

# **Umatter® Suicide Prevention Awareness and Skills Training Workshop**

**Program: VT School Counselors Conference  
Killington, VT**

**Date: Nov 6, 2023**

**Facilitator: Kathleen Kilbourne, MA Ed.**



# Welcome!

This training is sponsored by the Vermont Department of Health through funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Garrett Lee Smith Grant Program."





## Before we get started...

Please take a moment to scan this QR code and complete our pre-assessment survey.

All information is non-identifying and confidential and utilized to understand impact and outcomes of our work.

Thank you!





## Goals of Suicide Prevention Awareness

- To identify risk factors and warning signs of suicide and protective factors to resillance building.
- To learn a 3-step intervention process and gain confidence to respond.
- To understand your role as a suicide prevention helper in your school and community.





# The Umatter® Concept

*Built on the foundation of connection and conversation, Umatter® aims to enhance understanding of suicide risk and decrease the stigma of asking for help.*

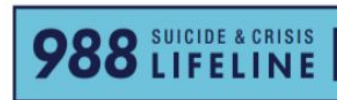
**“You matter because you may need help.  
You matter because you may be able to help”**




This module discusses suicide and related topics. We recognize that many people and communities have been affected by suicide and, due to the sensitive nature of the content, may need to step away; please take a break at any point if needed. If you need support during the module, please text or call 988, and someone will connect you with resources.

## Need Confidential Help for Mental Health?

- **Call or text 988** for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- **Call or text (833) VT-TALKS/(833)888-2557** for the Pathways Peer Support Warmline
- Talk to someone you trust – a family member, friend, health care provider or faith leader
- **Call 211** for local mental health agencies and referrals
- **Resources for help can be found at:** [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org) and [www.vtspc.org](http://www.vtspc.org)



A photograph of five lit candles of varying heights and positions, casting a warm, soft glow. The candles are arranged in a cluster, with some in the foreground and others slightly behind. The background is dark, making the light from the candles stand out. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

*Holding the light: Remembering  
those lost to suicide and those who  
struggle with mental health*

# Sensitive Language

## Please say this....

- Died by suicide
- Took their own life
- Killed themselves
- Suicide attempt
- Suicide death



## Instead of this:

- Committed suicide
- Successful suicide
- Completed suicide
- Failed suicide attempt





# What is Mental Health?

The foundation for individual well-being.

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. (who.int)

**EVERYONE HAS MENTAL HEALTH**

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health and needs regular care and attention.





**IN CRISIS**



**STRUGGLING**



**SURVIVING**



**THRIVING**



**EXCELLING**

Very anxious  
Very low mood  
Absenteeism  
Exhausted  
Very poor sleep  
Weight loss

Anxious  
Depressed  
Tired  
Poor performance  
Poor sleep  
Poor appetite

Worried  
Nervous  
Irritable  
Sad  
Trouble sleeping  
Distracted  
Withdrawn

Positive  
Calm  
Performing  
Sleeping well  
Eating normally  
Normal social activity

Cheerful  
Joyful  
Energetic  
High performance  
Flow  
Fully realising potential

# How are you — really?

## Your Mental Health Continuum

### CONTENT

Feeling content, natural mood fluctuations in response to life events, able to meet challenges most days



#### Strategies

- Connect with others
- Move your body in ways that you enjoy
- Eat at least 3 meals/day
- Sleep 7-8 hours/night
- Create and maintain other routines that help you feel good

### OKAY

Feeling more stressed, variability in mood, struggling to meet challenges, minor disruptions in performance and abilities



#### Strategies

- Seek out positive supports
- Seek out enjoyable activities
- Take care of your body (sleep, food, movement)
- Use strategies that have helped you cope in the past
- Check in on your substance use
- Learn about UNH's academic, physical, and mental health resources

### STRUGGLING

Feeling anxious, low mood, difficulty navigating challenges, disruption in daily functioning, low motivation



#### Strategies

- Stay connected with others
- Take care of your body
- Consider how your substance use is impacting your well-being
- Use coping strategies
- Consider using UNH's academic, physical, and mental health resources

### DISTRESSED

Experiencing intense and distressing emotions, unable to meet life's demands



#### Strategies

- Get professional physical or mental health care
- Confide in most trusted supports
- Take care of your body
- Follow healthcare recommendations
- Use coping strategies

# Learning Check

**Question 1: Choose all that apply: Mental Health includes our....**

a. Emotional Health b. Psychological Health c. Social Well Being d.

All of the Above

**Question 2: People can move back and forth in the mental health continuum.** a. True b. False

# Suicide is complex and complicated.



*No one takes their life for a single reason. Life stresses combined with known risk factors can all contribute to a sense of hopelessness and desperation.*



# Let's Discuss!

Why don't we talk about Suicide?

True or False: Will asking about suicide lead to a suicide?

True or False: People who want to die will do it - there is no point in helping?



# Impact of Brain Health on Suicide

**Ninety percent (90%)** of people who die by suicide have an underlying – *and potentially treatable* – mental health condition. (suicide.org) **Most prevalent:** Depression, Substance Use Disorders and Psychosis.

**Traumatic Brain Injury** - Linked risk for suicide (sprc.org). TBI's can interrupt, limit, erase, and change cognitive and problem solving abilities in the brain, making coping difficult

