

Tennessee Wesleyan University Suicide Prevention Plan

Tennessee Wesleyan University is committed to the mental health wellness of our students, faculty and staff.

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for college students
- Approximately 1,100 college students die by suicide each year
- 6% of college students report that they have seriously considered suicide over the past year; 90% of those students created a suicide plan, 14% attempted suicide, and 60% continued to have thoughts of suicide according to www.tsnp.org.

As such, and in compliance with the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-7-172, Tennessee Wesleyan University has developed a suicide prevention plan that engages in a variety of initiatives to improve and provide crisis services.

Tennessee Wesleyan University Suicide Prevention Plan will be disseminated to faculty, staff, and students each academic term. The plan will be distributed by the Student Life Office via the TWU website, TWU app, and email within the first month of each semester.

Prevention

Tennessee Wesleyan University has developed a comprehensive approach to increase mental health awareness through efforts of prevention.

Contact

Tennessee Wesleyan University contact for suicide prevention work is Scott Mashburn, Vice President for Student Life. His office is in the Colloms Campus Center, Student Life suite, and he can be reached at 423-746-5203 or smashburn@tnwesleyan.edu.

Prevention Resources

Key components of Tennessee Wesleyan University suicide prevention work include:

- A suicide or mental health wellness syllabus statement included on Faculty Syllabi for all courses. "Tennessee Wesleyan is committed to and cares about all students. If you or someone you know at the university feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide, supportive services are available and effective. For immediate help, contact the National Suicide Line at #988 or 1-800-273-8255. On campus, you may contact Dean Mashburn in the Student Life Office, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday at 423-746-5203."
- Promotion of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Crisis Text Line, and campus/community resources are made available through:
 - Tennessee Wesleyan app,
 - Wesleyan Weekly newsletter
 - Convocation and RA programming and
 - though flyers and posters.
- Utilizing community resources and agencies to provide prevention services for Tennessee Wesleyan University community members. Tennessee Wesleyan University has established

relationships with the following local Mental Health facilities for the purpose of providing prevention education, training and/or prevention screenings:

- TELUS Health via the TWU app which provides education, counseling, and resources.
- Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network which provides education, training, and resources.
- Hiwassee Mental Health Center which provides education, counseling, and resources.

Intervention

There is no typical suicidal person. No age group, ethnicity, or background is immune. Fortunately, many troubled individuals display behaviors deliberately or inadvertently signal their suicidal intent. Recognizing the [warning signs](http://tspn.org/warning-signs) (<http://tspn.org/warning-signs>) and learning what to do next may help save a life.

Contact

If someone exhibits behavioral patterns that may indicate possible risk for suicide, they should be watched closely. If they appear numerous or severe, seek professional help at once. **The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or #988 provides access to trained telephone counselors, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

If a student, faculty, or staff member encounters a suicidal student, faculty, or staff member, the following individual should be contacted immediately:

- Scott Mashburn, Vice President for Student Life, Colloms Campus Center, 423-746-5203
- Campus Safety, Townsend Hall, 423-887-3976

Should the incident occur after hours, or the above noted individual is not available, the following should be contacted immediately:

- Campus Safety, Townsend Hall, 423-887-3976

If the suicidal person has plans and access to a lethal means, is planning to try very soon, or is currently in the process of trying, this individual is in imminent danger and should not be left alone. Get the person help immediately. Determine who can get there quickly and keep the individual safe.

- Should you have this concern, you should immediately call 9-1-1.

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

A list of potential warning signs

There is no typical suicidal person. No age group, ethnicity, or background is immune. Fortunately, many troubled individuals display behaviors deliberately or inadvertently signal their suicidal intent. Recognizing the warning signs and learning what to do next may help save a life.

The Warning Signs: The following behavioral patterns may indicate possible risk for suicide and should be watched closely. If they appear numerous or severe, seek professional help at once. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) provides access to trained telephone counselors, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week or the Crisis Text Line by texting TN to 741 741.

