

PARENTS ARE IMPORTANT IN SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide prevention programs that work involve all parts of a teen's life: home, school, and the entire community. You have a unique chance to help teens at home. This pamphlet will teach you how to identify suicide warning signs in your child or your child's friends. It will also teach you how to get them the help they need.

YOU CAN PREVENT

SUICIDE BY:

- Becoming **AWARE** of the seriousness of suicide

- Learning the

WARNING SIGNS

- Taking steps to **GET HELP**

COMMON MYTHS

- ◆ **FALSE:** People who talk about or threaten suicide rarely attempt suicide.
- ◆ **FALSE:** If you talk to teens about their suicidal thoughts, this will cause them to commit suicide.
- ◆ **FALSE:** It is **OK** to keep others' suicidal thoughts a secret if they ask.

STATISTICS

- ◆ Suicide is the **THIRD** leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds nationwide.
- ◆ **17%** of U.S. high school students report serious thoughts of suicide.
- ◆ Among youth between the ages of 15 and 24, New Mexico has the **third** highest suicide rate in the nation.
- ◆ Suicide is the number one preventable cause of death.

WARNING SIGNS

1. **Suicide Threats**
Teens say that they think about or want to commit suicide
2. **Previous Attempts**
Teens have tried to kill themselves before or have hurt themselves on purpose
3. **Depression**
Teens feel sad or easily annoyed, have trouble paying attention to schoolwork, or avoid friends and family.
4. **Unusual Behavior**
Sudden changes in how they look, think, or act
5. **Final Arrangements**
Teens give away belongings, visit friends to say good-bye, or talk about funeral plans

FOLLOW THE "LIFE" MODEL

Four simple letters will remind you how you can help teens who may be thinking about hurting themselves.

Listen

Let them talk openly about how they feel. Try not to give advice. Avoid acting shocked or angry. Do not make them feel guilty. Do not minimize or take their problems too lightly.

Insist on honesty

Talk honestly with them about how serious their thoughts and feelings are. Never promise to keep what they tell you a secret.

Feelings

Tell them that you care and that you want to know how they feel.

Extend a helping hand

Let them know that they are not alone and that you are there to help. **DO NOT** leave a suicidal teen alone. Be willing to seek professional help and guidance. For example, contact a doctor, school counselor, psychologist, teacher, or call a **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.