

SUICIDE POSTVENTION

SUPPORT & RESOURCES FOR HEALING

The following resources have been compiled through active outreach to individuals who have experienced a suicide loss in Milwaukee County. This information has been most relevant and beneficial to those newly bereaved.

If you have questions, would like help navigating these resources, would like to provide suggestions for additional resources, or would like to support the active outreach work, please contact:

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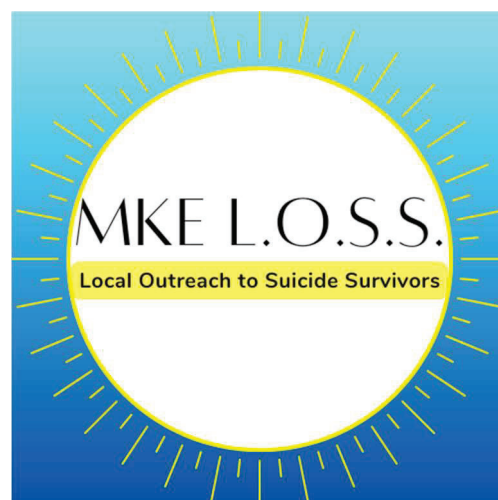
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Additional information about the outreach program and the Division of Suicide Research & Healing can be found at:

mcw.edu/postvention

Social Media: @mcwsuicideprev



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WHAT DO I SAY?

TELLING OTHERS & THE MEDIA

What to tell others about your loss is a personal choice. Honesty about the loss and the type of loss has been found to be helpful in addressing grief and stigma around suicide. Details do not need to be shared. Some additional considerations are below:

Children & Teens: It is recommended to start with an honest, simple explanation for the loss. Details do not need to be shared. Let the child's/teen's questions guide the conversation. Being open about the loss will help children and youth begin to process the death. Saying the word "suicide" will not increase the risk of someone dying by suicide. See "Youth" handouts and the Healing Guide for more information.

Media Guidelines: Media may or may not be interested in your situation. You do not have to speak to the media. If the media comes to you or you know the media will be reporting, it is suggested they follow reporting guidelines for suicide. These guidelines can be found at <https://reportingonsuicide.org/>.

Safe Language: Suicide and suicide loss is often stigmatized, leaving people feeling isolated. When communicating about suicide, it is important to use safe language that puts people first and reduces stigma around mental health and suicide. For example:

- Use "died by suicide" instead of "committed suicide"

For more information, please see <https://talksuicide.ca/understanding-suicide/suicide-safe-language>.

SUPPORTING OTHERS

CHILDREN, YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Before you can take care of others, you will need to take care of yourself. If you can, ask for help from others. Try to eat well, drink water, sleep and exercise if you can. Find a trusted professional to talk to. [See the Children, Teens, and Suicide Loss booklet for more information.](#)

Grief

Everyone grieves in their own way, in their own time. Children may not show any outward feelings of grief, or may show their grief through certain behaviors (e.g., physical aggression, stomach pain). Often, children will play and act “normal.” Still, children and youth will experience similar feelings of anger, guilt, fear, and anxiety. It will be important to listen and reassure them you are there to support them if and when they are ready to talk.

What to Share

It is recommended to start with an honest, simple explanation. Details do not need to be shared. Let the child’s/teen’s questions guide the conversation. Being open about the loss will help children and youth begin to process the death. Saying the word suicide will not increase the risk of someone dying by suicide.

Children’s Grief & Bereavement Resources

- Children’s Wisconsin Grief Support and Bereavement
 - (414) 337-4250
 - griefsupport@childrenswi.org
 - <https://childrenswi.org/patients-and-families/milwaukee-campus/inpatient-visit/during-your-stay/hospital-programs-and-services/grief-support>

Healing Hearts of Southeast Wisconsin

- Free grief peer groups for children, youth, families
- <https://www.healingheartswisconsin.org/>

Redefining Life Center for Grief & Healing

- Support for children, teens, adults and families
- <https://redefininglifeservices.org/redefining-life-center>

