



Real People. Real Stories.
A Month to Talk, Listen,
and Support.



Let's Talk About It: A Campaign by Mental Health Partnerships

Campaign Snapshot

We need to talk about mental health, so that more people feel comfortable asking for help when they are experiencing a mental health crisis including thoughts of suicide.

Let's Talk About It, a campaign from Mental Health Partnerships, aims to destigmatize conversations about mental health challenges through the power of peer connection and a coffee chat. From May 5 to June 5, 2025, we're inviting community members, service providers, lawmakers, leaders, and advocates to join us as we start a conversation about mental health and connect people experiencing mental health crises to the support they need with the help of their peers.

Let's Talk About It was inspired by the life of **Michael Simonelli**, a devoted son and community member who died by suicide last year. He was only 27 years old. Heartbroken by this loss, Michael's family and friends were determined to honor his memory, by starting a conversation about mental health and suicide prevention, creating hope through peer connection, and promoting systemic change.

For over seven decades, **Mental Health Partnerships** has transformed mental health services locally, statewide, and across the country—all to be more responsive to the priorities of the community members we serve including access to community-based resources for recovery. We are committed to advocacy, direct support services, and education to empower individuals on their mental health journeys.

How to Get Involved

- **Learn about mental health and mental wellness**
- **Start conversations** with friends and family about mental health and support
- **Share campaign materials** at your workplace, in community gathering spaces, and on social media.
- **Become a monthly donor of Mental Health Partnerships**, so we together can be a resource for hope and recovery for more community members in crisis.
- **Come to our pop-up awareness and support event on June 5** at Michael's Starbucks store (600 S 9th St, Philadelphia, PA 19147) at 12:00pm to talk about it, connect with community mental healthcare organizations, meet the Mental Health Partnerships team, gain resources, and walk away with information that will empower you to support loved ones, so no one has to go through mental health struggles alone.

Warning Signs

Mental health challenges can be invisible, and they can happen to people of all ages, sexual identities, races, ethnicities, and religious affiliations. That's why connection, understanding, and support systems matter so much; for the person struggling, and for the people who love them.

Warning signs that someone is in crisis and considering suicide can look like:

- **Emotional:** Significant changes in mood, feeling trapped with no way out, severe guilt and shame, feeling like a burden to others, or sudden relief
- **Behavioral:** Talking or writing about death/suicide, giving away personal possessions, doing risky or life-threatening things, or withdrawing from friends, family, the community, and/or activities they normally enjoy

Check out our **Warning Signs** resource at the end of this toolkit for an expanded list of Emotional and Behavioral signs to look out for.

And in some cases, a person contemplating suicide may **not show any external indication** that they're in crisis or thinking of harming themselves, which is why it is important to make sure everyone knows how to access mental health support, even before they need it

Many instances of acute suicidal ideation are precipitated by "triggering events" such as losing someone important due to death, moving away, breaking up, or becoming incarcerated. Losing someone you know to suicide may also be a triggering event.

Experiencing sexual violence, bullying, or rejection after coming out as LGBTQ can also cause a mental health crisis that leads to suicidal ideation. It's important to be mindful of suicide risk after these types of events, even if the individual has no prior history of suicidal thoughts or behaviors. **This is not a complete list**, so we've added more information about triggering events and other risk factors to be mindful of at the end of this toolkit.

If these symptoms sound like someone you care about, or their behavior has changed out of the blue, it's time to talk about it and seek help.

Tips for Having The Conversation

Before you start, consider if you are ready. Before we talk to the person we're worried about, we need to check in with ourselves and ask:

- Am I in a place mentally and emotionally to hear a potentially difficult answer?
- Can I stay in the moment, and be fully committed to what they need?
- Do I have the information I need to talk about this topic and provide resources?

Supporting someone through a mental health crisis can be emotionally intense. Make sure you have access to a support system of your own, and know where to get helpful information.

Ready to have the conversation? Remember **CALM**:

C - CREATE A CONNECTION where you can be proactive about discussing and asking about mental health. This will make it easier to have the conversation!

Example: “When I’m having a rough time, I like to talk about it with someone I trust. What do you do when you’re not feeling okay emotionally?”

A - ACKNOWLEDGE what you’re seeing or worried about, once you’re together or chatting by phone or on a video call.

Example: “I’m worried about you, because [briefly summarize what you’ve witnessed or noticed]. Are you alright?”

L - LISTEN to what they have to say, patiently and without judgement, then **LET THEM KNOW** you’re there for them no matter what.

