

U.P. Suicide Prevention Quarterly – January, 2017

Welcome! This electronic newsletter is meant to be a quarterly point of contact for those working in suicide prevention in the U.P. Please feel free to forward this and to send me information you want to have out for April, May, or June, 2017. Anyone may contact me to add to or remove their email from the list (dial.help@dialhelp.org).

Between newsletters, I'll be happy to post information on the U.P. Suicide Prevention Coalition Facebook page.

Mike Gaunt,
Crisis Unit Manager, Dial Help.

Dial Help, Houghton, Michigan

Our philosophy is to "help people help themselves" by providing immediate, accessible, and affordable services to the communities we serve.

906-482-9077

dial.help@dialhelp.org



For any individual experiencing thoughts of suicide at any time, call:

1-800-273-TALK,

or in the U.P. text:

906-35NEEDS (63337)

Dial Help Safety Net Program: Supporting Individuals At Risk of Suicide

Supported by the Portage Health Foundation, Superior Health Foundation, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, Dial Help has established the Safety Net Program, offering support to people at risk of suicide, as well as those who have lost a loved one to suicide.

Overview

The goal of the Safety Net Program is to bridge the gap between the time a person experiences suicidal thoughts or loses a loved one to suicide, and when the person is able to see a professional for on-going care (or receives other necessary help or services). Experienced Dial Help Crisis Specialists are selected to provide support and link individuals in the program to resources as needed. These Crisis Specialists also assess current risk levels of suicide, help the person identify supports in his or her life, and work collaboratively to develop a plan to stay safe.

How the Program Works

Individuals in the program are contacted via phone calls or text messages, depending on each person's preference. This contact generally ends once the person is able to attend an appointment with a counselor or other professional, or has accessed the necessary resources or supports. The Safety Net Program is not a replacement for counseling, and promoting professional treatment is an important part of the services offered. If an individual in the program chooses not to pursue on-going professional treatment, the Crisis Specialist will help the person develop a long-term safety plan before transitioning the individual out of the program.

From the initial contact with the client until the time the client is ready to leave the program, the Crisis Specialist also reminds the client that he or she can contact Dial Help's 24/7 crisis phone/text/instant message line any time their situation becomes overwhelming. The ability to access trained help any time, day or night, provides true wrap-around care, so that those dealing with suicide risk or loss of a loved one to suicide don't fall through the cracks. Between the Safety Net Program contact and the 24/7 crisis line, there is always someone to reach out to.

Enrolling in the Program

Anyone in the U.P. who is experiencing suicidal thoughts can self-enroll in the program by contacting Dial Help's 24/7 crisis line and asking to enroll in the Safety Net Program.

The View from Inside The Crisis Unit: The Holiday Myth

Sitting in the Dial Help Crisis Unit on Christmas Day.

No contacts except for a few regular callers. No high risk or Lifeline calls in days. No need to call police for a wellness check in a week. Strangely quiet.

The myth persists that the holidays are a time of high-stress calls to suicide hotlines and crisis lines. "Call volumes go up, many people complete suicide because of the holidays."

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Suicide doesn't follow a season. A person's decision to end their life is based on reasons specific to that individual.

The real danger is in assuming everything is OK now that the holidays are over. Not true. Be aware.

Encourage people to call or seek help. Save lives...

Anonymous