

Working to reduce suicide and self-harm

chooselife

in Argyll
and Bute

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Training Courses



What is Choose Life?

Choose Life in Argyll & Bute aim to promote suicide reduction by raising awareness within communities, one way this can be achieved is by providing training to organisations and individuals in order to:

- Increase their knowledge and awareness of suicide.
- Develop the skills to feel that they are ready, able and willing to help someone at risk of suicide keep safe.
- Understand the differences between self-harm and suicide.
- Be aware of the issues faced by those experiencing mental health problems.

These training programmes are organised at various locations within Argyll & Bute but can be arranged on request within workplaces or community groups.

The Argyll & Bute Choose Life Initiative is currently funded until March 2008 and by that time we hope to have helped make suicide awareness and intervention part of mainstream training. If you are interested in becoming a trainer for any of these courses within your organisation please contact Choose Life.

Choose Life is the Scottish Executive's strategy to reduce suicide in Scotland by 20% by 2013. You can find out more about national work by visiting the national Choose Life website on www.chooselife.net

Self-injury can include cutting, burning, skin plucking and eating disorders. The course is about helping people by being able to understand them better. It is not about how to stop people self-harming, although the course covers ways to help people reduce and stop self-harm if that is what they want from a helper.

It also covers harm-reduction and specific strategies for the very short term. Learning happens in a number of different ways including group discussion, working in pairs and case studies.

The course looks at:

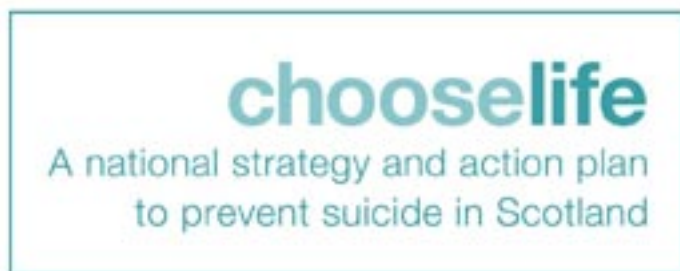
- what is self-harm
- what is the extent of self-harm in Scotland
- who self-harms
- why people self-harm & underlying reasons
- what they get out of it - the function of self-harm
- how to help (general and specific strategies)

SELF-HARM AWARENESS RAISING SESSION

1 – 3 hours

This is a flexible training based on the content of the Dealing with Self-Harm full day training and can be adapted dependant on the group's needs.

It is suitable for any size group and can involve a range of learning tools including video, case studies, quiz, work in pairs and group discussion.



DEALING WITH SELF-HARM

One day 9am – 4pm

A course for 4 – 24 participants.

Participants are provided with booklets from the Basement Project and Young Minds with a total cost of £10 per person, plus photocopied handouts and information packs

Resources

- 2 trainers must have attended a Self-Harm Training for Trainers course which can be provided free of charge by Choose Life.
- 1 room that seats participants comfortably.
- OHP or PowerPoint projector with screen
- DVD/video Player and TV
- A Dealing with Self-Harm trainers pack & video/DVD



This is a one day workshop suitable for anyone who comes into contact with people who self-harm, personally or professionally.



1 – 3 hours

A free course for 4 to 30 participants

Resources

- Can be presented by anyone who has attended an ASIST course
- Private room to seat the group comfortably
- OHP or PowerPoint and projection screen
- SuicideTALK presenters pack
- At least one other ASIST trained helper should be present

SuicideTALK is aimed at almost all members of all groups in a community. Its goal is to help make direct, open and honest talk about suicide easier. The aims are to:

- Encourage life-protection, life-preservation and life-promotion activities
- Facilitate community awareness of suicide as a serious community health problem
- Reduce the stigma and taboo surrounding suicide
- Increase personal commitment to and action in preventing suicide
- Support the spread of training opportunities and networking activities

SuicideTALK is an exploration of the question, “**Should we talk about suicide?**” By looking at this question in a number of different ways, session members may discover and uncover some of the beliefs and ideas about suicide in their community — and in themselves. Ways to help a person at risk are discussed. The pain of those touched by suicide is acknowledged.

SuicideTALK is primarily an exploration of some of the most fundamental attitudinal issues about suicide. It helps session members clarify their beliefs. Such clarification typically creates a strong foundation for future suicide prevention work.

