

National Suicide Prevention Month

September

Child & Family Studies

To All Concerned Citizens,

September is National Suicide Prevention month, an awareness campaign of value and importance. While suicide is statistically rare, it occurs too often. One person lost to suicide is one too many.

Experts believe that most suicidal individuals do not want to die. They just want to end the pain they are experiencing. Experts also know that many suicidal crises tend to be brief. When suicidal behaviors are detected early, lives can be saved.

Your efforts can have a positive impact on suicide prevention. Part of your efforts could include learning the warning signs so that we can reach out to friends, neighbors, co-workers, and relatives who might be struggling. September is Suicide Prevention month and each of us can Take 5 to Save Lives. Take just 5 minutes to check out <http://www.take5tosavelives.org> to learn the warning signs and how to support a friend, co-worker, neighbor, or family member.

Asking someone about suicide does not plant the idea in his/her mind. Asking someone directly if they are thinking about suicide in a caring manner may help a person realize it's okay to struggle and seek help. While there is no single test to see if someone is suicidal, there are warning signs.

By knowing the warning signs, we can be better prepared to intervene when we see a friend, coworker, neighbor, or relative in distress. Don't be afraid to tell your friend that you're concerned; you've been noticing changes — something is not quite right and you're worried.

This open dialogue can help individuals feel relief, know that someone cares, maybe seek professional help, and ultimately we can help save a life. You don't have to be the only lifeline; get help for someone at risk.

Anyone who is considering suicide, or knows someone who may be at risk for suicide, can call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) 24/7, the National Lifeline number, or contact a family physician, psychiatrist, medical emergency room, or community mental health center listed in the yellow pages. Many suicides can be prevented and each of us can help by learning the warning signs and responding when concerned.

Thanks for your time,



Stephen Roggenbaum

Gubernatorial appointment to Florida's Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council
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Know the Signs

We should respond immediately if an individual shows the following warning signs:

- Talking or writing about suicide, death or dying
- Giving direct verbal cues, such as "I wish I were dead" or "I'm going to end it all" (suicidal threats)
- Looking for ways to kill him- or herself: seeking access to pills, weapons or other means

The following warning signs also warrant attention, especially if in the presence of any of the above signs or other known risk factors:

- Hopelessness
- Increasing alcohol or other drug abuse
- Global insomnia
- Isolating him/herself from friends and family
- Dramatic changes in mood
- Neglecting his or her appearance and hygiene
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities
- No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life

If observed, seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or calling 1-800 273-8255 (TALK) for a referral.

*Everyone can help by learning
the warning signs, reaching out,
encouraging help seeking, and being a friend.*

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