



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Champlain East

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
Champlain Est

329 rue Pitt Street
Cornwall, On K6J 3R1
Tel 613-933-5845
1-800-493-8271
Fax 613-936-2323
chma-east.on.ca
acsm-est.on.ca

World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10, 2026

Changing the Narrative Around Suicide

Submitted by Jennifer Meyer, Mental Health Promoter, CMHA Champlain East

Every day in Canada, approximately 12 people die by suicide, leaving families, friends, and communities grieving a profound loss. While these numbers are concerning, there is hope. Suicide is preventable, and one of the most powerful ways to help is by changing the narrative around suicide and mental health.

For too long, we have avoided talking about suicide due to stigma, and fear. Many people worry that talking about suicide will make things worse or put the idea into someone's mind. In reality, the opposite is true. Asking someone directly if they are thinking about suicide can show that you care and provide relief to someone who may feel alone in their struggle.

This message is especially important for young people. Many adolescents experiencing suicidal thoughts are reluctant to seek help because they fear judgment or the consequences of sharing their feelings. By creating safe spaces where conversations about mental health and suicide are welcomed, trusted adults, families, educators, and community members can help ensure young people receive support before reaching a crisis point.

We can all play a role in suicide prevention by changing the narrative. Learning about important resources available to you, about how to talk to friends or loved ones about suicidal thoughts. Listen without judgment, validate their feelings, and encourage them to access professional support when needed. Sometimes, a simple conversation can make a life-changing difference.

Changing the narrative means replacing silence with understanding, stigma with compassion, and fear with connection. By talking openly about suicide, we let people know they are not alone, that help is available, and that hope is possible.

In recognition of **World Suicide Prevention Day**, the Canadian Mental Health Association Champlain East is offering:

LivingWorks safeTALK for FREE in English and French. This is a training that equips people to be more alert to someone thinking of suicide and better able to connect them with further help.

Other important resources offered through the CMHA Champlain East can be found on our website at cmha-east.on.ca, include:

- **Talk Today** provides athletes with suicide prevention training and connects them to mental health coaches, creating safer spaces in sports.



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- **Agriculture Wellness Ontario (AgWO)** delivers tailored supports for farmers and rural communities, including the Guardian Network of trained peers who help reduce suicide risk in agriculture.
- **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)** is a two-day, interactive workshop designed to help people recognize when someone may be at risk of suicide and respond effectively.

For more information, contact Jenny, Mental Health Promoter, at 613-551-2490 or email meyerj@cmha-east.on.ca

DO YOU NEED HELP?

Dial or text 2-1-1 for free and confidential service that easily connects people to the critical social and community supports they need.

If you are thinking of suicide, please call **9-8-8** which is a mental health crisis and suicide prevention line.

The information provided is not a substitute for professional advice. If you need advice, please consult a qualified health care professional. For further information or if you want to access our services at CMHA, please call 1-800-493-8271 or visit our web site at www.cmha-east.on.ca