

Warning Signs

Suicidal thoughts

Substance abuse

Loss of purpose

Anxiety

Feeling trapped

Loss of hope

Withdrawal

Anger

Recklessness

Mood changes

Protective Factors

No access to weapons

Close ties to family and friends

Problem solving skills

Support for seeking help

Treatment for addiction, depression, or mental health problems

Belief in self-preservation

Medical care

Youth Suicide Is Preventable!

- Oklahoma averages 71 youth suicides per year.
- According to the Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS 2011):
 - 14% of youth seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months before the survey.
 - 6% actually attempted suicide one or more times during the prior 12 months.
 - 1% made an attempt that required medical treatment.
- The suicide rate among Native American youth (14.4 deaths per 100,000) was 66% higher than the rate among whites and 2.8 times higher than the rate among blacks.
- Depression (41%), intimate partner problems (38%), and a crisis in the two weeks prior to the incident (30%) were leading circumstances surrounding youth suicides.
- Firearms were the leading method of suicides (50%), followed by hanging and strangulation (33%) and drug/poisoning (12%).

Prevention

- Expand suicide prevention efforts among young adults, and ensure that suicide prevention programs are linked with professional mental health resources in the community.
- Parents and teachers should be taught to recognize the warning signs for suicide and encouraged to restrict teenagers' access to lethal means.
- Emphasize to physicians and other health providers the importance of screening families with children regarding access to firearms, prescription drugs, or other lethal methods.
- Develop and implement suicide prevention/intervention/post-intervention training for everyone who has access to students – parents, teachers, administrative staff, bus drivers, maintenance crews, cafeteria staff, substitute teachers, school volunteers, etc.
- Reduce school bullying. While bullying doesn't cause suicide, it can increase a person's risk.
 - **Start prevention early.** Intervening in bullying among younger children can have significant benefits as children enter the developmental stage when suicide risk begins to rise.
 - **Keep up with technology.** Bullying often takes place in areas hidden from adult supervision.
 - **Use a comprehensive approach.** Reducing the risk of school bullying and the risk of suicide requires intervention that focuses on sound mental health access for youth.
 - **Pay attention** to the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth and youth who do not conform to the gender expectation of their specific community norm.

Internet Resources

- www.heartlineoklahoma.org
- www.suicidology.org
- Call: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or 211
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (<http://www.afsp.org>)

Live Injury-Free!