

# Suicide Prevention Day

## A Volunteer Project Plan



A step-by-step guide to help you give back on your own terms!

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I said  
I would.

# About Volunteer Project Plans

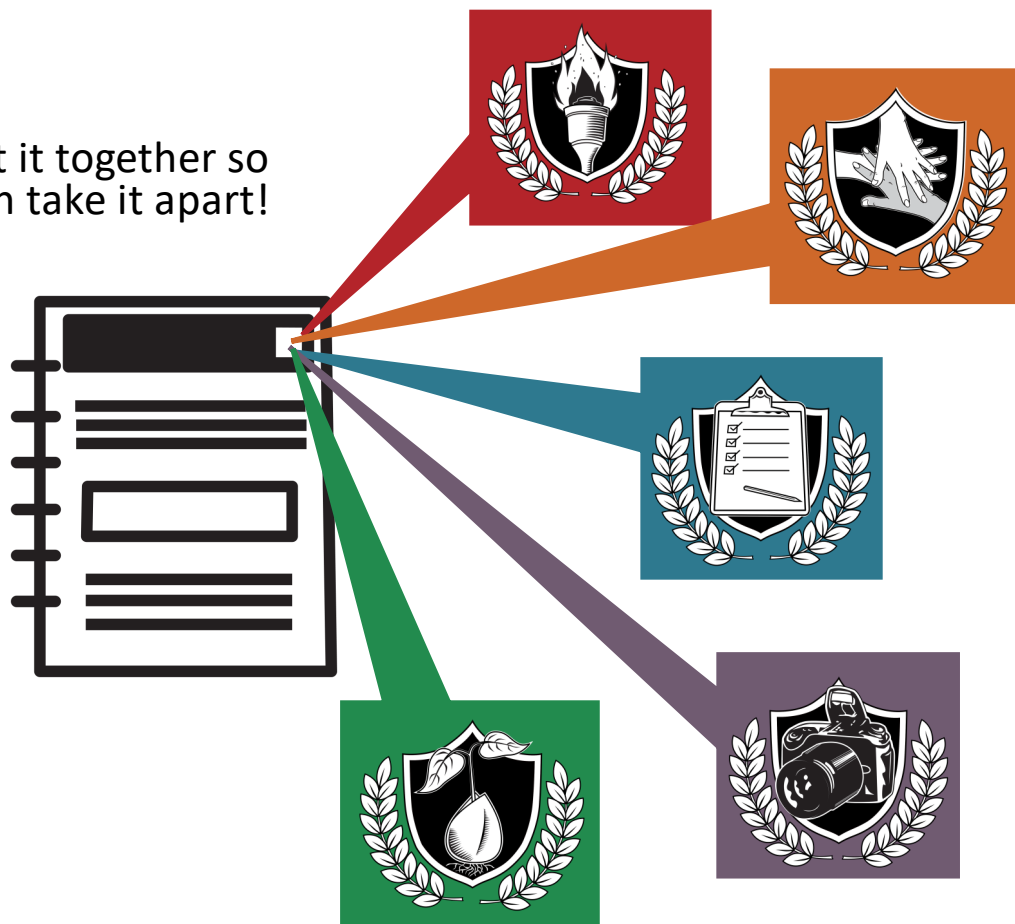
## What is a Volunteer Project Plan?

A **Volunteer Project Plan** is a step-by-step guide to complete a service project in your community.

All around us, there are opportunities to help our neighbors and our communities. However, it can be overwhelming trying to figure out what to do and where to start. A Volunteer Project Plan is the answer to this dilemma. We provide the tools and information you will need, including easy-to-use checklists.

All you have to do is distribute the checklists and other resources amongst members of your team according to their designated roles. The pages needed for each of these roles are indicated using a unique icon in the upper left corner.

**We put it together so  
you can take it apart!**



Please review the [commitment decision](#) page to help you decide if this project is right for you.

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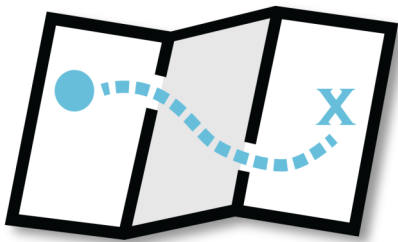
# Basic Project Overview

## The Issue:

People are hurting. In 2015, which is the year of the most current data available, over 44,000 people died of suicide in the U.S—which is approximately one person every 12 minutes.<sup>1</sup> The World Health Organization estimates that globally, approximately 800 thousand people die from suicide every year—which is equal to one person every 40 seconds.<sup>2</sup> In 2013, suicide was the second leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year-olds and the third leading cause of death for those even younger—aged 10 to 14.<sup>3</sup> And these numbers do not include those who struggled with suicide—but did not die. In 2014, almost 10 million people thought about, made plans to, or attempted to kill themselves.<sup>4</sup> The effects of suicide on families, and society are huge. By some reports, more than 1.5 million years of life are lost annually to suicide in the United States alone.<sup>5</sup> Considering that it is estimated that between 6 and 32 survivors exist for every suicide<sup>4</sup>, the enormity of the situation comes clear. Factor in the medical and work loss costs that hover around 51 billion dollars combined<sup>6</sup> and it is difficult to argue that suicide is not devastating human kind. But suicide is preventable. The place to start is here, and the time to start is now.



## The Plan:



Gather a group of volunteers and host a Suicide Prevention Day at your school, office, or other community location, like a library. For the Suicide Prevention Day, at least one counselor or mental health professional and a group of volunteers will help you run several stations for participants to work on things like: feeling more supported, becoming more informed about suicide and how to help, and getting some tools to help with difficult feelings. Gather your materials and hold a mini-training for volunteers prior to the main event. Then get ready for the big day—you just might save some lives!

