

Warning Signs of Suicide/Homicide and Resources for Caregivers

Risk factors for suicide refer to personal or environmental characteristics that are associated with suicide. Suicide risk is highest when a student has more than one risk factor at the same time. Some risk factors cannot be changed—such as a previous suicide attempt—but they can be used to help identify someone who may be vulnerable to suicide.

The most frequently reported risk factors for suicide are:

- Feeling down in a way that impacts daily life
- Severe mood swings
- Alcohol and drug use
- Unusual thoughts and behavior about the reality of life
- Personality traits that create a pattern of intense, unstable relationships or trouble with the law
- Impulsivity and aggression
- Previous suicide attempt
- Family history of a suicide attempt
- Medical condition or pain

Risk factors that correlate with homicidal behaviors include:

- Gang membership
- Possession of or access to a weapon.
- Recent violence or ideas, plans, intent, or attempts to harm others
- Alcohol and drug use
- Unusual thoughts and behavior about the reality of life
- Menacing thoughts of assault, control and revenge
- Personality traits that create a pattern of intense, unstable relationships or trouble with the law
- Impulsivity and aggression
- History of physical or sexual abuse
- History of being violent
- Brutal parent
- Delinquent behavior
- Pacing, threatening, angry, agitated, distrustful
- View of others as malevolent, dangerous, or the cause of one's problems

The following protective factors help to decrease a person's risk of suicide or homicide, especially when some of the above risk factors are present.

- **Effective Mental Health Care**
When there is a suspected mental health or substance abuse disorder, help connect students/parents with mental health support.
- **Positive Connections to Family, Peers, School, Community**
Make intentional bids to connect with students at risk. Connect at risk students with peer mentors and community-based programs.
- **Skills and the Ability to Solve Problems and Resolve Conflicts**
At risk students may feel powerless and helpless and will benefit from a caring adult who talks through problems and exploring solutions with them.
- **Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide or harm to others and support instincts for self-preservation and the preservation of human life.**

Emergency Resources

Assistance can be obtained from a hospital emergency room or by dialing **911**.

**New Hanover Regional Medical Center	(910) 667-7000. For Spanish (910) 667-5369
Coastal Horizons Center Crisis Hotline	(910) 392-6936
National Hotline	1-800-784-2433 OR 1-800-SUICIDE
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-8255 (Press 2 for Spanish)
Nacional de Prevención del Suicidio	1-888-628-9454
Trillium 24 Hour Crisis Care (Atencion a Crisis)	1-877-685-2415
*Integrated Family Services Mobile Crisis	1-866-437-1821
Strategic Behavioral Services	(910) 371-2500
*W.H.A.T. Clinic	(910) 790-9949

*Please note that grant-/agency-funded resources do not require a fee. If you choose to utilize a personal therapist, or other source, you will be responsible for the incurred fees.

**Please note that NHRMC Emergency Department is a valuable resource for families in crisis however, they will not sign forms releasing students to return to school. Students will have to be seen by a licensed mental health professional to get forms signed when/if appropriate.