Suicide Prevention Resource Guide for Veterinary Settings

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This document reflects learnings from suicide research and implementing evidence-based suicide prevention and postvention strategies in a variety of academic and workplace settings. This document is meant to be used to guide in the development of a comprehensive suicide prevention plan. You can learn more about developing a comprehensive suicide prevention and postvention plan at workplacesuicideprevention.com (for work settings) and at jedfoundation.org (for academic settings). You can learn more about public health strategies to prevent suicide at cdc.gov/suicide/prevention.

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American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC)

Is a nonprofit membership organization working to protect and improve the health and welfare of animals, people and the environment around the world by advancing academic veterinary medicine. AAVMC represents more than 40,000 faculty, staff and students across the global academic veterinary medical community. Members include accredited veterinary medical colleges in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia, Asia and New Zealand, as well as departments of veterinary science and departments of comparative medicine. Learn more about AAVMC at aavmc.org.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)

Is dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide. AFSP creates a culture that is smart about mental health through education and community programs, develops suicide prevention through research and advocacy, and provides support for those affected by suicide. Led by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Robert Gebbia and headquartered in New York, and with a public policy office in Washington, D.C., AFSP has local chapters in all 50 states with programs and events nationwide. Learn more about AFSP at afsp.org.

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

Since 1863, the American Veterinary Medical Association has served as the nation's leading advocate for the veterinary profession. We are a diverse and passionate group of professionals, representing more than 100,000 members, all striving to improve the health and wellbeing of animals, humans, and the environment we share. Learn more about AVMA at avma.org.

National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA)

NAVTA is a US-based not-for-profit membership community of more than 8,500 Credentialed Veterinary Technicians, as well as Veterinary Assistants and other veterinary support staff involved in veterinary care. NAVTA advances the profession of veterinary technology and veterinary nursing through its advocacy and awareness programs, and by providing continuing professional development opportunities. NAVTA supports the veterinary technology and veterinary nursing profession with a host of programs and benefits, available at navta.net/membership.

Veterinary Hospital Managers Association (VHMA)

Is a nationally recognized thought-leader and innovator in providing training, education, and resources to more than 4,300 members and a trusted resource that the veterinary sector relies on for industry insights, research, and advocacy to assure performance at the highest levels. VHMA's core purpose is to advance and support veterinary practice management professionals by developing professional competence, supporting and encouraging standards through the industry's highest-level certification program, the Certified Veterinary Practice Manager (CVPM), and providing individuals with a network for professional connection and support. Learn more about VHMA at vhma.org.

Veterinary Medical Association Executives (VMAE)

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Contents

About This Guide

Suicide is a public health problem that impacts individuals, families, friends, colleagues, and communities. A complex health outcome, suicide is driven by multiple interacting risk and protective factors. Despite its complexity, suicide can be prevented, and is an issue that we can all play a role in addressing.

What impacts suicide risk across academic and occupational industries and professional groups, such as veterinarians, are the same issues that are known to increase risk for any population.[1]

With that in mind, the goals of this guide are to:

- Educate veterinary professionals and students about suicide.
- Increase awareness of suicide risk and protective factors.
- Support individuals to recognize suicide warning signs in yourself and others.
- Provide recommendations on suicide prevention strategies.

Just as with physical health concerns, individuals should be able to receive support and access to care to have their mental health needs addressed. The more proactive we are in prioritizing our mental health and discussing mental health and suicide prevention in appropriate and accurate ways, the more we can contribute to a culture of safety and respect and address issues that are known to increase risk.

This guide provides an overview of the topic of suicide, information about suicide risk and protective factors, suicide warning signs, and recommendations for what organizations and individuals can do to help prevent suicide.

KEY POINTS

- Suicide is a complex health outcome with multiple intersecting risk and protective factors.
- Critical to suicide prevention is helping the person connect with hope and reasons for living while at the same time, helping them feel less connected to reasons for wanting to die.
- Key features of suicide prevention initiatives include reducing stigma associated with mental health distress and help seeking, improving access to mental health resources and services, and making judicious changes related to access to lethal means in the professional work setting.

What Leads to Suicide?

