

## Suicide Prevention Subcommittee

Montgomery County Mental Health Advisory Committee

### **Recommended Language:**

The US Preventive Services Task Force and most other mental health professional associations recommend not using “committed suicide,” “failed attempt,” and “successful or unsuccessful suicide” but rather using “died by suicide.” Other terms like “epidemic” or “copycat” are discouraged as well. In an effort to be *person-first and trauma-informed*, the subcommittee should recommend agreed upon language for the Mental Health Advisory Committee to use consistently. Additional Resources:

- [Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide](#)
- [Psychiatric Times: Words Matter – The Language of Suicidal Self-directed Violence](#)
- [CNN: The Words to Say – and Not to Say – About Suicide](#)

### **From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):**

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/riskprotectivefactors.html>

### **Protective Factors**

- Effective clinical care for mental, physical, and substance abuse disorders
- Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions and support for help seeking
- Family and community support (connectedness)
- Support from ongoing medical and mental health care relationships
- Skills in problem solving, conflict resolution, and nonviolent ways of handling disputes
- Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support instincts for self-preservation

### **Risk Factors**

- Family history of suicide
- Family history of child maltreatment
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- History of mental disorders, particularly clinical depression
- History of alcohol and substance abuse
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Impulsive or aggressive tendencies

- Cultural and religious beliefs (e.g., belief that suicide is noble resolution of a personal dilemma)
- Local epidemics of suicide
- Isolation, a feeling of being cut off from other people
- Barriers to accessing mental health treatment
- Loss (relational, social, work, or financial)
- Physical illness
- Easy access to lethal methods
- Unwillingness to seek help because of the stigma attached to mental health and substance abuse disorders or to suicidal thoughts

Alaska State has an expanded list of risk and protective factors:

[http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM\\_Matrix\\_8%205x11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM_Matrix_8%205x11_FINAL.pdf)

**CDC Additional Resources, Articles, and Data:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/resources.html>

**Primary Care/Pediatricians:**

The US Preventive Services Task Force offers the following recommendation for adolescents aged 12 to 18 years.

*The USPSTF recommends screening for major depressive disorder (MDD) in adolescents aged 12 to 18 years. Screening should be implemented with adequate systems in place to ensure accurate diagnosis, effective treatment, and appropriate follow-up.*

**School-Based Supports:**

Signs of Suicide (SOS) is the current EBP used by MCPS: <https://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/sos-signs-suicide>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center notes that implementation essentials of the SOS EBP requires a school-based crisis management plan (see Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program, Youth Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention Guidelines as suggested model)

MCPS also includes a suicide prevention resource with hotlines and web links:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/schools/westlandms/counseling/Suicide%20Prevention%20Resources.pdf>

## Community-Based Resources:

- [24-hour Crisis Center](#)
- [BTheOne](#)
- [Every Mind](#)
- [UMTTR – Your Life Matters](#)

## Hotline Information:

The Montgomery County Hotline is a program of the Mental Health Association, and is designed for callers who may be distressed; depressed, anxious, experiencing loneliness or for those who may need to talk. Workers on the hotline are also able to deal with other mental health issues including suicide.

Four lines are answered: the general hotline, a youth crisis hotline and local calls to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/1-800-SUICIDE (1.800.784.2433). Each call is free and confidential.

The hotline numbers for callers: General and Supportive Listening: 301.738.2255 (operates 24/7); Youth hotline: 301.738.9697; Military Hotline: 301.738.7176. For any of the previous mentioned issues that are more urgent, please contact the Montgomery County Crisis Center at 240.777.4000.

## Local News on the Rise in Suicide in Montgomery County

- <https://www.mymcmedia.org/montgomery-talks-teen-suicide-in-montgomery-county/>
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2019/03/18/six-ways-parents-schools-can-tackle-spike-teen-suicide/>