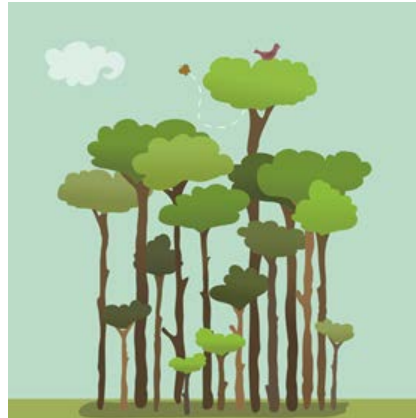


Monona Grove School District

Adolescent Depression and Suicide

A Resource Guide for Students, Parents and Staff



Suicide Myths and Facts

Myth: Suicidal people are fully intent on dying. Nothing others do or say can help.

Fact: Suicide is preventable. Most suicidal people desperately want to live; they are just unable to see alternatives to their problems.

Myth: Suicide happens without warning.

Fact: There are almost always warning signs, but others are often unaware of the significance of the warnings or unsure about what to do.

Myth: People who talk about suicide do not commit suicide.

Fact: Most people who commit suicide have talked about or given definite warning signs of their suicidal intentions.

Myth: Improvement in a suicidal person means the danger is over.

Fact: Many suicides occur several months after the beginning of improvement, when a person has energy to act on suicidal thoughts.

Myth: Suicide is more common in lower socio-economic groups.

Fact: Suicide cuts across social and economic boundaries.

Myth: All suicidal individuals are depressed.

Fact: Depression is often associated with suicidal feelings but not all persons who attempt or commit suicide are depressed. A number of other emotional factors may be involved.

Myth: Asking “Are you thinking about committing suicide?” may trigger a person to make a suicide attempt.

Fact: Asking direct, caring questions about suicide will often minimize a person’s anxiety and act as a deterrent to suicidal behavior.

What Can I Do to Help Prevent Suicide

Recognize Potential Impact of Crises in Students’ Lives

Such as: Death of a family member, Divorce or separation of parents, Adolescent pregnancy, Change in residence, A break-up with a significant other, Abusive relationships, Loss of family social or financial status

Know the Warning Signs

- Threatening to or talking about wanting to die
- Increased apathy, hopelessness
- Poor eating and sleeping habits
- Substance abuse
- Withdrawal from friends, family and activities usually enjoyed

Seek Help

- Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) (National Suicide Prevention Hotline)
- See a doctor or therapist – via clinic, walk-in or emergency room
- Contact the local crisis facility (i.e. hopes 608-274-9686, Dane County Counseling/Suicide Prevention 608-280-2600)
- In case of emergency call 911

Do's and Don'ts

What to Do:

When you suspect that a student may be suicidal, you may become nervous or anxious. This is a normal feeling. It may help you if you remember the following:

Believe or trust your suspicions that the student may be self-destructive. Seek help immediately for any suspicion of harm to self or others. Do not allow the student to be left alone.

Communicate your concern for the well-being of the student. Be an active listener and show your support.

Be direct. Talk openly and freely and ask direct questions about the student's intentions. Try to determine if the student has a plan for suicide (how, when, where). The more detailed the plan, the greater the risk. Point out that depressed feelings will pass and that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

Get professional help. Encourage the students to seek help from a school counselor, minister, or other trusted adult. Offer to accompany the student.

What Not to Do:

Do not allow yourself to be sworn to secrecy. You may lose the trust of the student for a while, but you may save a life in return.

Do not leave the student alone if you believe the risk of suicide is immediate.

Do not act shocked at what the student tells you.

Do not debate or second guess whether to report your suspicions.



School Resources

Monona Grove High School

Susan Bishop, Counselor (A-G): 316-1377

Scott Groff, Counselor (H-O): 316-1379

Melissa Burke, Counselor (P-Z): 316-1372

Melissa Smith, Psychologist: 316-1378

Jessica Frain, Social Worker: 316-1394

Glacial Drumlin School

Emily McKee, Counselor: 839-8433

Jessica Schiltz, Psychologist: 839-8434

Nichole Carlisle, Social Worker: 839-8432

Cottage Grove School

Kendra Atkinson, Psychologist: 839-8721

Peg Zizzo, Counselor: 839-8715

Winnequah School

Leah Kutschke, Counselor: 316-1984

Becky Swance, Psychologist: 316-1965

Taylor Prairie School/T4K

Kelsy Dieckhoff, Psychologist: 839-2112

Mary Vosters, Psychologist: 839-8721

Lindsey Miller, Psychologist: 839-2116

District

Lynn Hanson, District Nurse: 839-8460

Sarah Hughes, District Nurse: 316-1963

Christa Macomber, Director of Student Services: 316-1908