

A user-friendly GUIDE TO

# Suicide Prevention

FOR FAMILIES in Macomb County



## About This Book

This *Small Book* is designed to assist families in locating free or low-cost community services in Macomb County and is designed to be user-friendly.

The book first lists a "SITUATION" followed by a short descriptive phrase about each of the known services listed for that situation, an explanation of the services and eligibility requirements (if applicable), and finally, the telephone number for the service.

This book lists services by a service category, not by agency. This helps to speed the finding of needed services. For the most part, only Macomb County resources are listed. Exceptions to this are out-of-county resources included if a Macomb County facility is filled or county or state services that may be accessed in Macomb County.

To aid you in your use of this book, you will notice the following format: Each "*Situation*" is enclosed in a black box to differentiate it from other situations.

The symbol (~) is placed in front of each new service under that category. All known services for a situation are grouped under it regardless of what agency offers those services.

As names of agencies and programs frequently change, please note that the former name is indicated in brackets { }.

Every effort has been made to assure that the information is up-to-date and accurate. Due to the dynamic nature of organizations, information changes often.

We hope that you enjoy this resource and that you are able to locate help more quickly. For your information, *Small Books* are available on the following topics:

Adoption	Literacy
Child Abuse	Mental Health
Child Care	Parenting
Dementia	Recreation/Leisure
Dental	Runaway Services
Domestic Violence	Senior Citizen Services
Employment & Training Services	Sexual Assault
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	Special Needs
Financial Assistance	Substance Abuse
Food	Suicide Prevention
Gambling Addiction/Problems	Support Groups
Resources	Teen Pregnancy Service
Health	Transportation
Homeless Services	Utility Assistance
Housing	Vision and Hearing Services
Legal Issues	Glossary

## Table of Contents

A person is threatening or showing signs of suicidal tendencies and needs immediate attention	1
You are unsure if the person requires inpatient or outpatient care for suicide	2
Suicide Warning Signs	2-3
You are unsure if you should report a potentially suicidal youth	4-5
A group of people have experienced the loss of someone close and needs debriefing	5
Other Resources	6
Notes	7
Acknowledgements	8

## SUICIDE PREVENTION

**MACOMB COUNTY CRISIS CENTER (586) 307-9100**

**SITUATION: A person is threatening or showing signs of suicidal tendencies and needs immediate attention.**

### **YOUTH EMERGENCY ASSESSMENTS AND POSSIBLE HOSPITALIZATION**

Low income youth with no insurance may access hospitalization services by calling First Resources and Treatment \* - North in Mt. Clemens, (586) 469-6375 the Access Center (586) 948-0222 from 8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday only.

Macomb County Community Mental Health\* has contracted with the following agency to provide emergency assessments for youth after hours and on weekends, call:

Harbor Oaks Hospital\*, New Baltimore (800) 537-7924 or (586) 725-5777

### **ADULT EMERGENCY ASSESSMENTS AND POSSIBLE HOSPITALIZATION**

**If there is a medical emergency (overdose, etc.) the person should be seen at a medical emergency room first** and should be taken to the emergency room of the nearest hospital with an inpatient psychiatric unit, or directly to **Emergency Psychiatric Service (EPS) at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital, 215 N. Avenue, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043**. At the hospital, EPS staff will assess the immediate need and obtain authorization for the appropriate level of care. Treatment may be provided in an inpatient unit or in an alternative community setting.

**SITUATION: You are unsure if the person requires inpatient or outpatient care for suicide.**

If you want to speak to a professional trained in assessing suicidal risk, call the Macomb County Crisis Center\*, (586) 307-9100.

**SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS**

- Talking about death, suicide, or not being around much longer
- Recent loss of any kind (death, divorce, move, rejection, poor health, self-esteem, etc.)
- Family stress (parental conflict, divorce, unemployment, etc.)
- Changes in mood or behavior (crying, fighting, feeling depressed or hyperactive, running away, stealing, neglecting school work, taking increased risks, etc.)
- Avoiding contact with other people
- Increased (or initial) use of alcohol or drugs
- Decrease in personal care; changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Acquiring means for suicide (pills, gun, etc.)
- Getting things in order (writing goodbye letters, giving away favorite possessions, etc.)
- Sudden cheerfulness after a bout of depression. Most suicides occur within three months after a person's "improvement"

**If someone is suicidal:**

- Be aware of the warning signs.
- Directly ask the person if they are thinking about killing themselves.
- Be willing to listen and provide emotional support.
- Always take the person's feelings seriously.
- Recognize that this person is suffering within a set of circumstances unique to them.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available.
- Ask them for a "no suicide promise": an agreement that they will call you or the Crisis Center before taking any action to kill him/herself.
- Involve family members or other people supportive to that person.

