

## Suicide: An American Crisis

### **Warning Signs**

*Suicidal thoughts*

*Substance abuse*

*Loss of purpose*

*Anxiety*

*Feeling trapped*

*Loss of hope*

*Withdrawal*

*Anger*

*Recklessness*

*Mood changes*

*Many injuries happen in **predictable, preventable** ways.*

### **Protective Factors**

*Treatment for addiction, depression, or mental health problems.*

*No access to weapons*

*Support for seeking help*

*Close ties to family and friends*

*Medical care*

*Problem solving skills*

*Belief in self-preservation*

- Suicide is the most common type of violent death in the U.S. and Oklahoma. More than 32,000 people in the U.S. and 500 people in Oklahoma kill themselves each year, more than double that of homicides.

### **Warning Signs/Red Flags for Suicidal Behavior**

- Threatened or communicated wanting to hurt or kill one's self
- Looking for ways to kill one's self by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide, when these actions are out of the ordinary
- Excessive or increased substance (alcohol or drug) use
- No reason for living; no sense of purpose of life
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Feeling like there's no way out
- Hopelessness
- Withdrawal from friends, family and society
- Rage, uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Dramatic mood changes

### ***What do I do if I know someone is thinking/talking about suicide?***

### **Encourage Them To Talk To Someone – They Are Not Alone. Contact:**

- A community mental health agency
- A school counselor or psychologist
- A suicide prevention/crisis intervention center
- A parent or religious/spiritual leader
- A private therapist
- A family physician
- Call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Call 211

### **Prevention**

- Educating physicians in recognizing and treating depression
- Restricting access to lethal means
- Fostering religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support self-preservation
- Openly discussing warning signs and symptoms of depression in schools, churches, and families (when appropriate)
- School environments that
  - Build problem-solving skills
  - Create the feeling of safety at school
  - Identify and provide counseling for students in crisis
  - Provide opportunities for academic achievement
- Family and school connectedness that fosters consistent values and individual growth

### **Internet Resources**

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline ([www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org))
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (<http://www.afsp.org>)
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center ([www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org))
- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services ([http://ok.gov/odmhas/Prevention\\_/Prevention\\_Initiatives/Youth\\_Suicide\\_Prevention\\_and\\_Early\\_Intervention\\_Initiative/](http://ok.gov/odmhas/Prevention_/Prevention_Initiatives/Youth_Suicide_Prevention_and_Early_Intervention_Initiative/))

***Live Injury-Free!***