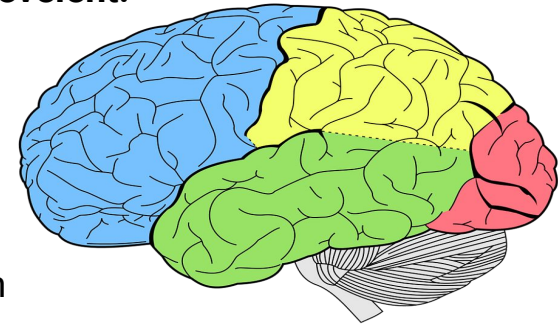
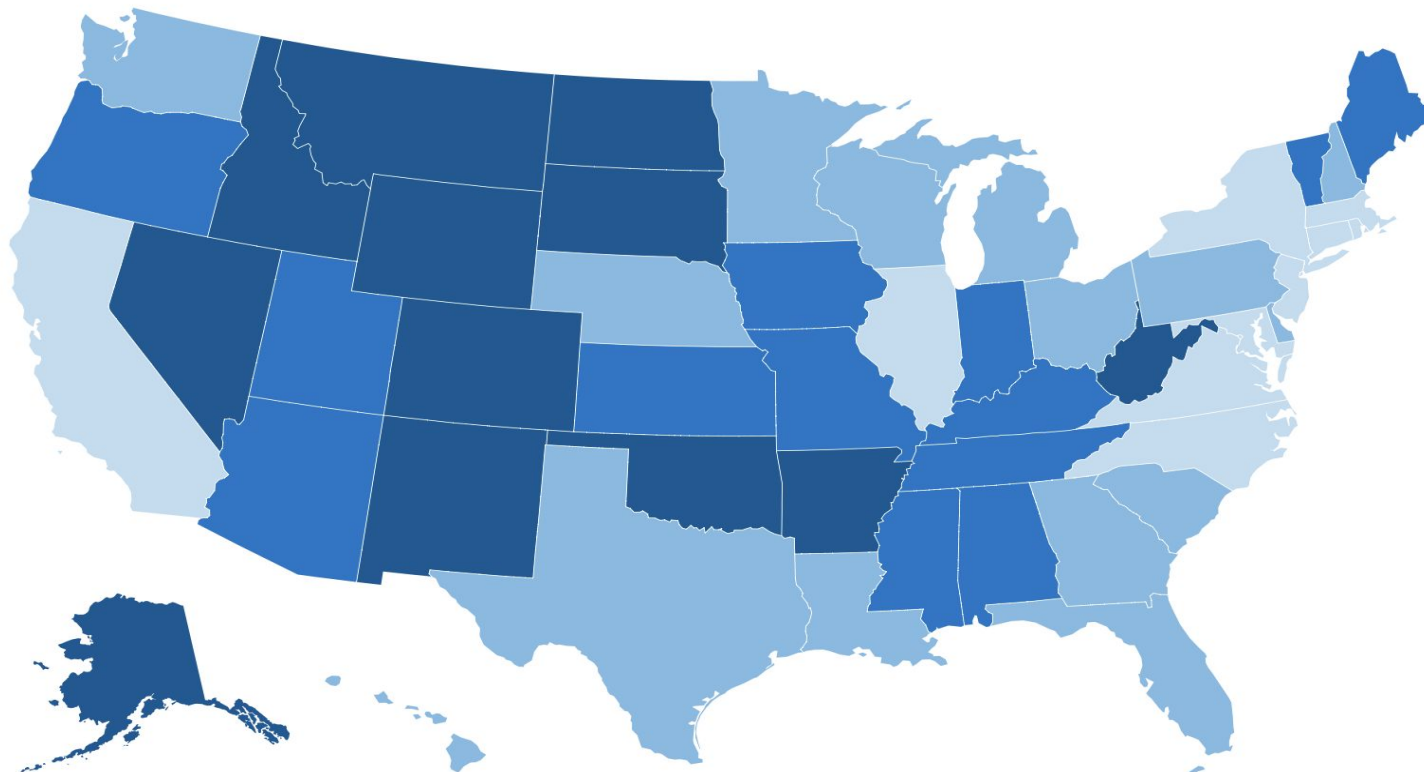


Figure 4

## Suicide Death Rate per 100,000 Population in 2021, Age-Adjusted

■ <13.5 (11 states including D.C.) ■ 13.5 to 15.3 (15 states) ■ 15.5 to 20.3 (13 states) ■ 20.4 to 32.3 (12 states)



NOTE: Analysis of CDC WONDER underlying cause of death data, 2011 to 2021. Suicide deaths were identified using ICD-10 113 Cause List, Intentional self-harm (U03, X60-X84, Y87.0).

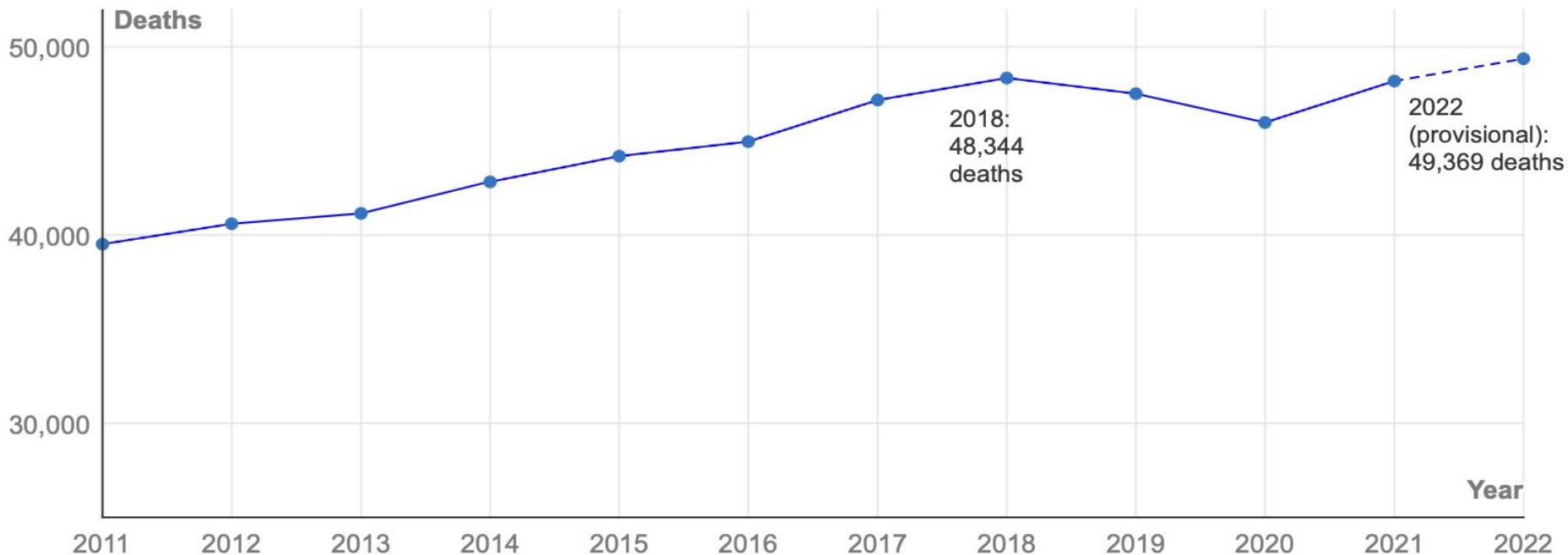
SOURCE: KFF analysis of CDC WONDER • PNG



