

National Suicide Prevention Week

September 9-15, 2012

Child
& Family
Studies

To All Concerned Citizens,

September 9 – 12, 2012 is **National Suicide Prevention Week**, an awareness campaign of extreme importance and urgency. Every 14 minutes in the United States, one person dies by suicide. Florida ranks 12th in the nation in its rate of suicide deaths.

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.

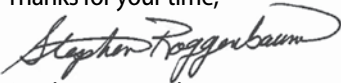
On September 10, 2012 (World Suicide Prevention Day), the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention and the Office of the Surgeon General will release a new **National Strategy for Suicide Prevention**. The U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Regina Benjamin and Jerry Reed, the Director of the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, co-lead a task force to revise the National Strategy, which charts a path forward for suicide prevention using the best and most current knowledge in the field.

State and local prevention efforts are having a positive impact on suicide prevention, and part of those efforts are to ensure everyone knows the warning signs so that we can all reach out to friends, neighbors, co-workers, and relatives who might be struggling.

Asking someone about suicide does not plant the idea. Asking someone directly if they are thinking about suicide in a caring manner may help a person realize it's okay to be struggling 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, co-worker, 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. Don't keep it a secret; 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), 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 we can help by being vigilant about the warning signs.

Thanks for your time,



Stephen Roggenbaum

Gubernatorial appointment to Florida's Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council
CFS/FMHI/CBCS/USF • 813-974-6149 • roggenna@usf.edu

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.



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