

FACTS

- Suicide is the **SECOND** leading cause of death for ages 10-24.
- Suicide is the **SECOND** leading cause of death for college-age youth and ages 12-18.
- More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease, **COMBINED**.
- Each day in our nation, there are an average of over 3,041 attempts by young people grades 9-12. If these percentages are additionally applied to grades 7 & 8, the numbers would be higher.
- Four out of Five teens who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs

MYTHS

“People who talk about suicide won’t really do it.”

False: Almost everyone who attempts or completes suicide has given warning signs through their words or behaviors. Do not ignore any suicide threats. Statements like “You’ll be sorry when I’m dead” or “I wish I was dead” — no matter how casually or jokingly said — may indicate serious suicidal feelings.

“If a person is determined to kill him/herself, nothing is going to stop him/her.”

False: Even the most severely depressed person has mixed feelings about death, wavering until the very last moment between wanting to live and wanting to die. Most suicidal people do not want to die; they want the pain to stop. The impulse to end their life, however overpowering, does not last forever.

“Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.”

False: You do not give person ideas about suicide by talking about it. The opposite is true. If a person is depressed or unhappy, discussing their feelings openly and allowing them to express how they feel is one of the most helpful things you can do. Even if they have had suicidal thoughts, giving them permission to express those thoughts can relieve some of the anxiety and provide an avenue to recognize other ways to escape their pain and sadness.

“People who attempt suicide and do not complete suicide are just trying to get attention and are not really serious.”

False: To a certain degree, they are trying to get attention and help for the pain that they are experiencing. A suicide attempt, even half-hearted, is an attempt to seek help. If the person perceives their action to be a suicide attempt, then that is what it is. Any attempt, regardless of severity, must be taken seriously and help must be sought for the individual.

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