Figure 1

# Number of Deaths Due to Suicide, 2011 to 2022

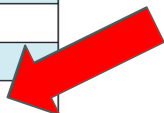
2022 CDC data is provisional



NOTE: Analysis of CDC WONDER underlying cause of death data, 2011 to 2022. Provisional data used for 2022 is not yet final and may represent incomplete data for that year that is subject to change. Suicide deaths are identified using the following codes: X72-X74, U03, X60-X71, X75-X84, and Y87.0) It is possible that some suicides may be classified under other categories.

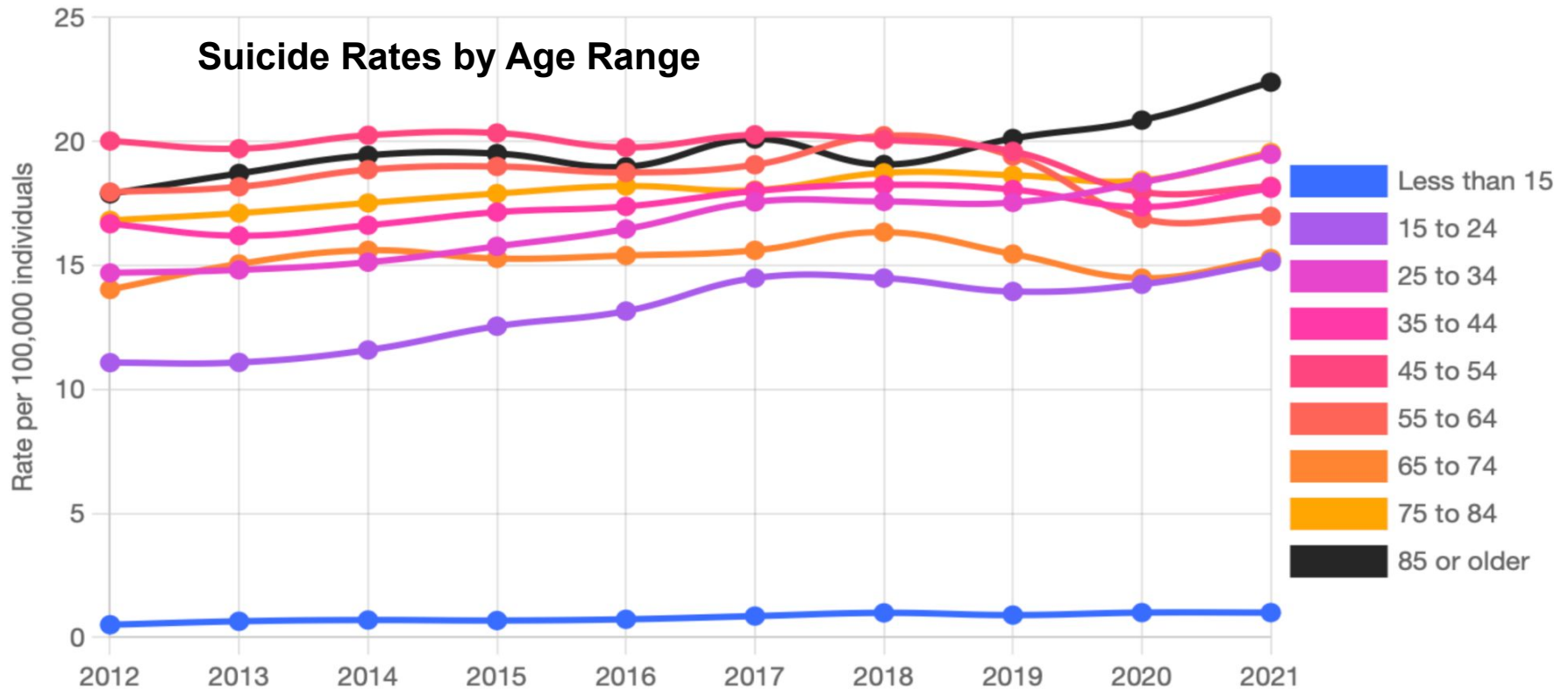
SOURCE: [KFF analysis of CDC WONDER data, 2011 to 2022](#) • PNG

Number of Suicide Deaths Among Vermont Residents, 2017-2021					
County of Residence	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Addison	1	6	8	2	13
Bennington	10	4	7	11	8
Caledonia	12	11	7	5	9
Chittenden	18	25	16	25	26
Essex	2	1	2	3	1
Franklin	14	9	13	8	10
Grand Isle	0	2	3	0	1
Lamoille	6	2	4	3	4
Orange	6	8	10	6	8
Orleans	7	5	3	7	9
Rutland	10	17	11	13	8
Washington	3	9	7	9	20
Windham	12	10	7	11	5
Windsor	11	16	11	13	19
<b>Total Suicide Deaths</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>142</b>
Suicide / Firearm	62	70	59	68	74
Suicide / Poisoning	16	12	13	13	25
Suicide / Suffocation	24	30	31	27	34



Age Group	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
0-14 years	0	0	1	2	1
15-24 years	14	13	11	15	11
25-44 years	45	40	34	37	45
45-64 years	37	48	35	37	52
65+ years	16	24	28	25	33
Sex	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Female	30	23	24	22	28
Male	82	102	85	94	114

