

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting



Home Healthy - Home Safe

September 2021

Suicide Awareness Month

Suicide is the most preventable kind of death and is also the most common psychiatric emergency.

SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE | 1-800-273-8255

CRISIS TEXT LINE | TEXT HOME TO 741741

September is **Suicide Awareness Month**! Suicide causes 4 times more death in construction than all the OSHA Fatal Four combined each year. As leaders in construction, Apollo recognizes we have a duty to help reduce the stigma and fear of talking about suicide. We have trained over 300 individuals in QPR within the last six months! If you have not been trained yet contact your safety representative for more information and to set up a training time. Training can be done in as little as one hour!

Suicide Awareness: For most people, talking about suicide is extremely difficult and uncomfortable. Our inability to talk frankly about a leading cause of death in the world and in construction is a direct result of taboo, stigma, and fear. It is important to recognize and overcome our fear of talking about suicide to prevent this kind of death.

You can recognize people in mental health crisis or potential suicide crisis by their behavior, their talk, or what's going on in their lives. Behavior clues include substance abuse, moodiness, depression, or unexplained anger or aggression. You might hear them say things like: "I wish I were dead" or "I wish I could go to sleep and never wake up". The person might be going through some difficult personal issues like the loss of a loved one, divorce, financial problems, substance abuse, or diagnosis of a terminal illness. If you see these clues speak up! Ask the person if they are ok or if they are thinking about suicide. Most likely they just need someone to listen for a little while. But if they are thinking about suicide we need to get them more help. If you don't know what to do or are uncomfortable, find someone on your team who is trained in QPR. You can recognize QPR trained personnel by the *QPR Gatekeeper* stickers on their hardhats.

What is QPR?

QPR is like CPR for the mind. It means Question, Persuade, Refer. It helps ordinary citizens like you and me recognize individuals in emotional distress. If you recognize someone is having a hard time, ask them about their intentions, tell them you want them to live, and help them get to a professional trained in mental health counseling. In any situation, mild or serious, you can call SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE anytime to talk to a trained volunteer. Just like performing CPR until the EMT's arrive, we can keep our co-workers safe by being a friend until they can get professional help.

SAFETY REMINDER: Whether asking someone directly if they are thinking of taking their own life, or easing into the question, ask the question and LISTEN. Give the distressed individual your undivided attention free of judgement or shame. Be willing to help and have resources available as there are plenty of 24-hour help lines that are accessible by call or text as well as additional local resources. If you do not feel confident approaching someone displaying signs of distress, find someone who will.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. How do you feel about talking about suicide?
2. Are there preconceived ideas you may have that could inhibit your ability to talk about suicide?