When someone dies by suicide, we often see the stressors or life events that may have precipitated the behavior and mistakenly assume that the event caused the death or was the "reason" the person died by suicide. If we take a moment to think about it, stressful life events happen to most or all people at some point in time, and they do not take their lives. There are multiple, biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors that contribute to increased risk for suicide.[2] Risk and protective factors are important to know to understand the big picture of someone who may be thinking about suicide. Just like someone who is at risk for heart disease because of high blood pressure, or a history of heart disease in the family, some people are at higher risk for suicide than others. In each case, having risk factors only means your risk is increased, it is not necessarily your destiny. The potential impact of these factors may fluctuate as they interact with each other so that much of the time the risk for suicide is lower. When several of these contributing factors are present for a person, their vulnerability for suicide may increase in the face of one or more stressors. If lethal means are available, the risk of death by suicide is higher.

There are many potential contributors to a person's suicide risk and it is the combination of these contributors, in the context of stressors, that can lead to periods of increased risk. In terms of biological and psychological contributors, past suicidal thoughts and behavior can indicate an individual's elevated risk. Suicide risk is complex, and risk involves more than past suicidal thoughts and behavior. Research findings support the role that mental health conditions play in suicide. [3] Depression, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, psychosis and substance use disorders are the most frequent mental health conditions people experience, and often there is more than one condition present. Family history of suicide or mental health conditions also contribute to risk. As with other health conditions that run in families, early assessment and detection combined with effective treatment is important for managing risk. Brain trauma can lead to difficulty controlling behavior and impulsiveness, increasing risk for suicide. Difficulty problem solving, aggressiveness and impulsivity contribute to risk as well, problems that can be worsened by head trauma. While these contributors are more longstanding, they can be addressed to reduce risk.
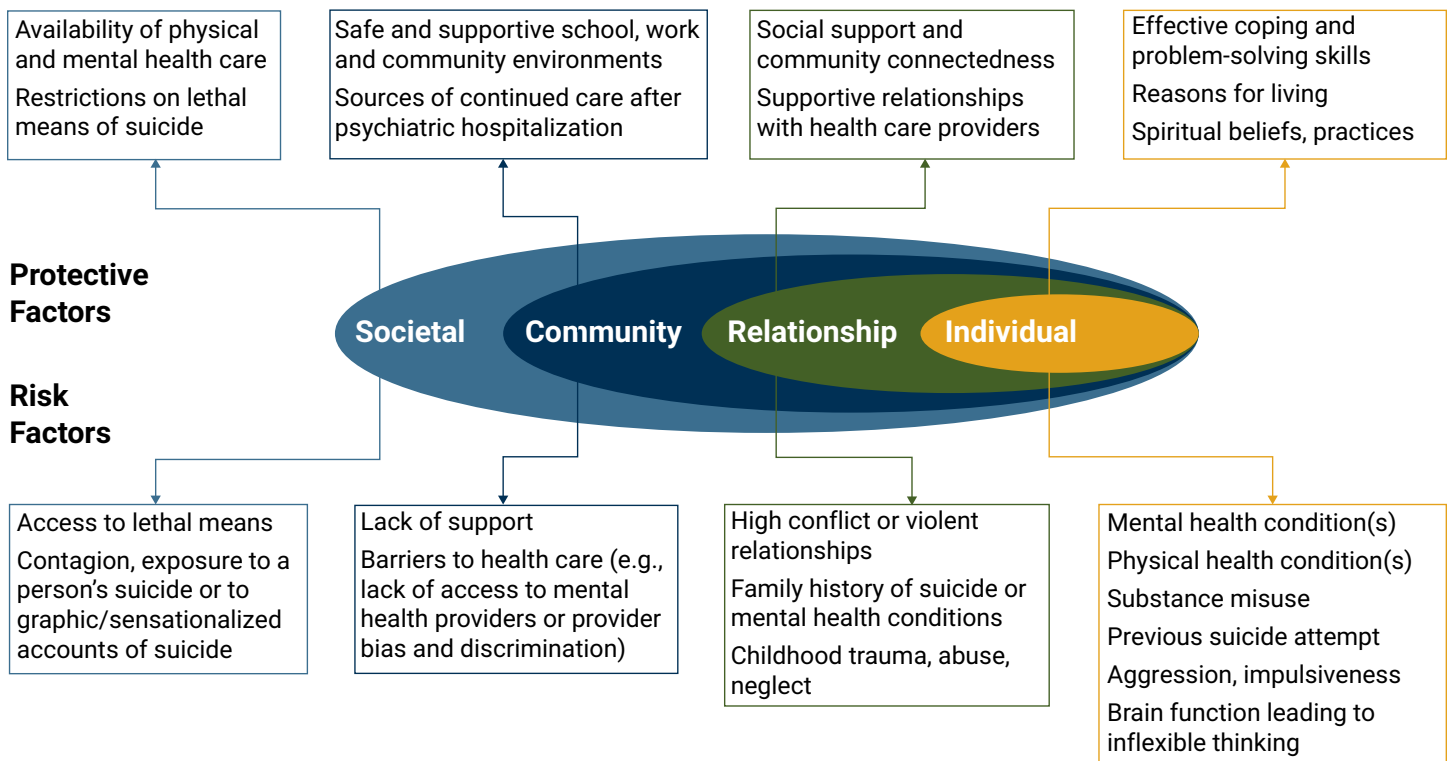
KEY POINTS