*\*2021 data are preliminary and subject to change.*

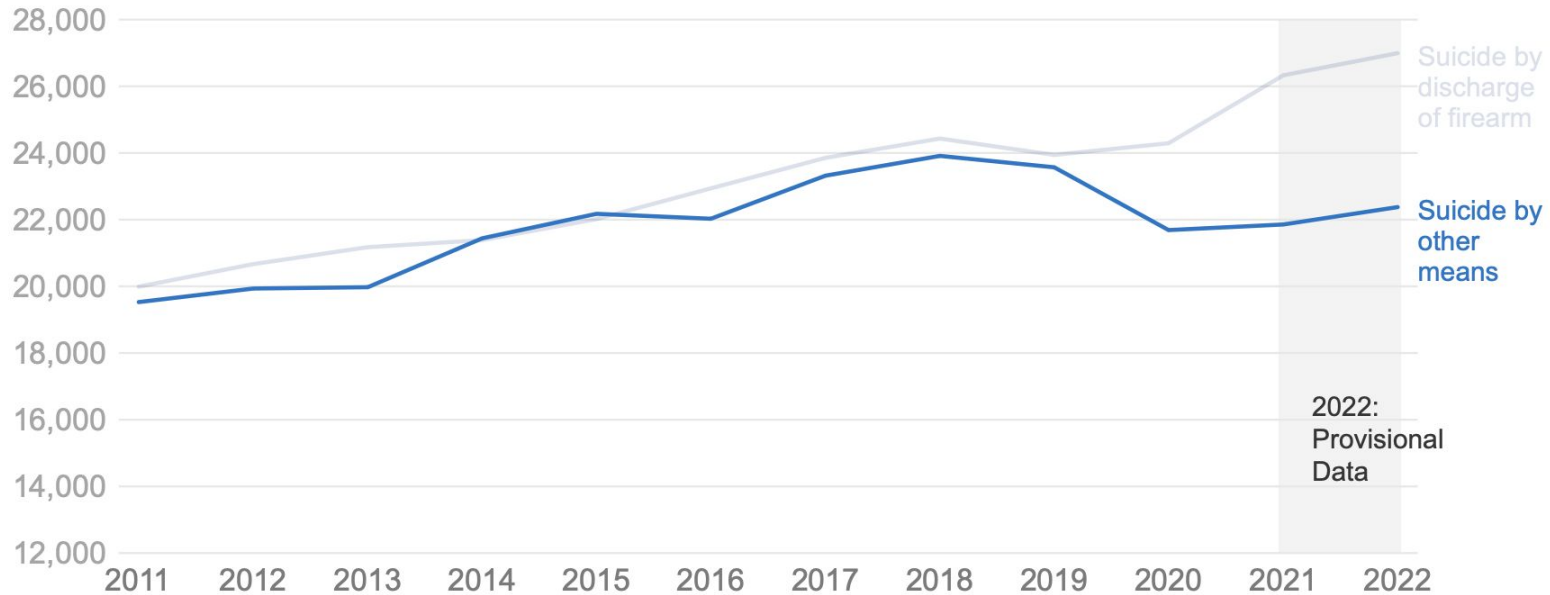


In 2021, the suicide rates were higher among adults ages 25 to 34 years (19.48 per 100,000) and 75 to 84 years (19.56 per 100,000), with the rate highest among adults ages 85 years or older (22.39 per 100,000). Younger groups have had consistently lower suicide rates than middle-aged and older adults. In 2021, adolescents and young adults aged 15 to 24 had a suicide rate of 15.15. (afsp.org)

Figure 2

## Number of Deaths Due to Suicide, by Firearm or Other Means, 2011 to 2022

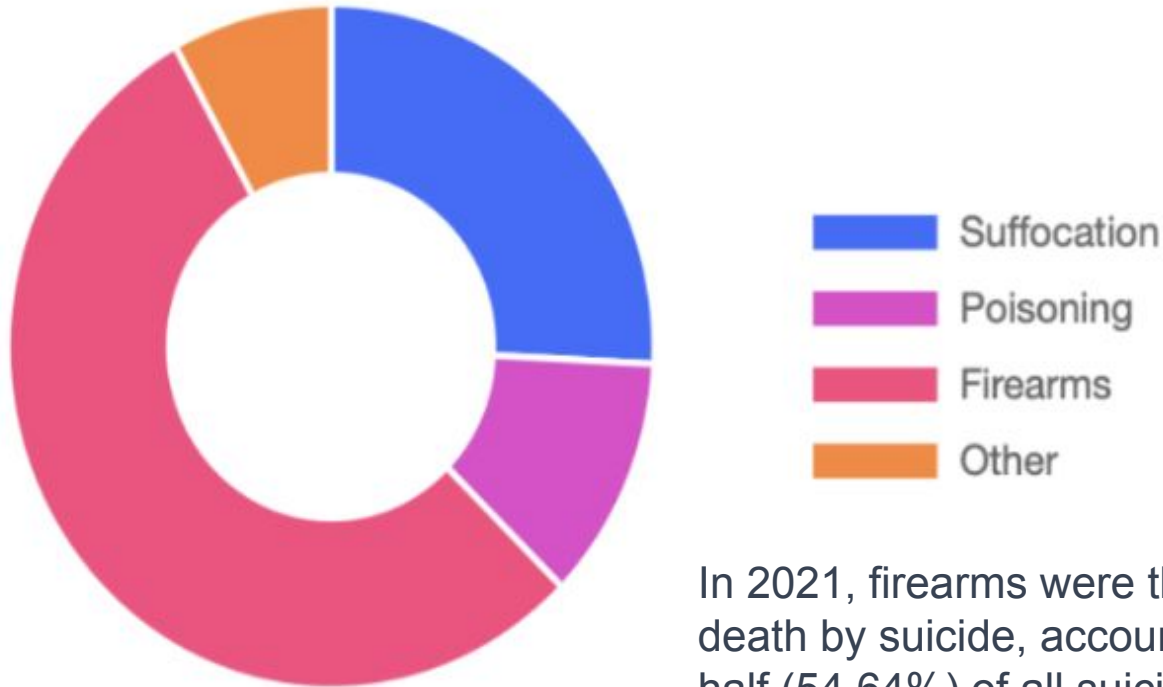
2022 CDC data is provisional



NOTE: Analysis of CDC WONDER underlying cause of death data, 2011 to 2022. Suicide deaths by the discharge of a firearm were identified using codes X72-X74. Suicide deaths by other/unspecified means were identified using ICD-10 codes U03, X60-X71, X75-X84, and Y87.0) The rate of suicides by firearms and suicides by other means are statistically different in 2021 and 2022. It is possible that some suicides may be classified under other categories.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of CDC WONDER data, 2011 to 2021 • [PNG](#)

