



Make Prevention a CHOICE

Suicide Prevention

Military suicide has recently attracted national attention and concern. Statistics reveal an alarming increase of as many as 17.3 suicides per 100,000 soldiers. This is the second leading cause of non-hostile death in the USN and USMC after accidents. This rising rate has been attributed to the stress of war compounded by the stress of emotional or family issues. Issues involve soldiers trying long distance to deal with financial problems, failed personal relationships or legal problems. Contrary to popular belief, suicide is not usually an impulsive act but the result of a three-step process: a *previous history* of emotional problems is compounded by *problems associated with lack of control of family issues*; and finally, a *precipitating event*, often a death, divorce, the end of a meaningful relationship or being shamed in front of peers, can trigger the suicide.

Warning Signs:

Three-quarters of all suicides gave some warning of their intentions to a family member or friend. Be concerned if someone...

- talks about life as “hopeless” or complains of feeling “helpless”
- talks about suicide or is preoccupied with death
- withdraws from friends, family, and regular activities or interest
- is suddenly more rebellious, angry, violent, or takes more risk
- neglects his or her personal appearance
- loss in appetite and weight
- change in sleeping pattern and seems fatigued
- abuses drugs or alcohol, and other destructive acts
- complains of feeling “rotten inside, guilt or worthlessness”
- becomes suddenly cheerful after a bout of depression

What you can do:

- **Don't be afraid to talk about it.** You may think that you will put suicide in their mind. It is already on their mind. Don't be afraid of telling your concern about them are afraid that they may hurt themselves. Don't be judgmental and try to talk them out of it, talk about it
- **Get help fast.** Someone who is dwelling on the thought that the world would be better without them needs immediate help like a person who is hemorrhaging. Why wait? It will not go away.

- **There's a stigma to suicide, but you can't let that get in the way of helping someone who needs you.** Educate yourself about depression and learn the clues to potential suicide. Understand that depression is an illness and has symptoms, like cancer or heart disease. If these symptoms aren't treated, someone can die. Treat the problem seriously, and take all threats seriously.
- **Don't go it alone.** Do not promise to keep this secret; contact help. Be open about talking about fears with other people. Get other insight and support from a trusted friend, supervisor, or health care professional. Contact the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-SUICIDE for further information and assistance.
- **Enlist community help.** . Contact Health Care Providers, FFSC, Community Counseling Center, Chaplain or bring to medical clinic or medical facility. **AID LIFE- Ask, Intervene immediately, Don't keep a secret, Locate help, Inform the chain of command, Find someone to stay with the person now and Expedite**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention confirms that the increase in teenage suicide rates over the past several decades is largely related to the use of firearms as the method of suicide. Two-thirds of adolescent suicides now occur by means of firearms. More than 80 percent obtain the gun from their own homes. Research also reveals that teenagers who feel connected to their families and their schools are less likely to have sex at an early age, engage in fighting, and to use drugs. They are less likely to be emotionally upset or suicidal.

Parents need to be as open and as attentive as possible to their teenager's difficulties. The most effective suicide prevention is to maintain open lines of communication. Parents also need to be involved in the counseling process if a teenager has suicidal tendencies. These activities may both alleviate parents' fears of the unknown and assure teenagers that their parents really do care about them.

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