

One of the most difficult challenges of parenting is realizing that you don't always know what your children are thinking and feeling. You may be aware that suicide is the third leading cause of death in adolescence, but you probably can't imagine that your child might become one of those statistics. When do the normal ups and downs of adolescence become something to worry about? How can you know if suicide is a risk for your family? And if you are worried about it, what can you do?



If you find yourself asking some of these questions, you're not alone. Although youth suicide is a relatively rare phenomenon, thoughts of suicide are not. Studies have shown that almost 20% of high-school students admitted to thinking about suicide.

The more you know, the better you'll understand what might put your child at risk.

Sources:

Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide



Benton Area Middle/High School Suicide Prevention and Awareness Week

March 16th - 20th

Take the time to talk to your children about the seriousness of suicide.

Risk Factors

- Previous suicide attempt or gesture
- Feelings of hopelessness or isolation
- Depression/mood disorders
- Parental psychopathology
- Drugs and alcohol use/abuse
- Family history of suicidal behavior
- Life stressors such as interpersonal losses and legal or disciplinary problems
- Access to firearms
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Conduct disorders or disruptive behaviors
- Sexual orientation (homosexual, bisexual, and trans-gendered youth)
- Juvenile delinquency
- School and/or work problems
- Exposure to media accounts of suicidal behavior and exposure to suicidal behavior in friends or acquaintances
- Chronic physical illness



Did you know . . .

- Approximately 30,000 people die each year from suicide.
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for those aged 15 to 24.
- Untreated depression is the # 1 cause of suicide.

ASK your child about his or her concerns. **LISTEN** to the answer. And most importantly, get them the **HELP** that they need.

Don't Wait. You're Child's Life May Depend On It.

School Resources

Benton Area Student Assistance Program (SAP)

SAP includes a team of professionally trained teachers, counselors, and school nurse formulated to assist students and family members with identifying personal issues and concerns.

To learn more about the Benton Area Student Assistance Program, please contact the school at (570) 925-2651.

Community Resources

TAPLINE 1-800-222-9016

Mental Health Services (570) 271-6396

CMSU Base Service Unit (570) 275-4962

Early Warning Signs

Research shows that roughly nine out of ten adolescents who die by suicide had given clues to others before their suicide attempt. Has your child shown any of these warning signs?

- **Withdrawal from friends and family**
- **Preoccupation with death**
- **Marked personality change and serious mood changes**
- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Difficulties in school (decline in quality of work)**
- **Change in eating and sleeping habits**
- **Loss of interest in pleasurable activities**
- **Frequent complaints about physical symptoms, often related to emotions, such as stomachaches, headaches, fatigue, etc.**
- **Experimenting with drugs and alcohol**
- **Persistent boredom**

