

## Teens Helping Teens

### Symptoms of teen depression

- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Losing interest in social and extracurricular activities
- Displaying a lack of energy
- Feeling tired most of the time
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Anger
- Feelings of sadness for much of the time
- Significant weight fluctuations
- Sleep pattern changes
- Physical pains and aches, or sickness, even though there is nothing physically wrong
- Indifference about the future
- Uncharacteristic pessimism
- Guilty feelings
- Lowering self-esteem
- Suicidal thoughts

### Teen suicide warning signs

Take the warning sign of a suicide threat seriously.

- Disinterest in favorite extracurricular activities
- Problems at work and losing interest in a job
- Substance abuse, including alcohol and drug (illegal and legal drugs) use
- Behavioral problems
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Sleep changes
- Changes in eating habits
- Begins to neglect hygiene and other matters of personal appearance
- Emotional distress brings on physical complaints (aches, fatigues, migraines)
- Hard time concentrating and paying attention
- Declining grades in school
- Loss of interest in schoolwork
- Risk taking behaviors
- Complains more frequently of boredom
- Does not respond as before to praise

Follow your "gut". You will not plant the seed of suicide by asking. It is better to seek help, even if you are in doubt. It is important to watch for two or three signs as indications of depression, or even teen suicidal thoughts

### Teen suicide warning signs: indications of a suicide plan

- Actually says, "I'm thinking of committing suicide" or "I want to kill myself" or "I wish I could die."
- There are also verbal hints that could indicate suicidal thoughts or plans. These include such phrases as: "I want you to know something, in case something happens to me" or "I won't trouble you anymore."
- Teenager begins giving away favorite belongings, or promising them to friends and family members.
- Throws away important possessions.
- Shows signs of extreme cheerfulness following periods of depression.
- Creates suicide notes.
- Expresses bizarre or unsettling thoughts on occasion

### *"Sound proof"*

*What can I do when on one hears me cry?  
 What can I do when I want to die?  
 Why is it no one ever sees my tears  
 Even though I freely express my fears?  
 Why do they not help me?  
 Why do they not care?  
 Their incomprehension just isn't fair  
 Listen to me  
 What I say is not lie  
 I am unhappy, and I want to die  
 I could scream and scream, till I could  
 scream no more  
 But the ears of my friends are a soundproof  
 door*

*~ Susan Elizabeth Jones  
 Suicide at fifteen years old*