



## Vilas County Public Health Department

330 Court Street

Eagle River, WI 54521

715-479-3656 • 866-845-2726 • Fax: 715-479-3741

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**Contact:** Vilas County Public Health Department: 715-479-3757

### **National Suicide Prevention Week, September 5 – 11, 2021**

Coffee Sleeve Campaign in Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. The Northwoods COPE Coalition\* is working with local coffee shops in Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties to connect people who may have thoughts or know someone who has thoughts of suicide with resources to get help. Texting 741741 to the HOPE LINE connects you to a free, trained crisis counselor.

In addition to promoting the HOPELINE, Michelle Gobert, Positive Youth Development Educator for UW-Madison Division of Extension Forest County, worked with a group of students from Crandon High School to develop messages of hope. "During the month of May, students in both the Laona and Crandon School Districts participated in Youth Mental Health Awareness activities. Crandon High School students focused on creating positive messaging and developed statements which we are now using for our coffee sleeve promotion," describes Michelle. These statements of hope include:

- Believe in Yourself.;
- You are important. You belong.;
- You matter. No matter what.;
- You are strong. Trust yourself.;
- and
- Treat yourself with gentle kindness.

These messages of hope along with the Crisis Text HOPE LINE 741741 will be displayed on coffee sleeves at most local tri-county coffee shops. We want to thank the below shops for being part of this campaign for suicide prevention week.

**Forest:** Jameson's Whiskey Darlin and Tricia's Treasures

**Oneida:** A'la Mode Ice Cream and Coffee shop, Bath & Body Creations, The Briar House, Café Sonder, Crimson Cup, Deja Brew Coffee & More, Northern Grounds, The Reve, Tilly's, and Tricia's Treasures

**Vilas:** The Daily Grind, Eagle Roasters, Jaime's Java, Little Creek Coffee, Milky Way, and Red Canoe

Suicide is connected with tremendous grief and loss that affects individuals, families, and communities. Suicide is also a complex issue that involves many factors that can increase suicide. Here are some statistics according to the *WI Suicide Prevention Plan 2020 and the National Vital Statistics Reports Volume 69, September 11, 2020:*

- Nationally, the suicide rate among persons aged 10–24 was statistically stable from 2000 to 2007 and then increased 57.4%, from 6.8 per 100,000 in 2007 to 10.7 in 2018.
- The suicide rate among Wisconsin residents increased by 40%, 2000–2017.
- The majority of suicide deaths were male, 2013–2017.
- The suicide rate was highest among individuals ages 45–54, 2013–2017.
- The suicide rate (per 100,000) for Wisconsin residents ages 45–54 has more than doubled from 2000 to 2017.
- Suicide rates were highest among American Indians/ Alaska Natives and Whites, 2013–2017.
- Suicide rates were higher in rural counties than urban/ suburban counties, 2013–2017.
- Firearm was the most commonly used method of suicide, 2013–2017.
- Nearly 1 in 4 individuals who died by suicide had a previous suicide attempt, 2013–2017.
- Veterans accounted for almost 1 in every 5 suicide deaths, 2013–2017.
- 271 adolescents (ages 10–19) died by suicide from 2013–2017.
- Suicide was the second leading cause of death among 10 to 19- year-olds, 2013–2017.
- Suicidal ideation was reported by approximately 1 in 6 Wisconsin public high school students, 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey.
- Adolescents who died by suicide were more likely to disclose suicide intent to a friend or peer when compared with adults, 2013–2017.
- Females ages 15–17 had the highest rates of emergency department visits and hospitalization stays with self-harm injuries, 2016–2017.
- LGBT youth are 3 times more likely than their heterosexual peers to have considered suicide, 2017 YRBS.

It is important to be aware of the differences between risk factors and warning signs to help someone who may be thinking about suicide or has a plan in place. According to the Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) institute out of Seattle, Washington, warning signs are things such as having a previous attempt of suicide, getting a gun or stockpiling pills, putting personal affairs in order, drug or alcohol abuse or relapse after a period of recovery, and /or unexplained anger, aggression, and irritability. Risk Factors include, residing in a rural area, previous attempt of suicide, adolescent 15-24, or having a family history of suicide. The more risk factors and warning signs a person shows, the closer they are to a possible attempt or completion of suicide.

Tips on starting a conversation per the QPR Institute include:

- If you suspect the person is thinking of suicide, ask the person directly, “Are you suicidal?”
- Stay calm – just because someone is having thoughts of suicide, it does not mean they are in immediate danger. Take the time to listen and provide support.

- Reassure them that help is available, and that these feelings are a signal that it's time to talk to a professional.

Below are other resources that can be used to help someone:

- If you or someone you know is in an emergency, call **911** immediately.
- If you are in crisis or are experiencing difficult or suicidal thoughts, call:  
Tri-County Crisis Number (Forest, Oneida, Vilas): 1-888-299-1188
- National Crisis Line: 1-800-273-TALK (8255).
- Text HOPELINE: 741741
- Veteran's Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1)

"If you are not comfortable in asking the question or getting the person the help they may need, then help them connect to someone they trust. This may be a pastor or priest, their healthcare provider, a mental health provider, or a close family member or friend," added Heidi Pritzl, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with Koller Behavioral Health. "Offer to help them connect in whatever way you're comfortable with. Sometimes making that first moment of contact can be difficult, especially if it's to get professional help."

\*The Northwood's Community, Outreach, Prevention, and Education Coalition (COPE) addresses mental health and substance use concerns in Forest, Oneida, and Forest Counties. The group is made up of community partners that include school districts, healthcare, private mental health providers, veteran's services, local health departments, and UW-Extension.

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