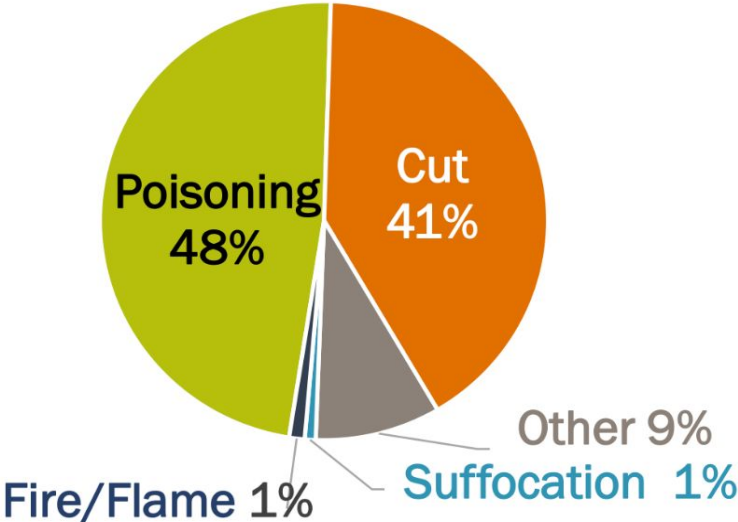
## Suicide Methods



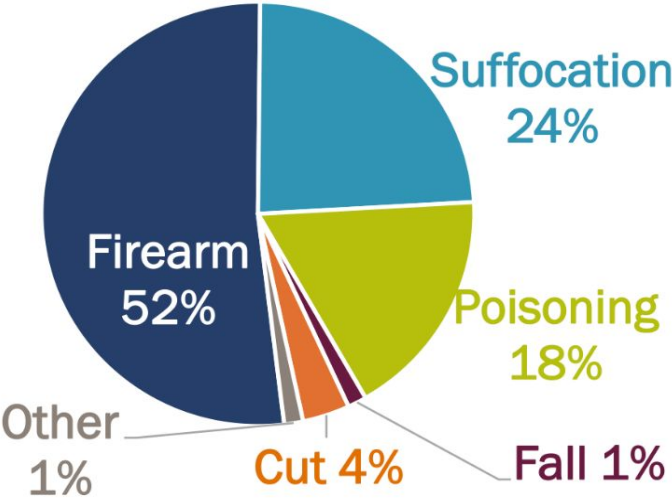
In 2021, firearms were the most common method of death by suicide, accounting for a little more than half (54.64%) of all suicide deaths. The next most common methods were suffocation (including hangings) at 25.80% and poisoning (including drug overdose) at 11.56%. (afsp.org)

# The mechanism or cause of intentional self-harm and suicide.

## Self-harm



## Suicide



Source: Vermont Vital Statistics, 2021; Vermont Uniform Hospital Discharge Data System, 2020.

# Safe Storage and Suicide Prevention: Why it Matters

**Research shows it can take less than 10 minutes  
between  
Thought - Access - Action**

**Safe storage practices increases the time it takes for a  
person experiencing suicidal thoughts to access a lethal  
item.**

During this critical time, the desire to die may wane. The person may be reminded of reasons to live, or someone else may be able to intervene, resulting in a life saved.

Vermont Department of Health; Source:

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2998717/dod-safe-handling-storage-of-lethal-means-key-to-suicide-prevention/>





## BY THE NUMBERS

# 2nd

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Vermonters ages 15 to 34.

[More](#)

# 4,914

Vermont emergency departments saw nearly 4,914 suicide-related visits in 2021.

[More](#)

# 3,300

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline received over 3,300 calls from Vermont in 2021.

[More](#)

# 52%

52% of people who used the Crisis Text Line shared something they've never shared with anyone else.

[More](#)

# Activity

**What statistics and facts stand out?**

**What is the impact of sharing this data with  
your school or community?**

# Building Awareness

Risk Factors

Warning Signs

Protective Factors and  
Resilience

# Cultural Considerations and Populations at Higher Risk

**Cultural Considerations include...**

Behavior	Religion	Race	Actions	Gender	Ability
Language	Values	Ethnicity	Communication	Sexual Identity	Education
Beliefs	Customs	Thoughts	Social Groups	Age	Status

**Populations at heightened risk:** Adult Males; Older Adults; Veterans; Black, Indigenous, People of color; LGBTQ+ identifying individuals; Refugee and Immigrant Populations

# Risk Factors

Internal and external factors leading to increased stress

<b>Health</b>	<b>Environment</b>	<b>History</b>
<p><b>Mental Health Conditions</b>            particularly depression and mood disorders.</p> <p>Physical Health Conditions including chronic pain and illness or a disability.</p> <p>Traumatic Brain Injury</p>	<p><b>Long term stress and stressful life events:</b>            Divorce, bullying, financial issues, loss of job, death of a loved one</p> <p><b>Access to lethal means</b></p> <p>Exposure to a suicide</p> <p>Lack of access to care</p> <p>Social Isolation</p>	<p>Previous attempts</p> <p>Family history of suicide or mental illness</p> <p><b>Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)</b></p> <p><b>Trauma</b>            Emotional or physical abuse            Prejudice or discrimination            Violence</p>

# Suicide Warning Signs

## Talk

### Talking about:

- Killing themselves
- Feeling Hopeless
- Having no reason to live
- Feeling trapped
- Unbearable pain
- Being a burden to others



