



Suicide Awareness Resources

As a District, we want to raise awareness of this very important public health issue. In Pennsylvania, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for ages 10–24. Providing resources, such as statistics, hotlines, and crisis services can help to increase the number of people who reach out to get help rather than struggle alone.

It can be scary and uncomfortable to know what to say, so we shared some strategies to use when talking with someone who may be struggling. Suicide is something that could affect any of us, but there is hope. YOU can make a difference and possibly save a life! Remember, discussing or saying the word suicide does NOT encourage a person to kill themselves.

- Use non-judgemental language when talking about suicide
- Use terms for suicidal events like, “died by suicide or death by suicide” versus “committed suicide” to remove negative associations such as suicide is a crime or a sin, as suicide is neither. Also acceptable are the terms, “killed him/her/ themself” or “took their own life”.
- Discuss suicide as preventable, and provide alternatives for help.

Prevention Tips:

- Talk about mental health and suicide. Don't wait for your child to come to you. If your child is sad, anxious, depressed, or appears to be struggling — ask what's wrong and offer your support.
- Pay attention. If your child is thinking about suicide, he or she is likely displaying warning signs. Listen to what your child is saying and watch how he or she is acting. Never shrug off threats of suicide as child/teen drama.
- Discourage isolation. Encourage your child to spend time with supportive friends and family.
- Monitor and talk about social media use. Keep an eye on your child's social media accounts. While some social media can give valuable support to children, it can also expose them to bullying, rumor spreading, unrealistic views of other people's lives, and peer pressure. If your child is hurt or upset by social media posts or messages, encourage him or her to talk to you or a trusted teacher, or a school counselor. Feeling connected and supported at school can have a strong protective effect.
- Encourage a healthy lifestyle. Help your child eat well, exercise, and get regular sleep.
- Support the treatment plan. If your child is undergoing treatment for suicidal behavior, remind him or her that it might take time to feel better. Help your child follow his or her doctor's recommendations. Also, encourage your child to participate in activities that will help him or her rebuild confidence.
- Monitor medications. Though it's uncommon, some children might have an increase in suicidal thoughts or behavior when taking antidepressants, especially in the first few weeks after starting or when a dose is changed. But antidepressants are more likely to reduce suicide risk in the long run by improving mood. If your child has suicidal thoughts while taking an antidepressant, immediately contact the doctor or get emergency help.
- Safely store firearms, alcohol, and medications. Access to means can play a role if a child is already suicidal.

Suicide Warning Signs:

- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or helpless
- Talking about feelings of being trapped with no way out of a situation
- Talking about being a burden on others
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting agitated, anxious, reckless, or a drastic change in mood
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Withdrawing or isolating
- Seeking revenge or showing rage

Listed below are some of the national and local organizations that can assist you, your loved ones, neighbors, co-workers, and/or friends who may need help.

Crisis Resources:

*In an emergency situation, call 911 or report to the local Emergency Department

National:

988 Suicide & Criss Lifeline: Call or text 988

Crisis Text Line: Text PA to 741741 or visit <http://www.crisistextline.org/>

The Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386 or visit <http://www.thetrevorproject.org>

Local/ Berks County:

Crisis Intervention & Emergency Services: Holcomb Behavioral Health Systems: 1-888-219-3910 or 610-379-2007 / Services available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

Safe2Say Something: 1-844-SAF2SAY or 1-844-723-2729

Wilson School District:

Counseling Webpage: <https://www.wilsonsd.org/counseling-department/>

Student Assistance Program/ If you are concerned about a student, fill out this form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfUdztAdgllRe6JUW-Sd5xoXPwMlQIWJ_YXYhjqVwLhjarZlg/viewform