



Often times, a suicidal person may indicate in some way that they plan to attempt suicide. Here are some warning signs you should know about.

### Warning Signs:

- Increased Isolation – From family and friends
- Alcohol or Drug Use Increases
- Expression of negative attitude toward self
- Expression of hopelessness or helplessness
- Change in Regular Behavior
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Giving away valued possessions
- Expression of a lack of future orientation (i.e. "It won't matter soon anyway")
- Expressing Suicidal Feelings
- Signs of Depression
- Describes a Specific Plan for Suicide
- History of Suicide in the Family
- A person who has been extremely depressed in the past may be at an increased risk for suicide if the depression begins to cease, as they may now have the psychological energy to follow through on a suicidal ideation.

**If you or someone you care about displays any of these warning signs, please do not hesitate to call The Trevor Lifeline at: 866-4-U-TREVOR (866-488-7386) to speak with a trained volunteer counselor.**

### Protective Factors Against Suicide

*Protective Factors are those that make it less likely someone will attempt suicide. They can encompass biological, psychological or social factors in the individual, family and environment.*

- Easy Access to Effective, Culturally Competent Care (1)
- Support Through Ongoing Medical and Mental Health Care Relationships (1)
- Coping, Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution Skills (1)
- Restricted Access to Highly Lethal Means of Suicide (1)
- Strong Connections to Family (1,2,3,6,7,8)
- Family and Parental Acceptance of Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity (8)
- School Safety, Support, Connectedness and Peer Groups such as Gay-Straight Alliances (3,5,7)
- Community Support (1,3)
- Positive Role Models and Self-esteem (4)

The Trevor Lifeline

**866 4-U-TREVOR**

866 488-7386

- Cultural and Religious Beliefs that Discourage Suicide and Support Self Preservation (1)

Sources:

- (1) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2001
- (2) Borowsky et al 2001
- (3) Eisenberg & Resnick 2006
- (4) Fenaughty & Harre 2003
- (5) Goodenow et al 2006
- (6) Kidd et al 2006
- (7) Resnick et al 1997
- (8) Ryan et al 2010

## Some Facts About Suicide:

(NOTE: Refrain from using the phrase "commit(ed) suicide." Instead, use "died by suicide" or "completed suicide" when describing a fatal suicide attempt).

- In the United States, more than 34,000 people die by suicide each year (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC 2007).
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15 to 24-year-olds, accounting for over 12% of deaths in this age group; only accidents and homicide occur more frequently (National Adolescent Health Information 2006).
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death on college campuses (CDC 2008).
- For every completed suicide by a young person, it is estimated that 100 to 200 attempts are made (Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey 2003).
- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth are up to four times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers (Massachusetts Youth Risk Survey 2007).
- More than 1/3 of LGB youth report having made a suicide attempt (D'Augelli AR - *Clinical Child Psychiatry and Psychology* 2002)
- Nearly half of young transgender people have seriously thought about taking their lives and one quarter report having made a suicide attempt (Grossman AH, D'Augelli AR - *Suicide and Life Threatening Behavior* 2007)
- Questioning youth who are less certain of their sexual orientation report even higher levels of substance abuse and depressed thoughts than their heterosexual or openly LGBT-identified peers (Poteat VP, Aragon SR, et al - *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 2009)
- LGB youth who come from highly rejecting families are more than 8 times as likely to have attempted suicide than LGB peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection (Ryan C, Huebner D, et al - *Peds* 2009;123(1):346-352)

## Additional Facts about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth

- Nine out of 10 LGBT students (86.2%) experienced harassment at school; three-fifths (60.8%) felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation; and about one-third (32.7%) skipped a day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe (GLSEN National School Climate Survey 2009).
- LGBT students are three times as likely as non-LGBT students to say that they do not feel safe at school (22% vs. 7%) and 90% of LGBT students (vs. 62% of non-LGBT teens) have been harassed or assaulted during the past year. (GLSEN From Teasing to Torment 2006)
- Sexual minority youth, or teens that identify themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual, are bullied two to three times more than heterosexuals. (Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, OH 2010)
- Almost all transgender students had been verbally harassed (e.g., called names or threatened in the past year at school because of their sexual orientation (89%) and gender expression (89%)) (GLSEN: Harsh Realities, The Experiences of Transgender Youth In Our Nation's Schools 2009).
- LGBT youth in rural communities and those with lower adult educational attainment face particularly hostile school climates (JG, Greytak EA, Diaz EM - *Journal of Youth & Adolescence* 2009)
- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual adolescents are 190 percent more likely to use drugs and alcohol than are heterosexual teens (Marshal MP, Friedman MS, et al - *Addiction* 2008).
- It is estimated that between 20 and 40 percent of all homeless youth identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender (2006 National Gay & Lesbian Task Force: An Epidemic of Homelessness). 62% of homeless LGB youth will attempt suicide at least once—more than two times as many as their heterosexual peers (Van Leeuwen JMM et al - *Child Welfare* 2005)