

## Warning Signs of Suicide

Incidents of suicide often increase after a suicide has occurred in a community and during the spring months, but suicide can happen at anytime of the year. It is always important to be aware of the emotions and behaviors of our children. The following information is provided to help you in dealing with suicidal behaviors:

### **The Warning Signs of Teen Suicide**

- Change in eating and sleeping habits
- Increased drug and alcohol use
- Noticeable personality *change* such as a depressed person suddenly becoming cheerful, compliant, well behaved, or a happy person becoming angry, rebellious, depressed
- Violent reactions, rebellious behavior, running away
- Persistent boredom, difficulty concentrating, falling grades
- Loss of interest in friends, personal appearance, fun activities
- Focus on morbid or death themes which can also be expressed in writing or artwork
- Frequent complaints of stomachaches, headaches, fatigue --physical symptoms often related to emotions
- Prior attempt at suicide or family history of suicide
- Complaints of feeling "rotten inside"
- Verbal hints such as:
  - » I won't be a problem to you much longer
  - » Nothing matters; it's no use
  - » I won't see you again
  - » I wish I was never born
  - » People are better off without me
- Putting affairs in order, cleaning room, throwing or giving away important belongings
- Break up in relationship.

### **If you know someone who is thinking of suicide, do this:**

1. Ask questions and listen, especially to their feelings.
2. Go with them to get help.
  - » Listen to what is said and treat it seriously. Do not debate, lecture, and argue about whether or not the teen feels suicidal.
  - » NEVER leave a teen that is suicidal alone.
  - » Ask if the teen has a plan. The more detailed the plan, the more at-risk the teen is.
3. If they refuse help, do not keep it a secret. Talk with a Mental Health Provider, Doctor, or call 911

### **LOCAL RESOURCES**

For local resources, look in the yellow pages under: "Mental Health, Counseling, Psychologists, Hospital, or Physicians...."

**PHONE NUMBERS**

1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)

1-800-273-TALK (8255)