

# Youth Suicide

- In a typical high school classroom of 30 students, 1 male and 2 females have probably attempted suicide in the past year. (10 % of the class)
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among all those 15–24 years old
- Suicide is the fifth leading cause of death among all those 5–14 years old
- Adolescent males die by suicide more than adolescent females by a ratio of over 4:1
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students
- According to a Department of Education study, drug and alcohol abuse was the most common characteristic of young people who attempted suicide; 70% of the attempters frequently used alcohol and/or other drugs
- 90% of adolescent suicide victims have at least one diagnosable, active psychiatric illness at the time of death — most often depression, substance abuse and conduct disorders. According to one study, approximately 50% of these had a psychiatric diagnosis for two years or more



SUICIDE PREVENTION COUNCIL  
of St. Joseph County and Surrounding Areas

## UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS FOR TEEN SUICIDE

1. Suicidal thoughts
2. Psychiatric disorders (such as depression, impulsive aggressive behavior, bipolar disorder, certain anxiety disorders)
3. Drug and/or alcohol abuse
4. Previous suicide attempts

### *The risk is even greater if there is:*

5. Access to firearms
6. Situational stress

## KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

### Five Warnings Signs for Teen Depression

1. Feelings of sadness or hopelessness, often accompanied by anxiety
2. Declining school performance
3. Loss of pleasure/interest in social and sports activities
4. Sleeping too little or too much
5. Changes in weight or appetite

## TAKE ACTION

### Three Steps Parents Can Take

1. Get your child help (medical or mental health professional).
2. Support your child (listen, avoid undue criticism, remain connected).
3. Become informed (library, local support group, Internet).

### Three Steps Teens Can Take

1. Take your friend's actions seriously.
2. Encourage your friend to seek professional help, accompany him/her if necessary.
3. Talk to an adult you trust. Don't be alone in helping your friend.



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For more information visit our website at  
[www.sjcsuicideprevention.com](http://www.sjcsuicideprevention.com) or call (574) 220-6381.

Crisis and Suicide Intervention National HOTLINE  
1-800-273-TALK

Local Help: Emergency Services  
(877) 234-0061 toll free (574) 234-0061 local  
*(operated by Madison Center)*