



Shadle Park High School Parents and Guardians:

The school year has been filled with a wide range of emotions, from excitement and joy to anxiousness and feelings of being overwhelmed. At times it has been hard and challenging, and with the holiday season it can be tough for many families, especially those who have members struggling with high stress, anxiety, depression, and/or loss. The purpose of this letter is to educate you about suicide, common warning signs, and the resources available. Your student will watch a suicide awareness and prevention video, created by the SPSHS Counseling Team, Tuesday, November 23rd during their Advisory class. Our hope is that together, we can keep Shadle Park students safe.

Suicide Statistics from the Washington State Department of Health (www.doh.wa.gov)

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death in the state of Washington for youth 10-24 years old and the third leading cause of death nationally.
- There were nearly twice as many suicides as homicides of youth ages 10–24.
- In Washington State and nationally, whites accounted for the highest total number of suicides, while Native Americans accounted for the highest rates of suicide.
- Suicide rates are lower for African-Americans and Hispanics.
- In Washington State and nationally, females attempted suicide more frequently, yet males died by suicide more often by a ratio of at least 4:1.
- In Washington State, firearms were the leading method of suicide for both males and females.

Suicide risk factors include: mental illness including depression, conduct disorders, and substance abuse, family stress/dysfunction, environmental risks, and situational crises (death of a loved one, abuse, violence, etc.)

Warning Signs of Suicide

- Unable to focus or think clearly
- Withdrawal from friends or family
- Changes in appearance and personality
- Feelings of depression, loneliness, or isolation
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Wanting to escape a painful or difficult situation
- Suicidal threats in the form of direct and indirect statements
- Increased use of drug and/or alcohol
- Suicide notes and plans
- Making final arrangements (writing a will, giving away prized possessions)
- Preoccupation with death
- Can't see a way out (hopelessness)

What You Can Do

- Remain calm
- Ask youth directly if he or she is thinking about suicide
- Focus on your concern for their wellbeing and avoid being accusatory
- Listen without judgement
- Reassure them that there is help and they will not feel like this forever
- Provide constant supervision. Do not leave the youth alone
- Remove means for self-harm
- Get help! (Seek help from school or community mental health resources as soon as possible)

Resiliency Factors

- Focus on developing social CONNECTIONS big or small
 - Family support and cohesion, including good communication
 - Peer support and close social networks
 - School and community connectedness
 - Cultural or religious beliefs
- Reorienting and developing a sense of PURPOSE
 - General life satisfaction, good self-esteem, sense of purpose
- Becoming adaptive and psychologically FLEXIBLE
 - Adaptive coping and problem-solving skills, including conflict resolution
- Focusing on HOPE

Suicide and Mental Wellness Resources	
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (National): 1-800-273-8255	Providence Behavioral Health: Sacred Heart Medical Center 509-474-3131
Crisis Text Line (National) Text "HOME" to 741741	National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Spokane 509-838-5515
The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+) 1-866-488-7286, text "START" to 678678	The Native Project 509-325-5502
Frontier Behavioral Health 24/7 Regional Crisis Line (Local): 1-877-266-1818	Lutheran Community Services 509-747-8224
Teen Link 1-866-TEENLINK (833-6546)	Daybreak Youth Services 509-475-4651
***IF IT IS AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE CALL 911. ***	

We feel education and awareness is key in helping our students stay safe.

Shadle Park High School Counseling Team

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