

THE SCOOP

SEPTEMBER
2020

Lakes Student Services' Monthly Newsletter

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month—a time to share resources and facts in an effort to shed light on this highly taboo and stigmatized topic.

- Depression is serious and it is the #1 risk factor for suicide.
- Although suicide is quite rare, it is the 2nd leading cause of death among school age youth.
- For every teen suicide, 100-200 people self-harm and for every self-harm 500 people struggle with depression.
- Suicide is preventable.
- Youth who are contemplating suicide frequently give warning signs. Warning signs should never be taken lightly or kept a secret.
- Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background.
- Suicide is often the result of an untreated mental health condition.



Warning Signs

- Suicidal thoughts in the form of direct ("I am going to kill myself") and indirect ("I wish I could fall asleep and never wake up again") statements.
- Suicide notes and plans (including online postings).
- Prior suicidal behavior.
- Making final arrangements (e.g., making funeral arrangements, writing a will, giving away prized possessions).
- Preoccupation with death. Changes in behavior, appearance, thoughts and/or feelings.
- Extreme withdrawal from friends and family.



What do we do at Lakes?

- Commonly, individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts report this to their counselors, school social workers, teachers, or other staff members.
- We are dedicated to promoting a safe and comfortable environment for students to share their feelings and concerns.
- We investigate student concerns regarding peers, while maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of reporter.
- The student services team evaluates each situation, speaks with the individual, contacts the parents, and makes referrals to the appropriate resources.
- The student services team also provides education to students, parents, and school staff about mental health and suicide and how they can help support one another.

What can you do to help a friend?

- Remain calm.
- Ask the person directly if he or she is thinking about suicide (e.g., "Are you thinking of suicide?").
- Focus on your concern for their well-being and avoid being accusatory.
- Listen.
- Reassure them that there is help and they will not feel like this forever. Do not judge.
- Provide constant supervision.
- Do not leave your friend alone.
- Remove means for self-harm.
- Get help: No one should ever agree to keep a person's suicidal thoughts a secret and instead should tell an appropriate caregiving adult, such as a parent, teacher, school counselor or school social worker.

Lakes Community High School Social Workers

Ms. Kaisserlian - debra.kaisserlian@chsd117.org
Ms. Schoon - jennifer.schoon@chsd117.org
Ms. O'Brien - megan.obrien@chsd117.org

[Lakes Student Services Website](#)



Resources

<https://www.erikaslighthouse.org>
<https://www.nami.org/get-involved/awareness-events/suicide-prevention-awareness-month>
<https://jasonfoundation.com/youth-suicide/facts-stats/>
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-yourself/youth/>