Coping After Suicide-Online Support Group for Youth

- Teens- Mondays 6-7:30pm EST
- Twentysomethings- Mondays 8-9:30pm EST
- Facilitator: Steve Karaiskos (stevenkaraiskos@gmail.com)
- <https://www.copingaftersuicide.com/support-groups>

Camp Hope

- Free weekend camp for grieving children, teens, and families in WI
- <https://www.camphopeforkids.org/>

Comfort Zone Camp

- Camps for children ages 7-25 in New Jersey or Michigan
- <https://comfortzonecamp.org/suicideloss/>

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

ON SCENE & PERSONAL LOGISTICS

On Scene Experience:

At first, the death of your loved one will be viewed as an investigation. This means, first responders will need to ask several questions. It may feel like you are being investigated. You may also be separated from other loved ones for a time. You may be asked the following about your loved one:

- The last time you saw or spoke to your loved one
- Medical, mental health, or substance use history
- Challenges faced by your loved one (e.g., financial, legal, relationship)
- Access to medication or firearms

Items from the scene, like personal belongings or a suicide note, will often be kept by the investigators. You will also be asked about an autopsy, screening for substances, and organ donation.

Cleaning Services:

If cleaning services are needed for your home, the cost may be covered by your home or rental insurance. Contact your insurance provider first.

This list is not exhaustive. An online search for biohazard cleaning should provide additional results.

- Bio-One Milwaukee
 - <https://www.bioonemilwaukee.com>
 - (414) 418-2521

Closing Accounts & Insurance:

In the days and weeks after your loss, you will need to think about any important accounts or policies your loved one had. Copies of the death certificate may be needed for each account.

Depending on the type of account you will be closing, a **Fact of Death Certificate** (does not contain manner or cause of death) may be sufficient or an **Extended Fact of Death Certificate** will be needed. For more information, please visit

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/vitalrecords/record.htm>.

- Life Insurance – Each policy may be different. It will be important to review your specific policy regarding a “suicide exclusion” or “incontestability.” Generally, if the death occurred within the **first 2 years** of a policy, the death benefit claim can be denied.
- Health Insurance – If you are covered by your loved one’s insurance, you may be able to continue this coverage if premiums are paid.
- Car Insurance – Taking your loved one off the policy will reduce your premium payment.
- Other accounts – Credit cards, bank accounts, utility accounts and others may need to be closed or changed to your name only.

Medical and Other Bills

- If your loved one was an adult or non-dependent you are not responsible for medical bills, loans, and other debts (e.g., credit cards, car payments, home loans) that were in **their name only**. However, payments may need to be covered by the individual’s estate if funds are available.
- If your name is on any of these accounts, or you are a parent, you are responsible for payment. Social security benefits, life insurance, and other savings may be used. Additionally, in Wisconsin if you are the living spouse, you are responsible for payment.

GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT

WHAT TO EXPECT & AVAILABLE SUPPORT

Grief after a suicide loss can be complicated, and often isolating. Feelings can include shock, anger, guilt, and depression-like symptoms (e.g., disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, intense sadness, lack of energy). You may also feel the effects of trauma (e.g., on-edge or extreme alertness, being easily upset). Getting help with these feelings will be important for you to process your grief.

SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT TRAINED CLINICIANS-FOR ADULTS

These clinicians have been specially trained to work with individuals who have experienced suicide loss.

- Jennifer Smith, Psy D, LPC
17100 W. North Ave.
Suite 100
Brookfield, WI 53005
(262) 239-5641
drjlsmith17@gmail.com
- Andrew Schramm, PhD
8701 W. Watertown Plank Rd
Medical College of
Wisconsin/Froedtert
Milwaukee, WI 53226
(414) 955-1743
aschramm@mcw.edu

Milwaukee County Access Clinics have four trained clinicians in suicide bereavement across three sites. Walk-in hours available at all sites from 8:30am-2:30pm. **Request to see a suicide bereavement trained clinician.**

ONE-ON-ONE THERAPY OPTIONS

When looking for a counselor or therapist, you may want to think about: 1) the person's experience with trauma, grief, and loss, 2) shared cultural background or characteristics (e.g., gender, religion, race, or ethnicity), 3) insurance coverage or cost.

