



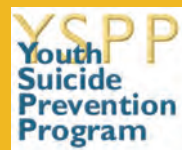
“ If a young person you know seems depressed or gloomy and has been spending a lot of time questioning why life is worth the bother, it’s time to pay attention. ”

Anonymous Parent,
(son lost to suicide)

Youth suicide is a significant problem in our state. There are warning signs you can watch for – and specific actions you can take – to help prevent young people from taking their own lives.

Inside you will learn how to recognize these warning signs, the “clues” that a young person might be considering suicide, and how to let them know you care.

Please call
your local crisis line
or
1-800-273-TALK



This brochure was produced by the Youth Suicide Prevention Program of Washington State whose mission is to reduce youth suicides by building public awareness, facilitating training and supporting communities taking action.



WATCH FOR
SIGNS
STOP YOUTH SUICIDE



THE FACTS:

- + Between 2003 and 2007, 539 Washington State youths completed suicide – an average of 2 youth suicides each week.
- + Youth suicides outnumber youth homicides in Washington State.
- + Between 2003 and 2007, 4,269 Washington State youths were admitted to the hospital for non-fatal suicidal behavior – an average of 16 admissions per week.
- + Boys and young men are significantly more likely to complete suicide – this is partly a result of using more lethal means – while girls and young women are more likely to make suicide attempts that result in hospitalization.
- + 30% of Washington State 10th graders reported feeling so sad or hopeless in the past year that they stopped doing their usual activities.
- + 26% of all 10th graders indicated that it was unlikely that they would seek adult help if they were feeling depressed or suicidal. More than 30% indicated that they did not have adults they could turn to if they were feeling sad or depressed.

WARNING SIGNS:

Most suicidal young people don't really want to die – they just want their pain to end.

There are several signs to watch for that may indicate someone is thinking about suicide. The more signs, the greater the risk.

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There are other key “risk factors” to keep in mind that increase the likelihood of suicide attempts by young people. Again, the more signs observed, the greater the risk.

Youth of all races, creeds, incomes, and educational levels attempt or complete suicide. There is no typical suicide victim.

About 80% of the time people who kill themselves have given definite signals or talked about suicide. The key to prevention is knowing what the warning signs are, and what to do to help.

PREVENTION STEPS:

If you're worried about a young person and suicide has crossed your mind as a concern, trust your judgment. Do something now! Here's what you might say to a young person who is thinking about suicide:

1) **SHOW YOU CARE:** Let the person know you really care. Talk about your feelings and ask about his or hers. Listen carefully to what they have to say.

“I’m concerned about you... about how you feel.”
“Tell me about your pain.”
“You mean a lot to me and I want to help.”
“I care about you, about how you’re holding up.”
“I don’t want you to kill yourself.”
“I’m on your side... we’ll get through this.”

2) **ASK THE QUESTION:** Don't hesitate to raise the subject. talking with young people about suicide won't put the idea in their heads. Chances are, if you've observed any of the warning signs, they are already thinking about it. Be direct in a caring, non-confrontational way. Get the conversation started.

“Are you thinking about suicide?”
“Are you thinking about harming yourself, ending your life?”
“What thoughts or plans do you have?”
“How long have you been thinking about suicide?”
“Have you thought about how you would do it?”

“Do you have _____?” (insert the lethal means they have mentioned.)
“Do you really want to die? Or do you want the pain to go away?”

3) **CALL FOR HELP:** The first steps toward instilling a sense of hope are: showing your concern, raising the issue, and listening to and understanding the young person's feelings. Keep moving forward, together. Call for help.

“Together I know we can figure something out to make you feel better.”
“I know where we can get some help.”
“Let’s talk to someone who can help... let’s call the crisis line, now.”
“I can go with you to where we can get help.”
“You’re not alone. Let me help you.”

If the young person has expressed an immediate plan, or has access to a gun or other potentially deadly means, do not leave him or her alone:
GET HELP IMMEDIATELY!