

Suicide Prevention



Understanding and Preventing Suicide

The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 1 million people die each year from suicide. What drives so many individuals to take their own lives? To those who have never experienced the overwhelming pain of suicidal depression and despair, it's difficult to understand the level of anguish a suicidal person is feeling that he or she can see no other option.



Warning Signs of Suicide

Often suicidal individuals give warning signs or signals of their intentions. The best way to prevent suicide is to recognize these warning signs and know how to respond if you spot them. If you believe that a friend or family member is suicidal, you can assist in suicide prevention by showing that you care, and getting a doctor or psychologist involved.

One warning sign that is more subtle than the others yet just as dangerous is that of hopelessness. If someone is feeling hopeless they often talk about how things will never change and how they have nothing to look forward to.

Other Suicide Warning Signs

- Talking about suicide
- Seeking out lethal means
- Preoccupation with death
- No hope for the future
- Self-loathing, self-hatred
- Getting affairs in order
- Saying goodbye
- Withdrawing from others
- Self-destructive behavior
- Sudden sense of calm

Suicide Prevention Tip #1: Speak up if you're worried

Often when we notice the warning signs of suicide, we wonder what we should do and wonder if the person will get angry if we say something. It is normal to feel uncomfortable and unsure yet when someone talks about suicide or exhibits warning signs, they need help.

Ways to start the conversation:

- "I've been concerned about you lately."
- "I've noticed some difference in you and wonder how you are doing."

Questions to ask:

- "How can I best support you right now?"
- "Have you thought about getting help?"

Suicide Prevention Tip #2: Offer help and support

It takes a lot of courage to help someone that is suicidal. Often the best thing you can do is to listen. Let the person know that you care and that they are not alone. Don't take responsibility for getting them well. Offer assistance in getting them started with the support they need.

What the SAP Can Do

The SAP can assist with locating appropriate resources in your area to help you in assisting someone who is having thoughts of suicide or feeling suicidal. It can provide next steps based on the person's level of immediate danger.

The SAP can also offer you support, as assisting someone who is suicidal may stir up many difficult emotions. Later, your SAP can provide follow-up support and resources as needed.

Contact McLaughlin Young SAP at 800.633.3353 or 704.529.1428

This information is not intended to replace the medical advice of your doctor or healthcare provider. Please consult your health care provider or SAP for advice about personal concern or medical condition. Resource: Helpguide.org