



Family Counseling
Medical & Counseling Associates

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Suicide Prevention & Intervention

Although adults don't often know about it, many Wisconsin youth experience symptoms of depression, think about suicide, make plans to die by suicide, and even make a suicide attempt each year. Wisconsin continues to have one of the highest youth suicide rates in the nation

However, there are many steps that can be taken to increase the factors that protect young people and reduce the factors that put them at risk.

Protective factors are characteristics that make it *less likely* that individuals will consider, attempt or die by suicide. Major protective factors include effective mental health care, connectedness to individuals, family, community and social institutions, problem solving skills, and contacts with care givers. Talk to your child's counselor about how you can help increase these protective factors.

Risk Factors are characteristics that make it *more likely* that individuals will consider, attempt or die by suicide. Examples of risk factors are a diagnosis of depression or mood disorder, relationship problems or break ups, financial hardships, legal difficulties, public humiliation or shame, or worsening medical prognosis in self or family member. Again, your child's counselor can help you work toward reducing risk factors.

Everyone should know the warning signs of suicide and what to do if you think someone you know may be considering suicide.

Signs of suicide:

- Talking about suicide.
- Statements about hopelessness, helplessness, or worthlessness.
- Preoccupation with death.
- Suddenly happier, calmer.
- Loss of interest in things one usually cares about.
- Visiting or calling people one cares about.
- Making arrangements; setting one's affairs in order.
- Giving things away.

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What you can do:

- Ask them if they are thinking about killing themselves (This will not put the idea into their heads, or make it more likely that they will attempt suicide.)
- For help, call:
- **U.S. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** at 800-273-TALK (8255);
- **Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to anyone in suicidal crisis. If you need help, please dial 1-800-273-TALK (8255). 1-800-799-4TTY [4889] (TTY)
- **The Trevor Lifeline**
1-866-488-7386
A national organization focused on crisis and suicide prevention efforts among LGBT youth.
- **National "YOUTH" Crisis Helpline**
1-800-999-9999
- **Wisconsin Crisis Lines by County**
<http://www.preventsuicidewi.org/>
Your county Crisis Line: _____
- Take the person to an emergency room or seek help from a medical or mental health professional
- Remove any objects that could be used in a suicide attempt (see the **Lethal Means Checklist**) and
- If possible, do not leave the person alone

The above information is taken from the following websites. Please visit them to learn more.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_suicideprev

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/national-strategy-suicide-prevention/>

Wisconsin Strategy for Suicide Prevention

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/injuryprevention/SuicidePrevention.htm>

Center for Disease Control http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/suicide_datasheet-a.pdf

Prevent Suicide Wisconsin <http://www.preventsuicidewi.org/>

Hopes Suicide Education and Prevention <http://www.hopes-wi.org/index.html>

Suicide Prevention Intervention Lethal Means Checklist 7-25-14