

Founded in 1992, Suicide Prevention Education Alliance's mission is to prevent suicide and promote recognition of adolescent depression through education and alliances with community partners.

SPEA has delivered its signature program, **Recognizing Adolescent Depression and Suicide Prevention**, to tens of thousands of students in more than 50 high schools in the Greater Cleveland area since December 2000.

Students are taught that they are the "first line of defense" in preventing suicide, since teens who make a plan to take their lives often inform a friend.

Utilizing an engaging, interactive, two consecutive-day curriculum which includes video, role playing, small group work, lecture and Q&A, SPEA's professional instructors teach students how to identify individuals who may be suffering from major depression and/or may be at risk of suicide; how to respond; and where to refer. This primary prevention program complements the mental health unit in school health classes.

The goal of the program is to cause students who are at risk of suicide to seek the help of a mental health professional. Post surveys consistently indicate that 5% of students seek the help of a mental health professional in the weeks following their participation in the program.

To schedule the **Recognizing Adolescent Depression and Suicide Prevention** program in your school or youth group, call Suicide Prevention Education Alliance (SPEA) at 216.464.3471.

**Suicide is often preventable.
Its causes are treatable.**

Positive Response...

"The SPEA instructor documents in writing when students come forward with personal concerns and some identify themselves as having suicidal ideation. The school is then able to take appropriate action... I feel that this life saving program is invaluable, and it is my sincerest hope that it will be available to our ...students on an ongoing basis."

Karen Z Kreinberg, LISW

SAY Prevention Specialist
Chagrin Falls High School

"The high school program developed by SPEA entitled **Recognizing Adolescent Depression and Suicide Prevention** is an outstanding one. The content of the program is marvelous. It is factually based, interactive, and jargon-free. Considering that mood disorders often go unrecognized in teens, **Recognizing Adolescent Depression and Suicide Prevention** will almost certainly lead to improved rates of detection of mood disorders in high-schoolers... This work... is extremely important. The high school program will surely have a positive benefit to the schools where it is run."

Robert L Findling, MD

Director, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
University Hospitals Case Medical System
Member of SPEA's Scientific Advisory Board



Suicide Prevention Education Alliance

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SPEA
Suicide Prevention
Education Alliance



Recognizing Adolescent Depression and Suicide Prevention

High School Program

Youth Suicide

According to David Satcher, MD, former Surgeon General of the United States, "Suicide is a national public health problem" and "Suicide is our most preventable form of death." More teenagers die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease combined.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among those aged 15 - 24 and the fourth leading cause of death for those aged 9 - 14.

14% of American youth aged 12-17 (3.5 million youth) experienced at least one episode of major depressive disorder in the past year. 90% of people who take their own lives suffered from depression or another diagnosable psychiatric disorder at the time of their death.

20% of Ohio high school students have considered suicide, 14% have made a plan, and 8% have made a suicide attempt.

While some suicides occur without any outward warning, most do not. The most effective way to prevent suicide is to learn the signs of someone at risk, take those signs seriously and respond.

IN CUYAHOGA COUNTY

216.623.6888

IN GEAUGA COUNTY

440.285.5665 or 888.285.5665

IN SUMMIT COUNTY

330.434.9144

IN CRISIS

1.800.TALK (8255)

SI USTED ESTÁ PENSANDO EN SUICIDIO, MARQUE ESTE NÚMERO

1.888.628.9454

5 Danger Signals for Suicide:

- 1 Previous suicide attempt
- 2 Talking about death or suicide
- 3 Planning for suicide
- 4 Depression
- 5 Sudden happiness/increased energy after a severe depression

In most cases, the depression that so often precedes suicide is both recognizable and treatable.

Recognizing Depression:

If someone has at least five of the following symptoms, lasting for at least two weeks, help should be sought from a physician or mental health professional:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in ordinary activities
- Declining school performance
- Feelings of hopelessness or desperation
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, shame
- Change in sleeping patterns
- Change in appetite or weight
- Decreased energy, fatigue, and feeling "slowed down"
- Restlessness and irritability, increased anger/fighting
- Decreased ability to concentrate, remember, or make decisions
- History of physical or emotional illness
- Increased alcohol and/or drug use
- Thoughts of death, suicide, or wishes to be dead

Leave a legacy. Remember Suicide Prevention Education Alliance in your will.

What You Can Do to Help:

ASK / LISTEN

- Ask the suicide question: "Are you having thoughts of suicide?"
- Listen with concern.
- Allow your friend or child to express his/her feelings.

PERSUADE

- Express your concern in a non-judgemental manner.
- Offer hope. Hope saves lives.
- Say, "I want you to live."
- Persuade the individual to go with you to get help from your School Counselor or a mental health professional.

GET HELP

- Get help from your School Counselor or a mental health professional.
- Arrange for your friend or child to get professional help quickly.
- If he/she refuses, get help anyway.

WHAT NOT TO DO

- **Don't** try to handle the situation alone.
- **Don't** swear yourself to secrecy.
- **Don't** ignore the situation.
- **Don't** leave the person unattended.
- **Avoid** saying, "You have so much to live for," or "Your suicide will hurt your family."

The most effective way to prevent suicide is to learn the signs of someone at risk, take those signs seriously and respond.