## The Impact:

Hosting this Suicide Prevention Day can help people in several ways. As a result of completing stations for making a 'web' to show growing social connections, writing thank you cards and positive statements to calm anxiety, and making a personalized coping kit for managing tough feelings, participants and volunteers will learn about emotional regulation and some concrete tools to practice this valuable life skill. Your event will also help decrease stigma about suicide and normalize help-seeking behaviors while simultaneously increasing social connectedness—which is one of the main suicide prevention strategies endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control.



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# Commitment Decision Page



Please consider if you are able to do the following before making this commitment.



Prep Time: 5-8 hours  
Service Time: 2-3 hours  
Total time: 7-11 hours

\$\$\$\$

**BUDGET**

\$100-\$200

## You will need:

A planning team of 4-10 people who will facilitate volunteer training AND the Suicide Prevention Day  
5-8 hours each



10 to 20 volunteers who will attend training AND help with the Suicide Prevention Day  
4-6 hours each



A counselor or mental health professional



Items for Mental Health First Aid kits  
(see full list provided)



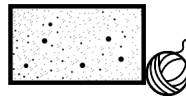
Food and drinks



Photography equipment



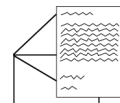
Info on local resources



Cork board, tacks, string or yarn



3-5 Tables



Thank you cards and index cards  
Less than \$25

## Steps:

### 1. Plan

The leadership team will:

1. Arrange a planning meeting
  - What will you call your event, where will you hold it
2. Obtain equipment & supplies
3. Research local information about suicide and community resources
4. Secure a Mental Health professional or guidance counselor to be present for your event
5. Spread the word & gather volunteers
6. Train volunteers prior to the main event
6. Advertise your event

### 2. Serve

Volunteers will participate in two-parts:

#### Part I

#### Orientation & Training

- Learn about the problem and the project
- Help prep for the main event

#### Part II

#### Hosting the Suicide Prevent Event

- Setup and cleanup
- Explaining activities, helping participants and answering questions
- Help direct the flow of traffic between activity stations

### 3. Report

Return your completed Impact Report form



### 4. Celebrate

You and your team just did something uncommonly AWESOME!



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# Leadership Team Roles

## Project Leader



- Oversees the planning, organizing and execution of the project including reporting impact
- Ensures that planning tasks are completed by coordinating with the other roles below\*

## Project Co-Leader



- Helps ensure that nothing 'falls through the cracks'
- Serves as a backup for other roles as needed

## Logistics Leader



- Works with Volunteer Project Leader to identify needed equipment & supplies
- Orders or procures any supplies, food, or other materials
- Brings above to the location and sets up before the event

## Photojournalist Leader



- Promotes the event
- Captures the experience to share success and inspire volunteerism
- Ensures that policies and personal preferences regarding photography and posting to social media are strictly enforced

## Fundraising Leader



- Works with the Volunteer Project Leader to determine if additional funds or supplies are needed
- Finds and collects donations if necessary

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# Project Leader Section



- Oversees the planning, organizing and execution of the project including reporting impact
- Ensures that planning tasks are completed by coordinating with the other roles

# Volunteer Project Leader Checklist



## Before

BEFORE

### Getting started

- ☐ Review the [adaptations page](#) for ideas to scale this project up or down if desired
- ☐ Have a **planning meeting** to review the needed [equipment and supplies](#) and determine if you need to hold a fundraiser first, decide who will facilitate the training for volunteers, and pick dates/times/locations for both the volunteer training and the main event.
  - ☐ You will likely need to plan for a second status and update meeting or phone call before the Main Event: What tasks are completed on each person's "Before" checklist. Are we on track? Any unexpected roadblocks?

### Prepare for the Volunteer Training Day:

- ☐ **Contact two counselors** or other mental health professionals and invite them to participate in the training and Suicide Prevention Day [Note: It is imperative to have a professional onsite for at least the Suicide Prevention Day in case someone needs help. Having two professionals ensures backup if one is unable to attend.]
- ☐ Work with the Logistics leader to obtain **equipment and supplies**, including wallet cards from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- ☐ **Advertise the need for volunteers** using flyers, social media or other means
- ☐ Review the **Volunteer Training Materials** provided and prep presentations/ notes as desired
- ☐ **Research local facts and statistics** and add these to the Volunteer Training Materials, the presentation materials for the Suicide Prevention Day and for use in the Coping Kit station.
- ☐ Double check with Logistics that the **space/location** is reserved for training service tasks

### Hold the Volunteer Training Day at least one week prior to the Suicide Prevention Day

- ☐ Ask each volunteer to write a **Promise Card** about THIS project and collect them
- ☐ **Explain the project** to volunteers using the Volunteer Training materials provided [A -F]
- ☐ Have **volunteers choose a station** they will oversee on the Suicide Prevention Day and then have them help prepare signs, displays, fact sheets and other items for the Main event [G]
- ☐ **Ask volunteers to help spread the word** about the event. Encourage each volunteer to bring or invite at least 3-5 people. Familiar faces will help increase the comfort level for participants.

### Prepare for the Suicide Prevention Day:

- ☐ Double check with the Logistics Leader that all supplies and equipment are packed up and ready to go and that the space/location is reserved
- ☐ Check in with the Leadership Team to make sure everyone has completed their 'before' service tasks

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# Volunteer Project Leader Checklist



DURING

## During

### Host the Suicide Prevention Day:

- ☐ Help set up and ensure that volunteers are assigned to all stations and that they have their respective checklists and supplies for the day
- ☐ Give the [impact presentation](#) and explain the flow of activities to the participants
- ☐ Be the main point of contact and help direct participants through the stations
- ☐ Oversee the other roles to ensure everyone is on track
- ☐ **Near the end of the Day:**
  - ☐ Review the training presentation with all participants and facilitate a wrap-up discussion while people enjoy refreshments
- ☐ **At the end of the day:**
  - ☐ Return Promise Cards to their respective writers



AFTER

## After

- ☐ Make sure the **Leadership Team** has completed their after service responsibilities
- ☐ Ask the **Fundraising Leader** for the collected information for the Impact Report
- ☐ Complete and send the [Impact Report](#) \*
- ☐ Thank your team and remind them of the impact of their hard work!
- ☐ Thank any donors and other partners (if applicable)

