



September 2020



KEEPING CONNECTED

Resource for supporting Social Emotional Learning at home

SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE AWARENESS MONTH

This month we want to focus on suicide awareness. There are common signs and do's and don'ts when it comes to helping someone in crisis. In this newsletter we wanted to give you some resources to help you determine if more help is needed and who you can reach out to for assistance.

How Parents Can Help Prevent Suicide

April 10, 2016

<https://teenlineonline.org/parents/suicide/>

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for 10-24 year olds (first is accidental injury). That means more young people die from suicide in a year than cancer, heart disease, and school or gang violence. As scary as that is, even scarier are studies reporting that suicide is not on the top 10 list of things parents worry about.

I returned this week from the 49th annual American Association of Suicidology Conference in Chicago. 1200 clinicians, crisis center staff, researchers, loss survivors and more gathered to address this important topic. It was truly inspirational to be around so many people dedicated to reducing stigma and preventing suicide.

Suicide truly is a public health crisis. It affects every race, culture, age and socioeconomic group. A few months ago, I wrote about not being afraid to talk to your kids about suicide, and I stand by that sentiment.

(<https://teenlineonline.org/parents/dont-be-afraid-to-discuss-suicide-with-your-teens/>) Asking a suicidal person about suicide doesn't put the idea in their head; it generally offers relief and gives them permission to talk about it.

As parents, our job is to prepare our kids for the future-the good and the bad. We can't avoid dealing with certain things by not talking about them. We can think (and hope) they are too young to know about or experience things like depression, anxiety, or low self-esteem, but from my experience, they know and feel more than we think. Start conversations early (in age and maturity appropriate terms) to decrease stigma and show them you are a safe haven for their big feelings.

90% of people who die by suicide have a diagnosable mental illness; many times untreated or hidden away. Depression and anxiety can often run in families. Make sure your kids know that they can come to you when they feel sad, scared, or alone, and you will support and not shame them for their feelings.

We do know that most teens who attempt suicide give warning signs (<https://teenlineonline.org/parents/understand/should-i-be-concerned/>.) A dramatic change in appearance or behavior, a decrease in motivation, drop in grades or even comments like "things would be better if I weren't here," are red flags for intervention. A breakup, loss of a friendship or death of a loved one can be triggers for a teen who is already struggling. We can't be too scared to ask the questions or think "not my kid."

We also need to teach our kids to look out for their friends and know when their friend's secrets are too much for them. In our suicide prevention outreach, we say: "a mad friend is better than a dead friend." There is help and hope if the teen can access it. With intervention and support, most suicidal teens do not grow up to be suicidal adults.

DO THEY NEED YOUR HELP?

SOME WARNING SIGNS MAY HELP YOU DETERMINE IF A LOVED ONE IS AT RISK FOR SUICIDE, ESPECIALLY IF THE BEHAVIOR IS NEW, HAS INCREASED, OR SEEMS RELATED TO A PAINFUL EVENT, LOSS, OR CHANGE. IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW EXHIBITS ANY OF THESE, SEEK HELP BY CALLING THE LIFELINE.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill themselves
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Extreme mood swings

USE THE DO'S AND DON'TS

IT CAN BE SCARY WHEN A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE IS THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE. IT'S HARD TO KNOW HOW A SUICIDAL CRISIS FEELS AND HOW TO ACT. CALL 1-800-273-TALK (8255) AT ANY TIME FOR HELP IF A FRIEND IS STRUGGLING

TALKING WITH AND FINDING HELP FOR SOMEONE THAT MAY BE SUICIDAL CAN BE DIFFICULT. HERE ARE SOME TIPS THAT MAY HELP.

- Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture on the value of life.
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Don't dare him or her to do it.
- Don't act shocked. This will put distance between you.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available but do not offer glib reassurance.
- Take action. Remove means, like weapons or pills.
- Get help from people or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.



LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESOURCE LIST

For Students and Parents

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE

- Call 1-877-273-8255
- Text 'TALK' to 741741
- suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Local Crisis Unit

Park Place Behavioral
Health Care
407-846-0023



TEEN HEALTH RESOURCES

Organization	Phone	Web
Florida Abuse Hotline	1-800-96-ABUSE	
Love is Respect - prevent and end abusive relationships	1-866-331-9474 or text 'loveisr' to 22522	loveisrespect.org
National Eating Disorders Association	1-800-931-2237 or text 'NEDA' to 741741	nationaleatingdisorders.org
National Human Trafficking Hotline	1-888-373-7888 or text 'HELP' or 'INFO' to BeFree (233733)	humantraffickinghotline.org
National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens		teens.drugabuse.gov
Stay Teen: Sexual Health		stayteen.org
STOMP Out Bullying		stompoutbullying.org
Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT)		swatflorida.com/join-the-movement
The LGBT+ Center Kissimmee - Zebra Coalition	407-201-2544	http://www.thecenterorlando.org/the-center-kissimmee/

OSCEOLA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

<https://www.osceolaschools.net/keeposceolasafe>

- Mental Health Questions Report
- bullying
- Report a threat

DEVEREUX'S MOBILE CRISIS SERVICES 24/7

Call or Text
407-720-0281

Can provide services via phone, Skype or Zoom



School District of
OSCEOLA COUNTY
FLORIDA