

Suicide



The Facts

Suicide is the action of intentionally ending one's life. It is an issue that is hard to face and discuss. With rates of suicide among the young skyrocketing year after year, it is an issue we can't ignore.

Statistics:

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people aged 15-24; accidents and homicides rate higher.
- Over 5,000 young Americans commit suicide every year.
- As many as 500,000 others make a suicide attempt.
- Many more suicides occur, yet they are reported as "accidental deaths."
- Depression is a main trigger to suicide. Depression is anger turned against oneself. It is estimated that 80 percent of suicidal individuals are depressed.
- Approximately 1 in 5 youth suffer from depression.

Signs Of Suicide

- Depression or sudden happiness after a long depression.
- Recent trauma-death, breakup, divorce or loss of a job.
- Inappropriate "Good-byes."
- Changes in personal appearance.
- Interest in occult, witch craft and satanism.
- Serious sadness and mood swings.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Separation from close friends.
- Low grades in school.
- Change in eating and sleeping patterns.
- Giving away personal items and possessions.
- Collecting items such as pills, razor blades, knives, ropes and guns.
- Self-criticism.
- Previous suicide attempt.

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How You Can Help Save A Life

Take suicide threats seriously

Talk openly and honestly to the person and let him/her know you are there to help.

Say things like: "Let's talk."

"I am here for you."

"I am here to help, not judge."

Get involved

Try and understand what the person's priorities and fears are, as well as what is important to him/her.

Ask the person questions

It will help you better understand his/her feelings and find out how serious they are about ending their life.

For example: "Are you having suicidal thoughts?"

"Do you have a plan?"

"Are you willing to talk to someone who can help?"

*A detailed plan indicates greater risk.

Give them your undivided attention

Listen with your eyes and heart, in addition to your ears. Do not be judgmental or blame the person for his/her problems. Rather than arguing, criticizing and/or lecturing, try to be a good listener and friend. It's important to look for nonverbal clues that show how the person may be feeling. Understand that he/she is already feeling guilty & depressed.

Don't feel guilty about being disloyal to the person

Contact a reliable relative and get professional help.

If you suspect your child, friend or relative has a problem, you should seek professional help as soon as possible. Professionals can help categorize the person's behavior as either serious or just a stage. The following are great sources of help:

- School counselors
- Local mental health center or other suicide prevention programs
- Local health clinic or medical association
- Clergy

Produced by
PARTNERS IN PARENTING (PIP) (800) 457-2736
Colorado Family Education, Resources & Training
Colorado State University Cooperative Extension
Funded by the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Division and CSAP

Information for this PIP TIP collected from a variety of research based resources.

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