Items can be sent using [projects@becauseisaidiwould.com](mailto:projects@becauseisaidiwould.com)

# A: Suggested Training Agenda



## Suggested Agenda for Volunteer Training

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 10 mins. | Welcome volunteers/introductions  |
| 5 mins.  | Explain social problem using the Impact presentation provided [Volunteer Training Materials—Page A]     |
| 5 mins.  | Review the flow of activities for the Suicide Prevention Day using the visual aid provided [Page B]     |
| 15 mins. | Explain the major components of the project and the reasons for doing these [Page C]                    |
| 5 mins.  | Overview of the Roles volunteers are needed to fill [Page D]  |
| 10 mins. | Review the information about Calming Cards* [Page E]  |
| 10 mins. | Review the information about Coping Kits* [Page F]  |
| 30 mins. | Separate volunteers according to role and have them complete their event preparation checklist [Page G] |

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90 mins.      total

\*It is important that everyone receives ALL of the training information so that volunteers can provide backup for each other as needed on the Suicide Prevention Day.

# Impact Presentation



Use this guide to explain some important information to volunteers as well as to the participants on the Suicide Prevention Day itself. It is recommended that you copy this as a handout so people can refer to it later.

Suicide has ranked among the top leading causes of death in the United States since 1975. Since then, almost consistently, suicide rates have risen every year in states across the country and the World Health Organization is now paying close attention to this problem worldwide.

- 
- In 2015, which is the year of the most current data available, over 44,000 people died of suicide in the U.S—which is approximately one person every 12 minutes.<sup>1</sup>
- The World Health Organization estimates that globally, approximately 800 thousand people die from suicide every year—which is equal to one person every 40 seconds.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2013, suicide was the second leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year-olds and the third leading cause of death for those even younger—aged 10 to 14.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2014, almost 10 million people thought about, make plans to, or attempt to kill themselves.<sup>4</sup>
- By some reports, more than 1.5 million years of life are lost annually to suicide in the United States alone.<sup>5</sup>
- It is estimated that between 6 and 32 survivors exist for every suicide<sup>6</sup> and the medical and work loss costs for these premature deaths are around 51 billion dollars combined

**Clearly there is work to be done.**

The CDC outlines several strategies to aid in suicide prevention efforts :

1. Create protective environments
2. Promote connectedness and build social capital
3. Teach coping and problem-solving skills
4. Identify and support people at-risk
5. Lessen harm and prevent future risk, including using safe messaging about suicide

Some of the potential outcomes of using the above strategies are:

1. Reduction in suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts
2. Reduction in psychological distress, depression, and feelings of hopelessness
3. Improvements in coping skills and help-seeking behaviors

**If you are survivor of suicide know this—you are not alone. And we're glad you're here.**

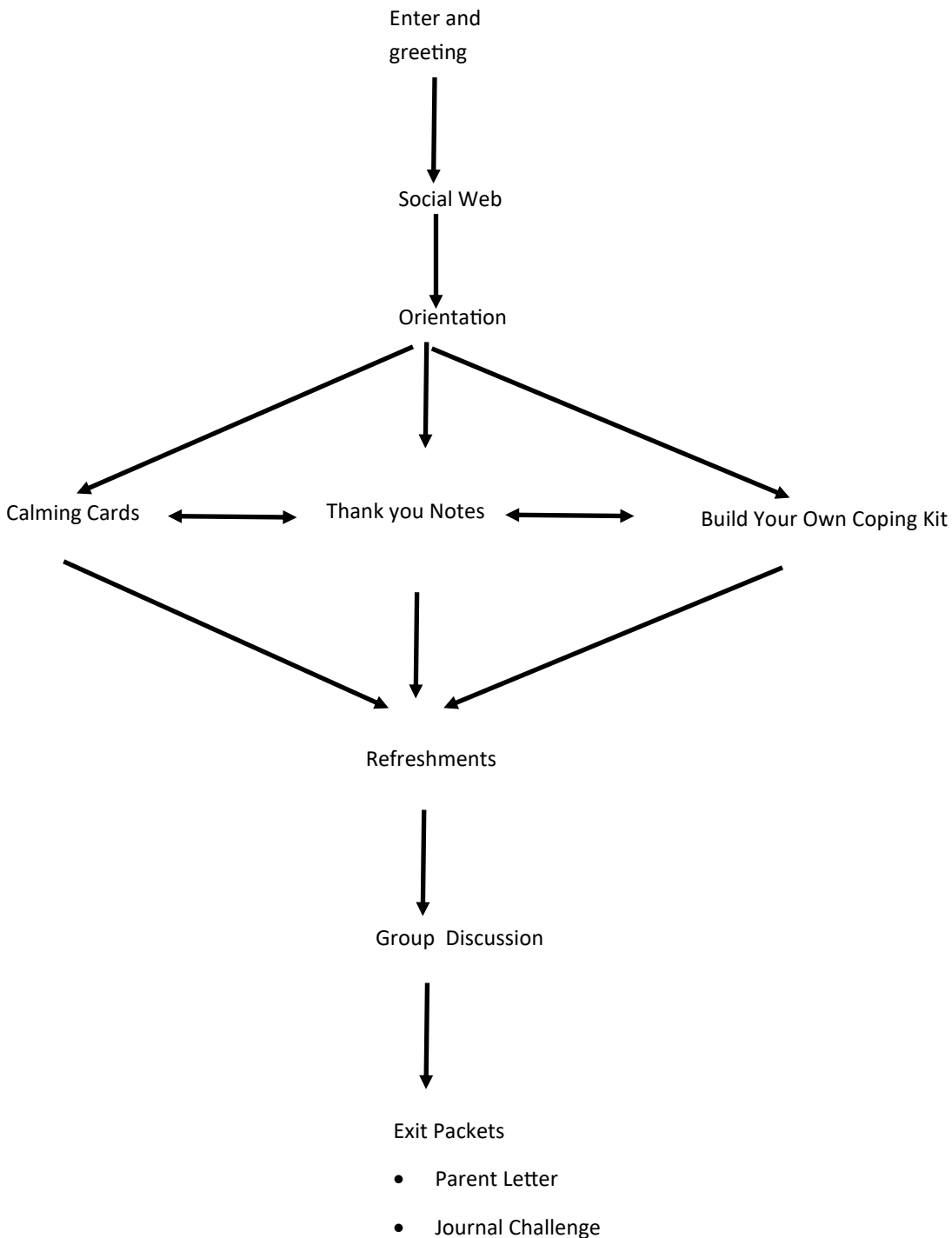
**Suicide Prevention Day 11**

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## B: Overview of Activities



Suggested flow of activities for the day.  
People can rotate through the stations as shown below.



