



## safeTALK: suicide alertness for everyone

safeTALK is a half-day training to increase suicide alertness.

This program alerts community members to signs that a person may be considering suicide. It acknowledges that while most people at risk of suicide signal their distress and invite help, these intervention opportunities are often overlooked. Participants learn to recognize when someone may have thoughts of suicide and to respond in ways that link them with further suicide intervention help.

Suicide alert helpers contribute to a suicide-safer community.

## Goals and objectives

It is intended that safeTALK participants will be better prepared to:

- recognize that invitations to help are often overlooked
- move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss and avoid suicide
- notice and respond to situations in which thoughts of suicide may be present
- apply basic TALK steps (*Tell, Ask, Listen, and KeepSafe*)
- connect the person with thoughts of suicide to suicide first aid help and further community resources

Suicide alert community members are better prepared to become a vital link in connecting persons at risk with further help.



### safeTALK training at a glance

**Focus:** Suicide alertness training

**PARTICIPANTS:** Anyone who might want to help, minimum age 15 years; 1 trainer and 1 community resource person per up to 30 participants

**PRE-REQUISITES:** None

**DURATION:** 3 to 3.5 hours

**LANGUAGES:** English and French

“An excellent first step in providing assistance to someone at risk.”

safeTALK participant

## safeTALK trainers

safeTALK is facilitated by a registered trainer who has completed the *safeTALK Training for Trainers (T4T)* course. Trainers use internationally standardized learning materials, tailoring examples and applications to local needs.

A listing of registered trainers can be found at [www.livingworks.net](http://www.livingworks.net) under *safeTALK Consumer Information*. Trainers must facilitate a minimum number of trainings per year and submit reports in order to remain on this list and receive ongoing support.



## safeTALK participants

Many things, personal and professional, stimulate interest in safeTALK. Improved suicide alertness may be applied in many settings—with family, friends, co-workers and in more formal helping relationships.

The fact that safeTALK is a half-day program that can be given to larger groups increases opportunities for improving suicide alertness on a community scale.

## Training attendance

Some organizations may choose to train a large number of people in safeTALK, while inviting key people, designated as suicide first aid resource persons, to attend *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)*. In our experience, some people who attend safeTALK want to learn more skills in suicide first aid and go on to also attend ASIST.

## Training process

The program is more presentation-oriented than ASIST. Trainers seek to facilitate participants' involvement, although the level of interaction and engagement will vary with the nature and size of the group.

### Key features

- Taught by one trainer, recommended group size up to 30 people.
- Powerful **videos** illustrate both non-alert and alert responses to persons with thoughts of suicide. Discussion, questions and practice stimulate learning. Basic steps that contribute to saving lives are provided.
- A **wallet card** helps recall the suicide alert steps when needed. The wallet card is also available as a **smart phone app**.

## safeTALK and ASIST

safeTALK is designed to complement ASIST. These programs share the same beliefs about suicide and preventing suicide. However, each has a specific role.

safeTALK is a brief program that shows how alertness to suicide risk can be followed by basic (*TALK*) steps that facilitate links with further suicide first aid help. The emphasis is on fulfilling this vital linking role with community resources rather than full engagement in a suicide first aid intervention. It will stimulate people to think and hopefully act differently when signs of potential suicide risk are present.

ASIST is a two-day interactive workshop which provides an opportunity to learn more about what is involved in suicide first aid intervention. Participants learn how to develop a collaborative helping relationship focused on suicide safety. Frameworks for understanding the needs of a person at risk are offered, along with a *Suicide Intervention Model* that features risk assessment and safeplans. Opportunities for practice to build confidence and skills are provided.

The roles of both the suicide alert and ASIST helpers are valued. ASIST caregivers complete the process that safeTALK helpers start. The more people who are suicide alert, the more the skills of those trained in suicide intervention will be used. ■

