These include:

- Access to effective mental health care
- Strong relationships with family or community
- Cultural identity and belonging
- Good problem-solving and coping skills
- Consistent follow-up from care providers

Steps You Can Take to Help

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline recommends five key steps you can take to support someone who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts:

Ask
Don't be afraid to ask directly: *"Are you thinking about suicide?"* Research shows this doesn't increase risk, it can help open a path to support.

Be There
Listen without judgment. Whether in person, on the phone, or by text, your presence matters.

Keep Them Safe
Limit access to lethal means, such as medications or firearms, especially if the person is at immediate risk.

Help Them Connect
Encourage them to speak with a mental health professional or contact the 988 Lifeline by calling or texting **988**.

Follow Up
Stay in touch. A simple check-in can offer ongoing support and make a lasting impact.

Full article found at https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/suicide-prevention

Local and National Resources and Support

911 For Immediate Support

Ventura County Crisis Team (866) 998-2243 –(24 hours)

Suicide Prevention Lines (24 Hours)

⇒ **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** 988 or (800) 273-8255

⇒ **Suicide Prevention Crisis Line** (877) 727-4747

⇒ **National Hope line Network** (800) SUICIDE or (800) 784-2433

⇒ **California Youth Crisis Line** (800) 843- 5200 –24 hours, bilingual

⇒ **TEEN LINE** (310) 855-4673 or text TEEN to 839863 – a teen-to-teen hotline with community outreach services, from 6pm-10pm PST daily. Text, email, and message board also available, with limited hours—visit http://teenlineonline.org for more information.

⇒ **The Trevor Project** (866) 488-7386 – a 24-hour crisis line that provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) young people ages 13-24. Text and chat also available, with limited