



SUICIDE AFFECTS EVERYONE

**SUICIDE IS A TRAGIC EVENT WHICH HAS A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ON THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE PERSON WHO DIES
AS WELL AS THOSE IN THE ENVIRONMENT HE/SHE FREQUENTS**



EACH YEAR IN QUEBEC

- Close to **1250** people take their lives; this represents **3 to 4 suicides each day**.
- Suicide **kills twice as many people as automobile accidents** and is the largest cause of death among men under the age of 40 years and among youth from 15 to 19 years.
- If we add together those who have died, persons who have thought about suicide or made an attempt, their relatives and friends in mourning, over **700,000 people** are affected by the problem, representing **10% of the population**.
- Since 18% of the population in Quebec live in the Montérégie, close to **140,000 people in our region are affected each year** by the problem of suicide.



AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO ACT

TOOLING PEOPLE IN LIVING ENVIRONMENTS PROVIDES MEANS OF ACTION TO PREVENT SUICIDE!



- Because suicidal people often give signs and it is possible to recognize them.
- Because it is not death that is sought, but to end the suffering.
- Because the suicidal process is reversible.
- Because there are resources that can help.
- Because it is not necessary to be a professional to help a person who is suicidal.



OBJECTIVES OF A NETWORK OF SENTINELS

THE INTRODUCTION OF A NETWORK OF SENTINELS TO PREVENT SUICIDE HELPS TO REINFORCE THE RELATIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY AND INCREASES THE PROBABILITY THAT SUICIDAL PERSONS ARE RECOGNIZED, REFERRED AND HELPED AT THE RIGHT TIME



OBJECTIVES

- To increase the number of people who are able to recognize a suicidal person and refer them to the appropriate resources for assistance.
- To make assistance resources in the community known.
- To contribute to the efforts to prevent suicide in the community.
- To enable a group of people to become involved in a movement of solidarity.



SENTINELS AND THEIR ROLE

SENTINELS ACT AS A RELAY BETWEEN SUICIDAL PEOPLE AND ASSISTANCE RESOURCES



They are not professionals but adult citizens who get involved as volunteers in an informal manner in their living environment or community.

Their role is to recognize suicidal persons, create a contact with them and refer them to the appropriate resources for assistance.

Throughout their involvement, but particularly when they are in a relationship with a suicidal person, sentinels will receive support to help them play their role.

THE ROLE OF A SENTINAL COULD BE COMPARED TO THAT OF A PERSON WHO HAS RECEIVED TRAINING IN FIRST-AID:

PROVIDING SUPPORT WHILE WAITING FOR THE PROFESSIONALS TO TAKE OVER!



GOOD REASONS TO IMPLEMENT A NETWORK OF SENTINELS IN OUR ENVIRONMENT

**“EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHAT ONE’S POSITION,
CAN AND SHOULD HELP TO PREVENT SUICIDE.”**

(MORISSETTE 2004)



“SUICIDE IS A PROBLEM INVOLVING SEVERAL FACTORS AND ITS PREVENTION IS A SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. SO THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP CAN PLAY THEIR ROLE, WE NEED TO ENSURE THAT ALL THE PLAYERS INVOLVED HAVE THE TOOLS THEY NEED.”

(MINISTÈRE DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX, 2006)

FACTS:

- **Many people are isolated** and lack support in their community.
- In spite of the fact that persons who die by suicide were often in contact with the health network before their death, **suicide frequently occurs when the supervision, mutual assistance or interventions necessary to prevent it are not in place, or are no longer available**, or the person no longer seeks the assistance they need.
- **Certain false beliefs**, such as the idea that talking about suicide encourages a person to think about it, or that suicidal people only want to attract attention, **limit the family and friends’ preventive actions**.

BUT, FORTUNATELY,

- **Everyone can help a member of their entourage using the means available:** recognizing the signs, opening a dialogue, offering support and referring the person to resources are all ways of preventing a suicidal act.

Establishing a network of sentinels enables each person to develop the means to help prevent suicide.



THE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUR COMMUNITY

**YOU WILL RECEIVE SUPPORT
TO MAKE THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE!**



TO IMPLEMENT A NETWORK OF SENTINELS IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

- We will present you with the project and the steps for its implementation.
- We will discuss your degree of commitment in the deployment.
- We will ensure the availability of the health and social service assistance resources already existing in the community.
- We will support your community in promoting and recruiting, as well as during the selection of future sentinels.
- We will plan the training (location, time, premises...).
- We will train sentinels to play their role. This seven-hour training program will be offered free of charge by a trainer who is experienced in the problem of suicide. This training will enable the sentinels in your community to:
 - ✎ Understand their role and its limits;
 - ✎ Develop assistance relation skills;
 - ✎ Recognize the warning signs of suicide;
 - ✎ Become comfortable in talking about suicide;
 - ✎ Know the resources to which a suicidal person or someone who needs assistance can be referred.