

Why: Hopelessness is a terrible state of mind. It's imperative we deliver messages that give hope and belonging to firefighters. This requires courage and commitment to take necessary action.

How: Educate firefighters about suicide to not be afraid to reach out and ask, "is there anything I can do to help you?" to a fellow fighter. Also, feel safe to acknowledge our own loneliness or isolation.

What: A change in attitude by recognizing communication, knowledge and awareness saves lives.

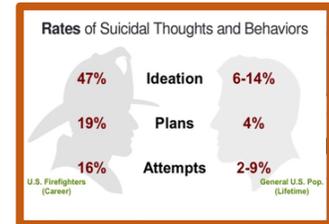
QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) hinges on the fact firefighters in distress typically communicate their despair and helplessness, either in word or behavior before making a suicide attempt.

Through QPR learning, its signs, causes and solutions for prevention, we become better equipped to keep firefighters safe now and into the future. It's designed to detect who are in the thinking or ideational phase of a suicide plan.

Research shows the majority of firefighters who are contemplating suicide give warning signs - verbal, written or behavioral. By recognizing these cries for help and offering hope, suicide can be prevented.

Those who are in a position to recognize warning signs either fail to see them or deny their meaning.

Failure to recognize and respond to suicide warning signs may reflect both lack of knowledge about suicide, as well as our basic fear about the subject itself.



QPR training offers the following:

1. Explore Myths & Facts of Suicide
2. Suicide Clues & Warning Signs
 - a. Direct Verbal Clues
 - b. Behavioral Clues
 - c. Situational Clues
3. QPR Suicidal Prevention Program

'Q' – Question – How to question a firefighter about suicidal thoughts. In the training we will explore two types of questions:

- a. Less direct approach (*"Have you been unhappy lately?"*)
- b. More direct approach (*"Have you ever wanted to harm yourself?"*)

'P' – Persuade – The goal of persuasion is simple. All we want to accomplish is for a person to agree to acknowledge their thoughts & get some help.

'R' – Referral – Being a resource, it's imperative to notify appropriate personnel as quickly as possible.

- a. Identify a person they trust most and see if they can be contacted.
- b. If a person is very depressed, try to get a 'good faith commitment' not to complete or attempt suicide.

Some Alarming Statistics:

- More first responders die by suicide than in the line of duty. That's 10 times the rate of the general population.
- Current numbers only reflect confirmed suicides. Suicides are being undercounted by as much as 40% to 60%.
- 1 in 5 firefighters have thought (ideation) about suicide.
- Less than 5% of fire departments have suicide prevention programs.
- Firefighters commit suicide at a higher rate than police officers.
- 30% increase in suicidal ideations by those exposed to suicides both attempts and completions.
- First responders feel they'll be looked down on or taken off the job if they speak up about what they are 'feeling.'

Resource Numbers:

- Fire/EMS Helpline
1-888-731-FIRE (3473)
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline –
988 - national crisis hotline or
800-271-8255
- Safe Call Now- 1-206-459-3020
- Crisis Text Line – Text 'SART' or
'HELP' to 741-741
- Frontline Helpline – 1-866-676-
7500
- EAP Program
- ***Peer support groups are
extremely helpful.***