

SIGNS OF TEEN SUICIDE

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suicide is the third-leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds. The suicide rates for boys and girls differ as girls think about and attempt it about twice as often as boys; they usually attempt suicide by overdosing on drugs or cutting themselves. However, boys die by suicide about four times as often as girls as they tend to use more lethal methods. This is all alarming information to read, however, there are signs which could provide you with the opportunity to intervene.

Warning Signs

- Pulling away from friends and/or family
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Talk about feeling hopeless or feeling guilty
- Talk about “going away”
- Self-destructive behavior (drinking alcohol, taking drugs, or driving too fast)
- No longer has a desire to take part in favorite activities
- Gives away their favorite possessions
- Suddenly very happy and cheerful after they have went through a long stint of depression (this may mean that they have decided to attempt suicide and are now relieved that they have found a solution)



If you see any of the signs above or if you see signs of the teen acting differently than normal, take it seriously, talk to them, find out what is troubling them. Let them know that the lines of communication are open with you and help them understand that you are eager to listen to them. Most of the time, teens who are considering suicide are willing to discuss it if someone ask them out of concern and care.

Do not be afraid that by asking the teen if they have been considering suicide it will plant the idea in their head that is a myth. Be the one to initiate the conversation, this will show the teen that you are really interested in how they are feeling and that you do care about them.

Opening lines of communication with the teen does three specific things for the situation:

- Allows you to get help for the person
- Just talking about it may help them feel less alone, less isolated, more cared about and understood. They may begin to feel many feelings that are opposite of those that have led to the suicidal thinking in the first place.
- It gives the teen an opportunity to consider that there may be another solution

Allow yourself the opportunity to hear what the teen is saying and feeling which lets them know that they are not alone and that you are there for support and understanding. You can never tell them enough how much you care and love them. Opening up to them and listening to their thoughts could be just the weapon needed to save a life.



An EAP counselor is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for emergency and urgent assistance. To schedule an appointment, receive a community referral or for inquires our office is open 7:30 am to 6:30 pm PST.

