

## **FAMILIES AND FRIENDS:**

### **Prevention Education for students and teachers on Suicide**

#### **Prevention and Depression**

In compliance with the KY state requirements for education, secondary schools including the Alternative Programs will be offering the annual student educational program on Suicide Prevention. The teachers have completed their own annual training on Suicide Prevention.

The student program helps teachers prepare to teach students about dealing with emotional issues and recognizing when to seek help.

Every year, the teachers will present a lesson plan using a power point slide show on Suicide Prevention. In addition, the class will use a discussion format to inform and explain the issues regarding suicide preventions. All students will receive important contact information if ever needed in the future for themselves or a friend of theirs.

**Topics include:** How can teachers and students help prevent youth suicide? What puts teens at risk for suicide? What are the suicide warning signs? Who can students go to for assistance in their school setting? How can teacher identify at-risk students?

For all enrolled secondary students, the presentations on Suicide Prevention will occur within the first month of the school year. Ask you student to share the information with you. Talk about their feelings and what they learned. Share concerns and, if needed, get help. If we work together we achieve so much more.

#### **Parent Information Enclosures:**

- Risk Factors for possible suicide
- Warning Signs for possible suicide
- Strengthening Protective Factors
- Mental Health Referral sources/Hotlines/Apps

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION: BE AN INFORMED PARENT**

### **KNOW THE RISK FACTORS FOR POSSIBLE SUICIDE**

If your son or daughter has:

- **Psychiatric Disorders;** At least 90% of people who kill themselves have diagnosable and treatable psychiatric illnesses such as Major Depression, Schizophrenia, Bipolar depression, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or some other Anxiety Disorder, Personality Disorder especially borderline or antisocial, Bulimia or Anorexia Nervosa, or alcohol or drug abuse combined with Depression.
- **Past history of attempted suicide;** about 20-50% of people who kill themselves had previously attempted suicide. The more serious suicide attempts = much higher risk of actually taking their lives.
- **Genetic Predisposition;** Family history of suicide, suicide attempts or other psychiatric disorders.
- **Neurotransmitters;** Low concentrations of the serotonin levels are clearly related to an increased incidence of attempted and completed suicide in people with psychiatric disorders.
- **Impulsivity;** impulsive individuals are more apt to succumb to suicidal impulses.
- **Demographic Info;** Sex: males are 3-5 times more likely to die from suicide than females. Age: elderly Caucasian males have the highest suicide rates.
- **Additional Contributing Factors;** History or current substance abuse (drugs or alcohol), relationship problems, health problems, financial problems or job related problems (if applicable).

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION: BE AN INFORMED PARENT**

### **KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE**

Watch for these warning signs of suicide in your son or daughter:

- **Observable signs of serious depression**
  - Low Moods that won't stop (2 weeks or more)
  - Pessimism (negative all the time)
  - Hopelessness (loss of hope)
  - Desperation (to make a change)
  - Anxiety, psychic pain and inner tension and stress
  - Withdrawal (from people, school, activities)
  - Sleep problems (too much sleeping or not sleeping)
  
- **Increased use of alcohol and/or drug use**
  
- **Recent impulsiveness and taking unnecessary risks**
  
- **Threatening suicide or expressing a strong wish to die**
  
- **Making a plan**
  - Giving away prized possessions
  - Sudden or Impulsive purchase of a firearm
  - Obtaining other means of killing oneself such as poisons or medications.
  
- **Unexpected rage or anger**

## Information provided by Covington Independent Public Schools

Strengthening Protective Factors can help reduce the probability of Suicide and can help buffer the effects of risk factors and can support coping and “resiliency” (the sense of hope even when faced with problems).

- **Individual characteristics as Protective Factors:**
  - Positive mood... Psychological and emotional well-being
  - Managing one's emotions... an adaptable temperament
  - Positive self-esteem/self-view
  - Internal feeling of controlling one's own life
  - Strong problem-solving skills
  - Coping skills; resolving conflicts, nonviolent methods of handling arguments
  - Frequent and sweat-producing activities or participating in sports
  - Spiritual faith or regular church attendance
  
- **Family and other support as Protective Factors:**
  - Connected to family & closeness to or strong relationship with parent(s)
  - Close friends, other family members, a caring adult, general social support
  - Parents who disapprove of violence (beating someone up) or drinking alcohol
  - Family support for school
  
- **School as Protective Factors:**
  - Positive school experiences/part of a close school community/feeling connected to school
  - Safe environment at school
  - A respect for the cultures of all students
  - Adequate or better academic achievement
  
- **Mental Health and Healthcare Providers as Protective Factors:**
  - Access t effective care for mental, physical and substance abuse disorders
  - Easy access to care and support through ongoing medical health relationships
  
- **“Access to Means” (often used in attempting suicide) as Protective Factors:**
  - Restricted access to firearms; guns locked & unloaded; ammunition stored & locked
  - Restricted access to medications (over-the-counter/prescription) and alcohol
  - Safety barriers for bridges, buildings and other jumping sites

## **National Mental Health Resources for Teens and Families**

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** call 988
  - Ayuda en español
- **Youth America Hotline**
  - 877-968-8491
  - Or text TEEN2TEEN to 839-863
  - [www.oregonlifeline.org](http://www.oregonlifeline.org)
- **Crisis Textline**
  - text HOME to 741741
  - Or online at [www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org)

For special concerns for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth:

- **The Trevor Project Crisis Intervention**
  - 866-488-7386
  - Text START to 678-678
  - Or online at [www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help](http://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help)
- **LGBT National Hotline**
  - 888-843-7743
  - Monday-Friday from 4pm-midnight; Saturday from 12pm-5pm
- **Youth Talkine**
  - 800-246-7743
  - Monday-Friday from 4om-midnight; Saturday from 12pm-5pm

## **Direct Local Health Resources for Teens and Families**

- **NorthKey Community Care** for 24 hour crisis consultation
  - 859-331-3292
  - [www.northkey.org](http://www.northkey.org)
  
- **Sun Behavioral Health** for 24 hour crisis consultation in partnership with St. Elizabeth Hospitals
  - 859-340-8995
  - [www.sunkentucky.com](http://www.sunkentucky.com)
  
- **St. Elizabeth Hospitals**
  - KY: 859-415-9280
  - Covington: 859-655-8800
  - Edgewood: 859-301-2000
  - 24 Hour Crisis Consultation: 859-415-9280
  - [www.stelizabeth.com](http://www.stelizabeth.com)
  
- **Cincinnati Children's Hospital**
  - 513-636-4200
  
- **Ion Center for Violence Prevention**
  - 859-491-3335
  
- **Mental Health America of Northern Kentucky**
  - 859-431-1077
  - [www.mhanky.org](http://www.mhanky.org)
  
- **GLSESN Greater Cincinnati Youth Group** (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network)
  - 866-934-9119
  - Email [info@glscincinnati.org](mailto:info@glscincinnati.org)