



## SUMMIT COUNTY SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION

### Commonly Asked Questions

#### HOW DO I KNOW IF SOMEONE IS SUICIDAL?

When people are thinking of ending their lives, they generally feel hopeless and helpless and experience great emotional pain. In many cases, the person is suffering from depression which is a very treatable illness. You may see some of these common behaviors which are called **warning signs**:

- A sad or grouchy, angry or very anxious mood
- Loss of interest in anything the person used to enjoy
- Withdrawal from friends, families and activities
- Noticeable changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Inability to concentrate
- Statements of hopelessness or worthlessness

In addition, people sometimes have **risk factors** which are big indicators that suicidal thinking is going on. Be extra concerned if you know:

- The person has made a previous suicide attempt
- The person is talking about death or suicide
- The person has lost someone to suicide
- The person is planning for suicide or making final plans much in the same way a terminally ill person would do.
- The person shows increased drug or alcohol use.
- The person is feeling trapped in their present life situation with no other way out.

#### WHAT DO I DO IF I SUSPECT SOMEONE IS SUICIDAL?

- Take the person seriously. At least 75% of people give off warning signs ahead of time, hoping that someone will intervene.
- Listen to the problems the person is experiencing without being judgmental.
- Ask if they are having suicidal thoughts if you suspect that they are. A person can not talk someone into suicide by asking about suicidal thoughts. You are validating their feelings.
- Explore the possibilities of getting help. The suicidal person may be looking at life so narrowly, that they are no longer able to see alternatives and need someone else to point them out.
- Do not send the person to get help. Go with him or her. Do not leave the person alone.
- Remove any means of suicide, i.e. guns, knives, pills etc.
- Realize that emergency rooms treat suicidal person and that 911 is a logical tool if you need assistance.

## WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?

- Try the following **websites**:
  1. American Association of Suicidology at <http://www.suicidology.org>
  2. American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at <http://www.afsp.org>
  3. Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network at <http://www.spanusa.org>
  4. Suicide Prevention Resource Center at <http://www.sprc.org>
  5. Yellow Ribbon at <http://www.yellowribbon.org/>
  6. The Trevor Project at <http://www.thetrevorproject.org>
  7. The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation at <http://www.ohiospf.org>
  
- Or call a **hotline**:
  1. SUPPORT Hotline of Portage Path Behavioral Health at 330-434-9144
  2. Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255)
  
- Or for more information about the Suicide Prevention Coalition call 330-762-3500 or contact [preventsuicide@admboard.org](mailto:preventsuicide@admboard.org).

The websites listed above have valuable information about specific age groups, publications and national statistics.

## WHAT IF I LOST SOMEONE TO SUICIDE?

- Call 330-762-3500 for information about the **local group**, Survivors of Suicide. The group meets the second and fourth Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. at Portage Path Behavioral Health, 340 S. Broadway in Akron.
- For Survivor groups in other places go to the websites of American Association of Suicidology or American Foundation for Suicide Prevention listed above.
- Call one of the hotlines listed above.
- Know that you do not have to manage your feelings alone.