

## Key Points

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for teenagers and young adults aged 15-24; only accidents and homicides occur more frequently. Suicide crosses all social, economic, and racial barriers.
- Age groups most at risk for suicide are 15 to 24 years of age and elderly Americans.
- Young people who talk about suicide are communicating that they need help and positive changes in their lives.
- No one should keep a secret about suicidal behavior.
- Suicide attempts are often precipitated by severe arguments with parents, loss, or humiliation.
- 60% of all suicides involve firearms.
- In Polk County, 4% of persons who committed suicide were under the age of 18.
- Most adolescent suicides occur in the afternoon or early evening and in the teen's home.



## Most Common Factors in Youth Suicide:

- Depression
- Recent Loss
- Substance Abuse
- Angry, Rebellious, Impulsive Behavior
- Gun Availability

## **School Procedures: What to do:**

1. Provide appropriate supervision of the suicidal student.
2. Inform the principal or administrative staff of the suicidal student and determine who will notify the parent(s).
3. The administrator or designee notifies the parents of the suicidal student. If an administrator is not available, proceed to notify parent and continue to attempt to make contact with the administrator.
4. Provide the parents and student with a list of community resources and stress that immediate action should be taken.
5. Consult with school counselor, psychologist, and/or social worker, or if needed, the Crisis Team.
6. Continue to monitor the student's progress, support the student, and work collaboratively with outside professionals and agencies.

## Where to go for help:

Lakeland Regional Medical Center  
Adolescent Program  
687-1100

Peace River Center - Crisis Line  
519-3744 or Toll Free (800) 627-5906

Winter Haven Hospital  
Behavioral Health Division Access Line  
1-800-723-3248

or

Private Mental Health Providers or Clergy  
in the Community



This brochure was developed by the Polk County  
Crisis Intervention Team. For further information, call:  
Pam Stein 534-0958 or Linda Troupe at 534-0928

## About Youth Suicide:

# Prevention and Intervention



## Warning Signs

- Seriously depressed
  - Increasingly isolated or withdrawn
  - Giving away prized possessions
  - Doing poorly in school
  - Making statements about wanting to die
  - Acting in a violent fashion
  - Taking unnecessary risks
  - Threatening to commit suicide or previous attempts
  - Over-reacting to perceived loss or failure
  - Suddenly happy for no reason after a long depression
  - Abusing drugs and/or alcohol
  - Gun available
  - Changes in eating, sleeping, or grooming habits
- One sign may or may not signal trouble. More than one sign often means that help is necessary. Notice how long and how intense the signs are and how many are present at one time.