

☞ SUICIDE ☞

🌀🌀🌀🌀 11 Red Flags 🌀🌀🌀🌀

Is Your Adolescent Is In Danger?

🌀 Depression: Does the youth exhibit sadness or despair lasting for more than short intervals or have deep feelings of futility, of overwhelming self-doubt and/or paralyzing insecurities? Does the youth exhibit a sad demeanor for longer than a few hours or perhaps a day or two at a time? Adolescent hormonal mood swings are different from chronic dangerous depression.

LEARN TO RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCE.

🌀 Art: Whether the art is manufactured by the adolescent or is art the adolescent is drawn to matters little. Artistic expression and attraction are clear, and are serious indicators of the youth's thoughts and feelings. What is the general, overall expression of the art the youth is creating or smitten with?

🌀 Music/Media: What do the lyrics express? Does the adolescent gravitate to dark, fatalistic lyrics and/or morbid audio and video content? Yes, lyrics and music, and video games and pals all have an impact on an impressionable youth. *Who or what* is impressing your adolescent?

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Obsessions: Look at the whole picture. Is the adolescent obsessed with the way they are being treated by peers, teachers, or persons in positions of authority? Is the adolescent obsessing over a possible *crush*? Does the youth have an unhealthy focus on guns, violence, death, sex, food, self-image? Is the youth being tormented at school, or on the Internet, or through any number of social settings? Is the youth obsessed with the Internet?

Withdrawing: Adolescents will go through a period of separation from their parents; this is a critical part of growing up. However, if the youth is spending each waking and sleeping hour alone, it is time for an *intervention*. Is the teen withdrawing because they feel helpless to effect a situation? Is the child being bullied? Find out.

Lethargy: Does the youth seem to be listless and want to sleep life away? This is a serious sign of depression and must be addressed immediately. **SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP.** Ask. Listen. Love. What is the underlying cause of the lethargy? Don't judge. Be the safe place your child knows he can come to. Know what's going on in your child's life.

Changes in Appearance: Adolescence is a time of developing self-expression and public persona. How adolescents wish to be seen by their peers and society at large is portrayed in rapidly

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changing outfits and costumes. Adolescents try on different looks, and watch for a reaction to their new *look*. These changes are normal. However, appearance is a clear determinant of how a teen is feeling inside. Has the look become slovenly or unkempt? Does the outfit reveal an *Edgar Allen Poe* attitude? Is the attire suddenly solid black? Are gang colors being flashed? What is the message the adolescent is sending? Are you *getting* it? Does it need to be addressed? It does if the attire and attitude presented is dark, is of a gang nature, or is one that reflects loss of interest in personal hygiene.

Changes in Habits: Have sleep habits, everyday rituals such as teeth brushing and bathing (hygiene), or any behaviors that are considered *normal* to your child changed? Look for signs in day-to-day activities. Sometimes we are so close that we don't notice what others notice. Take a step back and *see* what is going on in the life of your child. What appears to be laziness may be a serious sign of depression.

Substance Abuse: Self-medicating is a huge red flag that your youth is in danger. Watch for any signs, including cigarette smoking. It is more than just a struggle to 'fit in' with the crowd. Substance abuse can be a serious indication that

the youth is seeking pain release and relief. Watch closely for the signs. **TREAT IMMEDIATELY.**

R Self-Mutilation: Perhaps the most outwardly visible sign that something is wrong, self-mutilation indicates that the youth is needing to feel a physical pain, perhaps to take the focus off the emotional pain he or she is feeling. Add to this the obvious, that is, the clear message of feeling abused, possibly by others. Self-mutilation is a scream for attention. Hear the scream.

R Eating Disorders: When a person feels as if they have no control over their life, eating is one thing they know they can control. In addition to reflecting a value of self-image, an eating disorder is a sign of inward turmoil, of being *out of control*. Eating disorders kill. Eating disorders are another way of committing suicide. Get help.

~Ask, Listen, Love♥~

The leading cause of suicide is the overwhelming feeling of having no control over a situation. Adolescence is a natural time of discovery, of finding out who we are in varied settings, of trying on behaviors and relationships and determining what we deem important. It is an important process that all humans go through on the path to adulthood.

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With that said, the turbulence of adolescence may be unbearable if not given the tools with which to deal with these rapid life-changing events. If your child is being chided or bullied, is struggling with notions of *fitting in*, or is otherwise exhibiting signs of detachment, depression, or anger, find out what's going on. What is important to your child? Find out. Your interest could save their life. Ask, listen, love. And seek professional help immediately if you suspect your child is in danger of either suicide or homicide. The general school of thought is that *suicide* is homicide turned *inward*. Think about this until you really understand the implications. If your child is a bully, he or she is at risk for both suicide and for homicidal actions. Alternately, if your child is being bullied, he or she is at risk of both homicidal and suicidal actions. In either case, the risk is real.

Find out more about bullycide and emos.** Be an informed, vocal member of society; share what you learn about this crisis with others. Suicide is the number three cause of death for adolescents in America. We must stop the madness. Together, we can, and will save lives.****

***Bullycide:** When a child commits suicide as the result of either in-person or on-line bullying. Know whom your child is interacting with at every venue. Know who is on-line, and know what goes on on-line.

****Emos:** A definition of youth self-described as morbid, suicidal, dark; exhibit depression in dress and demeanor.

*****To make a donation or to learn how you can help go to:**

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