*First Responder Suicide Awareness & Assistance*

**The Mission**

To save lives and reduce suicidal behaviors by providing innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training. We believe that quality education empowers all people, regardless of their background, to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know.

**What does QPR mean?**

* Q - Question
* P - Persuade
* R - Refer

QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer — the 3 simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide.

Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Each year thousands of Americans, like you, are saying "Yes" to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor.

QPR can be learned in our Gatekeeper course in as little as one hour.

**What is a Gatekeeper?**

According to the Surgeon General’s National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (2001), a gatekeeper is someone in a position to recognize a crisis and the warning signs that someone may be contemplating suicide.

Gatekeepers can be anyone, but include parents, friends, neighbors, teachers, ministers, doctors, nurses, office supervisors, squad leaders, foremen, police officers, advisors, caseworkers, firefighters, and many others who are strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide.

As a QPR-trained Gatekeeper you will learn to:

* **Recognize the warning signs of suicide**
* **Know how to offer hope**
* **Know how to get help and save a life**

**How is QPR like CPR?**

Much of the world is familiar with CPR — short for cardiopulmonary resuscitation — an **emergency medical intervention** created in 1957 by Peter Safar. The process is designed to stabilize people who aren’t breathing or breathing intermittently and who may be in cardiac arrest until the person can reach a hospital or other care.

Similarly, QPR is an an **emergency mental health intervention** for suicidal persons created in 1995 by Paul Quinnett. An abbreviation for **Question, Persuade and Refer**, the intent is also to identify and interrupt the crisis and direct that person to the proper care.

*Both are part of a "Chain of Survival"*

Both CPR and QPR are part of systems designed to increase the chance of survival in the event of a crisis.

**Early Recognition**

We cannot overemphasize the need for early recognition of suicide warning signs.

A well-executed, strong and positive response to the early warning signs of a pending suicide event may render subsequent links in the Chain of Survival unnecessary. Most people thinking about suicide are suffering from an undiagnosed and/or untreated mental illness or substance abuse disorder for which excellent treatments exist.

The prompt recognition of the scream of a smoke detector can eliminate the need to suppress a raging fire. In just that way, by recognizing early the warning signs of suicide, opening a supporting dialogue with a suicidal person and securing consultation a professional may prevent the need for an emergency room visit or psychiatric hospitalization.

*Often times, the simple offering of hope and social and spiritual support can avert a suicide attempt entirely.*

**Different Crisis, Different Warning Signs**

In CPR the general public is educated about the classic signs of a heart attack: pressure, fullness, squeezing and pain in the center of the chest, sweating, and other symptoms, and then taught how to respond.

In QPR the general public is educated about the known warning signs of a suicide crisis: expressions of hopelessness, depression, giving away prized possessions, talking of suicide, securing lethal means, and then taught how to respond.

**Who needs training?**

*In short, the more people trained in QPR, the more lives saved.*

The city of Seattle, Washington and surrounding King County has trained more citizens in CPR per capita than any other region in the country. As result, CPR-trained citizens are more likely to resond to perceived medical emergencies in Seattle than in any other city in the United States, which leads to more favorable survival rates.

According to Sanddal and his colleagues (Sanddal, 2003), "In the Seattle cardiac care system it is estimated that one in four persons has been exposed to CPR training. One can conjecture that the recognition of, and survival from, an acute suicide event would be more likely if one in four persons were trained as a suicide lay gatekeeper."

Audience: 100

Length: 2 hours

Format: PowerPoint / Lecture / discussion