



ASIST[®]

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Focus

ASIST is a 2-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid.

Participants learn to recognise when someone may be at risk of suicide and respond in ways that help increase their immediate safety and link them to further help. ASIST aims to enhance a caregiver's abilities to help a person at risk avoid suicide.

Goals and objectives

It is intended that ASIST participants will be **better prepared** to:

- reflect on how their attitudes and beliefs about suicide affect their intervention role;
- discuss suicide with a person at risk in a direct manner;
- build a collaborative approach to intervention focused on safe outcomes;
- review immediate suicide risk and develop appropriate safeplans;
- demonstrate skills required to intervene with a person at risk of suicide;
- identify resources available to a person at risk of suicide;
- make a commitment to improving community resources; and
- recognise that suicide prevention is broader than suicide first aid and includes life-promotion and self-care for caregivers.

(Based on LivingWorks Trainer's Manual, p vii)

ASIST trainers

ASIST is presented by a team of least **two registered trainers** who have completed a one-week LivingWorks Training for Trainers (T4T) program.

Trainers use internationally standardised LivingWorks learning materials - tailoring examples and applications to local needs. The Australian LivingWorks team has contributed to the development of these materials and produced Australian editions of the workbook and Suicide Intervention Handbook.

ASIST participants

The workshop helps people apply suicide first aid in many settings - with family, friends, co-workers and team mates and more formal helping roles.

Many organisations have adopted the program as part of the professional development of their workers in suicide intervention training. The program's widespread use in communities across Australia helps promote a common language of assessment, risk management and referral across diverse organisational backgrounds.

Lifeline, accessible on 13 11 14 in Australia, is one of many community resources available to persons at risk of suicide.



suicide safer communities

saving lives
for tomorrow



Benefits

Participants consistently say that they feel better prepared to respond helpfully to a person at risk of suicide. Evaluations have shown that people remember and apply what they learned in ASIST and that this learning is consistent with workshop objectives. Commonwealth funded research initiatives with ASIST are currently being conducted. Workshop benefits live on in the lives of those they help.

Workshop process

ASIST is based on principles of **adult learning**. It values the experiences and contributions that participants bring and encourages people to share actively in the learning process.

Key features

- ASIST facilitates involvement. Participants will spend over half of the workshop in the same **small group** with one of the trainers.
- Learning is stimulated by **audio-visuals** and teaching. A **suicide first aid model** provides the framework for the workshop and skills practice.
- The workshop provides opportunities to learn **what a person at risk may need from others** in order to keep safe and get more help. Participants consider common factors that may flag potential suicide risk. However, the workshop emphasises checking out suicide risk on an individual basis, reviewing that risk and working collaboratively with the person to increase their immediate safety.
- **ASIST has a training focus**. Personal and professional experiences that participants bring contribute to everyone's learning. Experiences with suicide and intervention are focused on the overall learning goal - to provide suicide first aid.
- Participants are also encouraged to **share and reflect on their attitudes** about suicide and suicide intervention and hear those of others. People are invited to reflect on how these attitudes may affect their caregiver role with a person at risk and to appreciate diverse perspectives.
- The workshop encourages **honest, open and direct talk about suicide** as part of preparing people to provide suicide first aid.

Workshop attendance

Most days, someone in Australia is attending an ASIST workshop (between 4-6 workshops a week on average). Over half a million have attended the workshop worldwide - nearly 50,000 in Australia.

To find out more

For further information, read the ASIST brochure (available from the office or the website) or contact the LivingWorks office (see contact details below) or talk with a local LivingWorks trainer. The national office can help you find a trainer near you.

Lifeline Melbourne

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