Sometimes, finding a good fit with a clinician can be difficult. Not all clinicians are trained in grief and bereavement, and even fewer have specific training in suicide loss. If you are not happy with your care and would like help finding other options, please contact the **Postvention Program Manager**.

16th Street Clinic Behavioral Health

- Bilingual (Spanish/English) Services: Accepts most commercial insurance plans, BadgerCare Plus, Medicare, sliding fee scale for those uninsured.
- (414) 672-1353

HIR Wellness

- Provides free mental health and wellness services to Milwaukee residents and WI Indigenous Residents
- Program coordinator: Guinevere at GDuquaine@HIRWellness.org
- (414) 763-5815

City of Milwaukee Health Department-ReCAST Program

- 6 free sessions with local counselor/therapist
- Contact Julien Phifer who will coordinate connection
- Office: 414-758-7693; Email: jphifer@milwaukee.gov

Sebastian Family Psychology Practice

6025 N. Green Bay Ave
2nd Floor
Glendale, WI
(414) 247-0801

<http://www.sebastianfp.com/index.shtml>

- Provides mental health counseling and other services, including services for refugees and immigrants
- Accepts Medicaid, Children's Community Health Plan, selected private insurances and sliding scale

Other Ways to find a Clinician

- Contact your health insurance provider
- For Milwaukee County Mental Health & Wellness Resource Directory-
 - <https://www.mhawisconsin.org/milw-resources-search>
- To find a culturally competent mental health professional-
 - <https://findmeatherapist.org/>

LOCAL THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS

Access Clinic-Outreach Community Health Centers

- Services for uninsured/underinsured
- Walk-in hours available from 8:30am-2:30pm
- 210 W. Capitol Dr. **OR** 1635 W. National Ave. **OR** 8200 W. Silver Spring Dr.
- (414) 257-7665 (Capitol); 414-257-7900 (National); (414) 257-5190 (Silver Spring)

Black Space

www.blackspacehq.com

(414) 249-7301

- Focuses on group therapy for BIPOC & LGBTQ+ adults, has separate groups for identifying women, men, & LGBTQ+
- Sign up online or by emailing blackspacemke@gmail.com

CLARA Healing Institute

7954 Harwood Ave.

Wauwatosa, WI 53213

(414) 435-9603

www.clarahealinginstitute.com

- Services on reduced/sliding scale
- Child/youth; grief/loss; art therapy

CRISIS LINES

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS IN CRISIS

988

- If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available from the Wisconsin Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org.

Milwaukee County Crisis Services

- 24-7 crisis support & crisis mobile team
- (414) 257-7222
- <https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/DHHS/BHD>

Trevor Project

- Trained counselors to support individuals who identify with LGBTQIA+ community.
- Available 24/7, 365 days a year
- Text-START to 678-678
- Call 1-866-488-7386
- Chat <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help/>

Code Green Crisis Line

- 24/7 Peer Support for first responders and family members.
- 1-206-459-3020

FUNERAL/BURIAL ASSISTANCE

LOCAL & STATEWIDE OPTIONS

Wisconsin Funeral and Cemetery Aids Program

- Must be completed by funeral or crematory providers
- Only for those enrolled in eligible programs (e.g. Badger Care)
- Cannot reimburse expenses already paid
- <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/em/wfcap.htm>

Milwaukee County DHHS Burial Assistance Program

- For Milwaukee County residents who are not eligible for WFCFA program
- Maximum covered \$400
- Must meet income and asset guidelines
- (414) 289-6714

Helpful Hearts Foundation, Inc.

- For those not eligible for WFCFA program
- Maximum covered \$2,500
- Must complete within 60 days of date of death
- Residents of Milwaukee County will need to be approved by Board of Directors
- <https://www.helpfulheartswi.org/apply-now.html>

GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

Individuals who have experienced a loss from suicide have often found it helpful to meet with others who have faced a similar loss. Most often, this happens through support groups, one-on-one peer support, or online.