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# C--Volunteer Training Information



Use this chart to further explain what you are doing and why. It is important that everyone understands the impact that their efforts will make. A motivated team works harder!

Component	Description	Reason for activity
Social Web	Putting names on a cork board and using string or yarn to indicate connections between people	A visual representation of connectedness. Increasing social connectedness is a CDC endorsed Suicide Prevention Strategy. This will be updated at the end of the day to include people that met at this event.
Thank you Notes	Writing a letter of thanks to someone who has been supportive in the past	Research shows that the perception of support is important to feeling cared for, and writing thank you notes may encourage continued help in the future.
Build Your Own Coping Kit	Selecting items to help people manage specific challenges with strong emotions	Educating people about simple tools they can use to comfort or care for one's self in times of distress will increase healthy coping attitudes, normalize help-seeking behaviors, and enable people to practice emotional regulation skills.
Calming Cards	Writing positive coping statements to help people manage difficult or strong feelings like anxiety	Research shows that the messages we tell ourselves in times of distress have a significant impact on our ability to cope with the situation. Writing down positive coping statements prevents the need to rely on memory and repeating these statements can help a person learn to think more optimistically.
Food and drink	Grab some refreshments and socialize a little!	Sharing food is a surefire way for people to get to know one another and feel more connected.
Training and Group Discussion	Educating participants about the social problem, specifically what are the local statistics and facts about suicide, how to recognize the warning signs and what to do	Speaking openly and in an informed way about suicide helps reduce stigma and create an environment where it is safe to talk about mental health. Research shows that educating people about what to look for and how to respond can reduce the number of people who attempt or complete suicide.
Letter for a loved one	Providing participants a take-home letter that is informative about the problem and how to support someone who is struggling	Offering loved ones information and tips about ways to talk to and support a person who is struggling with suicidal feelings helps them be better equipped and may increase the perception of support.
Journal Challenge	Giving participants a small journal to track the number of minutes per day that they spend in positive, face-to-face interaction with others.	Research shows that tracking is a highly effective tool for behavior change. The goal is to increase the quantity and quality of face-to-face interactions, which will, in-turn, positively impact feelings of wellbeing.

Continue on next page



## D: Overview of Volunteer Roles



Let's review the roles needed for the Suicide Prevention Day. Afterwards, volunteers will be asked to select a station. Volunteers will then help prepare themselves and their respective stations for the Suicide Prevention Day.

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### Hello/Goodbye Post

- Welcomes participants, helps them sign-in and directs them to the social web activity
- Thanks participants at the end, helps them sign-out and gives them a small journal/notepad for the Journal Challenge

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### Social Web Station

- Helps participants make a name tag on an index card. Participants may decorate the card if desired and if time allows.
- Helps people post nametags on a cork board and use string/yarn to make a line indicating a connections to people they know
- Guides participants to the area where the Facilitator will give the Impact presentation and explain the planned activities of the day

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### Thank you note Station

- Helps participants write notes of thanks to people who have been supportive to them in the past

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### Build your own Coping Kit

- Helps participants build their own mental health coping kit by guiding them to select items based upon personal emotional needs and preferences for coping with difficult feelings
- Has information on local and national resources for people experiencing a mental health crisis

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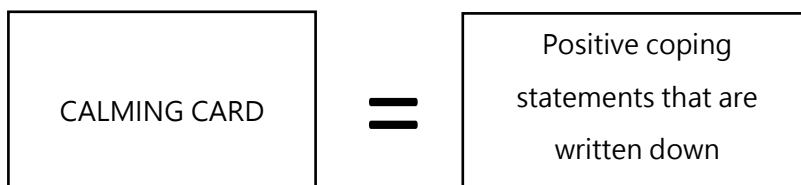
### Calming Cards Station

- Helps participants create their own unique, positive coping statements to put on index cards (or helps people get instructions and examples to take to a friend or loved one to do this.)



## E: Calming Card Station

Use this guide to explain the importance of this station. This sheet can also be photocopied as a handout as needed and desired.



**According to the experts, things that are helpful to put onto a calming card include:**

- A reminder that physical symptoms (sweaty palms, racing heart) are from anxiety
- Give a name to the anxiety (Worry Worm, The Bully)
- A reminder that anxiety is not dangerous and will not last forever
- Positive statements to coach you through ("I can get through this! I've done it before!")
- A reminder to use some coping skills (I can focus on my breathing)
- For someone else: write some calming facts your friend or loved one has used before or can use for specific worries (e.g. the odds of getting attacked lower than you think)

**Calming Cards can be used in several ways:**

1. Read them aloud to yourself every day to help combat negative thoughts & promote positive thinking
2. Refer to them in times of distress to help cope with strong or difficult feelings
3. Review them in advance of a potentially stressful situation to prepare yourself to get through it

**What to do:**

1. Explain the coping card concept to participants
2. Assist people to write coping cards for themselves OR to write down examples to give to someone else who may benefit from making coping cards
3. The more specific the coping statement is, the more effective it will be

**Example Coping Statements**

1. These are just thoughts – not reality.
2. This feeling isn't comfortable, but I can handle it.
3. Feeling tense is natural. It tells me it's time to use coping strategies.
4. I've done this before so I can do it again.
5. There is nothing dangerous here. I am not dying, just nervous.
6. I could [do something relaxing] now
7. Take deep breaths and take your time.

