

NEWS



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Suicide Prevention Week September 7-13, 2008

On the day you read this article there will be ninety individuals who lose their life to suicide in the United States. This will include people of both genders, all ages, and all races. According to the Center for Disease Control, suicide was the 11th leading cause of death in the U.S. during 2005 and even higher than homicide which was 15th. In Ohio, there are two suicides for every homicide.

Suicide happens in all communities. In Warren and Clinton Counties, 21 people died by suicide in 2007. These individuals represent husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, siblings, neighbors, and co-workers. People we may have contact with every day.

But these statistics only tell one part of the story; there are also countless suicide attempts. Nationally, it is estimated there are as many as 25 attempts for every death by suicide. For young people, ages 15-24, that number is even higher, with 100-200 attempts for every death by suicide. According to the Centers for Disease Control in 2005, 16.9% of students in grades 9-12, reported considering suicide in the previous 12 months, with 8.4% reporting to have made at least one suicide attempt.

During 2003-2007, several Warren and Clinton County schools conducted the Search Institute Survey which queried youth grades 6-12 regarding various issues they face. On this survey, 15% reported that they had attempted suicide one or more times. This statistic is alarmingly almost twice that reported nationally. This represents 450 children and adolescents in our community who believed suicide was a way to stop their despair.

Individuals at risk can be guided to professionals who can assist with crisis intervention, counseling, and psychiatric care. These services can be particularly effective as depression or other mental health issues are very frequently present, however may not be professionally diagnosed. Additionally, those who abuse drugs or alcohol tend to be at a higher risk for suicidal behavior. Local help is available on a free or sliding fee basis.

The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Warren and Clinton County has compiled this data to further determine local needs. Their goals are to enhance awareness, increase early

intervention and ultimately decrease the incidence of deaths by suicide and suicide attempts locally. Literature and speakers are available to employers, community groups, schools, churches and any other interested groups. For more information about the Suicide Prevention Coalition, call Mental Health Recovery Services of Warren and Clinton Counties at 513-695-1695 or 937-783-4993, ext. 1695.

Common Warning Signs

- Giving away favorite possessions
- A marked or noticeable change in an individual's behavior
- Previous suicide attempts & statements revealing a desire to die
- Depression (crying, insomnia, inability to think or function, excessive sleep or appetite loss)
- Inappropriate "good-byes"
- Verbal behavior that is ambiguous or indirect: "I'm going away on a real long trip. You won't have to worry about me anymore. I want to go to sleep and never wake up."
- Purchase of a gun or pills
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Sudden happiness after long depression
- Obsession about death and talk about suicide
- Decline in performance of work, school, or other activities
- Deteriorating physical appearance, or reckless actions

What To Do

- Take suicide threats seriously, be direct, open and honest in communications.
- Listen, allow the individual to express their feelings and express your concerns in a non-judgmental way.
- Say things like, "I'm here for you. Let's talk. I'm here to help."
- Ask, "Are you having suicidal thoughts?" A detailed plan indicates greater risk.
- Take action sooner rather than later.
- Get the individual who is at risk connected with professional help.
- Dispose of pills, drugs and guns.
- Don't worry about being disloyal to the individual; contact a reliable family member or close friend of the person.

Where to Get Help

24 Hour Toll-Free Crisis Hotline for Warren & Clinton Counties

1-877-695-6333

OR 1-877-695-NEED

Mental Health & Recovery Centers of Warren County

1-800-932-3366

Mental Health & Recovery Center of Clinton County

1-937-383-4441

Survivors After Suicide Support Group—
Warren County, Contact Bobbi

1-513-652-1017

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