

Suicide

Supporting our workers in the prevention of suicide

In Australia, suicide is the leading cause of death for males and females aged between 15 and 44. In a typical year, about 2500 people die by suicide. This is approximately 7 people per day (BeyondBlue, 2015). In our work in the harvest, it is more than likely that we will come across people who are struggling with mental health concerns. In Australia, we have access to a wide range of services to support people struggling with mental health concerns.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

- **If the person's life is in immediate danger, call 000 and do not leave them on their own.**
- www.beyondblue.org.au gives information on supporting a person who is struggling with suicidal thoughts. You can also phone them on 1300 22 4636 for support and advice.
- Lifeline- 13 11 14. This provides nationwide, 24hr access to crisis support and suicide intervention. As well as providing support directly to the person struggling with concerns, as a support person you can also call to get advice in regards to your specific situation
- Suicide call back service- 1300 659 467. Provides telephone or online counselling to those over the age of 15, struggling with suicide or caring for someone struggling with suicide.
- Local GP- if the person hasn't done so, encourage them to visit their local GP who will be able to start the process of getting psychological/ psychiatric support which might involve medication, hospitalisation etc. They will also be aware of local services that are available for mental health support.
- Your local hospital- take the person to the emergency department of the local hospital. They will be able to assess the person and provide access to their mental health facilities.

RELATIONAL SUPPORT

- Listen- if you see a person struggling, reach out and connect with them. Let them talk and just be a listening ear
- Ask questions- if you are unsure whether someone is going to commit suicide, the best way to get information is to ask them. Questions such as "Do you intend to take your life?", "Do you have a plan to take your life?" "Do you have access to the means to carry out your plan?" "Do you have a timeframe for your plan?"
- Help- help the person to seek support from any of the suicide support providers (some are listed above). Take them to the hospital, help them book an appointment or make a phone call to one of the suicide groups e.g. lifeline.
- Pray- raise a team of people to be praying for the person. Be wise in regards to confidentiality when asking people to pray.
- Look after yourself- make sure that you are being supported as well. You do not have to shoulder the responsibility on your own.

Remember, as workers we are not trained counsellors or providers of psychological/psychiatric care and so it is important that you help the person access professional support. However, your role as a friend and minister of the love and hope of Jesus is vital to the person's well-being and journey to healing.



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