- Suicide is complex and there is never a single cause.
- More than 90 percent of people who have made a suicide attempt do not die by suicide.[4]
- Approximately, 90 percent of people who die by suicide had one or more mental health conditions at the time of their death, even if they did not know it.[5]
- Most people who have a mental health condition do not die by suicide.

Suicide Risk and Protective Factors

Suicide risk factors are characteristics or conditions — at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels— that can increase risk. Similar to risk factors, a range of factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels can protect people from suicide. These are known as protective factors. The social-ecological model below shows suicide risk and protective factors at the societal, community, relationship, and individual levels.[6]

Figure 1. Interacting Suicide Risk and Protective Factors

Protective Factors

Availability of physical and mental health care
Restrictions on lethal means of suicide

Safe and supportive school, work and community environments
Sources of continued care after psychiatric hospitalization

Social support and community connectedness
Supportive relationships with health care providers

Effective coping and problem-solving skills
Reasons for living
Spiritual beliefs, practices

Societal   Community   Relationship   Individual

Risk Factors

Access to lethal means
Contagion, exposure to a person's suicide or to graphic/sensationalized accounts of suicide

Lack of support
Barriers to health care (e.g., lack of access to mental health providers or provider bias and discrimination)

High conflict or violent relationships
Family history of suicide or mental health conditions
Childhood trauma, abuse, neglect

Mental health condition(s)
Physical health condition(s)
Substance misuse
Previous suicide attempt
Aggression, impulsiveness
Brain function leading to inflexible thinking

Suicide Warning Signs

While most suicide risk factors endure over a longer period, warning signs are observable signs that signal suicide risk, often in the near future. Suicide warning signs are typically displayed in three main ways we can detect: through talk, behavior, and mood. Outlined below are the most common suicide warning signs.

Table 1. Suicide Warning Signs

TALK +	BEHAVIOR +	MOOD
A person showing warning signs for suicide may talk about: • Killing themselves • Feeling trapped • Feeling like a burden to others • Feeling like they are in unbearable pain • Feeling hopeless	Behaviors that may be warning signs for suicide include: • Increased use of alcohol or drugs • Looking for a way to end one's life • Withdrawing from activities • Isolating from family/friends • Sleeping too much or too little • Saying goodbye to people • Giving away prized possessions • Aggression • Fatigue	People showing warning signs for suicide may display any of the following moods: • Down and/or depressed • Anxious • Loss of interest • Relief or sudden improvement • Humiliation or shame • Agitation or anger • Irritability

Suicide warning signs may appear acutely or may gradually appear over time.[2] They are not always obvious, and they may vary from person to person. For example, some people may make their intentions clear, while others may keep suicidal thoughts and feelings secret. Regardless, learning the warning signs for suicide can help with recognizing when someone is in mental health distress or having suicidal thoughts.

