

# YOUTH

## Warning Signs

- Hopelessness/apathy
- Preoccupation with death/dying
- Change in eating/sleeping patterns/weight loss, neglected hygiene and appearance changes
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities
- Feeling trapped (like there is no way out)
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from interests/family/friends/society
- Agitation or intense anxiety/irritability
- Dramatic mood changes/sadness/crying/rage/anger
- No reasons for living/no sense of purpose in life/school refusal
- Loss of energy, motivation, physical indicators

## Risk Factors/Trigger Events

- Problems at school – bullying, suspension, poor grades
- Presence of current suicidal plan
- Previous suicide attempt
- History of mental disorder, including substance abuse (especially bipolar disorder and depression)
- Substance abuse
- Availability of lethal means (access to methods)
- History of emotional, sexual or physical abuse
- Family history of completed suicide
- Family history of psychiatric illness
- Recent conflict with a parent, friend/feeling helpless, alone, humiliated
- Trigger events/changes in family (job loss, divorce)
- A recent negative event (loss of status, loss of a significant other parent/boyfriend or girlfriend)

## Non Visible Issues

- Extremely high expectations of themselves and/or others
- Poor coping skills
- Actual or perceived lack of caring and supportive friends and/or family
- Adjusting to a new culture/immigration
- Social exclusion, racism and discrimination

## Questions to Ask:

### REMEMBER:

**It is important to validate the youth's expressed or seeming state**

- Have you had thoughts of ending your life? How often? When?
- Have you talked to others about ending your life?
- How much do you think about this?
- In your thoughts, how do you end your life?
- Do you have a plan right now? What is the plan? Have you set a time or date? How? Where?
- Have you tried to end your life in the past? How? When? What helped stop you? What was going on at the time?
- Are there other ways of ending your life that you think about?
- What are you likely to be doing or thinking when you have these thoughts?
- How close have you come to killing yourself?
- Do you know someone who has ended their life? Attempted?
- What do you think will happen to you after death?
- Has there been an increase in substance use?
- Something that has kept you alive – tell me about that.
- Do you want to die or do you not want to live like this?

## Crisis Services

- For youth up to 16 years go to Windsor Regional Hospital Metropolitan Campus – Emergency Department – 1995 Lens Ave.
  - For youth 16 + years go to Windsor Regional Hospital Ouellette Campus – Emergency Department – 1030 Ouellette Ave.
- In Leamington:
- For youth up to 18 years, go to Leamington Memorial District Hospital- 194 Talbot St., West
  - Alive! Canada (519) 973-4423
  - Community Crisis Centre (519) 973-4435
  - Distress Centre – (519) 256-5000
  - Kids Line – 1-800-668-6868

This chart was developed by WRSP and was adapted for the region of Windsor-Essex. It is intended for use by individuals trained in suicide intervention.



# YOUTH: Suicide Assessment and Community Referral