## Don'ts

- Don't ignore the warning signs.
- Don't dare the person to do it.
- Don't ask "why?."
- Don't judge their feelings as right or wrong.
- Don't leave a highly suicidal person alone.

## Making a preliminary assessment

The following are indicators of suicide potential. The more that are true, the higher the risk.

1. Extreme emotional states; very depressed or nervous, aggressive, out of control
2. Suicide plan; has specific lethal plan and available means to follow through on plan
3. Prior suicide attempt; considered the best single indicator of suicide risk
4. Recent loss; loved one, job, freedom, etc.
5. Medical problem: especially a terminal illness or anything physically debilitating
6. Lack of human support: no supportive family or friends
7. Lack of reasons for living: family, friendships, work, school, hobbies, religion, pets, future plans.
8. Suicide survivor: people who had a family member or friend who committed suicide are 8 times more likely to attempt themselves.
9. Substance abuse: alcohol and/or other drug abuse increases the risk of suicide
10. No suicide promise: person is reluctant or unwilling to give a "no suicide promise"

**You should always be in touch with another professional when working with a youth who is suicidal because it is too much responsibility to make a decision alone.**

**SITUATION: You are unsure if you should report a potentially suicidal youth.**

**There is a greater liability if a professional does nothing to assist a potentially suicidal youth than attempts an intervention in good faith.** Be sure to document whatever action you take to assess the youth to protect yourself from legal liability.

The confidential nature of student confidences or other professional persons engaged in character building in the public schools or in any other educational situation, including any clerical worker of such schools and institutions, who maintains records of students' behavior or who receives in confidence communications from students or other juveniles, shall be allowed in any proceedings, civil or criminal, in any court of this state to disclose any information obtained from the records of such communications: or to produce records or transcripts thereof, except that testimony may be given, with the consent of the person so confiding or to whom the records relate, if the person is 18 years of age or over, or if the person is a minor, with the consent of his or her parent or legal guardian.

The Michigan Attorney General has ruled that this statutory prohibition applies only to third parties and that disclosure may be made to parents or guardians. Of special note is the Attorney General's opinion that in cases involving divorced parents disclosure may be made to either parent without regard to which has custody.

Teachers may report any concerns or communications to other teachers and/or in-school counselors and social workers.

All questions concerning possible liability for disclosing information regarding students should be directed to attorneys for the school district; each district should prepare and publish with the assistance of counsel, a comprehensive policies and procedures manual for suicide risk identification and prevention.

## **Procedures for Involuntary Commitment if a student presents a suicide risk**

A parent can request emergency admission "if there is a reason to believe the minor is emotionally disturbed and poses a danger to himself or others".

A person acting in loco parentis, such as a teacher may make the request, but the parents must be notified immediately.

- A police officer may likewise make the request as long as he or she has personally observed the behavior.
- If the student is an adult (age 18 and above) any person may file a petition for involuntary commitment if the student threatens serious physical injury and has engaged in an act or made significant threats supportive of his intentions; or if the student has demonstrated his/her inability to attend to basic physical needs such as food, clothing or shelter; or if the student's judgment is so impaired that he/she is unable to understand his/her need for treatment and whose continued behavior can reasonably be expected to result in significant physical harm.
- Petitions are filed in the county probate court; police officers are familiar with this procedure and should be called if possible.
- Petitions must contain the facts which are the basis for the assertion, the names and addresses of all witnesses and the name and address of the nearest relative or guardian.

**SITUATION: A group of people have experienced the loss of someone close and needs debriefing.**

### **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

- ❖ **Trained teams that response on-site to community disasters affecting groups of people.** The Macomb Emergency Response Group (MERG) provides help to stabilize work, school, or community environments by responding immediately to the stress of such events. Contact MERG through the Macomb County Crisis Center\*, (586) 307-9100.

## OTHER RESOURCES

- ❖ **Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Support Group** provides a peer support group facilitated by a professional for friends and relatives of persons who have completed suicide. SOS aids the healing process by providing information and resources and by allowing members to share their feelings in a non-judgmental and confidential setting. Contact SOS through the Macomb County Crisis Center\*, (586) 307-9100.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This booklet has been developed from "*Making the Right Connection*", a project of the Macomb County Inter Agency Council and its Youth Council Subcommittee.

For the complete Resource Directory, please go to [www.misd.net/connection](http://www.misd.net/connection)





GREAT PARENTS MACOMB\*  
Serving families with children birth to age 5

For information on other resources for families of children  
age birth to 5 years, please call:

1.866.4MACOMB

1.866.464.2662

\* This document was printed through the State of Michigan Great Parents grant  
awarded to Macomb Intermediate School District.  
Agencies throughout Macomb County are program partners.