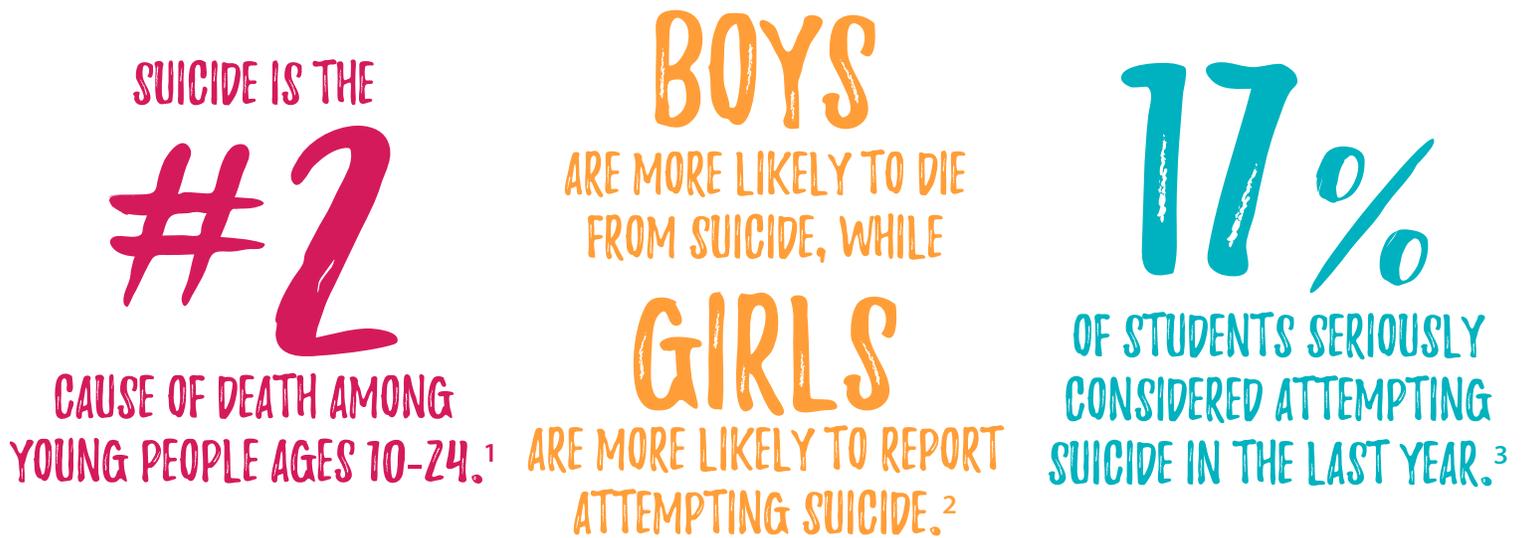


BACK TO SCHOOL: Preventing Suicide

It can be hard to know how to deal with all the things life throws at us. For some, sometimes death seems like the only option. More young people survive suicide attempts than die, but even one death is too many. It's important to know that there is help and there is hope.



Warning Signs

If you think someone you know is considering suicide, look for these warning signs:

- THREATS OF SUICIDE—EITHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT
- VERBAL HINTS SUCH AS “I WON’T BE AROUND MUCH LONGER” OR “IT’S HOPELESS”
 - OBSESSION WITH DEATH
 - DEPRESSION
- OVERWHELMING SENSE OF GUILT, SHAME OR REJECTION
 - PUTTING AFFAIRS IN ORDER (FOR EXAMPLE, GIVING OR THROWING AWAY FAVORITE POSSESSIONS)
- SUDDEN CHEERFULNESS AFTER A PERIOD OF DEPRESSION
- DRAMATIC CHANGE IN PERSONALITY OR APPEARANCE
 - BECOMING ANGERED EASILY
 - BIZARRE THOUGHTS
- CHANGES IN EATING OR SLEEPING PATTERNS
 - CHANGES IN SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
 - LACK OF INTEREST IN FUTURE PLANS

What Can You Do?

If you think someone you know is at immediate risk of suicide, you need to ACT.

A IS FOR ASK:

ASK YOUR FRIEND IF THEY ARE CONSIDERING SUICIDE OR IF THEY HAVE A PLAN TO END THEIR LIFE. IT'S OKAY TO BE DIRECT, JUST TRY TO BE NON-JUDGEMENTAL AND SHOW YOU CARE.

C IS FOR CARE:

IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, STAY WITH THEM AND OFFER TO GO WITH THEM TO FIND HELP. EVEN IF IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO YOU, TRY YOUR BEST TO SYMPATHIZE AND OFFER SUPPORT. TRY NOT TO LEAVE SOMEONE WITH SUICIDAL THOUGHTS ALONE.

T IS FOR TELL:

TELL A TRUSTED ADULT WHAT'S GOING ON. YOUR FRIEND MIGHT ASK YOU NOT TO TELL ANYONE, BUT YOU SHOULD NEVER KEEP TALK OF SUICIDE A SECRET. IT IS WORTH BREAKING TRUST TO SAVE A LIFE. YOU SHOULD NEVER TRY TO HANDLE THE SITUATION BY YOURSELF. THE MOST HELPFUL THING YOU CAN DO IS GUIDE YOUR FRIEND TO SOMEONE WITH TRAINING.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER OF TAKING SUICIDAL ACTION, SEEK HELP BY CALLING 911 OR GOING TO THE CLOSEST EMERGENCY ROOM.

TRAINED CRISIS COUNSELORS ARE AVAILABLE 24/7 BY TEXTING "MHA" TO 741-741 OR CALLING 1-800-273-TALK(8255).

YOU CAN ALSO DOWNLOAD THE NOTOK APP ON GOOGLE PLAY OR THE APP STORE. THE NOTOK APP ALLOWS YOU TO IDENTIFY UP TO 5 PEOPLE WHO WILL RECEIVE A NOTIFICATION WHEN YOU PRESS A BUTTON INDICATING THAT YOU'RE NOT OK.

Content adapted from Red Flags "Suicide: A Permanent Solution to a Temporary Problem," and "How to Help."

Sources

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