

Through the SOS program, school staff and students will learn about the signs of depression and suicide and that there is an associated risk of these behaviors with alcohol use and self-injury. Our hope is to increase confidence in our student to seek help for those who need it.

Through your participation, we are taking an important step toward protecting our students and encouraging them to seek help from trusted adults. We hope that the program will instill confidence in you about identifying the signs of depression and suicide and how to refer someone for help.



If something doesn't seem quite right, do not be afraid to ask, "Are you okay?"

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Counseling Department  
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## SIGNS OF SUICIDE



A.C.T.  
**Acknowledge**

**Care**

**Tell**

# SUICIDAL RISK BEHAVIORS

Research shows that a positive relationship with an adult is one of the most critical factors in preventing student violence, suicide and bullying. Getting to know your student and developing a relationship is something that can change his/her life (yours too)!



*Identify and Understand the risk*

- Previous attempts
- History of mental disorders, particularly depression
- History of alcohol and substance abuse
- Feelings of hopelessness or of being different than others
- Impulsive or aggressive tendencies
- Barriers to accessing mental health treatment
- Problems with school or law
- Physical illness
- Easy access to lethal means, especially guns
- A stigma attached for “getting help”
- Local epidemics of suicide (copy-cat)
- Isolation, a feeling of being cut off from other people
- History of physical and/or sexual abuse

## WARNING SIGNS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

Talking or writing about suicide or death \* Giving direct verbal cues, such as “I wish I were dead” or “I’m going to end it all.” \* Giving less direct verbal cues, such as “you will be better off without me,” “Who cares if I’m dead, anyway?” \* Isolating him/herself from friends \* Expressing the belief that life is meaningless \* Giving away prized possessions \* Exhibiting a sudden and unexplained improvement in mood after being depressed or withdrawn \* Neglecting his/her appearance and hygiene \* Dropping out of school or social, athletic and/or community activities \* Obtaining a weapon or another means of hurting him/herself such as prescription meds.

## MYTHS

Teens do not suffer from “Real” depression  
If a person is determined to kill themselves, nothing is going to stop them.  
Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN APPROACHED BY STUDENT ASKING FOR HELP (OR) IF YOU SUSPECT SUICIDAL IDEATION

Do not leave student alone once he/she has disclosed.

Listen and observe his/her demeanor and avoid making student feel embarrassed.

Offer words of encouragement but do NOT promise confidentiality.

Advise the student that you are going with him/her to the counselor or social worker’s office. (If you have other students to supervise, it is fine to send this student with another student whom you trust to escort him/her to counselor’s office.)

Parents will be contacted by counselor/social worker.

Counselor/Social Worker will notify building administrator.