



Canadian Mental
Health Association
British Columbia
Mental health for all

Have you had a client share a personal story, was troubled and thinking about suicide and you felt uncertain about what to say or do? In BC, 600 people committed suicide in one year, and for every death it's estimated there are 20 suicide attempts. Hygienists are in a position of trust. Clients often get to know their hygienist well over time and may disclose information about their lives, or the hygienist may notice something about the client that tweaks concern. Knowing what to look for, how to ask and what to do to help can be very important.

While suicide prevention really is everyone's business, being suicide aware, able and ready to offer help and support to someone who might be at risk, whether client, family member, friend or colleague, is perhaps particularly important for those of you likely to encounter people in their more vulnerable or less defended moments.

safeTALK is a half-day alertness training that prepares anyone over the age of 15, regardless of prior experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper. Most people with thoughts of suicide don't truly want to die, but are struggling with the pain in their lives. Through their words and actions, they invite help to stay alive. safeTALK-trained helpers can recognize these invitations and take action by connecting them with life-saving intervention resources, and trained caregivers.

Since its development in 2006, safeTALK has been used in over 20 countries around the world, and more than 200 selectable video vignettes have been produced to tailor the program's audio-visual component for diverse audiences. safeTALK-trained helpers are an important part of suicide-safer communities, working alongside intervention resources to identify and avert suicide risks.

Learning goals and objectives

Over the course of their training, safeTALK participants will learn to:

- Notice and respond to situations where suicide thoughts might be present
- Recognize that invitations for help are often over-

looked

- Move beyond the common tendency to miss, dismiss, and avoid suicide
- Apply the TALK steps: Tell, Ask, Listen, and KeepSafe
- Know community resources and how to connect someone with thoughts of suicide to them for further help

Training features:

- Presentations and guidance from a LivingWorks registered trainer
- Access to support from a local community resource person
- Powerful audiovisual learning aids
- The simple yet effective TALK steps: Tell, Ask, Listen, and KeepSafe
- Hands-on skills practice and development

safeTALK helps expand the reach of suicide intervention skills in communities around the world. Visit: <https://www.livingworks.net/programs/safetalk/>

If you would like to attend a course or help to plan a workshop in your community, please contact a Regional Coordinator in your area:

- **Vancouver Island** – CMHA Nanaimo – **Judy North**: Judy.North@cmha.bc.ca
- **Lower Mainland** – CMHA New Westminster – **Steve Baik**: Steve.Baik@cmha.bc.ca
- **Interior** – CMHA Salmon Arm – **Shannon Hecker**: Shannon.Hecker@cmha.bc.ca
- **Northern BC** – CMHA Prince George – **Devon Flynn**: Devon.Flynn@cmhapg.ca
- **Kootenays** – CMHA Cranbrook – **Rachel Doan**: rdoan@cmhakootenays.org