Preventing Suicide

Just as suicide has no one single cause, there is no single prevention activity that will prevent suicide. To be successful, suicide prevention efforts must be comprehensive and coordinated across organizations and systems. Outlined in this section are prevention strategies that address different aspects of the issue, including identifying and assisting individuals at-risk for suicide, encouraging help-seeking for persons exhibiting signs of distress or suicidality, providing access to effective care and treatment, reducing access to lethal means, and enhancing connectedness in schools, workplaces, and in the community.

Strategies and Approaches to Prevent Suicide

The following table outlines the societal, community, relationship, and individual strategies and approaches to prevent suicide, adapted from *Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policies, Programs, and Practices* from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).[7] Click on each strategy for information on the recommended resources.

Table 2. Societal, Community, Relationship, and Individual Strategies to Prevent Suicide

Strategies	Societal and Community Approaches	Relationship and Individual Approaches
Strengthen economic supports	• Housing stabilization policies, including affordable housing • Living wage	• Strengthen household financial security
Strengthen access and delivery of mental health services	• Coverage of mental health conditions in health insurance policies • Enhance communication around available resources and improve access to care; reduce mental health provider shortages in underserved areas • Safer suicide care through systems change	• Enhance mental health literacy and promote positive attitudes toward mental health treatment
Create protective environments	• Reduce access to lethal means in the workplace; address policies and processes related to safe storage practices • Organizational policies and culture; create a culture of belonging & trust • Community-based policies to reduce excessive alcohol use	• Eliminate stigmatized language and discriminating actions • Engage in safe storage practices for lethal means in professional and personal settings
Promote connectedness	• Community engagement activities • Promote and normalize help-seeking/ help-supporting behavior • Communications around mental health, distress, and resources are grounded in hope, empowerment, and support	• Evidence-based peer support groups • Schedule time to connect with individuals, groups, or communities that are positive and empowering influences in one's life
Teach coping and problem-solving skills	• Social-emotional learning programs • Parenting skills and family relationship programs	• Build adaptability and enhance protective factors • Avoid binary thinking (ex: "If this situation doesn't go perfectly, then I have failed...")
Identify and support people at risk	• Suicide prevention education and training (gatekeeper training) • Trauma-informed crisis intervention • Mental health and suicide screening as part of treatment engagement • Treatment for people at risk of suicide	• Practice help-seeking behaviors • Engage in resources to reduce emotional or life stressors (regular engagement with mental health providers or other licensed professionals, social-emotional learning programs, etc.) • Treatment to prevent re-attempts
Lessen harms and prevent future risk	• Postvention • Safe reporting and messaging about suicide	• Follow guidance for crisis intervention, including when people have acute thoughts of suicide, attempt suicide, or die by suicide

Strengthen Economic Supports

According to the CDC, economic and financial strain, such as job loss, long periods of unemployment, reduced income, difficulty covering medical, food, and housing expenses, and even the anticipation of such financial stress, may increase an individual's risk for suicide.[8] While more research is necessary to understand how economic factors interact with other suicide risk factors, the available evidence suggests that strengthening economic supports may be one opportunity to buffer suicide risk. Click to view Recommended Resources for Strengthening Economic Supports.

Strengthen Access and Delivery of Mental Health Services

While most people with mental health conditions do not die by suicide, research indicates that mental health conditions, particularly when undetected and/or untreated, can contribute to suicide risk.[5] Despite the prevalence of mental health conditions and suicide risk, many people with mental health conditions do not receive treatment.[9] There are several reasons people do not seek treatment and lack of access is one of the contributing factors related to the underutilization of care. Professionals with mental health conditions often face work-related discrimination or fear such discrimination, such as limits on independence, increase in supervision, jeopardized job-security, or restriction of their career advancement. Providing a variety of ways to access mental health resources, and promoting the confidentiality of resources, will help strengthen access and delivery of mental health services, particularly for individuals with barriers to accessing care. Click to view Recommended Resources for Strengthening Access and Delivery of Mental Health Services.

