Suicide is a preventable tragedy. As part of a caring community, it is incumbent upon all of us to do our part to recognize early warning signs and symptoms of suicidality. Together, we can help save lives.

Warning Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicating About…</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Change in Mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being a burden to others</td>
<td>Seeking access to lethal means (e.g. pills)</td>
<td>Depression / Hopelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling trapped</td>
<td>Acting recklessly or impulsively</td>
<td>Loss of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing unbearable pain</td>
<td>Not sleeping; or sleeping too much</td>
<td>Rage / Irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having no reason to live</td>
<td>Increased alcohol or drug use</td>
<td>Humiliation / Worthlessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanting to die</td>
<td>Withdrawal from friends, family, student activities or groups</td>
<td>Anxiety / Agitation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Risk Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stressful life events (e.g. major loss)</td>
<td>Mental illness (especially untreated)</td>
<td>Prior suicide attempts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prolonged stress (e.g. being bullied, discriminated against)</td>
<td>Substance abuse</td>
<td>Family history of attempts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to lethal means</td>
<td>Chronic illness or pain</td>
<td>History of abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to another suicide</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Isolation from others</td>
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Know the Facts

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth aged 15-24 in the United States.
- For every young person who dies by suicide, between 100-200 attempt suicide.
- Males are 4x as likely to die by suicide as females. Females attempt suicide 3x more often.

This can be a helpful mnemonic for determining whether a student is at risk. The more symptoms exhibited, and the more suddenly these symptoms emerge, the greater the risk.

I - Ideation
S - Substance Abuse
P - Purposelessness
A - Anxiety (or Agitation)
T - Trapped
H - Hopelessness
W - Withdrawal
A - Anger
R - Recklessness
M - Mood Changes
Facility and staff are in a unique position wherein they may be the first to identify a student who is dealing with emotional distress or crisis. Faculty and staff may also be the first people a student turns to for help.

**Guidelines for Interacting with a Student in Distress**

- Talk to the student in private when possible
- Listen carefully - communicate your understanding by repeating the essence of what the student tells you
- Be available - show interest, understanding, and support
- Avoid criticizing or sounding judgmental - don’t lecture or debate about suicide being wrong
- Don’t try to argue someone out of suicide - instead offer them hope, empathy, and resources
- Don’t promise confidentiality - you may need to contact additional supports
- If the student is in imminent danger, call for help and stay with him - don’t leave until help arrives
- Avoid physically restraining a student - campus police can find someone in danger very quickly if needed

**What to say?**

- **Express concern directly, using observable details when possible**
  
  *Example:* I notice that you’ve been tearful in class lately and I’m concerned about you. Can you tell me what’s going on?

- **Ask directly about suicide. You won’t put the idea in their head**
  
  *Example:* Sometimes high anxiety can be accompanied by thoughts of wanting to die. Are you thinking about suicide?

- **Offer hope that things will get better**
  
  *Example:* It may be hard to feel hopeful right now, but suicidal feelings are often temporary, and treatments can help.

- **Let them know you care, and that they are not alone**
  
  *Example:* Please know that you are not alone, and that there are people who care about you. I am one of them.

**Getting the Student Help**

- If you think the student presents a danger to themselves or others call Campus Police immediately at x 3911
- If the student is not in immediate danger, or you are not sure, contact the CARE team to let them know your concerns - email: CARE@stevens.edu
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is also available for consultation, evaluation and treatment. Hours are M-F, 9am - 5pm at x 5177; Howe 7th Floor
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1800-273-TALK

**Taking Care of Yourself**

Responding to students in distress can be confusing and overwhelming. Faculty and Staff can also be at risk for mental health issues and suicide. Make self-care a part of your regular routine, develop a support system, and seek consultation from others when interacting with distressed students. You can also access the Employee Assistance Program by calling 1-800-538-3543.