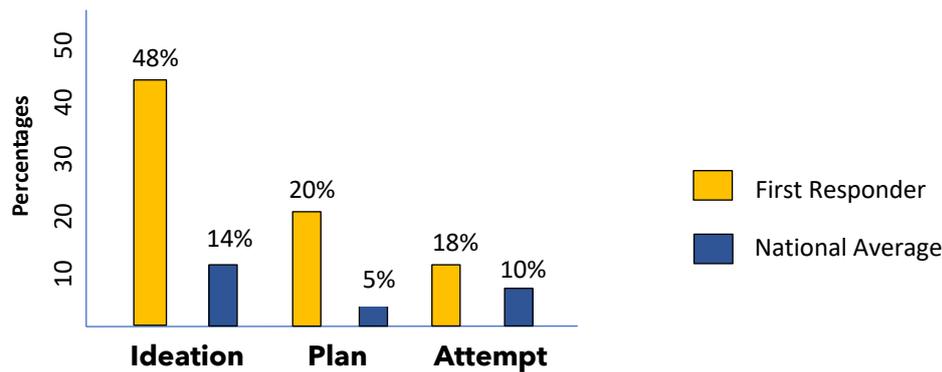


### Hopelessness is a Terrible State of Mind.

Think of a time you felt overwhelmed and found yourself struggling to find answers. What did you do? You may have reached out to someone and discovered some answers and support. However, as a first responder many feel disconnected and isolated, which creates anxiety and depression. This ongoing emotional trauma and stress can lead to suicidal ideation or suicidal attempt.

### First Responder Suicidal Thoughts & Behaviors



### “What Can We Do To Save Lives?”

1. Deliver messages that give hope and belonging. Delivering the message requires courage and commitment to take necessary action.
2. Educate others about suicide and encourage them to not be afraid to reach out and ask, “*Is there anything I can do to help you?*”
3. A change in attitude by recognizing that communication, knowledge, and awareness can save lives.

Suicide is preventable. As First Responders we all play a significant role by not feeling uncomfortable asking someone if they are depressed and contemplating suicide. People who have suicidal thoughts are looking for a person who will offer hope and give assistance to get the help they need.

Prevention can be accomplished through a program titled: **QPR**  
**(Question, Persuade, Refer).** 

**Question:** *How to question a person about suicidal thoughts*

**Persuade:** *Getting a person to agree to get some help*

**Refer:** *Help find a person they trust to get needed services*

**Question**, such as “*Lately, I noticed you hadn’t been yourself, is everything ok?*” Depending on the reply, follow-up with, “*Is there anything I can do to help?*” Just saying something like this lets the person know you are concerned and want to help. This can be a significant relief.

**Persuade**, if the person acknowledges there is a major issue going on in their life, we need to get them to a counselor through a company EAP, mental health center, or a close family member who can provide assistance.

**Refer**, a verbal agreement that the person has successfully been convinced they need help. A follow-up is recommended to make sure they are connected to appropriate services.

A key take away is the knowledge that there is genuine hope for people considering suicide. “Suicide is about despair, and the only cure for despair is hope,” says Joel Dvoskin, Ph.D., ABPP, a clinical and forensic psychologist.

To start a conversation with a person you feel is overwhelmed, or perhaps exhibiting signs of suicidal thoughts, engage with them using **HOPE**.

### **H**ope

- Support
- Giving Voice

### **c**ommunication

- Ask questions
- Listen Carefully

### **P**revention

- Reach Out
- Identify Clues

### **E**ducate

- Knowledge
- Awareness

To provide **HOPE**, we need to be more aware and knowledgeable on how to **Question, Persuade**, and **Refer** people to appropriate intervention resources. It may save a life.

For more information about Suicide Prevention Training, call 518-505-4836 or visit our website: [www.couragethroughaction.com](http://www.couragethroughaction.com)