Create Protective Environments

One of the most significant environmental risk factors for suicide is access to a method for killing oneself, which is referred to as access to lethal means. Creating environments that address risk and protective factors where individuals live and work can help prevent suicide. Similarly, modifying the characteristics of the physical environment to prevent or limit access to lethal means can reduce suicide rates, particularly in times of crisis or transition. Changes to organizational culture through the implementation of supportive policies, for instance, can change social norms, encourage help-seeking, and demonstrate that health and wellbeing are valued and that stigma and other risk factors for suicide are not. Stigma reduction is a core component in successful wellbeing and suicide prevention programming.[10] Education plays a key role, but policies and procedures that make it safe for individuals to seek support, including formal mental healthcare, must be created, and enforced to allow individuals to get the help they need when first experiencing distress. This combination of education and policy change is critically important to address fears about mental health and treatment. Click to view Recommended Resources for Creating Protective Environments.

Promote Connectedness

Promoting connectedness among individuals and within veterinary settings can help protect against suicide. Settings that promote and normalize help-seeking as well as help-supporting behaviors, and communicate safely about mental health, distress, and suicide by providing information and resources that are grounded in hope, empowerment, and support can all be effective in preventing suicide and supporting those at risk. Evidence-based peer support groups that are positive, empowering, and work to enhance community engagement may also protect against suicide. Click to view Recommended Resources for Promoting Connectedness.

Teach Coping and Problem-Solving Skills

Individuals at increased risk for suicide often experience cognitive inflexibility in the moment, which means that they may have difficulty problem solving, thinking critically, or shifting gears. Therefore, essential to suicide prevention is helping individuals build life skills, such as critical thinking, stress management and coping techniques. Click to view Recommended Resources for Teaching Coping and Problem-Solving Skills.

Identify and Support People at Risk

Identifying people at risk for suicide can help reach those in the greatest need and connect them to care and support. Suicide prevention education and training programs are designed to give individuals the knowledge and skills needed to identify people who may be at risk for suicide and to take appropriate action. Often referred to as "gatekeeper training programs," most suicide prevention programs consist of a workshop (either in-person or online) and appropriate accompanying educational materials with the goal to increase participants' knowledge of suicide and suicide-related behavior, risk factors, and warning signs, as well as changing attitudes toward suicide intervention to enhance referrals to treatment. Because mental health conditions like anxiety, depression, and substance abuse often go unnoticed and untreated, screening programs can serve as a systematic way to improve identification of employees who are at-risk. Screening programs as suicide prevention strategies are designed to identify individuals who should receive support and treatment because they are at risk for suicide. Organizations can provide screening tools that can help individuals self-assess for levels of stress, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and other mental health concerns. Screening programs must ideally have certain features to ensure optimal and intended outcomes; these features include voluntary participation, maintaining privacy or anonymity of participants, and the ability to provide supportive dialog and referral to mental health treatment when appropriate. Screening programs often serve as a comfortable, non-threatening way to gauge one's emotional health and can be used as a starting point for engagement into mental health services. [Click to view Recommended Resources for Identifying and Supporting People at Risk](#).

Lessen Harms and Prevent Future Risk

A key element of suicide prevention is ensuring that individuals with suicide risk have timely access to evidence-based treatments, suicide prevention interventions, and coordinated systems of care. Suicide prevention interventions such as safety planning and evidence-based treatments and therapies delivered by trained providers can lead to significant improvement and recovery. A postvention plan is a set of protocols to help your organization or school respond effectively and compassionately to a suicide death. Immediate responses focus on supporting those affected by the suicide death and reducing risk to other vulnerable individuals. Postvention efforts should also include intermediate and long-term support for people bereaved by suicide. Postvention guides provide information and resources to help settings in the aftermath of a suicide, including strategies for helping the setting and community to grieve and to organize and manage the key steps of crisis response, communication, and next steps for prevention. [Click to view Recommended Resources for Lessening Harms and Preventing Future Risk](#).

Recommended Resources and Programs

The following section provides recommendations for programs and resources to support mental health and suicide prevention efforts at the societal, community, relationship, and individual levels.

Recommended Resources for Strengthening Economic Supports

- [Department of Housing and Urban Development Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)](#): NSP provides emergency assistance to stabilize communities with high rates of abandoned and foreclosed homes, and to assist households whose annual incomes are up to 120 percent of the area median income (AMI).
- [Unemployment, Behavioral Health, and Suicide](#): Health Policy Brief exploring the complex relationship between job loss and suicide, along with public policies and interventions that may mitigate the distress associated with job loss and economic strain.

