

SUICIDE

- FACT: Suicide ranks third as a cause of death among 15-24 year olds.
- FACT: Some 30,000 people a year take their own life; 37 people die daily.
- FACT: Suicide and substance abuse often go hand in hand. Substances are involved in 20-50% of suicides.
- FACT: People over the age of 60 commit suicide more often than people of any other age group.

Suicide is no respecter of persons. While more males are "successful" in taking their lives, females attempt suicide more frequently. People who profess faith are not immune to thoughts of taking their lives. While 25% of suicide victims are "mentally unstable," the same number of suicide victims act only after consideration and weighing the pros and cons of living or dying. And suicide victims include members of all ethnic groups, economic levels, and age groups. No one is immune and the loss associated with suicide extends beyond the victim himself to family, friends, church congregations, business associates, and neighborhoods.

What do we look for? Are their "red flags" waving that should alert us to a potential suicide attempt? To be sure such warning signs do exist: depression, guilt, withdrawal, indirect comments about suicide or death, sleep disturbances, compulsive behaviors, recent loss -- death of a loved one, a career, and an anniversary of a traumatic event...the list is exhaustive.

But what should we do if we suspect someone we know is suicidal? Should we confront them directly or call someone we trust with our concerns? Should we "just pray" and ask God to intervene or does our moral responsibility lead us to a more direct response?

If you are struggling with suicidal thoughts or know someone who does, we are here to help at the Bridge. PLEASE call us, as we treat all of these calls with seriousness and promptness. We will make the right phone calls, involve the right personnel, and act with grace extending dignity, respect and affirmation to the one suffering.

Help us help others! We are a phone call, an e-mail (care@thebridgersm.com), or a drop-by visit away from demonstrating grace and providing solid, biblical answers and hope to the struggling individual.

