

## What Can You Do As a Parent?

- Learn the signs and clues to suicide.
- Listen with an empathic ear.
- Allow your child the opportunity to freely express feelings.
- Help your child to develop coping skills which do not include the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Recognize and acknowledge your child's accomplishments.
- Set realistic expectations for your child.
- Don't condemn your child for having suicidal thoughts – seek professional help!

*"Suicide is so often the final attempt at communication...The final communication."  
Kurt Ollaser, M.D.*

**To get help, contact your local school – The counselor, school psychologist or school social worker can help!**



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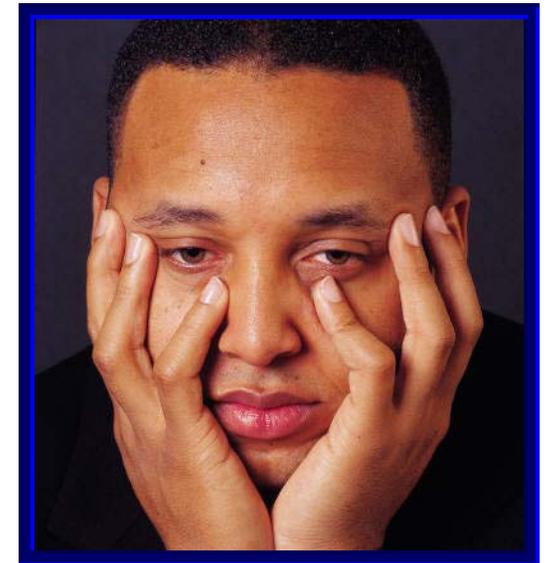
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# Teenage Suicide



**...A Message for Parents...**

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## Facts About Suicide

Teenage suicide is considered the 3rd leading cause of death among young people age fifteen to twenty-five years and the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death among children age 5 to 14 years. It is estimated that 500,000 teenagers try to kill themselves every year, and about 5000 succeed. Every two hours a young person kills him/herself. Every hour 60 children and adolescents in the United States attempt suicide.

*A suicide attempt is a cry for help, not a cry for attention. Suicide is, and always has been, sex, color and age blind.*

## Consider These Facts

- ✓ *9 out of 10 teenage suicide attempts take place in the home*
- ✓ *Seventy percent of teens who attempt suicide do so between the hours of three in the afternoon and midnight; when they can be seen, stopped, and saved.*
- ✓ *In the few months before committing suicide, 75% of victims had visited their family doctors.*
- ✓ *A study revealed that teenagers feel that teenage suicide can be prevented through suicide awareness programs for teenagers and parents.*

## Signs and Symptoms

**The #1 cause of suicide is untreated depression. Watch for events in your child's life that might trigger depression.**

- A death of a family member or close friend
- An assault, car accident or painful physical, mental or emotion event
- Extreme mood swings (i.e., violent or rebellious behavior, sudden cheerfulness)
- Difficulty in concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Neglect of personal appearance
- Loss of friends (i.e., boyfriend, girlfriend, best friend)
- Decline in quality of school work, failing grades
- Sudden lifestyle changes
- Withdrawal/isolation from peers, family, regular activities
- Noticeable change in sleeping or eating habits
- Preoccupation with death or the expression of suicidal thoughts
- Increased alcohol or drug use

- Prone to too many unexplained accidents
- Increased crying, irritability, anxiety
- Thoughts of suicide, suicide plans or attempts
- Feeling hopeless, helpless, worthless, pessimistic and or guilty

## Danger Signs of Suicide

- Talking about suicide or killing oneself, even in a joking manner
- Statements about hopelessness, or worthlessness
- Preoccupation with death
- Suddenly happier, calmer
- Loss of interest in things one cares about
- Giving away possessions, pulling affairs together, voluntarily cleaning room, throwing things out