

ADOLESCENT SUICIDE

Adolescence is a time of change and transition. There are pressures to succeed. Teens often have poor coping skills. It is a time of increased risk for mental illness such as depression.

Teenage suicide is the second leading cause of death in young people after accidents. Girls are more likely to make suicide attempts than boys. However, boys are 4 times more likely to succeed in their suicide attempt. Aboriginal youth on reserves are 6 times more likely to succeed.

Suicide is about trying to stop overwhelming feelings of pain, sadness and hopelessness. 80% of suicidal people send warning signs. If you can reduce pain and feelings of helplessness, you can reduce the risk of suicide. Take signs of suicide seriously. If you see changes outside in behaviour, ask about changes inside in feelings and thoughts.

People who are thinking about death often talk about it. They wonder about funerals, give away belongings, or romanticizing death, i.e. "people will miss me".

WARNING SIGNS

- Sadness and hopelessness
- Depression or other mental illness
- Previous attempts
- Family history
- Talking about death, making plans
- History of being abused
- Sexual identity issues; gay lesbian, bisexual youth are 6 times more likely to attempt suicide
- Use of drugs and alcohol
- Complaints of aches and pains
- Changes in eating, sleeping, moods, personality
- Withdrawal from friends, family or activities
- Neglect of personal appearance
- Can't concentrate
- No pleasure in activities
- Statements like "I won't be a problem much longer".
- Suddenly cheerful or calm after a period of depression

Adults who are depressed and suicidal are likely to turn in and withdraw where as teens are more likely to turn out, i.e. acting out with anger, agitation or reckless behaviour.

Teens sometimes withdraw from some things (school, family) but not all things (friends).

WHAT TO DO

Ask Directly;

I am worried about you and I want to know if you have been thinking of killing yourself. You do not increase the risk, you create relief!

LISTEN

- Listen without lecturing
- Validate feelings
- Acknowledge pain and sadness
- Don't minimize or trivialize
- Take their feeling seriously
- Be gentle but persistent

HELP

- Do they need to go to hospital, call a crisis line, go to a counselor, see a doctor or a trusted family friend. Call your employee assistant plan.
- Remove methods, i.e. pills, guns.
- Keep high risk youth safe, supervision
- Offer hope and support
- Encourage soothing activities
- Encourage fun
- Positive time with others
- Help them see positive possibilities for the future

FOR YOURSELF

- Take care of yourself
- Reach out for support
- Be open with family and friends
- Remember other siblings
- Avoid blame

PLEASE POST



Need a helpline?

Toll Free Helplines for Northern Ontario
CHILDREN YOUTH ADULTS

Support and Information Lines

Kids Help Phone

1-800-668-6868
24 hours

Operation Go Home

1-800-668-4663
24 hours

Child Find

1-800-387-7962
24 hours

Assaulted Women's Helpline

1-866-863-0511
24 hours

Victim Support Line

1-888-579-2888
8:00 am - 10:00 pm (Mon - Fri)

Substance Abuse and Addictions

Al-Anon - Alateen

1-888-425-2666
8:00 am - 6:00 pm (Mon - Fri)

Drug and Alcohol Information Line

1-800-565-8603
24 hours

Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline

1-888-230-3505
24 hours

Motherisk (Alcohol & Substance Use - Pregnancy Helpline)

1-877-327-4636
9:00 am - 5:00 pm (Mon - Fri)

Mental Health - Service Information Ontario

1-866-531-2600
24 hours

Health

AIDS / Sexual Health Information Line

1-800-668-2437
9:00 am - 11:30 pm (Mon - Fri)
11:00 am - 4:00 pm (Sat & Sun)

Telehealth Ontario (Health Information Line)

1-866-797-0000
24 hour

Legal Information

Ontario Human Rights Commission

1-800-387-9080
8:30 am - 5:00 pm (Mon - Fri)

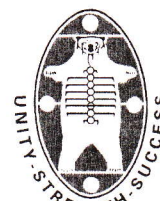
Lawyer Referral Crisis Service

(Must be in a hospital, shelter or institution;
in a physically abusive situation; or under 18.)

1-800-268-8326
9:00 am - 5:00 pm (Mon - Fri)

Sponsored by the Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Strategy, Nishnawbe Aski Nation.
Information provided by the Thunder Bay Community Information & Referral Centre, 1-877-586-5638.
Funding provided by the Ministry of Health Promotion.

Fall 2006, Thunder Bay, ON



NISHNAWBE ASKI NATION