Teenage suicide

By Paul Schoenfelder, CNO

- Suicide is the SECOND leading cause of death for ages 10-24
- Suicide is the SECOND leading cause of death for college-age youth and ages 12-18
- More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease, COMBINED.
- Each day in our nation there are an average of over 5,400 attempts by you people grades 7-12.

Four out of five teens who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs of their intentions. This means that, if we learn the signs and know how to respond, we have an opportunity to assist 80% of those teens who are contemplating suicide.

Many times, signs of concern mimic "typical teenage behaviors". So, how can we know if it's just "being a teenager" or something more? If the signs are persisting over a period of time, several of the signs appear at the same time, and the behavior is "out of character" for the young person as you know him/her, then close attention is warranted. Anytime you have a concern about a young person's actions and/or behaviors, be proactive – have a conversation with the child. Seek professional help if necessary. It is difficult for adults to understand what would motivate a young person to take his/her own life. Changes in the behavior of a child are often seen as a phase they are going through-just a part of adolescence. This may or may not be the case. As parents and adults, we need to be able to talk openly with our youth. Some youth in pain see suicide as their only option. We need to be able to recognize signs of concern and know how to react and get professional help if needed. The first thing we need to do is be we informed about the "Silent Epidemic" of youth suicide. Suicide is preventable. Ferry County Public Hospital District is here to care and listen to you. Call us or stop in if you have any questions. 509-775-3333, or call 1-800-273-TALK(8255)

Prior Hospital Happenings available at http://www.fcphd.org/news.html

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