

Know the Warning Signs of Possible Suicide

Our community has experienced a series of recent tragic adolescent deaths by suicide. Although not all suicides have warning signs, it is good to know and remain aware of the warning signs of possible suicide.

In the inset of this page, you can see the warning signs of possible suicide. Please review this list.

What is being done?

In our community, steps are being taken to reduce risky behaviors and ensure Monrovia is a safe and accepting place for adolescents.

This year, numerous efforts are taking place. In October a Parent Forum was hosted in both English and Spanish, providing parents with information regarding teen suicide. Counselors and teachers are providing lessons in classrooms having to do with anti-bullying, coping skills, self esteem, social issues and more. Several clubs are dedicated to supporting students including anti-bullying clubs, Healing Connections, Gay Straight Alliance and Safe School Ambassadors.

We are heightening awareness of the issue throughout the District and City. A task force has been created. This group of people includes Monrovia Unified School District staff, students, parents, as well as the Monrovia Ministerial Association, City employees and City Council members, Mayor Mary Ann Lutz, and many others. The Safe City, Safe Campus, Steering Committee, a coalition of the Monrovia Fire Chief, Monrovia Police Chief, and district administrators, met in October and November to address school and community safety concerns. Counseling service providers including school counselors, Five Acres clinicians, and other therapists and psychologists are also assisting us as we seek lasting solutions to prevent teen suicide in our community.

Last year, we had school counselors do lessons in every classroom teaching students skills such as ways of coping with stress, and how to tell when a friend is hurting and needs help.

We also held Students ROCK, (Recognizing our Commitment to Kommu-nity) resource fairs for our middle school and high school students in December, with the goal of helping students recognize community connections.

Our goals

Our efforts to reduce risky behaviors in adolescents have several goals:

- 1) We want our youth to know that under no circumstance is suicide an option.
- 2) We want students to know that help is available, and we want them to know where they can find help.
- 3) If our youth are concerned about a friend or acquaintance, we want them to know there is an adult they can turn to for help and guidance.

Warning signs of possible suicide

- *Prolonged depression*
- *Preoccupation with death and/or suicidal themes*
- *Previous suicide attempts or threats*
- *Plans made or attempts to secure the means for suicide*
- *Thinking or talking about suicide*
- *Risk-taking behavior (e.g. running away, jumping from heights)*
- *Withdrawal from activities, family and/or friends*
- *Alcohol or other drug abuse*
- *Neglect of personal appearance*
- *Marked personality and/or behavior change*
- *Persistent boredom / inability to concentrate*
- *Decline in quality of school work*
- *Physical symptoms linked to emotions (such as stomach aches, fatigue)*
- *Loss of interest in pleasurable activities*
- *Not tolerating praise or rewards*
- *Verbal hints (Such as, "I won't be a problem to you much longer")*
- *Putting affairs in order (such as giving away belongings)*
- *Becoming suddenly cheerful after a period of depression*

State and Local Suicide Statistics

- Los Angeles County averages 15 suicides per year. (This is lower than State and National averages).
- Monrovia has had 4 suicides among our youth in 2 years. This is far higher than average.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Suicide Statistics

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds.
- 16% of students in grades 9-12 seriously considered suicide in the previous 12 months.
- Males take their own lives at nearly four times the rate of females.
- Among 15-24 year olds, there are approximately 100 to 200 suicide attempts to every one completed suicide.
- On average, there is a much shorter period of time in teens than in adults from the point of contemplation to an actual suicide attempt.

Resources

Many resources are available. Some of them are listed here:

Emergency: 911

Monrovia Police: 626-256-8000

MHS Counselors: 626-471-2868

Psychiatric Mobile Response Team: 800-854-7771 (24 hrs)

Suicide Prevention Hotline: 310-391-1253 (24 hrs) 800-273-8255

Teen Line: Daily 6pm-10pm (800) 852-2336
Text "Teen" to 839863

Warm Line (Mon-Fri, 5pm-10pm) English (888) 448-9777 Spanish (888) 448-4055

Children of the Night Shelter (800) 551-1300 (24 hrs)