



Suicide Awareness Resources

As a District, we want to raise awareness of this very important public health issue. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in 10-14-year-olds and the 3rd leading cause of death in 15-24-year-olds. Although suicide is complicated and tragic, it is often preventable. Knowing the warning signs for suicide and how to get help can help save lives.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE:

- Talking about wanting to die or wanting to kill themselves
- Talking about feeling empty or hopeless, having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or feeling that there are no solutions
- Feeling unbearable emotional or physical pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Withdrawing from friends or family
- Giving Away Important Possessions
- Saying goodbye to family and friends
- Putting affairs in order, such as making a will
- Taking great risks that could lead to death, such as driving recklessly
- Displaying extreme mood swings, suddenly changing from very sad to very calm or happy
- Making a plan or looking for ways to kill themselves, such as searching online for lethal methods, buying a gun, or stockpiling pills.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT YOUR LOVED ONE IS SUICIDAL:

Knowing what to say can be scary and uncomfortable, so we shared some strategies to use when talking with someone who may be struggling. Suicide 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/ himself” 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 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 your child's words and watch how he or she acts. 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 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. However 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.

WHO CAN I CONTACT AT SCHOOL IF I AM CONCERNED ABOUT MY CHILD?

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's school counselor or one of our school social workers:

Michele Zawilla-Secondary Social Worker-610-670-0180 x3954

Alison Poplaski-Secondary Social Worker-610-670-0180 x4732

Ericka Garcia-Elementary Social Worker-610-670-0180 x1045

Below are some 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 RESOURCES:

*988 Suicide & Crisis 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>

BERKS COUNTY RESOURCES:

*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/Services available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week

*Kidspeace Behavioral Health: 610-929-4670/Free walk in assessments Monday through Friday; 8 a.m to 2 p.m for children and adults/Address is 704 Hay Road, Temple PA 19650

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/1FAIpQLSfUdztAdg11Re6JUW-Sd5xoXPwMIQIWJ_YXYhjqVwLhjarZlg/viewform