

Help is available for people thinking about suicide

If you know someone who has committed suicide, or you've contemplated suicide, you're not alone. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 1 million people die each year from suicide. Millions more are affected by suicide.

As part of mental health awareness month, Placer County's Campaign for Community Wellness is working to educate people about suicide warnings signs, risk factors and where to go for help.

Major suicide warning signs include talking about harming or killing oneself; talking or writing about death and dying and seeking items that could be used in a suicide attempt like guns and drugs. Feeling hopeless is a more subtle warning sign, though it is equally as dangerous. People who are acting hopeless say they have nothing to look forward to; they may talk about unbearable feelings. They simply feel and share with others that they have nothing to look forward to.

After someone commits suicide, often friends and family are left asking, "What more could I have done? Were there resources that I failed to seek and use? Were there warning signs that I missed?" They feel like they could have or should have done more. These feelings and questions are normal. One of the best things for people to do is to become familiar with as many warning signs as possible.

Other warning signs to look for in someone to see if he/she might be suicidal include dramatic mood swings or sudden personality changes. A suicidal person may also lose interest in day-to-day activities, neglect his or her appearance, and show big changes in eating or sleeping habits. All these warning signs are even more dangerous if a person has a mood

disorder such as depression, bipolar disorder, suffers from alcohol dependence, has previously attempted suicide or has a family history of suicide.

Local resources that provide general assistance for suicide risk can be found at the Placer County Network of Care. For a national resource that offers advice, information and a crisis hotline go online.

For immediate help, the following suicide hotline numbers and website are available:

Auburn: (530) 885.2300

Roseville: (916) 773.3111

Lincoln: (916) 645.8866

National: 800.273.8255.