

## Suicide Prevention

**While suicidal thoughts may occur for many people, attempting or completing a suicide is far less frequent. Suicide is not inevitable for anyone!**

**You can play a role in preventing suicide. By starting the conversation, knowing the risk factors, and connecting those in need to the appropriate resources, you can prevent suicides and help save lives. You can be the agent of change to make your family, friends, and communities healthier, happier, and safer.**

### Risk Factors . . .

- *Mental health concerns, particularly severe anxiety and depression, schizophrenia, eating disorders, and addiction*
- *Hopelessness*
- *Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies*
- *History of trauma or abuse*
- *Major physical illnesses*
- *Previous suicide attempt(s)*
- *Family history of suicide*
- *Significant academic difficulties*
- *Loss of relationship(s)*
- *Access to lethal means*
- *Lack of social support and sense of isolation*
- *Stigma associated with asking for help*
- *Exposure to others who have died by suicide (in real life or via the media and Internet)*

### Warning Signs . . .

- *Talking about wanting to die or to kill themselves*
- *Looking for a way to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun*
- *Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live*
- *Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain*
- *Talking about being a burden to others*
- *Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs*
- *Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly*
- *Sleeping too little or too much*
- *Withdrawing or isolating themselves*
- *Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge*
- *Extreme mood swings*

## Ways to Provide Support

**Everyone has the ability to make a difference. Here are some ways to help reduce the risk of suicide.**

## What You Can Do . . .

<b>Listen and Offer Support</b>	<i>Here are some ways to be an active listener</i> <a href="https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/active-listening.html">https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/active-listening.html</a>
<b>Assist the individual in exploring healthy ways to cope</b>	<a href="http://www.mhww.org/strategies.html">http://www.mhww.org/strategies.html</a>
<b>Ask direct questions</b>	<i>For example, ask if they are considering suicide and if they have a plan.</i>
<b>Communicate</b>	<i>Communicate your concern for their wellbeing.</i>
<b>Recommend the individual seek support from a mental health provider</b>	<i>Union College offers a 24/7 on-call system for those in need of crisis support after hours. Contact Campus Safety or your Residence Director to speak to counseling support.</i>
<b>Recommend the individual call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</b>	1-800-273-8255
<b>Call Campus Safety or 911 if you believe the risk of harm is immediate</b>	(518) 388-6911

## What Not To Do . . .

- *Do not minimize their thoughts or feelings*
- *Do not promise secrecy*
- *Do not encourage substance use*
- *Do not leave them alone, especially if you are concerned about their immediate safety*

## Resources

- *Union College Eppler Wolff Center for Psychological Services: 518-388-6161*
- *Campus Safety: 518-388-6911*
- *911*
- *Ellis Hospital Emergency Room :518-243-4121*
- *National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255*  
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
- *Suicide Prevention Resource Center*  
<https://www.sprc.org/>

**Need further tips on how to support a student with thoughts of suicide?  
CONTACT EPLER-WOLFF COUNSELING CENTER: 518-388-6161**

3/22/18 \*Some content summarized from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Website.