

Johnson County Suicide Prevention Coalition

Suicide Prevention Week Resources ~ September 8-14

Suicide Prevention Day-September 10



The Johnson County Suicide Prevention Coalition is a collaborative work group whose goals include: increasing community awareness of suicide intervention; identifying common goals and effective ways to communicate information to those who are at risk for self harming behaviors; sharing resources; and working toward a cohesive plan to reduce suicides. We hope these resources and information will be useful to share with staff and when planning activities for Suicide Prevention Week/Day.

Warning Signs

Warning signs of mental health issues include:

- References wanting to die or threatens taking their life
- A sudden deterioration of academic performance and involvement in school
- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Unhealthy peer relationships
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Unexplained changes in behavior
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Recklessness, including using drugs or alcohol
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like getting to work or school
- Significant recent loss, disappointment, or serious conflict involving family, friends, school, or a combination of those

Statistics

- 70% of people who commit suicide tell someone about their plans, or give warning signs
- Suicide is now the second leading cause of death for ages 10 to 24
- 19% of high school students surveyed had considered attempting suicide in the last 12 months
- Those who have experienced bullying are 2-9 times more likely to consider suicide
- Those who suffer from an eating disorder, and anorexia nervosa in particular, have a rate of suicide 32 times higher
- The average amount of time before someone with mental health issues seeks help is 10 years
- More than half of adolescents in the United States who fail to complete high school have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder

Key Messages

Use these as a starting point and customize, or add your own!

- Social media
- Announcements
- Table tents in the cafeteria
- Conversation

- Students at our school who need help should talk to _____.
- Depression is an illness. It is not a character weakness or something that people bring on themselves or can change at will.
- Worried about someone? Voice your concerns & remind them they are not alone.
- Supporting a friend or family member with a mental health concern can be as simple as listening and asking questions.
- Teens in a mental health crisis are most likely to reach out to a peer. You can be a lifeline.
- Don't pretend to be ok. If you're not ok, tell someone.
- Your kind words and actions make a difference.
- Depression is common and usually doesn't go away on its own. Help is available.
- Add your own messages!

Crisis Referral

- **Imminent Threat:** 911/Hospital Emergency Room
- **Johnson County Mental Health Center**
913-268-0156, jocogov.org/mentalhealth
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).
- **National Hopeline Network** –
800-784-2433

Child/Teen Specific Crisis

- **Marillac** - 913-951-4300
marillac.org
- **New Directions Behavioral Health** 800-528-5763
ndbh.com
- **KVC Behavioral Health**
913-621-5753 kvc.org



Report Suicidal User on Social Media

- **Facebook:** Go to <https://www.facebook.com/help/contact/?id=305410456169423> to anonymously report comments about suicide on Facebook. A member of Facebook's Safety Team will send the user an e-mail with the Lifeline number.
- **Twitter:** Go to <https://support.twitter.com/forms/general> select "Self-Harm" to send an e-mail reporting a suicidal user. Twitter will send the user a direct message with the Lifeline number.

Letter / e-mail to Teachers

Note: Customize the following email/letter copy for use with school staff. Incorporate helpful information from this document, i.e. statistics, symptoms.

September 8-14 marks Suicide Prevention Week with Suicide Prevention Day falling on September 10. As we begin the 2014/15 school year it is important that we are working to meet our student's social/emotional needs. Returning to school brings the potential for a surge of stress, anxiety and trigger for depression for many of our students and their families.

I encourage you to trust your experience as an educator and err on the side of caution when you observe or hear of behaviors that are concerning. Please make your concerns known to your Social Worker, Counselor, School Psychologist, Administration or SRO as soon as the information is known to you. If the student discloses that they are suicidal or makes reference to suicide you must act on that information. Do not allow the student to talk you into keeping the information private or allow them to minimize the significance of their disclosure.

School Activities Ideas

Random Words of Kindness -During lunch students can sign up to send a peer an encouraging message attached to a Jolly Rancher.

Walking Billboard – Students can make eye catching signs (stats and/or messages) on foam core, attach to a wooden stake and carry around during their passing periods.

School Newspaper – Ask them to write a story on the increase in suicides with the spin on the story being the various ways to support each other in the school community.

Daily announcements

Social Media Blast – Students that retweet or like a message can be eligible for a gift card.

Events for Students

- **September 28: Ultimate Frisbee Tournament**-sponsored by the Tom Karlin Foundation. Information/registration-tomkarlinfoundation.com
- **October 4: Out of the Darkness Walk**-sponsored by AFSP. Berkley Riverfront Park-information/registration-afsp.org.

Links for Students

- Reach Out reachout.com
- Mobile App-A Friend Asks jasonfoundation.com
- Tom Karlin Foundation tomkarlinfoundation.com

Helpful Things to Say When You're Concerned About Someone

- Are you ok?
- I'm concerned about you.
- How long have you been feeling like this?
- Have you spoken to someone about how you're feeling?
- Is something bothering you?
- I've noticed...are you ok?