

# Teens Saving Teens

The best way to prevent suicide is through education. Most suicides are related to depression, and, since we cannot always prevent depression, we can learn to recognize and respond to cries for help from people who feel hopeless and helpless.

## Facts About Teen Suicide in Texas

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for 15 to 19 year olds.
- Almost as many teens die by suicide as those who die from all natural causes combined.
- From 1999 to 2004, a total of 13,257 suicide attempts made in the state of Texas resulted in death. 2,100 of these deaths were children and young adults from 10 to 24 years of age.
- For Texas high school students within a 12-month period:
  - 16% think seriously about suicide
  - 9% attempt suicide
  - 3% make a suicide attempt that requires medical attention

## Risk Factors

- ☞ Depression, Bi-Polar Disorder, or other mental illness
- ☞ Significant loss (death, divorce, loss of health, separation, break-ups, loss of respect, etc.)
- ☞ Pressure to succeed
- ☞ Hopelessness
- ☞ Major physical illness
- ☞ Family problems
- ☞ Poor self esteem
- ☞ Family history of suicidal behavior
- ☞ Someone close to the individual has completed suicide
- ☞ Lack of social support/isolation

## Warning Signs

- Noticeable change in behavior
- Signs of depression (sleeping problems, change in appetite, feelings of hopelessness, etc.)
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Obsession with death
- Decline in performance or participation in activities
- Suicidal gesturing or reckless behavior
- Giving away prized possessions
- Unusual purchases (weapon, rope, pills)
- Sudden happiness after a prolonged depression
- Withdrawal from friends or family
- Previous suicide attempts
- Inability to concentrate or trouble remembering

## Verbal Cues

Direct messages include statements such as "I am going to commit suicide," or "I don't want to live any more." Indirect messages include statements such as "Life isn't worth living," "I want to go to sleep and never wake up," "Soon it won't matter anymore," and "Do you think suicide is wrong?" These are subtler ways that people express their pain and hopelessness, but they just as surely express a desire to die.

# What can you do?



**Look for this helpful app from the Jason Foundation**

- ✓ Listen and express concern in a non-judgmental way.
- ✓ Take action! - get them connected with a crisis line. 214.828.1000 or 800.273.TALK.
- ✓ Tell a caring adult. Don't try to help your friend alone.
- ✓ Ask questions openly (e.g., "Do you have a plan?" "Will you talk with someone who can help?")
- ✓ Show that you care.
- ✓ Take ALL suicide threats seriously.
- ✓ Never leave someone alone if they are threatening suicide. Call 911 or take them to an emergency room.

## Safety Teams at Social Media Sites

If someone you know online is showing any of these warning signs, it is important that you post a message encouraging them to call the Lifeline. If you are friends with the person in real life or know where the person is, please call **1-800-273-TALK (8255)** so that you can talk to a crisis counselor. You can also contact safety teams at Social Media Sites. Click [here](#) for more information.

## RESOURCES

LISD Guidance & Counseling  
<http://bit.ly/LISDGuidance>

Suicide & Crisis Center of North Texas  
<http://www.sccenter.org/>

Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
[Suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://Suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration  
[samsha.gov/prevention](http://samsha.gov/prevention)

# What NOT to do?

- ✓ Do NOT keep it a secret.
- ✓ Do NOT refuse to talk about it.
- ✓ Do NOT sidestep the issue or treat it lightly.
- ✓ Do NOT leave the person alone.
- ✓ Do NOT offer simple solutions.
- ✓ Do NOT act shocked or outraged.
- ✓ Do NOT judge.
- ✓ Do NOT offer or suggest drugs or alcohol.
- ✓ Do NOT try to be a therapist – get professional help.