

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide and related mental health concerns are societal issues, and your child may have been affected by recent tragedies, even if he or she did not know a particular student well. In particular, it is important to recognize and address a phenomenon known as suicide contagion, in which one person's suicide may lead to other suicides or suicide attempts. We want to do everything in our power to prevent this from happening within our school community. Partnering with families and regional mental health professionals to provide resources and education on mental health issues is key to ensuring the well-being of our students—we are all in this together.

It is very important to take a moment to talk with your child about what has happened. Discussing thoughts and feelings about death is an important step toward helping him/her work through grief or concerns. Please also consider monitoring and discussing your child's communications (Facebook, phone, e-mail, text messaging) to further assess his or her potential needs.

Some high-risk indicators for suicide may include:

- Talking about committing suicide
- Trouble eating or sleeping
- Drastic changes in behavior
- Withdrawal from friends and/or social activities or hobbies
- Losing interest in hobbies
- School or personal appearance
- Giving away prized possessions or appearing to be “saying goodbye
- History of suicidal behavior
- Taking unnecessary risks; or having had a recent severe loss of friends or family
- Having had a recent severe loss of friends or family

If you feel your child needs to speak to a guidance counselor, social worker or other adult, please feel free to call your child's school or direct them to stop into their school building main office. In addition, there are a number of community resources available to offer assistance.