

Child Mental Health & Youth Suicide

All too often, our community is faced with the tragic loss of a young person due to suicide.



Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teenagers and attempts greatly outnumber completions with 100 to 200 attempts for each death. One in 15 high school students attempt suicide each year, and nearly 2.5 percent of high school students report having made a suicide attempt that required medical attention.

Cincinnati Children's has seen an increase in families seeking support for children expressing signs/symptoms of depression or other mental disorders.

- From 2011 to 2015, mental health admissions at Cincinnati Children's rose 70 percent.
- 90 percent of youth who make a suicide attempt suffer from depression or another mental disorder.

Cincinnati Children's **Surviving the Teens** suicide prevention program provides education to teens, parents and teachers to recognize the stressors, warning signs, and behaviors that may signal depression and suicide risk in teens – and ways to help.

Grieving Centers: Families who have experienced a loss of a loved one to suicide can contact:

- **MindPeace** – Coordinates mental health services in CPS schools through local mental health providers. Call (513) 803-0844
- **Fernside – A Center for Grieving Children** which provides peer support for grieving families – children, teens and adults including phone consultation services. Call 513-246-9140.
- **Companions on a Journey**, which provides resources and support for families and a grief processing group that specializes in postvention work in schools post suicide. Call 513-870-9108.

Cincinnati Children's along with a host of other community-based organizations is also a part of the **Greater Cincinnati Suicide Education, Research and Advocacy (SERA) Collaborative** which provides resources to help the community respond and cope with the tragic loss of a young person to suicide.

If you notice that your teen is exhibiting warning signs, here are some things you can do.

- Please take them to see their doctor or call a crisis line volunteer at 1-800-273-TALK. If your child refuses help, saying things like, "I love you and don't want to lose you." or "Please do this for me," or "A professional will be able to help us work this out.," may persuade them to seek help with you.
- Utilize community resources, such as local Ohio County Crisis Numbers:
 - o Hamilton County: (513) 281-CARE (2273)
 - o Clermont County: (513) 528-SAVE (7283)
 - o Butler County: 1-844-4CRISIS
 - o Hamilton/West Chester: 513-894-7002
 - o Middletown: 513-424-5498
 - o Oxford/Hamilton: 513-523-4146
- If you believe your child is in immediate danger or is feeling he may hurt himself, then take him to an Emergency room. You can also call 911 if you're unable to be with him.
- You can also call Cincinnati Children's Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC) for a referral at 513-636-4124. The intake person can help direct you to various mental health services, depending upon the situation.

For additional information and resources on suicide prevention go to

<http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/service/s/surviving-teens/default/>

Warning Signs of Suicide: It is important to recognize the warning signs of suicide. Studies suggest that 80 percent of people who die from suicide give warning signs. The Surviving the Teens / Suicide Prevention Program provides a list of warning signs for potential suicide

- Saying good-byes. Perhaps thanking friends for “being a good friend” and telling them they are going away and will miss them.
- Direct statements about wanting to die or kill themselves (e.g., “I want to die” or “I am thinking about suicide.”)
- Looking for ways to kill themselves. They could be looking up methods on the internet or trying to obtain a gun, pills, or other means.
- Talking about being a burden on others. (e.g., “Everybody would be better off without me.”)
- Talking about being in unbearable pain, such as saying, “I can’t take this anymore!”
- Talking about feeling trapped or that there is no way out of a situation.
- Talking about feeling humiliated or too embarrassed to face others after being dishonored or disgraced in some way.
- Giving away prized possessions
- Sudden and extreme changes in mood or behavior. This can be a sudden positive or negative change (i.e., all of a sudden appearing happy or calm after a prolonged period of depression or being upset).
- Increased use of drugs / alcohol
- Hopelessness. Expressing things will never get better or that they cannot go on or that their life is over.
- Taking unnecessary risks or putting themselves in danger, such as driving recklessly or darting in front of traffic.
- Prior attempt. This is one risk factor that can actually predict a future suicide attempt.
- Having high levels of anxiety or agitation.
- Showing serious signs of depression, such as insomnia, drop in grades, isolation, losing interest in things they once enjoyed or not feeling pleasure (or feeling numb or empty inside).
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge for being rejected or victimized. They may believe this is happening even though others may not see this going on.

Call Psychiatric Intake Response Center with Questions

If you have concerns that your child may be suicidal or showing signs/symptoms or immediate threat to himself or others, please call 513-636-4124 to speak with a representative from the Cincinnati Children’s Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC).

The Response Center can answer all inquiries concerning Inpatient Care, Residential Hospital Extended Care, Outpatient Care and community mental health referrals. The PIRC is staffed by experienced mental health clinicians and can be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week.