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I would.

# F: Build your own Coping Kit



Use this guide to explain the importance of this project component. This page can also be photocopied and used as a handout as needed and desired.

## Build your own Coping Kit

Allowing people to create a kit on their own and according to their own preferences is empowering and sends the message that people are capable of successfully handling difficult feelings. Refer to the chart below for potential items to include and why these items are particularly helpful.

ITEM	INFORMATION
Soothing Music Playlist	Download or write down 10 songs that will help you relax
Statistic Card	Interesting fact that lets people know they are not alone if they experience an emotional crisis or difficult to manage feelings
Small journal	For writing down intruding thoughts, keeping track of moods and medication reminders (if applicable)
Emoji Stickers/ feeling stickers	A fun way to track mood in the journal above or on a calendar
Elastic bands	To snap against wrist as a physical reminder to 'snap' out of negative thinking traps and help re-direct feelings of self-harm
Chewing gum	Relieves tension held in the jaw
Lavender oil	A soothing, sensory distraction that can help prompt deep breathing as the person smells the oil
Stuffed animals or other soft/ plush items	Touching a soft item can be comforting and provide an additional sensory distraction
Lip balm and tissues	To help with tears and dehydrated lips when a good cry is in order
Coloring books/ crayons	Stimulates motor skills, relieves stress, and activates the part of the brain that controls logic and sensibility
Small modeling clay or dough	Eases tension in the hands when molding and manipulating the item
Resources	Information on where to get help if desired
Calming Cards	Remind people to put the Calming cards they make into the kit!

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# G: Event Prep Checklist for Volunteers



Give these checklists to volunteers during the training to help them prepare their respective stations.

## Hello/Goodbye Post

- ☐ Make a sheet for attendees to sign-in and sign-out
- ☐ Photocopy and cut out the instructions for the journal challenge provided
- ☐ Prepare packets to give to people as they leave: parent letter and small journal/notebook with the Journal Challenge instructions, and a pen or pencil if desired
- ☐ Help spread the word about the Suicide Prevention Day event. Bring or invite 3 to 5 people if possible.

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## Social Web Station

- ☐ Gathers materials needed for this station: Cork board, tacks, yarn or string, index cards, etc.
- ☐ Posts own names and makes string connections on the cork board to give an example and help get people started
- ☐ Help spread the word about the Suicide Prevention Day event. Bring or invite 3 to 5 people if possible.

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## Thank you note Station

- ☐ Prepare a way to display the Thank You Cards or postcards on the table along with stamps or materials to decorate and personalize the cards
- ☐ Gather any other materials you wish to provide for embellishment or decoration
- ☐ Help spread the word about the Suicide Prevention Day event. Bring or invite 3 to 5 people if possible.

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## Build your own Coping Kit

- ☐ Prepare a way to display the items for the kit on a table
- ☐ Gather information on local and national resources for people experiencing a mental health crisis
- ☐ Make statistic cards for use in the Coping Kits. Use something that conveys the idea 'you are not alone.'
- ☐ Help spread the word about the Suicide Prevention Day event. Bring or invite 3 to 5 people if possible.

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## Calming Cards Station

- ☐ Create any prompts or handouts to help participants create their own unique, positive coping statements to put on index cards (or helps people get instructions and examples to take to a friend or loved one to do this.) See Volunteer Training Materials—E.
- ☐ Help spread the word about the Suicide Prevention Day event. Bring or invite 3 to 5 people if possible.

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# H: Training Information for Day of



Use this guide to explain some important information to volunteers as well as to the participants on the Suicide Prevention Day itself. It is recommended that you copy this as a handout so people can refer to it later.

## If you or someone you know is experiencing the following kinds of feelings, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't sleep, eat or work
- Can't get out of depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see a future without pain
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control



From <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-someone-else/>

### 10 Warning signs

1. Feelings of **Hopelessness**
2. **Anxiety**, agitation, trouble sleeping or sleeping all of the time
3. Expressions of having no reason for living; no sense of **purpose** in life
4. Feelings of being **trapped** - like there's no way out
5. Increase **alcohol and/or drug use**
6. **Withdrawal** from friends, family, and community
7. Rage, uncontrolled **anger**, expressions of wanting or seeking revenge
8. **Reckless** behavior or more risky activities, seemingly without thinking
9. Dramatic **mood changes**
10. **Giving away** prized possessions

From: <http://www.suicidology.org>

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# H: Training Information for Day of



Use this guide to explain some important information to volunteers as well as to the participants on the Suicide Prevention Day itself. It is recommended that you copy this as a handout so people can refer to it later.

## Some Dos and Don'ts

- Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture on the value of life.
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Don't dare him or her to do it.
- Don't act shocked. This will put distance between you.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available but do not offer glib reassurance.
- Take action. Remove means, like weapons or pills.
- Get help from people or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention

From <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-someone-else/>

## Action Plan

1. **Ask**—"Are you thinking about killing yourself?" Contrary to popular belief, research shows that asking someone directly about suicide is not dangerous and actually decreases rather than increase these thoughts. Remember to NEVER promise to keep his or her thoughts of suicide a secret!
2. **Keep them Safe**—this includes removing highly lethal means from the immediate area such as guns, pills, pesticides or other toxic chemicals. Studies proving the effectiveness of this strategy have debunked the notion that if someone really wants to kill him or herself, they will persist in trying different methods until they succeed. This is simply not true.
3. **Be there**—this could be physically being there with someone or being on the phone. It is very important that you do not commit to 'being there' more than you actually can.
4. **Help them connect**—use the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK. If you can, help the person identify local resources and supports.

From <https://www.samhsa.gov/suicide-prevention>

**Bottom Line = If you see something, say something.**

**You might just save a life!**

Suicide Prevention Day 19

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# I: Wrap-up on Day of



Use this presentation guide to have a wrap-up discussion at the end of your event.