Example: “I care about you very much. I want you to know that you can tell me anything, even if it feels scary to say it out loud.”

M - MAKE A SAFETY PLAN. If they’ve disclosed that they are struggling with their mental health, thank them for telling you, re-affirm that you’re there for them and they’re not alone, and help them come up with a plan to get access to help and support. This could include providing resources, involving the person’s other supports, offering to help them make or go to appointments, and following up with them after this initial conversation.

If they don’t feel comfortable talking yet, that’s okay. You’ve let them know you are a safe person to come to if they’re struggling

If they are in immediate danger, stay with them and offer to call **988** for the **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** together.

If they aren’t in immediate danger, but they’re not sure what to do next, make a plan that outlines steps they can take to stay safe, including:

- Chat with Mental Health Partnership’s peer chatline, at MHPHope.org/chatline (**M-F 9am-7pm**).
- Connect with a counselor, therapist, or support group (Healthy Minds Philly has a great resource website you can share, at HealthyMindsPhilly.org/resources).
- Remove items from their home that could lead to self-harm or become lethal, especially firearms, ammunition, sharp objects, rope (or long cords), medication, self-medicating drugs, or alcohol.

(more safety plan ideas are on the next page)

- Self-care actions, such as: reaching out to a professional supporter like a therapist, creating a wellness plan such as a WRAP (Wellness Recovery Plan), or using mindfulness tools like journaling or grounding exercises.
- Call you and/or safe people in their life when they need to talk.

More Helpful Hints:

- When someone confides in us about a serious issue they're facing, it's important to **stay calm** and **not react out of fear**.
- We may not be able to fully alleviate their problem or change their circumstances. **The goal is to show that we are here to support them**, not to fix everything.
- The most important thing we can do is communicate that:
 - We are here for them
 - We won't be scared away by what they are telling us
 - We are in this with them
- When we provide support, we should mostly be listening.

Do:	Do NOT:
• Provide a space where the person can speak without worrying about being interrupted, judged, or minimized. • Use active listening and validate their experiences. • Take your time and be patient as they work through what they are experiencing. • Follow up after the initial conversation and regularly check in.	• Judge, criticize, blame, or make them feel guilty for what they are experiencing. ("You have so much to live for!") • Talk over them or minimize their feelings. ("Your life isn't that bad.") • Rush the conversation or force a solution. • Leave if the person is in immediate danger of harming themselves.

Mental Health Resources in Philadelphia, the Delaware Valley, and Beyond

Access and share resources for mental health crisis and suicide prevention:

- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**
Call or text 24/7 for support during a crisis or immediate risk of harm to self
- **MHPHope.org/chatline** - Mental Health Partnerships Chatline
Access for non-life-threatening crisis care, 9:00am to 7:00pm, Monday through Friday
- **Recovery Learning Centers by Mental Health Partnerships** - Peer-led mental health support for community members from diverse backgrounds and diagnoses, including support groups and workshops
- **HealthyMindsPhilly.org/resources** - Depression, Anxiety, and Addiction Resources, compiled by Healthy Minds Philly, an initiative of the City of Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS)
- **Community Behavioral Health Provider Directory** - regularly-updated, searchable directory for Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services
- **Youth Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Research Center** at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, **contact online**
- **The Trevor Project** - 24/7 Suicide Hotline for LGBTQIA+ Youth
Chat online, call 866-488-7386, or text 678678
- **Trans Lifeline** - peer support phone service run by trans community members for trans or questioning callers
Call 877-565-8860
- **Veterans Crisis Line** - for Veterans and their loved ones
Chat online, call 1-800-273-8255 (or 988 and press 1), or text 838255 to connect
- **Philadelphia Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** - connect with peer-led support groups for men, women, people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ community members, and more

Access and share resources for families and friends grieving the loss of a loved one due to suicide:

- **Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Groups** by **Healthy Minds Philly**
- **General Bereavement Groups by Penn Medicine Hospice Bereavement**
Meet weekly, for eight sessions. A new group usually begins every four to six weeks. Call **610-617-2478** to learn more and register.

