



Understanding & Helping the Suicidal Person



BE AWARE OF THE WARNING SIGNS

There is no typical suicide victim. It happens to young and old, rich and poor. Fortunately there are some

common warning signs which, when acted upon, can save lives.

A person may be suicidal if he or she:

- Talks about committing suicide
- Has trouble eating or sleeping
- Experiences drastic changes in behavior
- Withdraws from friends and/or social activities
- Loses interest in hobbies, work, school, etc.
- Prepares for death by making out a will and final arrangements
- Gives away prized possessions
- Has attempted suicide before
- Takes unnecessary risks
- Has had recent severe losses
- Is preoccupied with death and dying
- Loses interest in personal appearance
- Increases the use of alcohol or drugs

WHAT TO DO

Here are some ways to be helpful to someone who is threatening suicide:

- Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture on the value of life.
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Don't dare him or her to do it.
- Don't act shocked. This will put distance between you.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available but do not offer glib reassurance.
- Take action. Remove means, such as guns or stockpiled pills.
- Get help from persons or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.



(continued)

BE AWARE OF FEELINGS

Many people at some time in their lives think about committing suicide.

Most people decide to live, because they eventually come to realize that the crisis is temporary & death is permanent.

On other hand, people having a crisis sometimes perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel an utter loss of control.

These are some of the feelings suicidal people experience:

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't sleep, eat or work
- Can't get out of depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see a future without pain
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control

**If you experience these feelings,
*get help!***

**If someone you know exhibits these
symptoms, *offer help!***

CONTACT

- A community mental health agency
- A private therapist or counselor
- A school counselor or psychologist
- A family physician
- A suicide prevention or crisis center

**National Suicide
Prevention Lifeline**
1-800-273-TALK



Infoline Statewide Suicide and Crisis Hotline
2-1-1

CONNECTICUT CRISIS CENTERS

Derby

Griffin Hospital-Psychiatric Crisis Team
(203) 732-7541 or (800) 354-3094

Hartford

The Samaritans of the Capital Region
(860) 232-2121

Meriden

Midstate Behavioral Health System-Crisis Stabilization
Program
(203) 630-5305

Middletown

River Valley Services
(860) 344-2100

Middletown

Middlesex Hospital-Crisis Assessment and Triage Service
(860) 344-6496

New Haven

CT Mental Health Center-Acute Care Services
(203) 974-7713

New Haven

Clifford W. Beers Guidance Clinic-CAMPES
(888) 97-YOUTH

Plainville

Wheeler Clinic, Inc.-Emergency Service
(860) 747-3434 Help Line or (860) 524-1182 Help Line
(860) 747-8719 Community Response Team

Rocky Hill

United Way of Connecticut/INFOLINE
211 or 800-203-1234 (cell phone users)

Waterbury

Waterbury Hospital Psychiatric Center
(203) 573-6500

West Mystic

Contact of Southeast Connecticut
(800) 848-1281 or (860) 848-1281

Connecticut Youth Suicide Advisory Board

www.state.ct.us/dcf/Y SAB/

Information Provided by:

American Association Of Suicidology

4201 Connecticut, Ave., NW, Suite 408
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 237-2280
<http://www.suicidology.org>