

In The Know

A monthly newsletter to keep you current and In The Know on topics related to the Prevention of Substance Abuse

Suicide—Not an easy way out

Suicide is a serious yet preventable problem in the United States; it is the eighth leading cause of death in our country. Tens of thousands commit suicide each year, while hundreds of thousands attempt it annually. Although suicide does not discriminate and the people who commit it are diverse, the highest populations that commit suicide are older men and young people between the ages of 15 and 24.



Populations who have undergone certain events or have certain aspects about them are more likely to commit suicide. Some risk factors include: a traumatic experience, loss of a loved

one, job or something else of importance, a family history of suicide and/or mental health issues, and access to lethal weapons or drugs. A person is also more likely if they have less support, feelings of isolation and are afraid or cannot seek help or treatment. Someone with a great support system, access to treatment, and the ability to deal with various difficult issues through problem solving and other means is less likely to attempt suicide. It is imperative that as health care providers and support agencies we give clients the tools to help them in their times of need.

Signs a person may exhibit if thinking of ending their own life include but are not limited to: depression, substance abuse, anger, withdrawal, anxiety, recklessness, suicidal ideation, setting affairs in order, giving items away,

making contact with loved ones, and loss of interest in life. Everyone is different, they may exhibit these signs and they may not, therefore it is important that we look for risk factors early on and be available to help.

If you think you may know of someone thinking of committing suicide, do not dismiss it! Talk with the person about your concerns, but most importantly listen to what they have to say. Do not judge or preach or leave the person alone. Contact professional help.

Some resources in our area include: Steuben County Mental Health: 1-607-776-6577 (daytime) or 1-607-937-6577 (after hours). National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255. No one should be left feeling helpless or hopeless.

Suicide Safer Communities

SafeTALK is a two-and-a-half to three-hour training that prepares anyone over the age of 15 to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Most people with thoughts of suicide invite help to stay safe. Alert helpers know how to use these opportunities to support that desire for safety. As a safeTALK-trained suicide alert helper, you will be better able to:

move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or avoid suicide;

identify people who have thoughts of suicide;

apply the TALK steps (Tell, Ask, Listen and KeepSafe) to connect a person with suicide thoughts to suicide first aid, intervention caregivers.

Powerful video clips illustrate both non-alert and alert responses. Discussion and practice help stimulate learning. Learn steps that contribute to saving lives.

SafeTALK was designed to teach skills that complement

caregivers with suicide intervention skills. SafeTALK-trained helpers make early recognition and referral possible on a far larger scale than any community can



afford to do through suicide intervention skills training alone. When there are enough SafeTALK-trained

persons available, suicide intervention caregivers will be used more often.

SafeTALK presentations will be held Friday, September 10 at the Southern Tier Hospice, Corning from 10-1 or 1-4. Others will be held at the Human Resource Center, in Elmira, Booth School, Elmira and St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira. For more information please call (607) 737-5501.

This training is free of charge but registration is required.

Do you or someone you care about need help because of Drugs, Alcohol or Gambling call:

1-877-8HOPENY (1-877-846-7369)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week * Free & confidential information and referrals.

In The Know and By The Numbers

A brief look at current statistics and figures relating to the topic of suicide.

- By 2010, depression will be the #1 disability in the world. (*World Health Organization*)
- 80% of people that seek treatment for depression are treated successfully. (*Suicide Awareness Voices of Education*)
- It is estimated that there are at least 4.5 million survivors in this country. (*American Association of Suicidology AAS*)
- An average of one person dies by suicide every 16.2 minutes. (*CDC, AAS*)
- According to the Violent Death Reporting System, in 2004 73% of suicides also tested positive for at least one substance (alcohol, cocaine, heroin or marijuana).



- 73% of all suicide deaths are white males. (*familyfirstaid.org*)
- Nearly a million people worldwide commit suicide each year, with anywhere from 10 million to 20 million suicide attempts annually. About 30,000 people reportedly kill themselves each year in the United States. (*medicinenet.com*)
- An estimated 12 to 25 nonfatal suicide attempts occur per every suicide death. Men and the elderly are more likely to have fatal attempts than are women and youth. (*www.cdc.gov*)

- Teen suicide statistics show differences in the ways boys and girls handle suicide. While girls think about attempted suicide about twice as much as boys, boys are actually four times more likely than girls to actually die by killing themselves. (*teensuicidestatistics.com*)

Steuben County Underage Party Tip Line

Anyone with information about anything related to underage drinking - such as parties or underage sales - in Steuben County are urged to call the toll-free line. The tip line is monitored 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. All calls are anonymous.

1-877-862-4847

It is illegal to provide anyone under 21 with alcohol, even if they are your own child!

Steuben Council SCA on Addictions

Information, Assessments & Referrals

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Drug Free Communities Grant

Coordinator: Norm McCumiskey

Clerical Assistant: Peggy Wurzer



www.catholiccharitiessteuben.org

The Council Corner

A look at Steuben Council on Addictions and the projects they are working on

We are pleased to have on board with us for the summer and fall an intern to help us with numerous projects! Andrea Smith is a senior at Mansfield University majoring in Psychology. She chose to complete her internship at Steuben Council on Addictions for several reasons. As a sophomore she took Health Psychology and learned about smoking cessation and addiction; she knew then that she wanted to learn more about prevention and helping people. SCA was the perfect place to give her the opportunity



in outreach to the community and to grow as an individual.

Look for several displays throughout the community for awareness months that Andrea will be putting together. September is National Alcohol and Drug Recovery Month;

displays will be up in local banks and libraries. She will also help with the Drug Free Communities grant process. Besides shadowing the Prevention Educators, Andrea will also have the chance to present a

program before she departs in December.

After graduating in December, a career working for a nonprofit agency in prevention services is Andrea's goal. Welcome aboard Andrea, we hope you are able to learn a lot while here and develop the same passion for prevention that we have here at the Council!

If you have not already checked us out on Facebook please support us by becoming a fan of Steuben Council on Addictions. Getting important information out to the public is our mission and this is just one of many.

Steuben Council on Addictions is a division of Catholic Charities Steuben. In The Know is a regular monthly update about all topics that can help in the prevention of substance use and abuse. For more information on In The Know contact Stacey O'Dell, Prevention Educator at (607) 776-6441, x. 205 or sodell@dor.org.