



QPR Suicide Prevention Training for Refugee Gatekeepers



By the end of the training participants will be able to:

- Define suicide and describe how it is viewed within refugee communities.
- Identify “risk factors” and clues of suicide.
- Use the QPR Gatekeeper method to help stop someone from attempting suicide.



Outline

- Introductions
- Definition of “suicide,” “risk factor” and “gatekeeper”
- Suicide risk factors
- Suicide clues
- QPR Method
 - Question
 - Persuade
 - Refer



What is Suicide?

How is suicide viewed by refugees in your community?



What is a “Risk Factor”?

A “risk factor” is something that increases the chances of something else occurring.

Examples:

- Being a smoker is a risk factor for developing lung disease.
- Being overweight is a risk factor for diabetes.



Who is a Gatekeeper?

- According to the Surgeon General's National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (2001), gatekeepers are:

Individuals who, in the course of their activities, come into frequent contact with refugees and are respected by communities.

- A gatekeeper for suicide prevention is anyone in a position to recognize a crisis and warning signs that someone may be thinking about suicide.

Who are gatekeepers in your community?



Suicide: Is It a Concern in Refugee Communities?

- Are refugees at high risk for suicide?
- If so, what contributes to their risk of suicide?
- What can be done to prevent suicides among refugees?



Background Information





The Problem

In 2010, humanitarian and governmental agencies learned of suicides and attempted suicides among Bhutanese refugees living in camps in Nepal and among those resettled in the United States.



Suicide Risk Factors



General Suicide Risk Factors

- Past suicide attempt
- Family history of suicide
- Mental health issues including clinical depression
- Alcohol abuse (particularly when combined with depression)
- Job or financial loss
- Loss of important relationships
- Easy access to guns, knives, rope, drugs/poison or other ways to harm oneself
- Feeling alone and without the support of others

Source: Suicide Prevention Resource Center



Additional Challenges for Refugees

History of violence and trauma



Additional Challenges for Refugees

Resettlement



Resettlement

Discussion

What are the challenges that refugees face as they resettle in the U.S.?



Resettlement Challenges

Community

- Exposure to violence and trauma
- Breakdown of community and loss of traditional supports
- Feelings of isolation
- New culture
- New language
- Unrealistic expectations
- Decline in status
- Being labeled a “refugee”



Resettlement Challenges

Family

- Money problems
- Separation from family
- Family conflicts:
 - Reversal of family roles
 - Responsibility is placed on young family members to take care of their family
 - Shame from not being able to meet these responsibilities



Refugee Label

Discussion

Being labeled a “refugee” may make some refugees feel stigmatized or treated differently.

“Low,” “unrespected”, and “inferior”



QPR

Ask A Question. Save A Life.



QPR

- QPR is not counseling or treatment.
- QPR is intended to offer hope through positive action.



What Is QPR?

- Question
- Persuade
- Refer

“Question, Persuade, and Refer” is a set of skills that may help prevent suicide.



Suicide Clues And Warning Signs

The more clues and signs you see, the greater the risk. Take all signs seriously!



Behavioral Clues

- Has made a suicide attempt in the past
- Substance abuse (especially alcohol)
- Domestic violence
- Withdraws from relationships
- Gives away important things
- Takes unnecessary risks



Behavioral Clues (continued)

- Puts personal and business affairs in order
- Feels depressed, moody, hopeless
- Has unexplained anger, aggression, irritability
- Has a sudden interest or disinterest in religion
- Obtains the means to commit suicide



Direct Verbal Clues

- “I’ve decided to kill myself.”
- “I wish I were dead.”
- “I’m going to commit suicide.”
- “I’m going to end it all.”
- “If (such and such) doesn’t happen, I’ll kill myself.”



Indirect Verbal Clues

- “I’m tired of life, I just can’t go on.”
- “My family would be better off without me.”
- “Who cares if I’m dead anyway.”
- “I just want out.”
- “I won’t be around much longer.”
- “Soon you won’t have to worry about me.”



QPR: Question

“If we wait for suicidal people to ask for help, they will keep right on dying.”



QPR: Question

Suggestions for Asking the Suicide Question

- If in doubt, don't wait, ask the question.
- If the person doesn't want to talk, continue to ask.
- Talk to the person alone in a private setting or ask if the person wants to have a family member or friend with them.
- Ask the person if they want an interpreter.
- Allow the person to talk freely.
- Give yourself plenty of time.

Remember: How you ask the question is less important than asking it.



QPR: Question

Less Direct Approach

“Have you been unhappy lately?”

“Have you been very unhappy lately?”

“Have you been so very unhappy lately that you’ve been thinking about ending your life?”

“Do you ever wish you could go to sleep and not wake up?”



QPR: Question

Direct Approach

“You know, when people are as upset as you seem to be they sometimes wish they were dead. I’m wondering if you’re feeling that way too?”

“You look like you’re going through a hard time, I wonder if you’re thinking about suicide?”

“Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

NOTE: If you cannot ask the question, find someone who can.



QPR: Asking the Question about Suicide with Refugees

Discussion

- Before you ask the “suicide question,” how would you begin the conversation about suicide?
- What phrases would you use?



How *Not* to Ask the Suicide Question

“You’re not suicidal, are you?”



QPR: Persuade

How to Persuade Someone to Stay Alive

- Listen and give them your full attention.
- Do not interrupt.
- Remember that suicide is not a good solution. Suggest that there are better ways than suicide to deal with problems.
- Do not rush to judgment.
- Offer hope in any form.



QPR: Persuade

What would you say to encourage a refugee to seek help?



QPR: Persuade

Ask:

- “Will you go with me to get help?”
- “Will you let me help you?”
- “Will you promise me not to kill yourself until we’ve found some help?”

Your willingness to listen and to help can create hope, and make all the difference.



QPR: Refer

Discussion

- What resources are available in your community to help refugees who are thinking about suicide?
- What national resources are available?



QPR: How to Refer

- Get a commitment from the person to accept help.
- Connect the person to sources of help.
 - If possible, take the person to someone who can help, or
 - Have the person identify a trusted friend or family member to go with them as they seek help.

Why is this important when working with a refugee?

- Stay in touch to let the person know you care about them. Caring may save a life.



Handouts

- Communication Skills for Gatekeepers
- Suicide Prevention Websites
- Glossary of Terms Related to Suicide Prevention
- Social Support Worksheet
- Suicide Prevention Referral Worksheet



REMEMBER

When you use QPR, you help plant the seeds of hope.

Hope helps prevent suicide.