

## **SUICIDE**

Suicide is the second leading cause of death in young people. All around the world, approximately a thousand people commit suicide every day.

A major cause of suicide is depression. Most people think of death or killing themselves from time to time when feel depressed. However, for some people feelings of sadness, loneliness, worthlessness, loss and sorrow deepen and lead to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. For such individuals, the pressures of life feel so intolerable that suicide looks like the only way to overcome those feelings.

### **Risk Factors**

- Depression. The people who are severely depressed are quite likely to have suicidal thoughts.
- Psychiatric disorders. People with schizophrenia and personality disorders are at risk.
- Previous suicidal attempts. People who have previously attempted suicide are at risk.
- Recent losses. Recent losses of loved ones may trigger thoughts of suicide.
- Alcohol and drugs.
- Preparations for death. Talking about death or methods of suicide, giving away possessions or acquiring tools that will enable death (i.e. gun) are cause for great concern.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities.
- Neglect of schoolwork.

### **Some Myths about Suicide**

- "People who talk about suicide do not do it." You can never be sure about that. Talking about suicide is a cry for help. Every suicide threat should be taken seriously
- "People who are suicidal are beyond help." Suicidal impulses may be intense but short-lived. People with suicidal thoughts can be helped by professional treatment.

### **How to Help a Suicidal Friend?**

- Express openly your concern and care to your friend. Let him/her know that s/he is not alone.
- Try to listen without making any judgments.
- Support him/her by showing appreciation of his/her difficulties.
- If you believe that your friend is thinking about suicide, ask about it. This may allow him or her to share more openly his/her depressive feelings.
- If there's a threat of suicide, it is important to stay close to your friend until professional help is obtained.
- Seek professional help. Offer him/her to take an appointment with a professional or even accompany him/her to the appointment.

## References:

Shea, S. C. (2002). The Practical Art of Suicide Assessment: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals and Substance Abuse Counselors. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

## **Need Additional Help?**

For further information, please email KURES at: [kures@ku.edu.tr](mailto:kures@ku.edu.tr)