

SUICIDE ON GUAM

Suicide is ending one's life on purpose. Suicide ideation can happen to anyone.

→ According to the 2011 Guam Epidemiological Profile, suicide remains prevalent on Guam with an average of **one suicide death occurring every two weeks**. Guam's suicide death rate of ~ 18–19 per 100,000 inhabitants has remained unchanged since 2000.

→ Suicide deaths are highest among youth and young adults. **Three in every five suicide deaths** occur in those **under the age of 30 years old**.

→ Micronesian Islanders, particularly **Chuukese** and **Chamorros** are significantly over-represented in suicide deaths.

→ Correlates of **youth suicidal ideation and attempts** include:

- Sexual violence
- Depression
- Identifying oneself as gay or bisexual
- Substance abuse

Resources

Local Emergency **911**

Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, 24-Hour Crisis Hotline **(671) 647-8833**

I'Pinangon, University of Guam **(671) 735-2888/9**
Campus Suicide Prevention Program

Life Works Guam: Suicide Prevention Program and Rainbows for all Children on Guam **(671) 632-0257**

Sanctuary, Inc. of Guam **(671) 475-7100**
24-Hour Crisis Hotline

24-Hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline **1 (800) 273-TALK (8255)**
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org (Toll-Free)

Survivors of Suicide Support Group **(671) 477-9079**

Open to youth and adults who have lost a loved one to suicide

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention **www.afsp.org**

Suicide Prevention Resource Center **www.sprc.org**

For more information:

**Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse,
Prevention and Training Branch
(PEACE Office)**

(671) 477-9079 thru 9083

www.peaceguam.org

 facebook.com/FocusonLifeGuam

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STOP SUICIDE ON GUAM

With Help, there's Hope.



→ Recognize the Warning Signs

- Abrupt changes in personality
- Giving away possessions
- Use and/or misuse of substances such as alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- Significant weight change
- Change in sleeping pattern—unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Unwillingness or inability to communicate
- Clinical depression
- Unusual sadness
- Reckless behavior
- Withdrawal from people or usual activities they love
- Confusion — inability to concentrate

**Remember that suicide is
the most preventable
cause of death among
our island people.
Help is always
available.**

→ What You Can Do to Help

ASK

- Express concern by asking what is troubling the person. Ask further questions to get to the root of the problem.

- Ask if he/she has thought about suicide.
- If the individual has thought about suicide, ask if he/she has a plan.

LISTEN

- Be willing to listen. Allow him/her to express their feelings. Listen carefully.
- Be empathetic. Try to imagine what your friend is going through and accept the feelings he or she expresses.
- Be non-judgmental. Avoid lecturing on the value of life or debating whether suicide is right or wrong. Instead, allow the person to talk freely about his/her feelings.

ACT

- Take all threats, gestures and previous attempts seriously.
- Remove any means that might be used to hurt him/herself such as pills, extension cords, wire coat hangers or rope.
- Never agree to keep suicide thoughts or plans a secret.
- Offer hope by letting him/her know that counseling can help.
- Assist him/her in finding professional help and offer to accompany him/her.

→ Keep Yourself Safe, Too!

People who neglect their own needs and forget to nurture themselves are at danger of deeper levels of unhappiness, low self-esteem and feelings of resentment. Also, sometimes people who spend their time only taking care of others can be at risk for getting burned out on all the giving, which makes it more difficult to care for others or themselves. Taking time for *self-care* can start at managing your stress. Here are some tips:

- Learn how to say “NO.”
- Avoid people who stress you out.
- Express your feelings instead of bottling them up.
- Manage your time better.
- Learn to relax. (Try to meditate regularly.)
- Remember the **Four A's**

⇒ **Avoid the Stressor**

Do something that makes you happy such as joining extra-curricular or sports activities.

⇒ **Alter the Stressor**

Focus your time and energy on positive experiences. Practice smart time management.

⇒ **Adapt to the Stressor**

Know your limits and be flexible. Accept that things will not always go your way.

⇒ **Accept the Stressor**

Accept the things that you cannot change.