



EMPOWERING PARENTS TO RAISE  
THEIR CHILDREN TO BE SUBSTANCE-FREE

Talk Early And Often About Alcohol, Tobacco And Other Drugs. Even When It Gets Tough



**NOTE to TEACHERS:** You are in a unique position to witness individual students' attitudes, behaviors and peer interactions (including bullying) on a regular basis – some of which may indicate increased risk for teen suicide. If you know of a student who may be having suicidal thoughts, follow your school's protocol and stay involved to make sure your student is indeed getting the potentially life-saving help he or she needs.

## Know! The Threat of Teen Suicide

Suicide is currently the third leading cause of death among adolescents. While some youth are at greater risk for suicidal behavior, it is a very real threat to all children. Teen suicide may be an uncomfortable subject, but in order to prevent it, we must learn more about it and discuss it openly with children.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 4600 young lives are lost to suicide each year in the U.S., and for every completed suicide, there are 100-200 more attempted suicides. In a nationwide survey of high school youth, 16% of all students said they had seriously considered suicide, 13% reported creating a plan, and 8% reported trying to take their own life in the 12 months preceding the survey.

While there is no checklist to determine which teens will or will not attempt or complete suicide, there are certain factors that place youth at higher risk:

- Those with previous suicide attempts.
- Children with a family history of suicide or exposure to the suicidal behavior of others.
- Young people who suffer with depression or other mental illness.
- Adolescents with alcohol and other drug abuse issues.
- Youth who are disruptive and have difficulty controlling aggressive and impulsive behavior.
- Children who have problems dealing with stress.
- Those experiencing a stressful life event or loss.
- While girls are more likely to attempt suicide, boys are 4 times more likely to complete suicide.
- Gay and lesbian youth are 2 to 3 times more likely to complete suicide than other youth.
- And those associated with bullying - as the victim, the perpetrator or even as a witness are at greater risk for self-harm.

Talking regularly with kids about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs reduces their risk of using.

Know! urges you to encourage other parents to join Know!.

[Click here for the Know! Parent Tip Sign-Up Page.](#)

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The CDC reports that the top three methods used in suicides among youth include firearms (45%), suffocation (40%), and poisoning (8%). Therefore, access to guns, prescription medications, or any other lethal means, also increases risk for death.

Now that you know the staggering statistics surrounding the issue, let's discuss the warning signs to look out for and ways to you can proactively take part in prevention. We will discuss all this and more in the following Know! Tip.

*The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available online at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org) or by phone at 1-800-273-TALK.*

Sources: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Suicide Prevention – Youth Suicide.](#)  
[National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Division of Violence Prevention: Suicide – Facts at a Glance, 2012.](#) [Teen Suicide: Teen Suicide Prevention Main Source Material: "Teen Suicide."](#)  
[Ohio State University Medical Center. Ohio State University.](#)



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