



**MISSION STATEMENT:** To ensure that every Colorado student, parent, teacher and community member has access to a safe and anonymous way to report any concerns to their safety or the safety of others, with a focus on early intervention and prevention through awareness and education.

**Silence Doesn't STOP Suicide**

The topic of taking one's own life often causes discomfort. We are frequently prone to ignore the difficult conversations that need to take place regarding suicide and yet one of the most certain ways to prevent such a tragedy from taking place is to have open, honest discussions. In other words: **TALK ABOUT IT.**

It is vital that we all educate ourselves regarding the warning signs of suicide, taking the initiative to approach those who may be at-risk and speaking with them honestly.

**WHY?** Suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death among Colorado youth, ages 10 to 24. Often young people with suicidal ideation report they just want to know someone CARES.

In the U.S., 20% of high school students report having seriously considered suicide during the previous 12 months.

**DID YOU KNOW?** 4 out of 5 teens who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs.

**Risk Factors May Include:**

- Problems with school or the law
- Breakup of a romance
- A stressful family life. (having parents who are depressed or are substance abusers, or a family history of suicide)
- Loss of security...fear of authority, peers, group or gang members
- Stress due to new situations, college or relocation to a new community
- Failing in school or failing to pass an important test
- A serious illness or injury to oneself
- Seriously injuring another person or causing another person's death (example: automobile accident)
- Major loss...of a loved one, a home, divorce in the family, a trauma, a relationship
- Unexpected Pregnancy



You can help keep Colorado students safe by calling 1-877-542-7233 (SAFE).

Increasing our knowledge and awareness of the warning signs of suicide can better enable us to identify when a friend or loved one is at risk.

**Suicide Warning Signs May Include:**

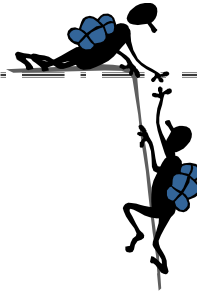
- ◆ Noticeable change in behavior, personality
- ◆ Signs of depression (sleeping problems, change in appetite, feelings of hopelessness, etc.)
- ◆ Alcohol or drug abuse
- ◆ Obsession with death, talk about dying
- ◆ Decline in performance or participation in activities
- ◆ Reckless behavior
- ◆ Recent loss
- ◆ Giving away possessions
- ◆ Fear of losing control
- ◆ Sudden happiness after a prolonged depression
- ◆ Withdrawal from friends or family
- ◆ Previous suicide attempts
- ◆ Statements about hopelessness, worthlessness, helplessness
- ◆ Inability to concentrate or trouble remembering
- ◆ Chronic pain or frequent complaints of physical symptoms



## KNOW SOMEONE AT RISK? HOW YOU CAN HELP:

If someone you know is at risk for taking his/her own life, what do you do? Here are a few practical tips from the CO State Office of Suicide Prevention:

- Listen and express concern in a non-judgmental way
- Take action! Get them connected with professional help
- Ask questions openly (e.g., "Do you have a plan?" "Will you talk with someone who can help?")
- Show that you care
- Take every suicide threat seriously



### What About Cutting?

"Cutting" is a type of self-injury that typically begins in the early teen years, as a form of release from emotional pain. Typically, sharp objects are used to leave marks or scars to the arms, wrists, legs or abdomen.

Risks are: infection, addiction, loss of blood and loss of life. Cutting can be overwhelmingly addictive and peer pressure is often a factor. Young people engaged in cutting need professional help in order to find healthy ways of dealing with their emotional pain. Please remember that simply ignoring the behavior or saying "stop" will not solve the issue.

For helpful information and resources:  
<http://www.thechildrenshospital.org/wellness/info/teens/20974.aspx>

### Suicide Prevention Resources:

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)

CO State Office of Suicide Prevention:  
[www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/suicide/index.html](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/suicide/index.html)

The Second Wind Fund:  
[www.thesecondwindfund.org](http://www.thesecondwindfund.org)

## Safe2Tell is Making a Difference!

From September 2004 to December 2008, over 4,100 calls have been received resulting in 1,326 Tip Reports with 89% follow-up interventions from 125 Colorado cities and 49 counties.

To date, Safe2Tell efforts have resulted in **119 Suicide Preventions** amongst youth throughout the state of Colorado.

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