

National Suicide Prevention Week

Suicide remains shrouded in myth and shame. However, most suicides are caused by undiagnosed and untreated emotional disorders. The first week of September is deemed National Suicide Prevention Week across the nation. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States with one suicide occurring on the average of every 12.5 minutes. Suicide is second leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds. The elderly makeup 12.4% of the population but comprise 16% of all suicides. Approximately 42,800 people die each year from suicide and the numbers are increasing.

Suicide Prevention Week serves not only as a way to educate others but also a way to help others speak up and let a trusted adult know that he or she is suicidal. It is time to shred the shroud of myth and shame and bring public awareness in regards to suicide and what to do if you or someone you know is suicidal.

Suicide does not discriminate based on race, gender, or age. Warning signs can be expressed in many different ways. The signs of emotional distress include: felling alone, useless, or a burden on others; showing irritability and hostility that is out of character; showing impulsive behaviors possible risky and/or substance misuse; insomnia posts; withdrawal from everyday activities; use of negative emoticons; and/or use of concerning hashtags. Signs of contemplating suicide may include: suicidal threats; dramatic changes in behavior or mood; lack of interest in most things; feelings of excessive guilt, hopelessness, and depression; rage or seeking revenge; saying goodbye and/or giving away personal possessions; making a plan to end one's life; and glorifying or glamorizing death.

People facing depression and suicidal thoughts may find asking for help to be embarrassing and frightening. Encourage them to speak up and reach out. Tell them that you may not think that the world needs you, but it does. You are unique. No one has ever been like you before nor will anyone be like you after. No one else can play your part. Take them to a trusted adult that can connect them with professionals that can help them through his or her difficult time. Give him or her the hotline number at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or them that they can text the crisis line by texting Start to 741-741.