Before we adjourn, we are going to have a short wrap-up discussion. Please chime in with comments and thoughts about one of the following 3 things:

## Wrap-up discussion:

1. One thing you are grateful for OR
2. One thing you appreciate about yourself or someone in the room OR
3. Key take-away from the day

Thank you all for your participation today! Please stay and socialize for a little bit and enjoy some more refreshments before you go.

## Letter for Loved-ones

As you leave, you will all be given a letter for loved ones. Please take this sheet home and use it as an opportunity to talk openly about suicide as a family.

## Journal Challenge

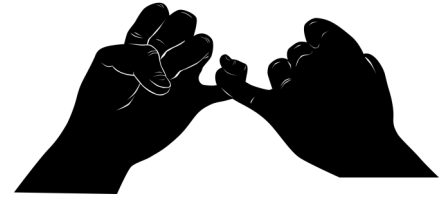
- You will also be given a small journal/notebook to use in the “Journal Challenge” if you desire. Instructions will be provided as well.
- The “Journal Challenge” is where you keep track of the number of minutes you spend each day having positive face-to-face interactions with others.
- You can even take it up a notch by developing your own rating system for the what you believe to be the quality of the interaction. One star for okay, two for good, three for great —or something like that.
- The challenge is to increase the quantity and quality of the time (in minutes) that you spend having enjoyable, in-person interactions with people. People you already know and meeting new people both count!
- Why would you do this? Because it can help you feel more connected to others....which is very good for your health!

**Thank you again** for joining this effort to help prevent Suicide in our community!

Are there any questions?



1. Tally up the impact of your project
2. Share the results on social media to inspire others to volunteer
3. Send this form to: [projects@becauseisaidiwould.com](mailto:projects@becauseisaidiwould.com)



**Promises  
matter!**

## Volunteer Hours

Estimated total number of hours of planning time

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours

Estimated total number of day-of-service hours including prep time, time hosting the Prevention Day and clean up

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours

## Cost

Estimated savings from donated equipment and supplies

\_\_\_\_\_ Dollars

Total cost of purchased supplies and equipment

\_\_\_\_\_ Dollars

## Impact

Total number of volunteers trained

\_\_\_\_\_ People

Total number of people who attended the Suicide Prevention Day  
(do not include volunteers)

\_\_\_\_\_ People

Total number of letters for loved-ones distributed

\_\_\_\_\_ Letters

## Comments

*Please include any other comments or information that you think is important for understanding the impact (effect) of this project.*



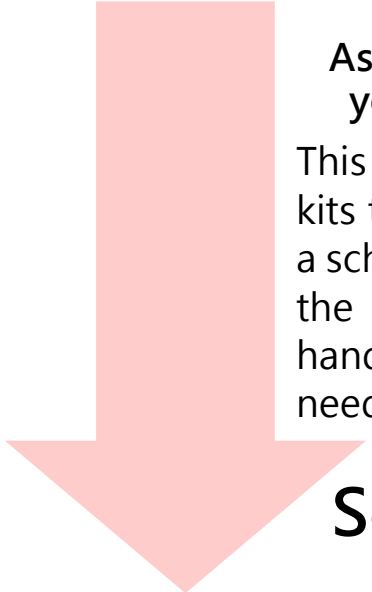
- You can adjust (or scale) the project “up” or “down” if desired.
  - Simply adapt the information and checklists provided to tailor this project to the interests of your volunteers and the specific needs of your community.
- 



## Scale It Up

**Have a large-scale Suicide Prevention event that includes other community members such as parents or loved-ones of the primary audience**

This option requires that you include tools and resources that are relevant for two audiences: a person who is personally struggling with suicide or suicidal thoughts as well as the loved ones who are supporting these individuals. The impact increases with your intended audience, too; more people means a greater number of individuals who get useful information and resources, and a larger group also equals more opportunities to interact, build connections and feel supported.



**Assemble Mental Health Coping kits to keep on hand at your school or company or other community location**

This option allows volunteers to assemble a variety of coping kits that will be donated to a specific group or place such as a school counselor, an employee assistance program, or even the community library. Having this tangible resource on hand will not only provide concrete assistance to people in need but also creates a welcoming environment.

## Scale It Down

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# Project Co-Leader Section



- Helps ensure that nothing 'falls through the cracks'
- Serves as a backup for other roles as needed



# Project Co-Leader Checklist



## Before

BEFORE

- ☐ Work with the Project Leader to make sure everyone has completed their 'Before' service tasks
- ☐ Ensure that nothing falls through the cracks
- ☐ Provide backup for other roles as needed



## During

DURING

- ☐ Work with the Project Leader and other Leadership Team roles to make sure things run smoothly
- ☐ Ensure that nothing falls through the cracks
- ☐ Provide backup for other roles as needed



## After

AFTER

- ☐ Work with the Project Leader to make sure everyone has completed their 'After' service tasks
- ☐ Ensure that nothing falls through the cracks
- ☐ Provide backup for other roles as needed

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# Logistics Leader Section



- Works with Project Leader to identify needed equipment & supplies
- Orders or procures any supplies, food, or other materials
- Brings above to the location and sets up before the event

# Logistics Leader Checklist



## Before

BEFORE

Work with the **Project Leader** to get started:

- ☐ Determine [equipment & supplies](#) needed & quantities for each
- ☐ Start gathering/buying equipment & supplies
- ☐ Secure a location for BOTH the Volunteer Training and also for the Suicide Prevention Day
- ☐ Order wallet or print out cards for the Volunteer Training and for the Suicide Prevention Day—National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1800-272-TALK

**Prepare for the Volunteer Training Day**

- ☐ Make copies of the Volunteer Training Materials

**Prepare for the Suicide Prevention Event**

- ☐ Make copies of the volunteer role sheets and [Promise Cards](#) (and cut them out)
- ☐ Just prior to the Main Event, make sure all equipment and supplies are packed up and ready to go