## Three Areas to Keep in Mind

## Behavior

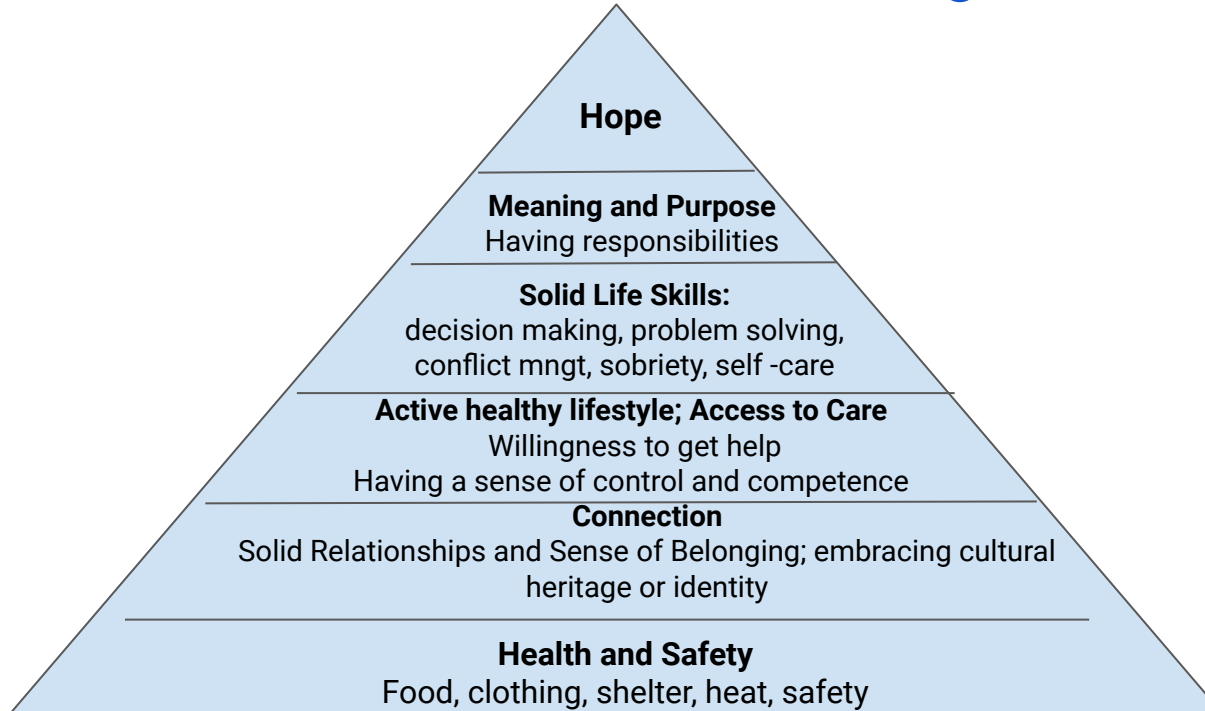
- Withdrawing from activities/isolating
- Sleep too much or too little
- Researching a way to end their life
- Increased use of substances
- Giving away possessions
- Abrupt improvement after a period of struggle
- Changes in sleeping/eating habits

## Mood

### Showing Signs of:

- Anxiety or Depression
- Loss of interest
- Irritability
- Humiliation/Shame
- Agitation/Anger

# Protective Factors and Resilience Building



# Developmental Assets® Framework

40 positive supports and strengths that young people need to succeed.

## External Assets

Supports - Opportunities -  
Relationships



Support



Empowerment



Boundaries and Expectations



Constructive Use of Time

## Internal Assets

Personal Skills - Commitments -  
Values



Commitment to Learning



Positive Values



Social Competencies



Positive Identity



# Youth Resiliency Starts with Connection

## **Cared For - Supported - Belonging - Seen**

Building strong bonds with schools, families, friends, community is critical.

Protective relationships are a key factor in youth prevention for poor mental health, sexual risk, substance misuse, violence.

*The path to connectedness is not the same for all youth. Please pay attention to how schools connect with those identifying as LGBTQ+, racial and ethnic minority groups and overall those who experience racism.*





# Learning Check

**Question 1: No one takes their life for a single reason.** A. True B. False

**Question 2: Of the following, which are risk factors?**

A. Untreated Depression B. Chronic Back Pain. C. Keeping a firearm in an unlocked drawer D. Childhood Trauma E. All of the above

**Question 3: If someone says at the end of their shift “Things would be easier if I wasn’t here”, is this a warning sign to pay attention to that requires follow up?**

A. Yes. B. No



# KEY POINTS

## Risk Factors:

- Personal, Interpersonal, environmental conditions that may predispose someone to depression and suicide