Session members then examine the range of things they could do to help prevent suicide. Session members are encouraged to act on their commitments in the future and to invest in suicide prevention in their Community.

SuicideTALK is one of the programmes developed by LivingWorks. You can find out more about their training programmes from www.livingworks.net



Emphasising structured small-group discussions and practice, the course uses a 20-page workbook and two award-winning audiovisuals. Participants receive a 110-page Suicide Intervention Handbook and a full color, laminated pocket card featuring intervention, and risk review and safeplan development principles. They serve as living refreshers of the workshop learning.

Participants who have completed an **ASIST** course are able to present **suicideTALK** and Choose Life is happy to provide support to those wishing to do so. For those who have previously attended an **ASIST** but feel they need a refresher, Choose Life can arrange a refresher course called **ASIST Tune-up**. Please contact Choose Life in Argyll & Bute for further information.

ASIST trainers undertake a 5 day course to become a provisional trainer and are registered after completing three courses. If you are interested in training as an **ASIST** trainer or incorporating suicide awareness work into your organisation by using **ASIST**, contact Choose Life in Argyll and Bute for further information.

Dates for ASIST courses across Scotland are posted on the national Choose Life website training section on www.chooselife.net



persons at risk. Suicide can be prevented through the actions of prepared caregivers. Just as “CPR” skills make physical first aid possible, training in suicide intervention develops the skills used in suicide first aid.

ASIST is a two-day intensive, interactive and practice-dominated course designed to help caregivers recognise risk and learn how to intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. The workshop is for all caregivers both formal and informal. This includes professionals, paraprofessionals and lay people. It is suitable for mental health professionals, nurses, physicians, teachers, counselors, youth workers, police and correctional staff, school support staff, clergy and community volunteers.

ASIST caregiver competencies

A Willing caregiver recognises:

- attitudes affect interventions
- Intervention meets needs of a person at risk
- the value of life

A ready caregiver understands:

- there are likely to be reasons for living
- focus is on immediate safety
- all risk alerts need to be addressed

An able caregiver:

- explores invitations
- talks openly, honestly and directly about suicide
- listens to reasons for dying before the reasons for living
- reviews and creates a safeplan
- involves the person at risk in decision-making
- knows local resources and how to access them
- follows up on safeplan commitments



safeTALK
suicide alertness for everyone

3 - 4 hours

A talk for 4 – 30 participants

Materials cost £2 per person (costs currently absorbed by Choose Life in Argyll & Bute)

Resources

- Presenter must have attended SafeTALK Training for Trainers course.
- A private room to seat the group comfortably
- OHP or PowerPoint projector plus screen
- Flipchart
- SafeTALK trainers pack
- Another ASIST trained helper must be present

safeTALK is a suicide alertness programme from LivingWorks that teaches community members to recognise persons with thoughts of suicide and to connect them to suicide intervention resources.

safeTALK prepares community members of all kinds to be suicide alert helpers in only a few hours. **safeTALK** participants become aware that opportunities to help a person with thoughts of suicide are sometimes missed, dismissed and avoided. Participants will learn that people with thoughts of suicide will find ways to invite their help.



The safe in **safeTALK** stands for Suicide Alertness for Everyone and is suitable for any members of the community who have an awareness about suicide.

Participants will learn the TALK steps (Tell, Ask, Listen and KeepSafe) and how to activate a suicide alert. As a part of the KeepSafe step, they connect people with thoughts to persons trained in suicide intervention. Helpers trained in suicide intervention complete the helping process or link the person with more specialised help.



2 consecutive days 9am - 5pm

Materials cost £25 per person and costs for room hire, trainers' time, lunch etc (costs currently absorbed by Choose Life in Argyll & Bute)

A minimum of 12 and maximum 24 participants with 2 trainers or up to 30 with 3 trainers

Resources

- 2 qualified ASIST trainers
- Requires 2 self contained, private training rooms, one of which must sit the whole group comfortably
- OHP
- PowerPoint projector and screen
- DVD/video player and TV
- 2 flipcharts

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is the most widely used and highly acclaimed course of its kind. It is used worldwide and over 600,000 participants have completed the training. It aims to improve the attitude, knowledge and skills so that any member of a community can recognise and address the risk of suicidal behaviours.

ASIST is designed to help all caregivers - both formal and informal - become more willing, ready and able to help