SUICIDE SPECIFIC GROUPS

Survivors Helping Survivors		
<i>Hosted by Mental Health of America Wisconsin</i>		
<u>South Side Group</u> Date: 2 nd Tuesday of Time: 7-8pm <i>Virtual</i>	<u>North Side Group</u> Date: 1 st Wednesday Time: 6-7pm <i>Virtual</i>	<u>East Side Group</u> Date: 3 rd Wednesday Time: 7-8pm <i>Virtual</i>
For meeting connection details: erica@mhawisconsin.org (414) 336-7984 mhawisconsin.org/survivors		
Survivors Helping Survivors		
<i>Hosted by National Alliance on Mental Illness</i>		
Date: 2 nd Tuesday Time: 6:30-7:30pm	Date: 4 th Tuesday Time: 7:00-8:00pm <i>Virtual</i>	*For family members & friends 18+
*If interested, must register by Monday prior to group. Email Jennifer Smith for location details and information. jsmith@namisoutheastwi.org		
Mourning & Muffins:		
Loss Through Suicide Support Group		
Date: 2 nd Saturday Time: 9:00-11:00am	Elmbrook Church Room B229	777 S. Barker Rd. Brookfield
No need to register. For questions, contact facilitator: Barb (262) 424-8375		
Guided Grief Meditation Circles		
Healing Intergenerational Roots (HIR) Wellness Institute		
Date: Every W/F Time: 4:00-6:00pm Hybrid	3136 W. Kilbourn Ave.	https://hirwellness.org
For more information, registration & current offerings, contact Guinevere GDuQuaine@HIRWellness.org or call (414) 763-5815		

HEALING CONVERSATIONS

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Wisconsin Chapter

Peer support (someone who has experienced a similar loss) is provided through one-on-one meetings (in person, over phone, virtual).

- Gena Orlando, Area Director
gorlando@afsp.org
(414) 216-4180
- To be connected, fill out form at: <https://afsp.org/healing-conversations/> after clicking on “Request a Visit”

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Prevent Suicide Wisconsin--
<https://www.preventsuicidewi.org/home>
 - Local information and resources
 - Special resource section for specific populations
- Alliance of Hope--<https://allianceofhope.org/>
 - Find helpful resources to help you understand, cope, and begin to heal
 - Find information for the newly bereaved
- Parents of Suicides--<https://www.pos-ffos.com/>
 - Online community, exclusively for parents, to offer understanding, support, information and hope
 - Email Karyl Chastain Beal (arlynsmom@cs.com) to receive application to join
- Friends for Survival--<https://friendsforsurvival.org/>
 - Provides resources, including a monthly newsletter
 - Online support groups
 - Toll Free Suicide Loss Helpline: 1-800-646-7322
- Coping After Suicide--
<https://www.copingaftersuicide.com/support-groups>
 - Online support groups for youth and different types of losses

Social Media

- Facebook Groups:
 - Young Adult Survivors of Suicide Loss (YASSL)
 - Friends for Survival
- Instagram
 - #survivorsofsuicideloss
 - afspwichapter
 - mcwsuicideprev
 - chaosofloss
 - unlockethelight
 - letters_to_john



PEER RUN WARMLINES

IF STRUGGLING-CALL FOR SUPPORT

Service Member, Veteran & Family (SMVF) Warmline

- 24/7 support for Wisconsin residents who are currently serving or have previously served and their families.
- (262) 336-9540

Wisconsin Farmer Wellness Helpline

- 24/7 support for Wisconsin farmers and family members
- (888) 901-2558
- <https://datcp.wi.gov/pages/AgDevelopment/FarmerMentalHealthWellness.aspx>

Friendship Line

- 24-7 support for those 60 years and older or adults living with disabilities
- (800) 971-0016

Physician Support Line

- Support for US physician & medical students, confidential/anonymous
- 8:00am-12:00am ET
- (888) 409-0141