



# Florence County Health Department

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### Mental Health Awareness

[Florence, WI] –

Mental health problems are the leading cause of suicide. Mental health refers to the capacity of diminished cognitive, social, or emotional abilities causing deterioration to one's well-being and development. In Wisconsin, suicide is currently the second leading cause of death among ages 5-25 years old. There are numerous risk factors increasing the possibility of suicide, some of which include, financial problems, social isolation, job problems or loss, unhealthy relationships, major life changes from divorce or illness, and the stigma associated with seeking help.

Warning signs that may indicate someone is thinking of suicide:

- Talking or threatening about wanting to hurt or kill oneself.
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, pills, or other means.
- Talking about substantial guilt, being a burden, or wanting to die.
- Experiencing feelings of emptiness, hopelessness, extreme sadness and anger.
- Expressing having no reason to live, no sense of purpose, and feeling trapped.
- Extreme changes in behavior, such as, significant changes in eating and sleeping habits, increasing drug or alcohol use, withdrawing from friends and family, giving away valuable items or saying good-bye, engaging in risky behaviors, and dramatic mood swings.

Suicide can be prevented. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline encourages that, "By starting the conversation, providing support, and direction help to those who need it, we can prevent suicides and save lives". #BeThe1To is a movement encouraging people to "Be the one to save a life" using a five-step action plan for communicating with someone that may be suicidal. Use these five simple steps to help prevent suicide: ask, be there, keep the individual safe, help them connect, and follow-up. See the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline website for more information to prevent suicide. Call the suicide lifeline at 988 to get free help immediately for anyone in suicidal crisis.

Florence County Health Department is hosting a QPR training on suicide awareness and prevention to high schoolers who are interested. Lunch and transportation to site will be provided. The training will be held in the Florence Utilities Conference Room on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 11:00am- 1:00pm. For more information on how to sign-up, see the Secretary at Florence High School.

Florence County Health Department can be reached at 715-528-4837. Visit our website at <http://www.florencecountywi.com/> for more information on programming. The health department is located on the second floor, 501 Lake Avenue in the Florence County Courthouse, open Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. open during lunch time and by appointment after hours. Need health insurance? Visit [access.wi.gov](http://access.wi.gov) to see if you qualify for benefits.

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