



# World Mental Health Day 2019

## Working together to prevent suicide

### A day for “40 seconds of action”

World Mental Health Day, on 10 October, is a day for us to unite in our efforts to improve the mental health of people around the world. The theme selected for this year’s Day is suicide prevention. We will begin our efforts to raise awareness of the scale of suicide around the world and the role that each of us can play to help prevent it on 10 September, World Suicide Prevention Day ([#WorldSuicidePreventionDay](#)), which has been observed for more than 15 years. Our efforts will continue throughout the following month, until 10 October.

***Every 40 seconds someone loses their life to suicide.***

[#40seconds](#)

On this year’s World Mental Health Day, in addition to events and activities taking place on or around 10 September, we are encouraging you to prepare to take “40 seconds of action” on 10 October to help us:

- **improve awareness of the significance of suicide as a global public health problem;**
- **improve knowledge of what can be done to prevent suicide;**
- **reduce the stigma associated with suicide; and**
- **let people who are struggling know that they are not alone.**

Put simply, this is an opportunity to show you care.

Everyone can take part in whichever way makes most sense. Your activity may be private, for example, initiating a conversation with someone you are worried about or sharing a message of hope with someone who is struggling; or it may be public, for example posting a video message for local or national authorities about action you would like them to take on this issue.



World Health Organization



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## Here are some more ideas:

- If you are struggling, take 40 seconds to kickstart a conversation with someone you trust about how you are feeling.
- If you know someone who has lost a loved one to suicide, take 40 seconds to start a conversation and ask them how they are doing.
- If you work in media, highlight the 40-second statistic in interviews, articles and blogposts.
- If you work in the arts or on digital platforms, interrupt your production or broadcast to transmit a 40-second message about mental health or preventing suicide.
- If you are an employer or manager, take 40 seconds to formulate a positive message of support to your employees about resources available to them in the workplace or local community in times of mental distress.
- If you want your leaders to hear your request for action, record a 40-second audio clip or video telling them the action you want them to take on suicide prevention and mental health.
- If you have a platform for communicating with a large audience (social media, television, radio), provide 40-second slots for sharing mental health stories and messages.
- If you hold political office, communicate publicly about action you are taking to promote mental health and prevent suicide, highlighting the 40-second statistic.

## Key facts and figures



*Suicides are preventable.*



*One person dies by suicide every 40 seconds.*



*A prior suicide attempt is an important risk factor for suicide.*



*Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year-olds.*



*Suicide affects people of all age groups in all countries.*



**Share your messages, photos, illustrations and videos that are not of a private nature on Twitter or Instagram using the hashtag #40seconds. Include #WorldMentalHealthDay in your posts too.**

Remember to respect the privacy of friends, colleagues or acquaintances who may be struggling and never share any information about their mental health on a public channel without their consent.