Recommended Resources for Strengthening Access and Delivery of Mental Health Services

Mental and behavioral health services:

- **American College Counseling Association (ACCA)**: ACCA consists of diverse mental health professionals from the fields of counseling, psychology, and social work all working within higher education settings.

- **Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA)**: Provides information on selecting and evaluating Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services for the workplace.

- **Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA)**: Information on selecting and evaluating EAP services for the workplace.

Mental health tools and resources:

- **Center for Workplace Mental Health**: Tools and resources for employers for developing workplace wellbeing programs.

- **Coverage of mental health conditions in health insurance policies**: Information about implementation of laws requiring mental health parity in insurance coverage.

Trainings for mental health professionals for assessing and managing suicide risk:

- **Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk**: Developed by the Zero Suicide Institute, Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk is a series of one-day or half-day trainings designed for health and behavioral health professionals interested in the latest intersectional suicide care practices.

- **Collaborative Assessment & Management of Suicidal Behavior (CAMS)**: CAMS is an evidence based, therapeutic framework for suicide-specific assessment and treatment of a patient's suicidal risk. It is a flexible approach that can be used across theoretical orientations and disciplines for a wide range of patients who are suicidal across treatment settings and different treatment modalities.

Recommended Resources for Creating Protective Environments

Lethal means safety:

- **Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM)**: Reducing access to lethal means, such as firearms and medication, can determine whether a person at risk for suicide lives or dies. This course is about how to reduce access to the methods people use to kill themselves. It covers who needs lethal means counseling and how to work with people at risk for suicide—and their families—to reduce access.

- **Means Matter**: From the Harvard School of Public Health, research findings and recommendations on how to reduce access to lethal means including information on lethal means counseling.

- **Reduce access to lethal means in the workplace**: Article on implementing lethal means safety as part of workplace suicide prevention.

- **Safer Homes, Suicide Aware**: This program educates the public on the potential deadliness of easy access to firearms and medications if available during a time of crisis. The focus is on men in the middle years, ages 35-64 and veterans who disproportionately use firearms to end their lives.

Stigma and discrimination:

- **Guidance for HR Professionals and Employment Lawyers**: Developed by the International Workgroup on Workplace Suicide Prevention and Postvention, the Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention in the Workplace White Paper for HR Professionals and Employment Lawyers provides policy and response recommendations to help employers positively impact workers and the work environment.

Systems of care:

- **Zero Suicide Institute**: Provides expert support to systems of care committed to adopting and sustaining continuous quality improvement practices designed to transform suicide prevention and treatment.

Wellbeing programming and education:

- [AAVMC Learn](#): AAVMC's digital educational platform provides wellbeing content focused on students, faculty, and leaders as they develop their understanding of how to be well while advancing their careers in a rewarding demanding profession.

- [AVMA Axon programming](#): AVMA's digital educational platform provides a growing library of convenient, easy-to-use veterinary CE courses with a promise that you'll be able to transform your learning into action immediately. Check out their wellbeing programming, including AVMA's Workplace Wellbeing Certificate program.

- [Resources to Support Veterinary Wellbeing](#): The Veterinary Medical Association Executives (VMAE) Wellbeing Committee has assembled resources for VMA Executives to support both personal and workplace wellbeing.

Recommended Resources for Promoting Connectedness

Communicating about mental health, distress, and suicide:

- [Framework for Successful Messaging](#): Created by the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, the Framework for Successful Messaging is a resource to help people messaging about suicide to develop messages that are strategic, safe, positive, and make use of relevant guidelines and best practices.

Evidence-based peer support programming:

- [Veterinary Mental Health Initiative (VMHI)](#): Founded by the Shanti Project – a non-profit dedicated to reducing isolation, enhancing health and well-being, and improving quality of life – the Veterinary Mental Health Initiative (VMHI) provides individual and peer group support for veterinary professionals.

