

# Suicide Prevention Awareness

Suicide Prevention Awareness (SPA) provides information for EMS personnel who see others struggling, withdrawing from social contact, anxious or depressed which potentially can lead to overwhelming thoughts of suicidal ideations.

**Courage Through Action** helps provide encouragement and support during times of crisis by creating safe and open communication.

**Why:** Deliver messages that gives hope and belonging. This requires courage and commit to take necessary action.

**How:** Educate EMS about suicide to not be afraid to reach out and ask, *“you haven’t been yourself lately, is everything ok?”*

**What:** A change in a person’s attitude to create hope through communication and

**Suicide Prevention Awareness** hinges on the fact people in distress typically communicate their despair and helplessness, either in word or behavior before making a suicide attempt.

Through SPA learning, its signs, causes and solutions for prevention, we become better equipped to keep students safe now and into the future.

Research shows many people who are contemplating suicide give some warning signs - verbal, written or behavioral. By recognizing these signs for help and offering hope, suicide can be prevented.

## SPA Prevention Awareness System

**Aware** - Be attentive to what people are saying as well as not saying or doing.

**Ask** - If you feel someone is struggling, trust your gut and ask them directly, don’t wait, start the conversation, and ASK the ‘S’ question:

- *“got a minute, I’d like to ask you something.”*
- *“have you been struggling lately?”*
- *“I’d like to understand what’s going on?”*
- *“have you been thinking about suicide?”*

**Act** - After asking questions, help create a safety plan by saying *“how about I help you find someone you can talk with?”* or *“is there a partner, friend or relative we can reach out to?”*

**Follow-up** - This can make a big difference, regardless how the conversation went.

Here are some ways to follow-up:

- Make a phone call
- Short text message
- Visit home/apt.
- Email

When you make contact ask

- *“wanted to follow-up to see how you’re doing?”*
- *“did you hear back from the people we contacted the other day?”*

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