## During

DURING

- ☐ Bring equipment and supplies to the location of your event
- ☐ Set up the registration table (or clipboards) and set out volunteer role sheets
- ☐ Help volunteers sign-in and setup their respective stations
- ☐ Work with the **Project Leader** to coordinate other needs as they arise
- ☐ Continually ask volunteers if they need anything— bathroom breaks? Water?
- ☐ Make sure volunteers have something to do at all times; rotate people as needed
- ☐ Verify that all equipment and supplies are returned
- ☐ Oversee packing and cleaning up



## After

AFTER

- ☐ Return any borrowed or unused supplies
- ☐ Let the **Project Leader** know of any donations so that a personalized thank you can be made

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# Equipment & Supplies Checklist



- Try to get as much of the equipment & supplies donated as possible.
- See if you can borrow something if it cannot be donated.
- Let organizations, friends, and others know that you are helping your community through volunteerism.

<b>Thank you notes or postcards and stamps</b>	For thanking the people in one's life who have been supportive in the past
<b>Index Cards</b>	For writing down facts and for creating 'Calming cards' with positive coping statements
<b>Items selected for the Coping Kit</b>	Choose items that help people cope with specific symptoms, such as lip balm for after crying or crayons to help provide a soothing distraction. SEE FULL LIST PROVIDED
<b>Wallet cards with National and local 'talk' line phone numbers</b>	In addition to any local resources, request or print out wallet cards with the National Suicide Prevention hotline phone number: 1-800-273-TALK
<b>Cork board, tacks, and yarn or string</b>	For creating a 'social web'...a visual representation of the connections between people
<b>Tables and Chairs</b>	To display activities, items, and provide a place for people to work/write
<b>Pens and markers</b>	For writing things down and decorating notes and messages
<b>Boxes and bins</b>	For displaying items on tables for participants to use for each station
<b>Registration/ Sign out Table</b>	Make sure to have a place for people to sign in and out as well as to distribute materials at the beginning and the end of the event
<b>Snacks &amp; Beverages</b>	Sharing food is a great way for people to connect! Get creative: potato bar, 'walking' tacos or nachos, or an ice cream sundae bar are a few ideas.
<b>Volunteer Roles Checklists</b>	Make enough copies of each to cover multiple volunteers in the same role/s
<b>Tape, stapler, paper clips</b>	You just never know when these will come in handy!

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# Journal Challenge Instructions

- ☐ Each time you have a positive, face-to-face interaction with someone during the day, write down the number of minutes in your journal
- ☐ Keep track like this for a desired period of time (a few days, weeks, months)
- ☐ Try to increase the quantity and quality of your face-to-face interactions
- ☐ Notice any changes in your mood or thinking as a result of this Journal Challenge
- ☐ Bonus: Track your screen time and aim to decrease minutes spent in this activity

- 
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# For Loved Ones

Today, your loved one participated in a project about suicide prevention. In addition to learning some important facts, we crafted Calming cards for improving self-talk about anxiety and made our own Coping Kits for managing strong feelings.

## Did you know?

- Nearly 16 percent of students in grades 9 to 12 report having seriously considered suicide, and 7.8 percent report having attempted suicide once or more in the past 12 months.<sup>7</sup>
- More than 1.5 million people get help by calling the National Suicide Prevention Hotline each year<sup>8</sup>

If you or someone you know is experiencing an emotional crisis,  
call **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

## Feelings and warning signs related to suicide

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't sleep, eat or work
- Can't get out of depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see a future without pain
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Feelings of **Hopelessness**
- **Anxiety**, agitation, trouble sleeping or sleeping all of the time
- Expressions of having no reason for living; no sense of **purpose** in life
- Feelings of being **trapped** - like there's no way out
- Increase **alcohol and/or drug use**
- **Withdrawal** from friends, family, and community
- Rage, uncontrolled **anger**, expressions of wanting or seeking revenge
- **Reckless** behavior or more risky activities, seemingly without thinking
- Dramatic **mood changes**

## What you can do

- Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture on the value of life, and do not compare the person to people who 'have it worse'
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Don't dare him or her to do it.
- Don't act shocked. This will put distance between you.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available but do not offer glib reassurance.
- Take action. Remove means, like weapons or pills.
- Get help from people or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Contact person Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

# Please distribute to volunteers on the day of the Suicide Prevention Event

## 1. Hello/Goodbye Post

\_\_Provide a friendly welcome to the participants

\_\_Help direct participants to the first station

\_\_Thank participants for coming to the event!

\_\_Help them sign-out and give each person a small journal/notepad for the Journal Challenge and the Letter for Parents or Guardians

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## 2. Web Weavers

—Introduce yourself to the people at your station

\_\_Help people make a name tag on an index card. Participants may decorate the card if desired.

\_\_Help people post nametags on a cork board and use string/yarn to indicate connections to people they know

\_\_Guides people to the seating area where the Volunteer Project Leader will give the Impact presentation and explain the planned activities of the day

\_\_Take a photo of yourself and post it to social media using **#becauseisaidiwould**

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## 3. Thank you Card Crew

—Introduce yourself to the people at your station

\_\_Provide directions for people to complete the station activity. You may need to repeat this several times as people rotate between stations at different times.

