

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

ASIST is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first-aid. ASIST teaches participants to recognize when someone may be at risk of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety. Although ASIST is widely used by healthcare providers, participants don't need any formal training to attend the workshop—ASIST can be learned and used by anyone.

ASIST makes a difference

As the world's leading suicide intervention workshop, LivingWorks' ASIST program is supported by numerous evaluations including independent and peer-reviewed studies. Results demonstrate that ASIST helps participants become more willing, ready, and able to intervene with someone at risk of suicide.

ASIST is also proven to reduce suicidality for those at risk. A 2013 study that monitored over 1,500 suicidal callers to crisis lines found that callers who spoke with ASIST-trained counselors were 74% less likely to be suicidal after the call, compared to callers who spoke with counselors trained in methods other than ASIST. Callers were also less overwhelmed, less depressed, and more hopeful after speaking with ASIST-trained counselors.

FOCUS: Suicide intervention training

DURATION: Two days (15 hours)

PARTICIPANTS: Anyone 16 or older

TRAINERS: Two registered trainers per 15–30 participants

LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish, Inuktitut, and Norwegian; Large print and Braille also available

Goals and objectives

In the course of the two-day workshop, ASIST participants learn to:

- Understand the ways personal and societal attitudes affect views on suicide and interventions
- Provide guidance and suicide first-aid to a person at risk in ways that meet their individual safety needs
- Identify the key elements of an effective suicide safety plan and the actions required to implement it
- Appreciate the value of improving and integrating suicide prevention resources in the community at large
- Recognize other important aspects of suicide prevention including life-promotion and self-care

ASIST trainers

ASIST workshops are facilitated by a minimum of two registered trainers who have completed a five-day *Training for Trainers (T4T)* course. ASIST trainers come from diverse backgrounds, but they must all deliver regular workshops and participate in a rigorous quality control program to remain registered. For information about trainers in your area, email info@livingworks.net. A listing of upcoming workshops is available at www.livingworks.net under "Find a Training."

ASIST participants

ASIST is a resource for the whole community. It helps people apply suicide first-aid in many settings: with family, friends, co-workers, and teammates, as well as formal caregiving roles. Many organizations have incorporated ASIST into professional development for their employees. Its widespread use in various communities creates a common language to understand suicide safety issues and communicate across different organizational backgrounds.



Workshop Process

ASIST is based on adult learning principles. Valuing participants’ contributions and experiences, it encourages them to take an active role in the learning process. ASIST’s key features include:

Small-group learning	To facilitate involvement, participants spend over half the workshop in a small group with one of the trainers.
Audiovisual aid	High-quality slides, diagrams, and videos help participants understand and memorize concepts.
Training focus	Some participants may have previous personal or professional experience with suicide or intervention. ASIST builds on these experiences to contribute to the overall learning goal—providing suicide first-aid.
Reliable, proven model	Workshop activities are structured around the ASIST intervention model and provide applicable, hands-on skills practice.
Emphasis on individual needs	Participants learn to adapt to the specific circumstances of a person at risk and work collaboratively to help them stay safe.
Perspective matters	Participants are encouraged to reflect on and share their own attitudes about suicide and suicide intervention. This helps them understand how their perspectives may affect their role in providing help to a person at risk.
Direct approach	By encouraging honest, open, and direct talk about suicide, ASIST helps prepare to discuss the topic with a person at risk.
Adaptable components	ASIST trainers can tailor certain features of the program, such as role-playing activities, to meet participants’ professional or cultural needs.

About Your Lead Facilitator: Kenneth Koon, D.Min was the 2016 Trinity Awards Emergency Responder of the Year for his work in conducting more than 600 successful suicide interventions and training nearly 8,000 participants in various intervention models. Ken’s work in intervention and emergency response spans more than two decades and includes service in fire and police departments, military units, hospitals, schools and the community at large. In his assignment as the primary suicide intervention officer for a US Army Reserve Brigade covering 10 states he was able during his tenure to sustain a ZERO suicide rate from 2010 to 2015, before being called to work in a Command covering 40 states with a 575% higher rate of suicide than the public. In 2013 Ken developed the first LOSS (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors) Team for the state of Georgia. Ken serves as Executive Director of Armed Forces Mission, an organization focused on Veteran Suicide. Ken serves as the CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) Chaplain for the Peachtree City Police Department; and is a member of the Georgia Chiefs of Police Association and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

“Excellent workshop! After 40 years in the counseling field, it is rare I say that.” Marilyn Roberts, LPC

*“The ASIST class was great! I highly recommend all law enforcement officers take this training. Fantastic job.”
Lt Josh Duke Henry County Police*