

# Depression and Suicide

## \*Know the Signs\*

Teenagers naturally go through ups and downs; but when the lows become especially low, and are long lasting, it may be much more serious. **According to the CDC, suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 24, resulting in approximately 4600 lives lost each year.**

### Depression

- Depressed mood (feeling sad or empty)
- Lack of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Significant changes in weight/appetite
- Insomnia or hypersomnia
- Agitation, restlessness, irritability
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling worthless, hopeless, guilt
- Inability to think or concentrate, indecisiveness
- Unable to cope
- Recurrent thoughts of death, recurrent suicidal ideation, suicide attempt or plan

### Suicide

- Signs of depression
- Feeling trapped, hopeless
- Withdrawing from friends and family
- Anger
- Recklessness
- Lack of energy or wild variations in energy levels
- Dramatic changes in behavior, actions, attitude
- Increase in anxiety/anxiety related illness (headaches, stomach aches)
- Changes in eating habits, sleep patterns, or personal appearance
- Being unusually quiet or unusually aggressive/angry
- Dropping out of hobbies, sports, school, work

### Suicide: Acute Warning Signs

- No reason for living, no sense of purpose in life
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Feeling trapped, like there's no way out
- Hopelessness
- Withdrawing
- Uncontrolled anger, rage, seeking revenge
- Dramatic mood changes
- Preoccupation with death, dying, or suicide including joking about death or suicide, creative writing, poetry, artwork
- A sudden elated mood following a time of depression
- A previous suicide attempt
- Serious talk of suicide, or making a plan
- Reckless behavior
- Increase in alcohol or drug use
- Giving away prize possessions, saying goodbye, writing a will, writing farewell letters

#### **Warning signs you may hear:**

- "Nothing ever goes right for me."
- "It'll all be over soon."
- "Whatever, nothing matters anyway."
- "I might as well kill myself."
- "I hate life."
- "Everyone would be better off without me."
- "I just can't take it anymore."
- "I wish I was dead."

### What to do

Don't leave the person alone. Remove any object that could be used in a suicide attempt such as a gun, sharp knife, razor blade, or drugs. Take the person to an emergency room or seek help from a mental health professional. Call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-TALK)**. All local calls are answered 24 hours a day by trained counselors at the Contra Costa Crisis Center and are treated confidentially.