

## Warning Signs of Suicide

- Abrupt changes in eating habits
- Aggressive behavior
- Changes in sleeping habits
- Decline in schoolwork
- Depression
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Giving away possessions
- Legal questions about death
- Loss of interest in regular activities
- Loss of energy
- Mood swings and personality changes
- Neglect of personal appearance
- Preoccupation with death
- Previous suicide attempts
- Psychosomatic complaints
- Suddenly happy after long depression
- Talking about life after death
- Unnecessary and dangerous risk-taking
- Withdrawal from friends or family

Many young people will exhibit some signs in this publication. One sign may not signal trouble, however, more than one sign lasting two weeks or longer is often an indication help is needed. Take all talk of suicide seriously. Listen carefully and give the person a chance to express his or her feelings. Let him or her know you are concerned and want to help.

If you, or someone you know is contemplating suicide, seek help right away. Immediately inform an adult such as a parent, teacher, coach, principal, clergy, counselor or doctor. Or call a crisis center hotline.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline*  
**1-800-273-TALK (273-8255)**  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

*National Hopeline Network*  
**1-800-442-HOPE (442-4673)**

*Suicide Awareness Voices of Education*  
[save.org](http://save.org)

*American Foundation  
for Suicide Prevention*  
Text "Talk" to 741741  
[afsp.org](http://afsp.org)



**THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
AMERICANISM COMMISSION  
COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

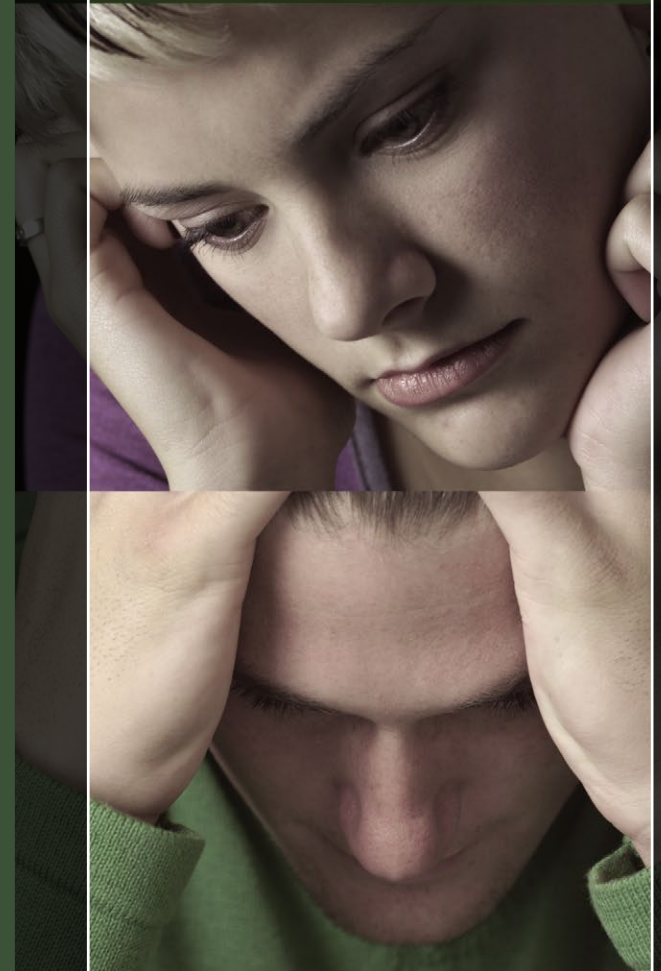
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THE AMERICAN LEGION

## Know the Warning Signs of Youth Suicide





## AMERICANISM COMMISSION'S COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH



The American Legion is concerned about the welfare of our nation's youth, and suicide threatens them. Among adolescents ages 15 to 24 this problem continues to be the second leading cause of death and the second leading cause of death for 10 to 14-year-olds. The Journal of the American Medical Association sites that over 6,200 suicides occurred in 2017 within the age group of 15-24.

Familiarize yourself with the warning signs, and you may be able to save a life. Every life is sacred and must be preserved.

### Youth suicide: Facts versus myths

***“Young people don’t kill themselves. Youth suicide is uncommon.”***

The CDC sites that suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 to 24. Studies suggest that one in 25 teens in the United States has attempted suicide, and one in eight has contemplated it. A person under 25 commits suicide every two hours, and suicide accounts for 20 percent of deaths among 15 to 24-year-olds.

***“People who talk about suicide are just looking for attention. They really don’t kill themselves.”***

Eight out of 10 people who commit suicide tell someone that they’re thinking about hurting themselves before they actually do it. Most people exhibit warning signs prior to a suicide attempt.

***“Young people who have attempted suicide before won’t ever try again.”***

Four out of every five people who commit suicide have made at least one previous suicide attempt.

***“The number of teen suicides is small compared to other causes.”***

The Jason Foundation, a nonprofit that provides awareness on suicide prevention, says more teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza and chronic lung disease, combined.

***“Most young people who kill themselves want to die.”***

Many people who kill themselves are unresolved about whether they want to live or die. Suicide is often a “cry for help” that ends in tragedy.

***“If a person’s mind is made up, there is no use in trying to change it. They can’t be stopped.”***

People who are contemplating suicide go back and forth, considering life and death. The realization that they can be helped, treatments are available and they are not alone gives them hope. We should never give up on people because we think they’ve made up their minds.