

Normal Teen Angst or Cause for Concern?

Provided By SPEA

Adolescents...whether you are one, love one, or work with one, there is bound to be turmoil. Undulating adolescent behavior has forever confounded teens, their parents and other caring adults in their lives.

How do we know what is normal teenage angst? How do we recognize behaviors that should raise giant red flags? For most teens, the transition from child to adult is filled with exciting, rocky, and awkward years; and they survive. For others, however, this is a time of great suffering and despair; a time when too many teenagers seriously consider suicide.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health reports that 20% of Ohio high school students have considered suicide, 14% have made a suicide plan and

8% have attempted suicide. It is staggering to think that in the last 12 months, one in five Ohio teenagers have seriously considered suicide.

Shocking statistics and the questions you should ask are these: Why are these numbers so high; would I know if my child, best friend, relative, or neighborhood babysitter was contemplating suicide; what can I do to prevent this from happening; and who do I go to for help?

"Ninety percent of people who take their lives suffered from depression or another diagnosable and treatable psychiatric disorder," says Pat Lyden, executive director of Suicide Prevention Education Alliance (SPEA) of Northeast Ohio headquartered in Beachwood. "When you consider that 14% of children

Danger Signals for Suicide:

- Previous suicide attempt
- Talking about death or suicide
- Planning for suicide
- Depression
- Sudden happiness/increased energy after a severe depression
- Unusual visiting or calling friends/loved ones
- Making arrangements/getting affairs in order
- Giving away prized possessions

What You Can Do to Help

- Ask "Are you having thoughts of suicide?"
- Listen with concern and without passing judgment
- Assess the danger. Does the person have a plan?
- Does the person have access to the means?
- Has he/she attempted suicide before?
- Stay calm
- Tell others and GET HELP from a mental health professional

Visit HelpPreventSuicide.org for more information or call 216.464.3471

12-17 experienced at least one episode of a major depressive disorder in the last year, then we clearly have a critical issue to address. Fortunately, we know that the most effective way to prevent suicide is for people to learn the warning signs of someone at risk, take those signs seriously, and respond appropriately."

While some suicides occur without any outward warning, most do not; teaching students, parents and others in contact with teens is imperative to preventing suicide. Lyden, whose organization has delivered free, evidence-based suicide prevention programming to over 55,000 students in 77 schools across Northeast Ohio, cites numerous examples of teens who have come forward to SPEA's instructors and said, "I'm

having thoughts of suicide," and "You are describing me...I have these symptoms of depression." Expert instructors who connect with students in a special way deliver SPEA's program, Recognizing Adolescent Depression and Suicide Prevention. "Because our instructors are not part of the school faculty, teens feel safe admitting that they need help. We can point to sound, scientific proof that when we educate students, parents, and other concerned community members on recognizing adolescent depression and bipolar disorder," emphasizes Lyden, "we can change behavior and cause teens to seek treatment from a mental health professional before they put into play an act that will have devastating effects on everyone in their lives, forever."

SUICIDE PREVENTION EDUCATION ALLIANCE (SPEA)

6TH ANNUAL INTO THE LIGHT™ WALK

SUNDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 27, 2009

At The Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

6:00-8:30 PM - (Rain or Shine)

Are you concerned about depression and suicide prevention?

This is **YOUR** Walk.

Register now at: www.helppreventsuicide.org

Or Call: 216.464.3471

TOGETHER WE CAN SAVE LIVES!



SPEA

Suicide Prevention Education Alliance

of Northeast Ohio