Promoting and normalizing help-seeking and help-supporting behavior:

- [Help-Seeking and Help-Supporting](#): Information and resources from the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) to support individuals who are struggling with thoughts of suicide and/or experiencing mental health concerns and the individual/s that are supporting them.

Recommended Resources for Teaching Coping and Problem-Solving Skills

- [AAVMC Learn](#): AAVMC's digital educational platform provides wellbeing content focused on students, faculty, and leaders as they develop their understanding of how to be well while advancing their careers in a rewarding demanding profession.

- [AVMA Axon programming](#): AVMA's digital educational platform provides a growing library of convenient, easy-to-use veterinary CE courses with a promise that you'll be able to transform your learning into action immediately. Check out their wellbeing programming, including how to effectively navigate rudeness in the workplace.

- [Enhancing life skills and building resilience](#): A component of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention, the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) provides information and resources to help individuals and communities understand the importance of life skills as a key protective factor for suicide. Programs and activities that enhance these skills can help individuals as they face challenges such as economic stress, relationship issues, physical illness, and aging.

Recommended Resources for Identifying and Supporting People at Risk

Gatekeeper training programs:

- [Applied Suicide Intervention Skill Training (ASIST)](#): In-person/2-day workshop to train gatekeepers who want to feel more comfortable, confident, and competent in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide.

- **Banfield Pet Hospital's ASK (Assess, Support, Know)**: This training is designed specifically for veterinary professionals to help them recognize and address emotional distress and suicidal thoughts in themselves and others. This training is freely available.

- **Choosing a Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Program**: A comparison table to help settings find the appropriate suicide prevention gatekeeper training program.

- **QPR**: QPR training, also known as gatekeeper training, teaches people without professional mental health backgrounds to recognize the signs that someone may be considering suicide, establish dialogue, and guide the person to seek professional help. AVMA, AVMA LIFE, and AVMA PLIT have joined together to offer free gatekeeper training to all members of the veterinary community.

- **safeTALK**: In-person, three-hour training that prepares individuals to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources.

- **VitalCog**: VitalCog trains organizations to proactively address the early warning signs of suicide in the workplace. Just as organizations have realized they can help reduce heart disease by encouraging exercise, they can also reduce suicide by promoting mental health and encouraging early identification and intervention. This training will educate and equip businesses with tools to address mental health and suicide concerns within the workplace.

Mental health and suicide screening as part of treatment engagement:

- **Interactive Screening Program**: Developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the Interactive Screening Program provides an online platform to support connection and engagement into mental health services. Available to institutions of higher education, organizations, and workplaces.

- **MindWise Innovations**: Mental health and substance use support through online screening tools and digital library of 100+ shareable articles, videos, image templates, and more.

Suicide prevention education:

- **Talk Saves Lives™**: Talk Saves Lives is the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's standardized, 45-60 minute education program that provides participants with the scope of the problem of suicide, a clear understanding of this leading cause of death, including the most up-to-date research on suicide prevention, and what they can do in their communities to save lives.

Trauma-Informed Crisis Intervention and Treatment for People at Risk of Suicide:

- **Crisis Prevention Institute**: Provides person-centered training programs to help workplaces establish sustainable cultures of safety.

- **Suicide prevention interventions and treatments**: Information on suicide prevention interventions and treatments.

Recommended Resources for Lessening Harms and Preventing Future Risk

Crisis Resources and Services:

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** - **Call or text 988 or chat at** 988lifeline.org/chat: The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. Find more information about the Lifeline at 988crisisline.org.

- **BlackLine®** - **Call or text 1-800-604-5841**: BlackLine® provides a space for peer support, counseling, reporting of mistreatment, and affirming the lived experiences to folxs who are most impacted by systematic oppression with an LGBTQ+ Black Femme Lens.

- **Crisis Text Line** - **Text "TALK" to 741741**: Text from anywhere in the USA to text with a trained Crisis Counselor. Every texter is connected with a Crisis Counselor, a real-life human being trained to bring texters from a hot moment to a cool calm through active listening and collaborative problem solving. Find more information about the Crisis Text Line at crisistextline.org.

