

# REFUGEE HEALTH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

## Elder Role Play

To be better prepared to help someone who may be suicidal, it is very important to practice the Question-Persuade-Refer (QPR) Gatekeeper method. The goal of this role play is to have you practice listening to a person and asking in a compassionate manner if they are thinking about suicide.

### Role: Elder

You are 70 years old.

You have come to the U.S. as a refugee with your son, his wife, and their three children. You felt too old to leave the refugee camp where your spouse died 2 years ago. But your family would not leave you behind.

You have been in the U.S. for about one year. You can't speak English and you feel alone, depressed, useless, and no longer respected as the elder of your family. Your worst fears have come true.

You are now talking to someone you know and trust (a gatekeeper). You are very emotional as you start to talk about your problems and feelings and you eventually say, "**I don't think life is worth living anymore.**"

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### Role: Gatekeeper

You are meeting with an elder whom you know.

The elder's spouse died 2 years ago in a refugee camp. The elder did not want to leave the camp but his/her family would not leave the elder behind.

The elder came to the U.S. as a refugee with his /her son, the son's wife, and their three children about a year ago. The elder is still unable to speak English.

You have met with the elder before. You are concerned because you know the elder is having a really difficult time adjusting to his/her new life.

As you begin talking with the elder, encourage the elder to talk about his/her problems. Listen for a verbal "warning sign" or clue that may indicate suicide risk. When you hear it, find a way to ask the suicide question.

## High School Student Role Play

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### Role: High School Student

You are 17 years old and a high school student.

You came to the U.S. as a refugee with your parents, your grandparent, and 2 younger sisters about a year ago. You are learning English but not as quickly as you would like. Your parents and grandparent speak little or no English. They depend on you to interpret for them when they go to doctor's appointments, shopping, and other activities outside the home.

You are struggling in school. Your teachers told you today that you are failing three classes.

You have no time for homework or for yourself. You are feeling overwhelmed and angry with your family for being so dependent on you. However, you are also ashamed of not meeting your family's expectations.

You are now talking with someone you know and trust (a gatekeeper). You are very emotional as you start to talk about your problems and feelings and you eventually say, **"I'm not sure how much longer I can go on."**

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## High School Student Role Play

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### Role: Gatekeeper

You are meeting with a 17-year old high school student. You have met with the student before. The student is a refugee and came with his/her parents, grandparent, and 2 younger sisters to the U.S. about a year ago. The student is learning to speak English but not as quickly as s/he would like. The student's parents and grandparent speak little or no English and they depend on the student to interpret for them. The student has no time for himself/herself or homework and is struggling in school.

As you begin talking with the student, encourage the student to talk about his/her problems. Listen for a verbal "warning sign" or clue that may indicate suicide risk. When you hear it, find a way to ask the suicide question.

### **Middle-aged Married Woman Role Play**

To be better prepared to help someone who may be suicidal, it is very important to practice the Question-Persuade-Refer (QPR) Gatekeeper method. The goal of this role play is to have you practice listening to a person and asking in a compassionate manner if they are thinking about suicide.

#### **Role: Middle-aged Married Woman**

You are a middle-aged married woman. You came to the U.S. as a refugee with your husband, his father, and your three children about a year ago. You had to leave your sisters, brothers, and their families behind in the refugee camp.

You are still unable to speak English. You must depend upon your teenage son to interpret for you.

Your husband is very depressed and angry because he can't get a job to support the family. He often drinks too much and beats you when he does.

You are feeling anxious, depressed, and worthless. You are worried about your children because they are struggling in school. You just found out that your son is failing three classes.

You are now talking to someone you know and trust (a gatekeeper). You are very emotional as you start to talk about your problems and feelings and you eventually say, "**I would just like to go to sleep and not wake up.**"

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### **Middle-aged Married Woman Role Play**

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#### **Role: Gatekeeper**

You are meeting with a middle-aged married woman. You have met with her before. She came as a refugee to the U.S. with her husband, his father, and her three children.

She has been in the U.S. for about a year and is still unable to speak English. She depends on her teenage son to interpret for her.

She has told you that her husband is very depressed and angry because he can't get a job to support the family. He often drinks too much and beats her when he does.

As you begin talking with her, encourage her to talk about her problems. Listen for a verbal "warning sign" or clue that may indicate suicide risk. When you hear it, find a way to ask the suicide question.

## Middle-aged Married Man Role Play

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### Role: Middle-aged Married Man

You are a middle-aged married man. You came to the U.S. as a refugee with your wife, your father, and your three children. You have been in the U.S. for about a year.

You are unable to speak English and must depend upon your teenage son to interpret for you.

You came to the U.S. to provide a better life for your family but you can't find a job. You feel that your wife and children do not respect you. You are depressed, angry, and drinking too much. You beat your wife when you are drunk and feel badly about it when you are sober.

Your landlord has just told you that if you can't pay the three months' rent that you owe, he will force you and your family to move out of the apartment.

You are now talking to someone you know and trust (a gatekeeper). You are very emotional as you start to talk about your problems and feelings and you eventually say, "**I think my family would be better off without me.**"

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## Middle-aged Married Man Role Play

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### Role: Gatekeeper

You are meeting with a middle-aged married man. You have met with him before. He came as a refugee to the U.S. with his wife, his father, and his three children.

He has been in the U.S. for about a year and is still unable to speak English. He depends on his teenage son to interpret for him.

He came to the U.S. to provide a better life for his family but he can't find a job. He feels that his wife and children don't respect him. He often beats his wife when he's drunk and feels badly about it when he's sober.

As you begin talking with him, encourage him to talk about his problems. Listen for a verbal "warning sign" or clue that may indicate suicide risk. When you hear it, find a way to ask the suicide question.