## Warning Signs:

- What someone is saying or doing that may mean they are thinking about suicide

## Assets or Protective Factors:

- Positive conditions and resources that promote resilience

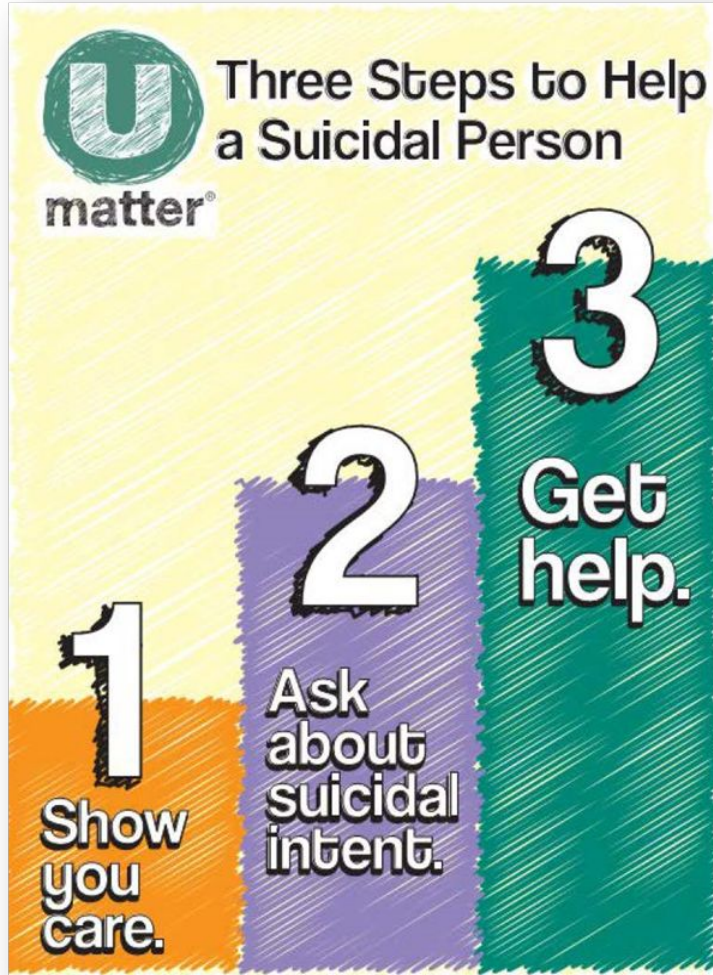
# How You Can Help

What can we do to get safely through the crisis?

How do we ask the hard questions?

Where do we go for help?





## 3 Step Process

### Show you care

Listen, be supportive, caring,  
and honest

### Ask about suicide

*"Do you have thoughts of  
killing yourself?"*

### Get help

You are not alone, help is  
available!





# Step 1: Show You Care

- Your responsibility is to listen without judgement.
- Explain you care about the person and their wellbeing.
- Have the conversation in a safe and private environment.
- Be supportive and honest, and offer reassurance.
- Do not try to solve the problem or make promises to remain quiet.
- Your number one goal is to get through the crisis

*“I notice you seem different, distracted - I’m concerned, can we talk?”*

*“I care how you are doing, do you have a moment to talk?”*

*“I hear you say things are really hard right now, thank you for sharing that.”*





## Step 2: Ask About Suicide

Asking about suicidal thoughts and intent does not make things worse. In fact it could bring great relief to that person struggling to know there is help and hope.

- **Ask directly if they are considering suicide**
- **Remain kind and clear**

*“Do you feel so badly that you wish you were dead?”*

*“Are you thinking about suicide?”*

*“Do you have thoughts of killing yourself?”*

*“Do you ever wanted to stop living?”*



## Step 3: Get Help

**Know the resources available in your community.. Assisting with calls and follow through may be very helpful in this process.**

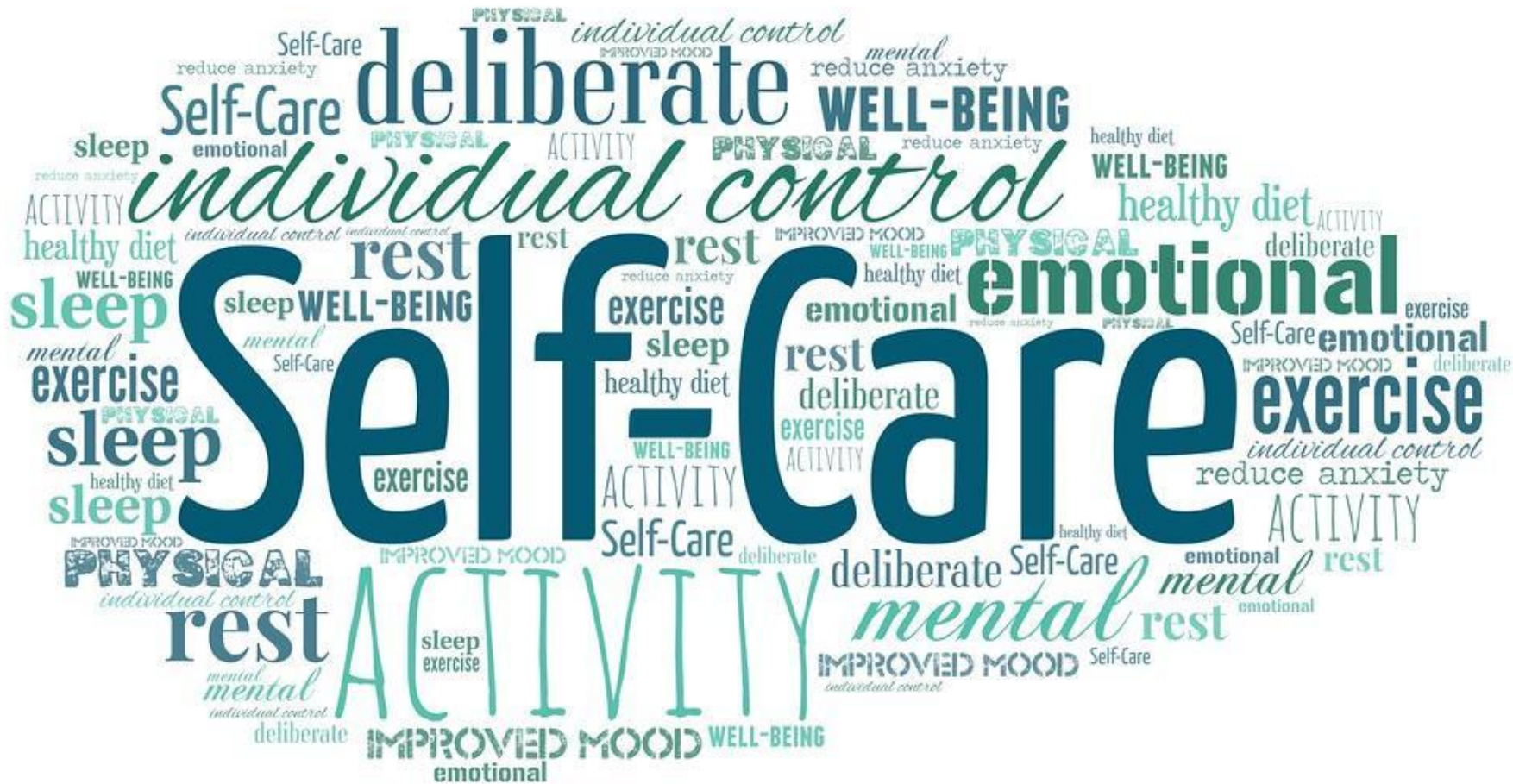
**Call your local mental health crisis line or 988**

### **Urgent Crisis/Imminent Danger:**

- If you have found the person in the immediate act, seek help immediately.
- Do not leave the person alone - send someone to call for help or call while with the person.
- Speak in a calm and direct manor and engage the person in connection.

