

MEN & SUICIDE: a High-Risk Population



Topics included in this toolkit

Statistics

A brief overview of the tragic statistics pertaining to men and suicide.

Warning Signs

Signs that may indicate suicidal ideation in men.

Risk Factors

Those factors in a man's life that may put him at higher risk of suicide.

Protective Factors

Those factors in a man's life that can help protect him from the risk of suicide.

Links

Some links that provide additional information about men and suicide.

Programs

Programs available for men in need of assistance and general suicide prevention programs.

Psychologists try to get men to open up, get help

Quotes from psychologists trying to help men deal with depression.

Recommended Reading

Recommended literature about men and suicide, available at the Centre for Suicide Prevention's library.

References



Statistics

In Alberta, in 2009, there were **377** male suicides and 106 female suicides.

Men aged **40-60** have the highest number of suicides
(Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Alberta Justice. 2009).

Women attempt suicide more often than men BUT men die by suicide **four times** more often than women.

How do men kill themselves?

Canada: **No.1 hanging**, No.2 firearms

United States: **No.1 firearms**

Men die by suicide more than any other group and these realities must be addressed!

Instead of talking about stress or trying to seek help for their depression men will often mask their stress and deal with their depression through harmful behaviours and actions (Ogrodniczuk,2011).



Warning Signs

- Depression (often manifested through irritability, anger, hostility),
 - Risk-taking behaviours,
 - Avoidance behaviours

Risk Factors

- Alcohol and drug abuse,
 - Social isolation,
- Tendency to choose more lethal methods of suicide,
 - Reluctance to seek help

Protective Factors

- Social supports (family, friends),
- Peer support programs (schools, workplace),
 - Stable domestic environment,
 - With proper diagnosis and treatment, men at risk of suicide can be helped.



Related Links

SIEC ALERT #65: Men and suicide part one:

<http://suicideinfo.ca/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=2XdwKwf1lwA%3d&tabid=538>

SIEC ALERT #66: Men and **suicide** part 2:

<http://suicideinfo.ca/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=xRlcm-wXleQ%3d&tabid=538>

National Institute of Mental Health, Men and **depression**:

http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/lps34084/NIMH317.406_FTSH_treatable.pdf

Canadian Mental Health Association, Men and **mental illness**:

http://cmha.ca/bins/content_page.asp?cid=3-726&lang=1



Programs

Programs available for men in need of assistance

Men at Risk: <http://www.sp-rc.ca/mar.html>

A program for adult men working in trades, industry and agriculture. The program features male facilitators who have dealt with stress, depression or loss from suicide.

Programs available in suicide prevention

Applied **Suicide Intervention** Skills Training:
<http://suicideinfo.ca/Training/WorkshopDescriptions/ASISTDescription.aspx>

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a two-day intensive, interactive and practice-dominated course designed to help caregivers recognize and review risk, and intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. It is by far the most widely used, acclaimed and researched suicide intervention training workshop in the world.



Psychologists try to help men get help, open up.

Quotes on the following two pages are taken from the American Psychological Association article, Men: A Different Depression

“Untreated depression can result in personal, family and financial problems, even suicide.”

“Eight out of 10 cases of depression **respond** to treatment.”

“Research shows that the men who need mental-health services most are the least interested in getting help.”



“The **traditional male role**... restricts emotional expression and encourages a pre-occupation with success, power and competition - (this) is associated with negative physical and psychological consequences, such as depression, anxiety and relationship problems.”

“Doctors may also **overlook** the signs of depression in older men. It can be especially hard to single out depression when men have other problems such as heart disease, which can cause depressive symptoms, or whose medications may have depressive side effects.”

“It is critical to identify **depression** among the elderly because they have the highest rates of suicide.”

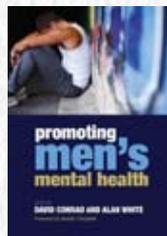


Recommended Reading

Promoting men's mental health

eds. by David Conrad and Alan White. Radcliffe Publishing. (2011). 266p.

An anthology of scholars exploring topics in male mental health ranging from urban distress to military stress to gay issues and beyond. Of particular interest are the sections on men and suicide.



Lonely at the top: the high cost of men's success

by Thomas Joiner. Palgrave Macmillan. (2011). 266p.

This study tries to uncover some of the myriad reasons that men continue to be the most at-risk group of suicides. Some interesting ideas, especially that the male quest for material and professional success through their working years can cost them supportive friendships as they age, making them even more susceptible to depression and suicide.



References

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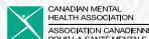


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**Resource Toolkit produced by the Centre for
Suicide Prevention, Copyright 2011
Released November 2011**

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