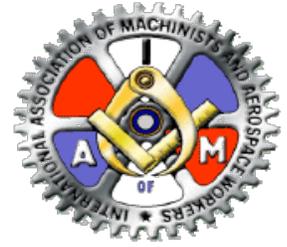




HELPING HANDS



Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

(Excerpts from NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, nami.org, web site)

Suicidal thoughts, much like mental health conditions, can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background. Suicidal thoughts, although common, should not be considered normal and often indicate more serious issues. September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month — a time to raise awareness about this stigmatized, and often taboo, topic. In addition to shifting public perception, we use this month to spread hope and vital information to people affected by suicide. Our goal is ensuring that individuals, friends, and families have access to the resources they need to discuss suicide prevention and to seek help.

Warning Signs

Here are a few other warning signs of suicide:

- Increased alcohol and drug use
- Aggressive behavior
- Withdrawal from friends, family, and community
- Dramatic mood swings
- Impulsive or reckless behavior

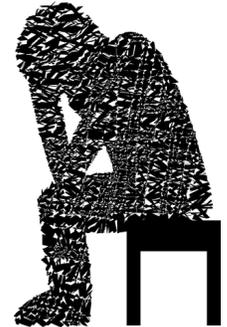
Suicidal *behaviors* are a psychiatric emergency. If you or a loved one starts to take any of these steps, seek immediate help from a health care provider or call 911:

- Collecting and saving pills or buying a weapon
- Giving away possessions
- Tying up loose ends, like organizing personal papers or paying off debts
- Saying goodbye to friends and family

If you are unsure, a licensed mental health professional can help with an assessment.

Risk Factors

- A family history of suicide
- Substance use. Drugs can create mental highs and lows that worsen suicidal thoughts.
- Intoxication. More than 1 in 3 people who die from suicide are under the influence of alcohol.
- Access to firearms
- A serious or chronic medical illness
- Gender. Although more women than men attempt suicide, men are nearly 4x more likely to die by suicide.
- A history of trauma or abuse
- Prolonged stress
- A recent tragedy or loss



Support In a Crisis

When a suicide-related crisis occurs, friends and family are often caught off-guard, unprepared, and unsure of what to do. The behaviors of a person experiencing a crisis can be unpredictable, changing dramatically without warning.

There are a few ways to approach a suicide-crisis:

- Talk openly and honestly. Don't be afraid to ask questions like: "Do you have a plan?"
- Remove means such as guns, knives, or stockpiled pills
- Calmly ask simple and direct questions, like "Can I help you call your psychiatrist?"
- If there are multiple people around, have one person speak at a time
- Express support and concern
- Don't argue, threaten, or raise your voice
- Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong
- If you're nervous, try not to fidget or pace
- Be patient

Like any other health emergency, it's important to address a mental health crisis like suicide quickly and effectively. Unlike other health emergencies, mental health crises don't have instructions or resources on how to help or what to expect.

Employee Assistance Programs are workplace-based services that help employees/union members resolve problems. These problems can be personal or professional in nature. An EAP will listen to your situation, explore the situation with you and make referrals to professionals, and other appropriate resources. This will help you address difficult circumstances quickly as possible. See the box below for your Local EAP.



IAM Peer Employee Assistance Program



The heart and soul of the District 141 Employee Assistance Program is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer their personal time to assist other union members and their families who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP peer coordinators do not make clinical diagnoses or clinical evaluations, however, they are trained to make a basic assessment of your situation and refer you to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation. EAP peer coordinators will follow up to ensure you have been able to access services that addressed the difficulty you were experiencing.

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Suicide Intervention Resources Informational Resource

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- [Know the Warning Signs and Risk Factors of Suicide](#)
- [Being Prepared for a Crisis](#)
- [Navigating a Mental Health Crisis](#)
- [NAMI Help Line](#).

Crisis Resources

If you or someone you know is in an emergency, all **911** immediately. If you are in crisis or are experiencing difficult or suicidal thoughts, call the National Suicide Hotline at **1-800-273 TALK (8255)**. If you're uncomfortable talking on the phone, you can also **741-741** to be connected to a free, trained crisis counselor on the Crisis Text Line.