

TIP OF THE MONTH

SUICIDE PREVENTION



While some degree of stress supports optimal functioning, when life and work demands exceed our energy and resources, a stress injury can occur, in which we no longer feel like ourselves. Suicidal thoughts can be one sign of a stress injury or illness.

KNOW THE SIGNS:

1. **Health:** increased use of medications, alcohol, illicit drugs; talking about wanting to hurt themselves or die
2. **Emotion:** experiencing extreme mood swings; feeling hopeless or having no purpose
3. **Attitude:** being negative about professional and personal life; having inappropriate outbursts of anger or sadness
4. **Relationships:** withdrawing or isolating themselves from family, friends, and coworkers; talking about being a burden to others
5. **Temperament:** acting anxious or agitated, behaving recklessly; being uncomfortable, tired or in unbearable pain

If you notice signs of distress in a colleague, step in, reach out. Offer stress first aid.

THE 7 “C”s of STRESS FIRST AID:

- **Check:** “You seem stressed. How are you doing?”
- **Coordinate:** Get assistance from a manager, FEAP, or others as needed.
- **Cover:** “How about we take a few minutes in the break room?”
- **Calm:** “Take a slow deep breath with me a few times.”
- **Connect:** “Who have you been able to talk to about this? Who would you want to talk with?” “FEAP has been so helpful to others, would that be helpful to you?”
- **Competence:** “There are things that we can do together to make it through today and this week.”
- **Confidence:** “The work we do is really important; you matter and make a difference.”

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE?

Mental health can be a difficult topic to broach for many people. A recent article in Forbes Magazine entitled "[3 Guiding Principles For Workplaces This National Suicide Prevention Month And Beyond](#)" suggests the most important rule is to "name mental health for what it is." Rather than generalizing towards wellness terms, we should specifically name diagnosable conditions, thereby reducing the stigma surrounding them. Best practices include:

- Focus on resilience. Instead of "suicide attempter," say "a person who has lived through a suicide attempt."
- Don't assume impairment. Instead of "suffering from" or "struggling with" mental health, say "living with" or "managing" a mental health condition.
- Avoid derisive or trivializing comments tied to mental health, such as calling someone "crazy" or "insane," or saying "I'm OCD" to describe cleanliness.

Creating a culture of support around mental health in the workplace is another important step in raising awareness for and

valuing the importance of mental health.

SHARE THE RESOURCES WITH OTHERS:

In mental health emergencies, call 911.

Crisis Services:

- Local: Region Ten CSB Crisis Services Charlottesville & Albemarle, Luisa, Fluvanna, Nelson and Greene. 434.972.1800 [Crisis Services - Region Ten](#)
- State/National: Text HOME to 741741 from anywhere in the US about any type of crisis. A live, trained crisis counselor will receive the text and respond quickly.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.8255

[American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Home](#)

NIMH: [5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain](#)

FEAP is here to help you. For employees and their families, we offer assessment, brief counseling, referral, and follow-up at no cost for a wide variety of personal concerns.

Visit our website to learn more, or [contact us.](#)

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