

# Steps to prepare for violent situations

## What you should know about violence

When seemingly random acts of violence happen at a school, factory, office or public place, most of us are left shaking our heads in disbelief. Help prepare for violence by taking these simple steps.



### Know what causes extreme stress or anger

Violence is usually the manifestation of someone's frustration when things don't go their way — personally, professionally or both. Although it's hard to predict violence, it helps to be aware that violent incidents are more likely to occur when a person is experiencing a stressful life event such as:

- Relationship or family disputes
- Personal tragedy such as losing a spouse or child
- Financial or tax troubles
- Harassment or exclusion by others
- Racial, ethnic, cultural, gender or lifestyle conflict
- Downsizing, demotion or termination

Although many people manage such problems appropriately, some cannot, and their behavior may escalate to violence. You should be concerned when a person's behavior becomes threatening or consistently out of character.

## Recognize the danger signs

An unforeseen change in behavior is usually the first sign of extreme stress. If it's not addressed, it may eventually cause a person to lash out. Reach out to an Emotional Wellbeing Specialist or the authorities if someone:

- Acts out anger physically instead of resolving it through speech
- Alienates themselves from others
- Uses inappropriate language such as swearing or yelling
- Vandalizes or steals
- Threatens anyone at any time

If you notice these or other unusual behavior, don't overreact or make sweeping generalizations about the person. Instead, call an Emotional Wellbeing Specialist for advice.

Your Emotional Wellbeing Solutions benefit offers you and your family confidential assistance to help you deal with a wide range of personal, health or work-related issues. This free service helps you manage stress, overcome anxiety or depression, and cope with grief or loss. Our Emotional Wellbeing Specialists are available any time, every day.



There are a variety of resources available to yourself and loved ones at [optumwellbeing.com](https://optumwellbeing.com)

Our Critical Support Center offers emotional support resources and information when you need it most. Find a variety of topic areas including mental health, traumatic events, natural disasters, grief and loss, supporting adolescents in crisis, and more.



## Critical support when you need it

Visit [optumwellbeing.com](https://optumwellbeing.com) for additional critical support resources and information.



## Call for support at

Your Optum benefit offers support from specially trained, mental health specialists to help anyone who is overwhelmed, depressed, or searching for answers.



**This program should not be used for emergency or urgent care needs. In an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.** This program is not a substitute for a doctor's or professional's care. Consult with your clinician for specific health care needs, treatment or medication. Due to the potential for a conflict of interest, legal consultation will not be provided on issues that may involve legal action against Optum or its affiliates, or any entity through which the caller is receiving these services directly or indirectly (e.g., employer or health plan). This program and its components may not be available in all states or for all group sizes and is subject to change. Coverage exclusions and limitations may apply.

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