

Suicide Among OLDER ADULTS in South Dakota



Older adults, ages 65 years and older, made up about 17% of the South Dakota population but accounted for 12% of suicide deaths in the state (2013-2022). Older adults are one of the fastest-growing populations in the state and suicide deaths among this population increased by 80% from 2013 to 2022, making suicide a major public health priority among this population. Some factors that might increase the risk for older adult suicide include loneliness, grief over lost loved ones, loss of self-sufficiency, chronic illness and pain, cognitive impairment, and financial troubles.

WARNING SIGNS

- Talking about being a burden
- Being isolated
- Loss of interest in things or activities
- Expressing hopelessness
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Putting affairs in order, giving things away, or making changes in will
- Stock-piling medication or obtaining other lethal means
- Preoccupation with death or a lack of concern about personal safety
- Remarks such as "This is the last time that you'll see me" or "I won't be needing any more appointments"

WHAT CAN REDUCE RISK?

- Building supportive and strong relationships
- Access to confidential mental health care
- Willingness to share and express emotions
- Readiness to look for support when it's needed
- The safe storage of firearms

RESOURCES

- If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health-related distress, suicide crisis, or substance use, **call, text, or chat 988**.
- The South Dakota Suicide Prevention (SDSP) website serves as a resource hub for those seeking help, resources, data and free suicide prevention training and materials. The platform is multi-agency collaboration meant to serve the needs of all South Dakotans to reduce the stigma of behavioral health needs and the prevalence of death by suicide.

To visit the South Dakota Suicide Prevention website, go to sdsuicideprevention.org or scan the QR code on the right.



988

SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

87%

87% of suicide deaths among older adults were among males (2013-2022)

75%

75% of suicide deaths among older adults were firearm-related (2013-2022)

SDSP
SOUTH DAKOTA
SUICIDE PREVENTION

[SDSuicidePrevention.org](https://sdsuicideprevention.org)

988 Call. Text. Chat.