



# Delaware County Suicide Prevention Awareness Task Force

## Teen Suicide

### ***What's the problem?***

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among youths. The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center found that almost 1 in 5 teens had thought about suicide, about 1 in 6 had made plans for suicide, and more than 1 in 12 had attempted suicide in the last year. About 8 of 10 teens who complete suicide ask for help before attempting suicide.

### ***What are the key risk factors of suicide?***

These are factors commonly found among suicidal youths (*absence does not mean no risk*).

• History of suicide, attempts	• Criminal justice or legal problems
• History of abuse, violence, trauma	• Chronic illness, disability
• Family relationship problems	• White male; Latina teen
• Depression, other mental illness	• Access to firearms
• Humiliation, shame, status loss	• Low self-esteem, poor coping skills
• Trouble concentrating in class	• Dropping off teams/activities

### ***What are some important protective factors?***

These are factors that offset risk factors and deter the occurrence of suicidal behavior.

• Strong family or social ties	• Strong self-esteem, sense of self-worth
• Optimism, resilience	• Willingness to seek help
• Emotional stability (not impulsive)	• Religiosity, spirituality

### ***What are the warning signs of suicide?***

Contact a mental health or medical provider if you encounter any of these behaviors:

• Hopelessness	• Rage, anger, revenge, recklessness
• Feeling trapped/no way out/helplessness	• Increasing alcohol and/or drug use
• Withdrawal from family, friends	• Anxiety, agitation, sleep problems
• Dramatic mood changes	• No reason for living

### ***What are the immediate danger signs of suicide?***

Immediately call the Delaware County Crisis Connections Team at 1-855-889-7827 or dial 9-1-1 if you encounter:

- Someone threatening to hurt or kill herself or himself
- Someone looking for ways to take her or his life (i.e., a gun, pills, other lethal means)
- Someone talking, writing, or drawing about death, dying, or suicide

### ***What can you do to help prevent suicide?***

- Never agree to keep a friend's suicidal feelings a secret.
- Don't try to handle a friend's crisis alone – get adult help.
- Make sure that all family members know the warning and danger signs and what to do.

**DCSPATF**  
**P.O. Box. 175**  
**4 State Road**  
**Media, PA 19063-1413**  
[www.delcosuicideprevention.org](http://www.delcosuicideprevention.org)