- **LGBT National Hotline** - **Call 1-888-843-4564**: The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) National Hotline provides telephone, online private one-to-one chat and email peer-support, as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States. Available Monday-Friday from 4pm to midnight (eastern time) and Saturday from noon to 5pm (eastern time), all services are completely free and confidential.

- **Trans Lifeline** - **Call 1-877-565-8860**: Trans Lifeline is a peer support service staffed by trans people, for trans and questioning callers. Trans Lifeline provides confidential, 24/7 crisis support.

- **Veterans Crisis Line** | Call 988 and press 1, or text 838255: Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are Veterans themselves. Find more information about the Veterans Crisis Line at veteranscrisisline.net.

Postvention Toolkits and Guidance for the Aftermath of a Suicide:

- **After a Suicide: A Guide for Veterinary Workplaces**: This guide provides information and resources to help veterinary work settings in the aftermath of an employee suicide, including strategies for helping the workplace and community to grieve and to organize and manage the key steps of crisis response, communication, and next steps for prevention. This guide was created by AFSP and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in partnership with the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA), Veterinary Hospital Managers Association (VHMA), and the Veterinary Medical Association Executives (VMAE).

- **After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Colleges of Veterinary Medicine**: Provides guidance in the event of a death by suicide of a student within a school or college of veterinary medicine. This toolkit contains strategies for helping the veterinary medical community to grieve, to mitigate the risk of contagion, and to attend to the main details of crisis response, communication, and next steps for prevention. This toolkit was created by AFSP in partnership with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC).

- **Leading a Company in the Aftermath of a Suicide Loss**: Article sharing perspectives, strategies, resources and tools to help organizations respond appropriately in the aftermath of a suicide.

- **A Manager's Guide to Suicide Postvention in the Workplace**: 10 Action Steps for Dealing with the Aftermath of Suicide: This guide provides workplace leaders with clear action steps for suicide postvention, including immediate, short-term, and long-term responses to help employees cope with the aftermath of the traumatic event.

- **Suicide Response for Leaders**: Strategies for supporting employees when a co-worker has died by or attempted suicide. From the Workplace Strategies for Mental Health of Canada, this resource covers response to suicide in the workplace, including return to work for an employee who has attempted suicide.

- **Safe reporting and messaging about suicide**: The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention has developed information and resources to help organizations and individuals develop suicide-related messages conveyed in ways that support safety, help-seeking, and healing.

Suicide Attempt Resources:

- **After a Suicide Attempt**: Information and resources from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

- **A Journey Toward Health and Hope - Your Handbook for Recovery After a Suicide Attempt**: Developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), this resource guides people through the first steps toward recovery and a hopeful future after a suicide attempt. It includes personal stories from survivors, and strategies for recovery, such as re-establishing connections and finding a counselor.

- **Lived Experience Programs**: Developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, *Introduction to Supporting Those At Risk and Finding Hope: Guidance For Supporting Those At Risk* are designed to educate communities on how to offer support to those with lived experience.
- **Supporting Someone in the Workplace at Risk of Suicide**: Beyond Blue and the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance in Australia offer important information and resources for supporting individuals returning to work after a suicide attempt or after a suicide loss.

Suicide Loss Resources:

- **Find a Support Group**: The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention lists U.S. and international support groups as a public service.
- **Healing Conversations | Personal Support for Survivors of Suicide Loss**: Healing Conversations gives survivors of suicide loss the opportunity to speak with volunteers, who are themselves loss survivors.
- **International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day**: Each year, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention supports hundreds of large and small events around the world, in which survivors of suicide loss come together to find connection, understanding, and hope through their shared experience.
- **Loss and Healing Resources and Support**: The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention provides a variety of resources and programming to support individuals and communities in the aftermath of a suicide.
- **Suicide Loss Information and Resources**: Losing a loved one to suicide is a traumatic experience. Individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide can experience a form of grieving that is especially intense. This experience can be further exacerbated by societal stigma around suicide.
- **Suicide Loss Survivors**: From the American Association of Suicidology, information and resources dedicated to supporting suicide loss survivors.

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Organizations

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: afsp.org
- International Association for Suicide Prevention: iasp.info
- The Jed Foundation: jedfoundation.org
- National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention: theactionalliance.org
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): nami.org

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