



## **WHAT DO I SAY...to my child if I think he or she is at risk of suicide:**

Suicide need not claim as many lives as it does each year. There is help available and we can all play a part to ensure that individuals with thoughts of suicide get the help they need.

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

- **Be aware.** Learn the warning signs.
- **Take any indication of suicide seriously**, no matter how casually they may be conveyed
- **Get involved.** Be available, show love & support
- **Ask directly** if they are thinking about suicide
- **Talk openly** about suicide and try not to act shocked or surprised
- **Be willing to listen.** Rather than ask “why”, allow them to express how they are feeling, accept these feelings and try not to judge them for having these feelings. If you do, they may stop talking about this
- **Try to understand** their feelings and reflect this understanding back to them. Don't get defensive. Your child is expressing feeling, not blaming you
- **Help your children explore the things that they are proud of** or that them happy. You can't solve their problems for them but you can help them find the help they need
- **TAKE ACTION. GET HELP.** Remove any dangerous objects that could be used to inflict self injury. Get professional help

Anyone who is suicidal needs the help of a counsellor or mental health professional. This provides them with the opportunity to learn new life strategies to cope with their stresses and pain

### **ATTITUDES**

It is very important that you understand your own attitudes about suicide and then set them aside. The individual considering suicide is the important one and we need to be able to listen to their feelings without judgement.

### **WARNING SIGNS**

4101 – 54 Avenue Red Deer, AB T4N 1G8

Phone: 403 – 342 – 4966 Fax: 403 – 342 -4154

Email: [support@suicidehelp.ca](mailto:support@suicidehelp.ca) Website: [www.suicidehelp.ca](http://www.suicidehelp.ca)

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- **LOSS-** relationships, self-esteem, moving.
- **Change in behavior** – eating, sleeping habits, withdrawal, anxiety, moodiness
- **Withdrawal/isolation**
- **Grades dropping**
- **Suicide threats** – ANY statements revealing a desire to die or indicating that they feel others would be better off without them
- **Increased use of alcohol and/or drugs.**
- **Making final arrangements** – saying goodbye, giving away prized possessions.
- **Depression** – expressing hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness
- **Previous suicide attempts** – especially if they did not receive support
- **Lack of interest** in previously enjoyed activities

### **WHAT DO I SAY IF I SEE THE WARNING SIGNS?**

“I’ve hear you mentioning suicide lately. I’m very concerned. Are you feeling so bad that you are thinking about killing yourself?”

“I’m concerned for you because you have seemed very down lately. Would you like to talk? I’m here for you”

“I can tell you’re really hurting. You can tell me what you’re going through. I love you and nothing you say will shock me or make me reject you.”

“I would like to try to understand what it is you are feeling. If you won’t talk to me about it, is there someone else you trust?”

### **RESOURCES:**

**ALBERTA HELP LINE 1-877-303-2642**

**CRISIS LINE (403 CALLING AREA) 1-800-784-2433**

**CRISIS LINE (780 CALLING AREA) 1-800-232-7288**

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