

Suicide Prevention Basics

Learn to recognize and respond to the warning signs of suicide.

- **Talking About Dying** -- any mention of dying, disappearing, jumping, shooting oneself, or other types of self harm.
- **Recent Loss** -- through death, divorce, separation, broken relationship, loss of job, money, status, self-confidence, self-esteem, loss of religious faith, loss of interest in friends, sex, hobbies, activities previously enjoyed
- **Change in Personality** -- sad, withdrawn, irritable, anxious, tired, indecisive, apathetic
- **Change in Behavior** -- can't concentrate on school, work, routine tasks
- **Change in Sleep Patterns** -- insomnia, often with early waking or oversleeping, nightmares
- **Change in Eating Habits** -- loss of appetite and weight, or overeating
- **Diminished Sexual Interest** -- impotence, menstrual abnormalities (often missed periods)
- **Fear of losing control** -- going crazy, harming self or others
- **Low self esteem** -- feeling worthless, shame, overwhelming guilt, self-hatred, "everyone would be better off without me"
- **No hope for the future** -- believing things will never get better; that nothing will ever change

Other things to watch for- Suicidal impulses, statements, plans; giving away favorite things; previous suicide attempts, substance abuse, making out wills, arranging for the care of pets, extravagant spending, agitation, hyperactivity, restlessness or lethargy.

REMEMBER: The risk of suicide may be greatest as the depression lifts.

Contact an SPRC Prevention Specialist. SPRC can connect you with people, organizations, and resources. Contact us by email at info@sprc.org or by telephone at 877-GET-SPRC **Things to watch for when assessing potential risk...**

Plan -- Do they have one?

Lethality -- Is it lethal? Can they die?

Availability -- Do they have the means to carry it out?

Illness -- Do they have a mental or physical illness?

Depression -- Chronic or specific incident(s)?

Previous attempts -- How many? How recent?

Alone -- Are they alone? Do they have a support system? Partner? Are they alone
right now?

Loss -- Have they suffered a loss? Death, job, relationship, self-esteem?

Substance Abuse (or use) -- Drugs, alcohol, medicine? Current, chronic?