

## **RESPONDING TO WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE**

IF SOMEONE IS ...	THE BEST RESPONSE IS ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Threatening to hurt or kill themselves</li> <li>▪ Looking for ways to kill themselves, such as seeking access to pills, weapons, or other lethal means</li> <li>▪ Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Do not leave the person alone and remove his or her access to lethal means.</u></b> Connect the person immediately with an emergency resource. Clearly inform the referral resource that the person could be in danger of suicide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Call “911”</b> or another emergency resource.</li> <li>▪ Have the person transported to a hospital <b>emergency room</b> (get the family’s help, or do it yourself if it is necessary and safe to do so).</li> <li>▪ Seek <b>immediate help</b> from               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a mental health provider or</li> <li>• a caregiver who can keep the person safe from suicide.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Call <b>800-273-TALK</b> (8255).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exhibiting any one or more of these behaviors or feelings *               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hopelessness</li> <li>• Rage, anger, seeking revenge</li> <li>• Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities</li> <li>• Feeling trapped—like there's no way out</li> <li>• Increasing alcohol or drug use</li> <li>• Withdrawing from friends, family, or society</li> <li>• Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep, or sleeping all the time</li> <li>• Dramatic mood changes</li> <li>• No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Ensure that the person will be safe</u></b> until he or she meets with a referral resource who is informed about the danger of suicide. Make a referral to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a <b>mental health provider</b> or</li> <li>▪ another caregiver who can <b>keep the person safe</b> from suicide.</li> </ul> <p>If an underage person is involved, do this through the parent, guardian, or a trusted family member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call <b>800-273-TALK</b> (8255).</li> </ul>

\* People who are suicidal experience a phenomenon known as psychache: The late Edwin Shneidman—the father of modern suicidology in America—coined the term psychache to describe the experience of people who are suicidal. He describes psychache as "intolerable emotion, unbearable pain, unacceptable anguish that eventually becomes intolerable and which cannot be abated by means that were previously successful."