- Talking about suicide, death, and/or no reason to live
- Preoccupation with death and dying
- Withdrawal from friends and/or social activities

- Experience of a recent severe loss (especially a relationship) or the threat of a significant loss
 - Experience or fear of a situation of humiliation or failure
 - Drastic changes in behavior
 - Loss of interest in hobbies, work, school, etc.
 - Preparation for death by making out a will (unexpectedly) and final arrangements
 - Giving away prized possessions
 - Previous history of suicide attempts, as well as violence and/or hostility
 - Unnecessary risks; reckless and/or impulsive behavior
 - Loss of interest in personal appearance • Increased use of alcohol and/or drugs
 - General hopelessness
 - Recent experience humiliation or failure
 - Unwillingness to connect with potential helpers
- Feelings, Thoughts, and Behaviors

Nearly everyone at some time in his or her life thinks about suicide. Most everyone decides to live because they come to realize that the crisis is temporary, but death is not. On the other hand, people during a crisis often perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel an utter loss of control.

Frequently, they:

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't sleep eat or work
- Can't get out of the depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see the possibility of change
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control

What Do You Do?

1. Be aware. Learn the warning signs listed above.
2. Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
3. Ask if s/he is thinking about suicide.
4. Be direct. Talk openly and freely about suicide.
5. Be willing to listen. Allow for expressions of feelings and accept those feelings.
6. Be non-judgmental. Avoid debating whether suicide is right or wrong, whether someone's feelings are good or bad, or on the value of life.
7. Avoid taunting the person or daring him/her to "do it".
8. Avoid giving advice by making decisions for someone else to tell them to behave differently.
9. Avoid asking "why." This only encourages defensiveness.
10. Offer empathy, not sympathy.
11. Avoid acting shocked. This creates distance.
12. Don't keep someone else's suicidal thoughts (or your own) a secret. Get help, silence can be deadly.
13. Offer hope that alternatives are available. Avoid offering easy reassurance; it only proves you don't understand.
14. Take action. Remove anything that the person could use to hurt themselves means. Get help from individuals or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

Who Can You Talk To?

- A community mental health agency

- A private therapist
- A school counselor or psychologist
- A family physician
- A suicide prevention/crisis intervention center
- A religious/spiritual leader

Intervention Resources

Tennessee Wesleyan University has established relationships with the following local Mental Health facilities for the purpose of crisis referral services.

- Volunteer Behavioral Health resources include the Hiwassee Mental Health Center (with locations in Cleveland, Athens and Madisonville).
- Crisis Services provides services including crisis counseling, scheduling an outpatient appointment, voluntary admission to the Crisis Stabilization Unit and Inpatient Hospitalization. The 24/7 Crisis Call Center, located at 413 Spring St., Chattanooga, TN, can be reached at 1-800-704-2651.

The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, and staff is of the utmost importance. In situations that require immediate action because of safety or other concerns, Tennessee Wesleyan University will take any reasonable administrative action or accommodation protocols that are appropriate. Such interim actions may include, but are not limited to: adjustments to schedules, ADA accommodations, adjustments of course, exam, schedules, facilitation of hold harmless voluntary withdrawals, incompletes, etc.

Postvention

Because all student/faculty/staff deaths affect our community, whether that death is accidental, due to illness, or the result of self-inflicted injury, it is important for Tennessee Wesleyan University to respond to and recognize all deaths in a consistent manner. Campus leadership and the communications department developed a protocol that includes a campus response to a student/faculty/staff suicide to decrease the trauma experienced by the students and other campus community members left behind and to help prevent further suicides through contagion.

Contact

If a student, staff, or faculty member death occurs by suicide, the following person, or their designee, should be notified immediately:

- Scott Mashburn, Vice President for Student Life, Colloms Campus Center, 423-746-5203
- After hours, contact Campus Safety, Townsend Hall, 423-887-3976 and they can reach Scott Mashburn

Postvention Components & Resources

Tennessee Wesleyan University has established relationships with the following local Mental Health facilities for the purpose of working to decrease community trauma.

- Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network provides postvention support

Additional Information

Information regarding such relationships at Tennessee Wesleyan University is available Student Life Office, Colloms Campus Center. The Student Life Office will have available a comprehensive list of

partners and services available to members of the Tennessee Wesleyan University. Any campus member interested in more information about Tennessee Wesleyan University suicide prevention protocol should contact the Student Life Office.

Comprehensive Response Protocol

Tennessee Wesleyan University comprehensive suicide prevention, intervention and postvention protocol is available to the campus community, campus administration, etc.) For more information, please contact Scott Mashburn, Vice President for Student Life, at 423-746-5203 or smashburn@tnwesleyan.edu.