



Stop the stigma

Mental illnesses and substance use disorders are treatable health conditions—just like asthma, high blood pressure, or diabetes.

Stigma refers to negative opinions of a person or group based on having certain characteristics.

A stigma implies social disapproval and can lead unfairly to discrimination against and exclusion of the individual.

Stigma linked to mental health and addiction often keeps people from seeking the help they need. The effects of stigma—feelings of shame, hopelessness, isolation, reluctance to seek help—are extremely harmful.

Words matter

- Avoid the word “committed” when discussing suicide. Consider using “died by suicide” or “took their life.”
- Share the hopeful message that suicide is preventable in your language and tone.
- Convey that suicidal thoughts and behaviors can be reduced with the proper mental health support and treatment, and these thoughts are not weaknesses or flaws.

Suicide is a leading cause of death in the U.S.

- 1 death from suicide occurs every 11 minutes.
- 12.2 million adults seriously thought about suicide in 2020.
- 1.2 million adults attempted suicide in 2020.

Suicide can be prevented

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, help is available. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **988** or **1-800-273-8255** is available 24/7 and is free and confidential.

In a life-threatening situation, call 911 immediately.

Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Community Care Behavioral Health

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