\_\_Remind people that specific is better than general when writing notes of thanks

\_\_Keep the table stocked with supplies as needed

\_\_Take a photo of yourself and post it to social media using **#becauseisaidiwould**

## PLEASE DISTRIBUTE

### 4. Build your own Coping Kit

- \_\_Introduce yourself to the people at your station
- \_\_Provide directions for people to complete the station activity. You may need to repeat this several times as people rotate between stations at different times.
- \_\_Help people (as needed) to strategically select items to include in their kit based on specific symptoms they may experience in times of distress or emotional crisis
- \_\_Provide information on local and national resources for people experiencing a mental health crisis
- \_\_Keep the table stocked with supplies as needed
- \_\_Take a photo of yourself and post it to social media using **#becauseisaidiwould**

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### 5. Calming Card Crew

- \_\_Introduce yourself to the people at your station
- \_\_Provide directions for people to complete the station activity. You may need to repeat this several times as people rotate between stations at different times.
- \_\_Help people create their own unique, positive coping statements to put on index cards (or help people get instructions and examples to take to a friend or loved one to do this.)
- \_\_Remind people that specific coping statements are better than generic or general ones
- \_\_Keep the table stocked with supplies as needed
- \_\_Take a photo of yourself and post it to social media using **#becauseisaidiwould**



### Instructions for using a Promise Card:

- Write your promise to complete this project on the card
- Give the card to the Volunteer Project Leader
- Fulfill your promise
- Get your card back. Keep it as a reminder that you are a person of your word!

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# Photojournalist Leader Section



- Promotes the event
- Captures the experience to share success and inspire volunteerism
- Ensures that policies and personal preferences regarding photography and posting to social media are strictly enforced

# Photojournalist Leader Checklist



**A picture is worth a thousand words.** Capture the moment and share the impact volunteering can make!

**Remember:** the rules and regulations of photography may vary. Make sure to ask each person if he or she is comfortable having a picture taken.



## Before

BEFORE

- ☐ Recruit volunteers for the Suicide Prevention Day; advertise the project using flyers and on social media, including the roles needed on the day of service

**NOTE: Make sure people know this project will require training prior to helping out with the Suicide Prevention**

- ☐ Charge batteries for your camera/s & ensure your phone is charged
- ☐ Check that you have extra batteries and/or chargers
- ☐ Pack up your photography/ recording equipment



## During

DURING

- ☐ Bring and set up photography equipment
- ☐ Capture the project through photo or video (or both)
- ☐ Interview 5 or more people ([see Interview Guide](#))
- ☐ Make sure volunteers know how to use **#becauseisaidiwould**



## After

AFTER

- ☐ Use the completed Photojournalist Guide to write a short paragraph about an interesting part of the project
- ☐ Announce the outcome on social media platforms
- ☐ Send a recap including photos and write-up of interviews to ***projects@becauseisaidiwould.com***

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## TIPS FOR TAKING INTERESTING PHOTOS

### Before and After—

- Show a striking difference between the start of the project and at the end.

### Subject selection—

- Choose people/places/things to photograph that are unexpected, surprising, emotional, or action-oriented.

### Frame and focus—

- Eliminate unnecessary background by getting 'up close' to the intended subject/s of the photo.
- Experiment with different angles and perspectives that draw the viewer in.

- Take a before and after shot
- Do a group photo
- Catch an action shot

## Sample Interview Questions

1. What is the most unexpected thing to occur today?
2. Have you ever done something like this before?
3. What did you learn today?
4. Has this issue affected you directly or indirectly?
5. What did you discover while interacting with others? Does anything stand out? Any interesting discussions?



Write a short story that recounts interesting experiences people had during this event. Share your story with *because I said I would* headquarters and post it to social media to increase awareness and promote volunteerism!

*Use the back of this sheet if desired*

Email to [projects@becauseisaidiwould.com](mailto:projects@becauseisaidiwould.com)



# Fundraising Leader Section



- Works with the Project Leader to determine if additional funds or supplies are needed
- Finds and collects donations if necessary

# Fundraising Leader Checklist



BEFORE

## Before

- ☐ Find out what equipment/supplies are needed (if any) by checking with the **Logistics Leader**
- ☐ Identify possible donors for needed supplies or equipment
- ☐ Plan and complete a fundraising event **prior to the day of service** if additional funds or supplies are needed (see fundraising guide sheet)
- ☐ Use acquired funds to purchase needed equipment or supplies by working with the **Project Leader**
- ☐ Give any other donated equipment or supplies to the **Logistics Leader**



DURING

## During

- ☐ Collect and compile information for the Impact Report by doing the following:
  - ☐ Recognize and record how many volunteers are there
  - ☐ Find out from **the Logistics Leader** the cost of purchased supplies and how many of each were needed
  - ☐ Distinguish between what was donated, borrowed, and purchased



AFTER

## After

- ☐ Inform the **Project Leader** of information collected for the Impact Report
- ☐ Thank any donors who had a part in making this project possible by working with the **Project Leader**

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# Fundraising Guide Sheet



Below are some important considerations for planning and completing a fundraising event. The more time you have in advance to plan, the more likely it is that you will have a successful event.

START

Decide on a fundraising idea

## IDEAS

- Ice cream bar/potato bar
- Spaghetti dinner
- Pancake breakfast
- Flea Market
- Bake Sale
- Bingo
- Silent Auction

Make a thorough **supplies list**. Do not forget about the **place or specific services** you may need like landfill fees or food delivery.

**Do the math** to find out your '**break even**' point: Subtract the cost of doing your fundraiser from the minimum amount of money that you could possibly raise. Make sure it is possible that you can raise enough funds to make your efforts worthwhile.

**Research nearby similar fundraisers and schedule** accordingly to reduce duplication of similar projects in the same area at the same time

**Promote/advertise** your event as far in advance as possible

- Make it clear what **methods of payment** will be accepted
- **Inform donors** that their donation is NOT tax deductible (because you are not a non-profit organization)
- Ensure your **electronic payment methods** are fully functional
- Get sufficient bills and coins to **make change**

**Donate the surplus:** Any amount in excess of what is needed should be gifted to *because I said I would* or invested in another project

After your fundraiser, **make personal thank you notes/calls** using the donor's name

END

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## Sources and for more information

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### OTHER RESOURCES

For additional information about Suicide Prevention, visit:

- <http://www.samhsa.gov/>
- <http://www.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org>
- <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- <http://www.sprc.org> [Suicide Prevention Resource Center]
- <http://www.suicidology.org/>
- <http://www.afsp.org/> [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention]

If you or someone you know is experiencing an emotional crisis,  
call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

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