

Suicide Prevention

Suicide is a major public health problem, with social, emotional and economic consequences. There are approximately one million suicides worldwide each year, and it is estimated that at least six people are affected by each suicide.

Mood disorders, particularly depression, are a major contributing risk factor in someone considering suicide. Alcohol and drug abuse increase the likelihood of self-injury.

Evidence indicates that adequate prevention and treatment of depression and substance abuse can reduce suicide rates, as well as follow-up contact with those who have attempted suicide.

Statistics

- Every 15.2 minutes one person dies by suicide in the United States.
- Every day one person dies by suicide in Kansas.
- 2nd leading cause of death for the 15 -44 age group.
- 3rd leading cause of death in youth ages 5-14.
- 10th leading cause of death in Kansas and the United States.
- 16% of high school students have thoughts of suicide.
- 157,000 youth 10-24 receive medical care for self-inflicted injuries each year.

Potential Signs

- Observable serious depression:
 - Unrelenting low mood
 - Pessimism
 - Hopelessness
 - Desperation
 - Anxiety, emotional pain, and inner tension
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Sleep problems
- Increased alcohol and/ or drug use
- Recent impulsiveness and taking unnecessary risks
- Threatening suicide or expressing a strong wish to die
- Making a plan:
 - Seeking access to pills, weapons or other means
- Unexpected rage or anger

What to do if you see someone showing signs?

If a family member or friend mentions suicide, take it seriously.

Do not leave him or her alone.

SEEK ASSISTANCE Call **988**.

SEKMHC Crisis Services are available 24/7 at **(866) 973-2241**.

*We are here for you
whenever you need us.*

How you can help

Looking out for friends and loved ones is an important part of preventing suicide. Take comments seriously and respond with compassion. Do not be judgmental or debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad.

Thoughts of suicide are often a symptom of a treatable illness or disorder. Encourage anyone at risk for suicide to reach out for help from a friend, family member, mental health professional, counselor, clergy and other community members.

Best Practices

- Be direct, talk openly and matter-of-factly.
- Ask "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- Listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy.
- Offer hope that help is available.
- Take action. Remove means, such as guns or stockpiled pills.
- Seek support; get help immediately.

Protective Factors

- Effective behavioral health care.
- Connectedness to individuals, family, community, and social institutions.
- Life skills (including problem solving and coping skills, ability to adapt to change).
- Self-esteem and a sense of purpose or meaning in life.
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs that discourage suicide.

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, please call for help.

Headquarters Counseling Center in Lawrence is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Center for Kansas. Reach them free of charge, 24/7 at (800) 273-8255 or (785) 841-2345. You can also call the national Lifeline by dialing 988.



**Southeast Kansas
Mental Health
Center**

**(866) 973-2241
sekmhc.org**

AshleyClinic

**(620) 431-2500
ashleyclinic.com**

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