Suicide

Teenagers and older adults are at a higher risk of suicide. Although the highest suicide rates of any age group are among those 65 years old and older, Teenage Suicide is a serious and growing problem. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds, after accidents and homicide. It is thought that at least 25 attempts are made for every completed teen suicide.

Suicide rates differ between boys and girls, with girls thinking about and attempting suicide about twice as often. Girls tend to attempt suicide by overdosing on drugs or cutting themselves. Yet boys die by suicide about four times as often girls, possibly because they tend to use more lethal methods, such as firearms, hanging, or jumping from heights.

The teenage years are a time of tremendous possibility but can also be emotionally turbulent and stressful. Teenagers face pressures to succeed and fit in. They may struggle with self-esteem issues, self-doubt, and feelings of alienation. For some, this leads to suicide. Depression is also a major risk factor. It is important to watch for signs of depression or self-destructive behavior and obtain professional help.

Recognizing Suicidal Behavior

The following signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. The risk of suicide is greater if a behavior is new or has increased and if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change. If you know someone exhibiting any of these signs, seek help as soon as possible.

Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
Talking about being a burden to others
Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun
Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
Displaying extreme mood swings
Changes in eating and sleeping habits
Withdrawing from friends, family, and regular activities
Unusual neglect of personal appearance
Persistent boredom, difficulty concentrating, or a decline in the quality of schoolwork
Frequent complaints about physical symptoms, such as stomachaches, headaches, fatigue, etc.
Not tolerating praise or rewards

It is a common myth that people who talk of suicide don't commit it! Take any suicidal talk or behavior seriously.