Social Media Messaging

You can help break the stigma around mental health conversations and encourage the people in your life to join you. Here's some tips to share the Let's Talk About It campaign on social media:

- Use the hashtags **#LetsTalkAboutIt**, **#MentalHealthMonth**, and **#MHPHope**
- Follow and tag or mention **Mental Health Partnerships** in your posts:



- Personalize your posts - this campaign is about real people and real stories! If you're having trouble getting started, here is some suggested messaging:
 - Your mental health matters, so **#LetsTalkAboutIt** during **#MentalHealthMonth** and beyond. If you need help, call or text 988 anytime, day or night.
 - I'm supporting Mental Health Partnership's **#LetsTalkAboutIt** campaign as an ongoing supporter, because EVERY month is **#MentalHealthMonth**. You can get involved and build hope year-round at MHPHope.org/Donate!
 - It's okay not to be okay, and it's okay to talk about it with me. If you agree, share this message with your followers and help me shatter the stigma around talking about mental health. **#LetsTalkAboutIt #MentalHealthMonth #MHPHope**
- Still having writer's block? No problem - you can share our social media content between May 5 and June 5, including affirmations, videos, and invitations to our event on June 5 at Noon at Starbucks, 9th and South Street, Philadelphia.

- You can also share one of our campaign logos with your personalized message on social media. [Download the logos on our campaign website here.](#)

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More Ways to Get Involved

- **Become a monthly donor of Mental Health Partnerships.** Every month is Mental Health Awareness Month for us, and when you invest in our work year-round, you connect real people to hope and recovery. [Get started here.](#)
- Share **Let's Talk About It** campaign materials in places you frequent, or in your front window. You can [download a printable poster on the campaign website here](#), or stop by our office to grab a postcard or several to distribute in your community.
- **Contact your elected officials**, and tell them that connecting community members experiencing a mental health crisis to life-saving care is important and that they have an opportunity to make this happen by fully funding the continuum of crisis services needed in Pennsylvania.
- **Join Mental Health Partnerships for Lobby Day on June 3.** We'll provide the transportation and lunch, you bring your passion for protecting and expanding vital service for community members in crisis. Our three priorities this year are: 1) funding for community-based mental health services to scale, 2) investment in the mental health workforce with an emphasis on peer support professionals, and 3) affordable housing and homelessness prevention. To join us, contact Denise Sherman, Sr. Program Manager, Advocacy Division, at dsherman@mhphope.org or call **267-507-3843**.
- **Share this toolkit widely!**

Resource: Warning Signs

Compiled by Andrea Boffice, Training and Content Development Specialist, Institute at Mental Health Partnerships

Mental health challenges may be invisible, which is why it can be helpful to know as many warning signs as possible that something is not right.

Emotional:

- Significant changes in mood
- Feeling trapped with no way out ("I just have to get out of here, I can't stand it anymore...")
- Severe guilt and shame
- Talking or writing about death, ruminating
- Feeling like a failure at work, school, life
- Having no reason to live
- Feeling like a burden to others
- Experiencing unbearable pain
- Feeling hopeless
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Having delusions or hallucinations
- Fatigue
- Loss of interest
- Humiliation/shame
- Anger/agitation
- Sudden relief

Behavioral:

- Talking or writing about death/suicide ("I just wish I were dead")
- Talking less obviously about death but with finality ("I can't take this anymore, I'll never recover")
- Increasing drug and alcohol use
- Giving away personal possessions
- Doing risky, life-threatening things
- Getting into fights, dangerous stunts, etc.
- Regularly self-harming
- "Rehearsing"
- Searching online for methods, obtaining and preparing methods

Behavioral, continued:

- Withdrawing from family, friends and the community
- Withdrawing from activities they normally enjoy
- Dramatic sleep changes, sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling friends to say goodbye
- Aggression
- Sudden and dramatic improvement in mood without obvious cause
- Dramatic changes in eating/sleeping habits

Triggering Events and Other Risk Factors:

- Recent “Triggering Events,” like
 - Loss of an important person due to a death, moving away, breakup, incarceration, etc.
 - Loss of someone important to suicide
 - Physical or sexual assault
 - Bullying (victimization or perpetration)
 - Rejection/relationship conflict as a result of coming out as LGBTQ
 - Diagnosis of a serious health problem
 - Painful anniversary
 - Legal troubles
 - Witnessing violence
- Dissociated parental relationships
- Alcohol/substance use/dependence
- History of physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse
- History of childhood neglect
- Legal troubles of self or family
- History of family or friend deaths from suicide
- Social isolation
- Relationship issues with friends or siblings
- Suicide death in school/community
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Medications with side effects that may increase the risk of suicide
- Firearms in the home

If you notice these warning signs or risk factors, don't wait - call or share these resources with anyone who needs them:

- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

Call or text 24/7 for support during a crisis or immediate risk of harm to self

- **MHPHope.org/chatline** - Mental Health Partnerships Chatline

Access for non-life-threatening crisis care, 9:00am to 7:00pm, Monday through Friday