

Suicide: Facts and Warning Signs

Did you know?

- 755 Wisconsinites died by suicide in 2014, the most recent year we have data for. That is 4.5 times the number who died as a result of homicide in Wisconsin that year.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 10-34.
- For every suicide, there are 25 attempts.
- In 2013, among Wisconsin's high school students, 1 out of 7 seriously considered attempting suicide.
- Firearms account for almost 50% of all suicides.
- The highest rates of suicide tend to be clustered in the northern and western regions of the state.
- Men complete suicide four times more often than women; however, at least twice as many women attempt suicide.

Why do people commit suicide?

A suicide attempt is a clear indication that something is gravely wrong in a person's life. Most people who commit suicide have an underlying mental or emotional disorder. The most common cause of suicide is untreated depression. It has been reported that 90% of all suicides occur at the peak of a depressive episode. Depressive illnesses can distort thinking, so people can't reason clearly or rationally. They may not know they have a treatable illness or they may think they can't be helped.

Risk Factors and Warning Signs

- Talking about suicide, death, and/or no reason to live
- Expressions of hopelessness, worthlessness and helplessness
- Previous suicide attempts
- Abrupt personality changes
- Excessive risk-taking behavior
- Depression
- Giving away prized possessions or setting one's affairs in order
- Lack of interest in the future
- Preoccupation with death
- Withdrawal from family, friends or social supports

Know What to Do

- Know the warning signs of depression and suicide.
- Always take thoughts or plans of suicide seriously.



Phone: (414) 276-3122 or (866) 948-6483

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- Ask the person if they are thinking about suicide. Asking will not plant the idea in someone's head.
- Ask the person if they have a suicide plan, a weapon or some type of dangerous object.
- If the person is in immediate danger, they must see a doctor or psychiatrist immediately. Call 911 or take the person to the nearest hospital emergency room.
- Never keep a person's plan for suicide a secret.
- Do not minimize the person's problems. Be non-judgmental. Show interest, support and undivided attention. He or she is not just seeking attention.
- If the person is not in immediate danger, show empathy and do your best to help him or her find a doctor or a mental health professional.

If you or someone you know is contemplating suicide, call the **Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)**. Your call will be routed to the crisis center nearest to you, or **dial 9-1-1**.

Or, contact the HOPELINE, Wisconsin's 24/7 Emotional Support Text Line. Text **"HOPELINE"** to **741741**.

