

## Be Aware

Danger signs of a person who might be suicidal include:

- major changes in their lives
- problems with alcohol and/or other drugs
- break up with a spouse or girlfriend/boyfriend
- recent loss of a friend or family member through death, particularly suicide
- other losses such as parents' divorce, a recent move, loss of self-esteem, change in school, loss of physical capabilities, or loss of status
- depression or other emotional disorder
- feel different from their peers, i.e. gay, lesbian, gifted, learning disability, pregnant
- are currently or have been abused

## Resources

### Treatment and Information Community Mental Health Centers

#### MISSOURI

**Comprehensive Mental Health Services, Inc.**  
10901 Winner Road  
Independence, MO 64052  
816-254-3652  
[www.thecmhs.com](http://www.thecmhs.com)

#### ReDiscover

901 NE Independence  
Lee's Summit, MO 64086  
816-246-8000

#### TMC Behavioral Health

300 W. 19th Terrace  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
816-467-1400  
[www.trumed.org](http://www.trumed.org)

#### Swope Health Services

3801 Blue Parkway  
Kansas City, MO 64130  
816-923-5800  
[www.swopeparkway.org](http://www.swopeparkway.org)

#### Tri County Mental Health Services

3100 NE 83rd Street  
Kansas City, MO 64119  
816-468-0400

#### KANSAS

**Johnson County Mental Health Center**  
6000 Lamar, Suite 130  
Mission, KS 66202  
913-831-2550  
<http://mentalhealth.jocogov.org>

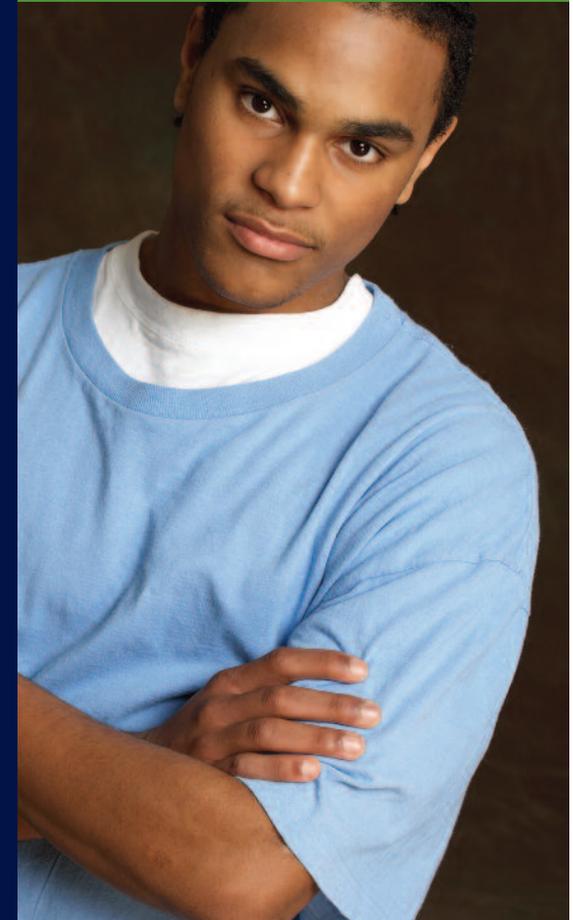
#### Wyandot Centers

3615 Eaton Street  
Kansas City, KS 66103  
913-831-9500  
[www.kumc.edu/wmhc](http://www.kumc.edu/wmhc)

#### Mental Health America of the Heartland

739 Minnesota Ave.  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
913-281-2221  
HelpLine 913-281-1234

# Teen Suicide



# Teen Suicide

## Did you know?

- Suicide ranks as the second leading cause of death for young people (behind accidents).
- Every hour and 40 minutes a person under the age of 25 commits suicide.
- Black males have shown the largest increase in suicide rates among adolescents. Rates are also two to six times higher for gay and lesbian youth.
- Most adolescent suicides occur in the afternoon or early evening and in their own home.
- Four to eight percent of adolescents report an attempt within the prior 12 months; that is, within a typical high school classroom, it is likely that three students (one boy and two girls) have made a suicide attempt in the past year.
- Up to 60 percent of high school students report having thoughts of suicide.
- Approximately 5,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years old commit suicide each year.
- For every teen person who completes suicide it is estimated there are 100-200 who attempt it.
- Eighty percent of teens who killed themselves gave clues of their intentions.

## Do's and Don'ts

Family and friends of a depressed or suicidal person often wonder what they should or shouldn't do to help. Discussing the subject of suicide openly and honestly is one of the most helpful things one can do.

It is important to remember - most suicidal people do not want death, they just want the pain to stop.

Even the most severely depressed person may have mixed feelings about death. Here are some guidelines in talking with a depressed or suicidal person:

### Do's

- Do listen
- Do show you care
- Do ask direct questions
- Do trust your instincts
- Do take all threats seriously
- Do get the person to a trusted adult or professional who can help

### Don'ts

- Don't discount the person's feelings, reactions or thoughts
- Don't hesitate to talk about suicide directly
- Don't try to console someone with empty reassurances
- Don't be judgmental or lecture
- Don't be sworn to secrecy
- Don't assume he/she will get help on their own
- Don't assume he/she is not serious
- Don't be afraid to tell someone who can help

## Warning Signs

Often people with problems send out signals as a cry for help. If someone you know is experiencing several of the warning signs that follow, tell a responsible adult or a mental health professional.

- Sudden or dramatic changes in behavior, personality or appearance
- Sadness, depression and lack of energy
- Apathy and withdrawal from friends
- Truancy, low grades
- Anger, rage, mood swings and irritability
- Lack of interest in school and other activities
- Inability to make decisions or concentrate
- Poor self esteem and feelings of guilt, shame or rejection
- Family problems
- Loss of a loved one or significant relationship
- Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Sleep or eating disturbances
- Ending significant relationships or commitments
- Increased or decreased appetite
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse
- Giving away possessions
- Thoughts, plans or threats of suicide
- Preoccupations with death or themes of death
- Previous attempts at suicide
- Excessive risk taking