

Suicide Myths and Facts

Myth: Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.

Fact: Talking about suicide does not create or increase risk. In many cases, it may contribute to preventing it from happening. The best way to identify the intention of suicide is to ask directly.

Myth: A person who attempts suicide is only looking for attention.

Fact: For some, these behaviours are serious invitations to others to help them live. If help is not available, they may feel it will never come. Ignoring suicidal thoughts or actions can be dangerous.

Myth: Those who attempted suicide in the past won't try it again.

Fact: 4 out of 5 people who have died by suicide have made at least one previous attempt.

Myth: A suicidal person clearly wants to die.

Fact: What they want most often is a way to handle circumstances in their life that are difficult and impossible to bear. Escape from the pain of these events may be their intention.

COUNSELLING SERVICES

Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Liz Sokol - Co-ordinator

NORTH CAMPUS

B112 416.675.5090

COUNSELLORS

Camille Hannays-King, M.Ed.

Liz Sokol, M.Ed.

Rose Anthony, M.Ed.

Shivon Raghunandan, M.Ed.

Sophia Barna, MSW

Vinnie Mitchell, M.A.

Bohdan Turok, M.Ed. (on leave)

LAKESHORE CAMPUS

A120 416.675.6622 ext. 3331

COUNSELLORS

Catherine Wilson-Cheverie, M.Ed.

Andrew Poulos, M.Ed

Risa Handler, M.A.

HEALTH SERVICES

North Campus - K137, ext. 4533

Lakeshore Campus - H206, ext. 3234

After hours assistance is available from the following resources:

- Community Crisis Response Program
416-493-0043
- Distress Centre hotline
416-408-4357
- Humber Campus Security
ext. 4000

Suicide Prevention

*Suicide shouldn't
be a secret.*

Suicide shouldn't be a secret.

It is something that we would rather not talk about. We hope that it will never happen to anyone we know, but suicide is a reality and it is more common than you might think.

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for young people age 15-24 years of age in Canada. By paying attention to warning signs and talking about the "unthinkable", you may be able to prevent a death.

Who is at risk?

People who are at high risk of dying by suicide include those who:

- are performing poorly at school; not meeting the expectations of family or friends
- are abusing alcohol or drugs
- have had a previous suicide attempt
- have issues with their sexual orientation (lesbian, gay and transgendered)
- are experiencing a major loss such as the death of a loved one
- are experiencing major changes in their life, e.g. first time away from home; new city/environment; isolated from family & friends
- are experiencing serious physical or mental illness

Suicide. Know the warning signs.

There are many circumstances which can contribute to someone's decision to end his or her life. People who consider suicide often do so in response to a perceived set of life stresses and situations. Strong indicators of potential suicide are the belief that life is unbearable and feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and desperation.

In addition, people who exhibit some of the following behaviours may be at risk for suicide:

- verbalizing thoughts about suicide or a plan for suicide
- preoccupation with death
- giving away favourite possessions
- declining academic performance or difficulty concentrating
- loss of pleasure or interest things they once cared about; always feeling bored.

Take action.

All suicidal thoughts or threats must be taken seriously. Trust your instinct if you are concerned about someone and tell someone about it.

What can I do?

Suicide interventions can be a challenging process. If you suspect that a student or staff member may be at risk of suicide as a result of something you have heard from them say or from someone else about them, or you have observed some of the warning sign behaviour, or you have read something that they have written in an e-mail or an assignment then do the following.

Three steps faculty or staff can take:

- take suicidal threats, thoughts or behaviours seriously
- contact Humber Counselling Services
- contact Humber Health Services
- contact security, after office hours
- talk with the student directly
- support him/her (listen and avoid undue criticism; remain connected)

Three steps friends can take:

- take your friend's actions seriously
- encourage your friend to seek professional help, accompany them to counselling services if necessary.
- if you have any concerns about how to proceed with your friend, please speak with a Humber counsellor.