

How are the Children?



Suburban Ramsey  
Family Collaborative

## *A Kids Matter! Parent Message*

# Taking Action to Prevent Suicide

Youth who are contemplating suicide frequently give warning signs of their suicidal thinking. Parents, teachers, coaches, youth workers and friends are in a key position to recognize these signs and get help. **Never take these warning signs lightly or promise to keep them secret.** When adults and young people in the school and community are committed to making suicide prevention a priority—and are empowered to take the correct actions—we can help youth before they engage in behavior with irreversible consequences (Source: NASP).

It is difficult to imagine a child would think about hurting or killing themselves. Yet, according to the 2010 Minnesota Student Survey, just over one in ten (1 in 10) 6th graders in Suburban Ramsey County students answered “yes” to the question “Have you thought about killing yourself?” In high school, the numbers are even higher; about one in four (1 in 4) 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders in Suburban Ramsey County said they had thought about killing themselves.

Therefore, it is important we are all aware of some **common warning signs so you are able to take action to get your child the help they need** (Source: NASP).

### **Common warning signs include:**

- Threatening or talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself.
- Looking for ways to kill oneself such as seeking access to firearms, available pills, or looking online for other means.
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person.
- Talking about feeling hopeless.
- Feeling rage or seeking revenge.
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking.
- Feeling trapped - like there's no way out.
- Increasing alcohol or drug use.
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society.
- Feeling anxious, agitated.
- Unable to sleep or sleeping all the time.
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes.
- Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life.



To receive your own Suicide Prevention Guide for Parents—

Contact the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative (SRFC) by emailing Angie.Goserud@isd623.org

Ask for the "Parents As Partners Guide".

## Tips for Parents

- **Know the warning signs!**
- **Do not be afraid to talk to your child.** Talking to your children about suicide will not put thoughts into their head. In fact, all available evidence indicates that talking to your child lowers the risk of suicide. A key message is, "I love you and care so much about you that suicide is not an option." "Help is available and I will help you get it."
- **Take immediate action.** If your child indicates he/she is contemplating suicide, or if your gut instinct tells you they might hurt themselves, get help immediately. **Do not leave your child alone, not even for a minute.** Even if he/she denies "meaning it," stay with them and reassure them you will get the help they need. Let them know that there are many treatments and things professionals can do to help.
- **Seek professional help.** If necessary, drive your child to the hospital's emergency room to ensure that he/she is in a safe environment until a psychiatric evaluation can be completed.
- **Suicide-proof your home.** Remove or secure all knives, pills, firearms, poison and anything that your child could use to hurt themselves.
- **Utilize school and community resources.** This can include your school psychologist/social worker, crisis intervention personnel, suicide prevention groups or hotlines, or private mental health professionals.
- **Listen to your child's friends.** They may have information or knowledge that they are worried about their friend. Be open. Ask questions.

**In an immediate, life-threatening situation, go to the nearest hospital emergency room or call 911.**

## Suicide Prevention Resources

- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/): 1-800-273-TALK (8255); 1-800-799-4TTY(4889)
- [SAVE](https://www.save.org/) - Suicide Awareness Voices of Education [www.save.org](https://www.save.org/)
- [Reach Out](https://www.reachout.org/) shares stories and information to help teens get through tough times. Visit or refer a teen to this website to hear from others who have been there and made it.

## Mental Health Emergency Services

- **Ramsey County Children's Crisis Response** - 651-774-7000
- **Ramsey County Adult Crisis Response** - 651-266-7900
- **Sexual Offense Services of Ramsey County** - 651-643-3006 (Services and support are available to help with rape, abuse, sexual assault, and any other form of sexual violence.)
- **Crisis Connection** - 612-379-6363

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