**Never leave a suicidal person alone.**







- 

**SOCIAL**  
We're all in this together.
- 

**PHYSICAL**  
Health, safety, movement, nutrition, and sleep.
- 

**EMOTIONAL**  
Resilience in times of uncertainty.
- 

**OCCUPATIONAL**  
Continue contributing your unique talents.
- 

**SPIRITUAL**  
Be part of the common good.
- 

**INTELLECTUAL**  
Stay informed.
- 

**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
Make workspace work for you.
- 

**FINANCIAL**  
Navigate through difficult times.



# Help Tips and Resources

- Identity someone you trust to talk to
- Never leave someone in a crisis alone
- Know your local mental health agency or crisis call center numbers
- Remember 988 is confidential and available 24/7 or text to 741741

Vermont Suicide Prevention Center: <https://www.vtspc.org>

Facing Suicide VT: [www.facingsuicidevt.org](http://www.facingsuicidevt.org)

The Trevor Project - LGBTQ+ Youth: <https://www.vtspc.org>

The Jed Foundation - teens/college/young adults: <https://www.jedfoundation.org>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://www.afsp.org>

Veterans Suicide Prevention (including live chat line): <https://www.va.gov>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center - <https://sprc.org>



## Need Confidential Help for Mental Health?

**In Crisis?**  
Text VT to 741741  
CRISIS TEXT LINE  
Free, 24/7, Confidential

THE **TREVOR** PROJECT  
Saving Young LGBTQ Lives  
LGBTQ CRISIS HOTLINE:  
CALL 1-866-488-7386

**988** SUICIDE & CRISIS  
LIFELINE

 **Veterans  
Crisis Line**  
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

### SUICIDE LOSS SURVIVAL

If you or a loved one has recently experienced a suicide loss, the reality can be shocking and it can be hard to find ways to cope with the loss. The Vermont Suicide Prevention Coalition is a group of organizations and individuals working to prevent suicide and support the families and friends who have suffered the loss of a loved one due to suicide. It is important to take care of yourself as you go through the grieving process.

**SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE VERMONT RESOURCE PACKET:**  
[www.vtspc.org/survivors-of-suicide-vermont-resource-packet](http://www.vtspc.org/survivors-of-suicide-vermont-resource-packet)

#### REMEMBER:

- **You are not alone.** There is a network of support available to you. Look through the resources for survivors at [vtspc.org](http://vtspc.org) and [afsp.org](http://afsp.org).
- It is important to **prioritize taking care of yourself.** Find ways to nourish your body, soul, and mind.
- **Be kind to yourself.** The path to healing is a journey.
- **You can get through this.**



VTSPC is a public-private partnership of  
Center for Health and Learning  
[www.healthandlearning.org](http://www.healthandlearning.org)



## Need Confidential Help for Mental Health?

- Call the Pathways Support Line – 18+ Adult:  
(833) VT-TALKS / (833) 888-2557
- Call 2-1-1 to connect to your local mental health agency and COVID supports
- Call or text 9-8-8 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- Talk to someone you trust – a family member, friend, health care provider or faith leader
- **Resources for help can be found at:**  
[www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org) and [www.vtspc.org](http://www.vtspc.org)

# Need Help for Mental Health?

CONFIDENTIAL HELP IS AVAILABLE!



If you, or someone you know is in emotional distress, text the Crisis Text Line:

**Text VT to 741741**

**Stress, anxiety, depression and suicidality are treatable mental health conditions.**

Without help, these feelings can get worse. Learn to help yourself and the people you care about.



#### Recognize the Critical Warning Signs:

- Expressions of burdensomeness or of unbearable pain
- Depression, isolation or hopelessness
- Mood swings, sadness, rage or revenge seeking
- Talking or writing about a desire or intent to die
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs

#### Know How to Help:

- **LISTEN.** Show you care.
- **ASK.** Are you thinking about suicide?
- **GET HELP.** Call someone trained to help.

- **OFFER HOPE.** Remind them that they matter to you and others.
- **STAY CLOSE.** Remain until help arrives.

Pathways Support Line – 18+ Adult:  
(833) VT-TALKS / (833) 888-2557

Call 2-1-1 to find local mental health providers and COVID supports.



Text the Crisis Text Line:  
Text VT to 741741



National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:  
Call or Text 9-8-8



LGBTQ CRISIS HOTLINE:  
1-866-488-7386



Veterans Crisis Line:  
Call 9-8-8 PRESS 1



Resources for help can be found at:  
[www.vtspc.org](http://www.vtspc.org)



Talk to someone you trust.



# Upcoming Trainings

- **Umatter® Suicide Prevention Awareness Trainings**
  - Second Wednesday of each month 10 - 11:30am  
On Line, \$10 a seat, register at [www.healthandlearning.org](http://www.healthandlearning.org) under trainings
- **Umatter® for Schools (new times and dates)**
  - January 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th - 12 - 1:30pm
  - April - evening classes
- **Umatter® Training of Trainers**
  - November 7th, 2023 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
  - Delta Hotel, Burlington VT



# Umatter® recognizes:

Experiencing mental health challenge and distress is part of being human.

There are things we can do to help balance and build resilience.

Asking for and getting help is okay.

**Show You Care**

**Ask About Suicide**

**Get Help**

*You matter because you may **NEED HELP***

*You matter because you may **BE ABLE TO HELP***

QUESTIONS



# Thank you for all you do.

Email: [info@healthandlearning.org](mailto:info@healthandlearning.org)

or visit

<https://www.healthandlearning.org>





# POST SURVEY FEEDBACK

Please take a moment to scan this QR code and complete our post-assessment survey.

After you complete this POST Survey, you will have access to your certificate of completion to print off.

All information is non-identifying and confidential and utilized to understand impact and outcomes of our work.

Thank you!

