

- Be Alert
Ask
Assess
Take Action

Suicide - Myths & Facts

Myth *Once a person has decided to kill themselves no-one can stop them.*

Fact Suicide is a cry for help, not a wish to die, and it can be prevented.

Myth *A person who attempts suicide and does not complete will not try again.*

Fact For every 5 people who take their own lives, the majority have made one or more previous attempts.

Myth *The suicide crisis is over when a depression lifts.*

Fact This is often a high-risk time as a person may find it easier to carry out an attempt as they begin to feel better.

Myth *Most suicides happen late at night.*

Fact Most suicides happen in late afternoon or early evening.

Myth *People who abuse substances rarely complete suicide.*

Fact Those who abuse alcohol/drugs are at a higher risk of completing suicide.

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Suicide - Myths & Facts

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| Myth | <i>People who talk about suicide won't do it or are attention seeking.</i> |
| Fact | Talking about suicide is a cry for help AND a warning sign from a potentially suicidal person and should be listened to and acted upon. |
| Myth | <i>Suicide occurs without warning.</i> |
| Fact | Many people give warning signs of their suicidal intentions.
Be Alert. |
| Myth | <i>Recent significant events will not cause a suicide.</i> |
| Fact | Recent significant events may precipitate a suicide. |
| Myth | <i>Only certain types of people consider, attempt or complete suicide.</i> |
| Fact | Anyone can have thoughts, feelings or actions that are suicidal. |
| Myth | <i>Asking someone if they are feeling suicidal will put the idea into their head.</i> |
| Fact | Asking about suicide directly, openly and sensitively allows the suicidal person to communicate. It will not put the idea into their head. |

*Adapted from Appleby M (1996)
Suicide Awareness Training Manual
Rose Education, New South Wales.*