

### Suicide: A Leading Cause of Death in the U.S.

Suicide is a leading cause of death in the U.S. It's the tenth leading cause of death overall and the second leading cause of death in people ages 10 to 34, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.<sup>1</sup>

47,173 people died by suicide in 2017, the latest year for which data are available. An additional 479,000 people harmed themselves through self-inflicted injuries.<sup>2</sup>



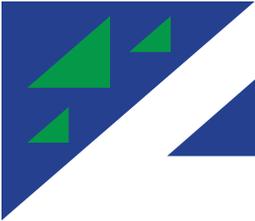
### The Warning Signs of Suicide

Most people who contemplate or consider suicide want help. There are often indicators you can look for, including:

- Talking about wanting to die or kill themselves, sometimes presented as harmless, such as “I won’t be around for much longer” or “I wish I wasn’t here”
- Giving away personal belongings, treasures, or things that are important.
- Withdrawing socially from friends, family, or the community
- Failing to uphold obligations at home, work, or school
- Increased drug or alcohol use
- Dramatic mood swings
- Thinking, talking, or writing about death
- Impulsive, reckless, or aggressive behavior

If you notice these or other warning signs, it’s important to seek professional help and for you to intervene. Talking about suicide doesn’t give people ideas. It can, however, save a life.

**If you or someone else is in an emergency, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by dialing 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or call 911.**



# Suicide: A Public Health Concern

## Ways to Prevent Suicide

Reducing stigma encourages others to get help when they need it. Getting professional help when you or someone else needs it is one of the most effective ways to prevent suicide. Normalizing help-seeking behavior and reducing stigma can encourage others to get help when they need it. [Visit preventionactionalliance.org/words-matter-to-learn-more-about-stigma](https://preventionactionalliance.org/words-matter-to-learn-more-about-stigma).



Suicide can be directly linked to substance use and mental health disorders. We can help prevent suicides by encouraging wellness at an early age. One way to do this is to use school and community prevention programs that promote resiliency and teach strategies for self care and how to seek help if a person is contemplating suicide.

Whole books and websites are devoted to the topic of suicide prevention. Needless to say, there's a vast literature of resources for creating or providing effective suicide prevention programs. To learn more about preventing suicide, [visit the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation at ohiospf.org](https://ohiospf.org) or reach out to your local suicide prevention coalitions, programs, or projects.

## About Us

Prevention Action Alliance is a 501(c)3 nonprofit in Columbus, Ohio that is dedicated to leading healthy communities in the prevention of substance misuse and the promotion of mental health wellness. Learn more about Prevention Action Alliance at [preventionactionalliance.org](https://preventionactionalliance.org).

Prevention  
Action Alliance

1. "Suicide." National Institute on Mental Health, with data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.shtml>.
2. "Suicide and Self-Inflicted Injury." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/suicide.htm>.

