

PIA SAFE



QPR: Question, Persuade, Refer
Suicide Awareness and Prevention

The Core Steps of QPR

1. Recognize Warning Signs

Identify verbal, behavioral, or situational cues that someone may be struggling or considering suicide. Early recognition and intervention can make a critical difference.

Watch for significant changes in mood or behavior, such as:

- Appearing withdrawn, depressed, agitated, or “checked out.”
- Increased irritability, tension, or aggression
- Neglecting personal hygiene or appearance
- Increased alcohol or substance use
- Significant weight changes
- Persistent sleep disturbances (too much or too little)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Noticeable shifts from usual personality or functioning

If you notice concerning changes in a colleague or friend, reach out early.

2. Question

Ask directly and compassionately.

- Don't hesitate to ask:
- “What's going on?”
- “I'm worried about you. You haven't seemed like yourself lately.”
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Asking about suicide does NOT create risk; it opens space for support.

- Listening without judgment is one of the most powerful forms of help.

It is OK to ask directly whether they are thinking about suicide to assess risk. If they are thinking of suicide, ask whether they have a plan. If they have a plan, you must ACT to protect them.

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Safety guidance:

- If someone has a specific plan or immediate risk: do not leave them alone. Call 988 or 911.
- If there is concern but no active plan, encourage them to contact 988 and connect them with professional support.

3. Persuade

Listen actively, express hope, and encourage the person to seek help.

- Reinforce that support is available.
- Encourage connection with trained professionals through:
 - 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
 - Emergency services if immediate danger exists.

4. Refer

Help connect the person with appropriate resources.

- Call or encourage contact with 988.
- Guide them toward mental health professionals or institutional support resources.
- Stay supportive during the process whenever possible.

Key Principles of QPR

- Early recognition matters: Identifying warning signs early improves outcomes.
- Early questioning opens conversations: Asking directly can help someone feel seen and supported.
- Early intervention and referral are critical: Connecting individuals with appropriate resources can save lives.

Learn more about QPR here:

<https://www.qprinstitute.com/about-qpr>