

NATIONAL SUICIDE AWARENESS MONTH

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September is National Suicide Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness on the stigma surrounding suicidal thoughts and mental health. Suicidal thoughts may affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background. Often times, suicide is a result of an untreated mental health concern or situational stressors. Suicidal thoughts SHOULD NOT be ignored. It is important to bring awareness to the topic, identify warning signs and the resources available. If you or someone you know are having suicidal thought, reach out to someone immediately. Remember, YOU MATTER.

Warning Signs

The warning signs to suicide may include but are not limited to the following:

- Talking about wanting to die or killing oneself
- Talking about feeling empty, hopeless, or having no reason to live
- Making a plan
- Talking about guilt or shame
- Feeling trapped or feeling there is no solutions
- Unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Taking greater risk that could lead to death
- Giving away important possessions
- Saying goodbye to friends or family
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Changing eating and/or sleeping patterns

Steps for Parents of Children with Warning signs

Show Love: When going through hard times, children need to be reassured over and over that they are loved and that they are important. Show them in big and small ways

Be Empathetic: Validate their feelings by saying "It sounds like that was really hard" or "I know that can be very painful". Do not diminish their feelings with statements like "pull it together" or telling them not to feel that way.

Positive Interactions: Prioritize interacting with your child in positive ways like doing fun activities together or discussing topics that are not controversial.

Talk Openly: If you are worried, ask your child if they are having suicidal thoughts. Feeling that they have someone to talk to and being understood often helps children feel better.

Get Help : Consider therapy by talking to your family physician or school for referrals

Act : If danger is imminent call 911, take your child to the nearest emergency room, or call a local/regional hotline.

Crisis Resources

If you or someone is in an emergency call 911 immediately

If you are in crisis or are experiencing suicidal thoughts, call the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

If you are uncomfortable talking talk the phone, you can also text NAMI to 741-741 to be connected to a free, trained crisis counselor on the Crisis Text Line

Stanislaus County Warmline 1-209-558-4600 available 24/7. A non-emergency resource for anyone seeking emotional support.

References

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/>
<https://www.childmind.org/article/youre-worried-suicide/>