



Office of the Children's Advocate  
Unit 100– 346 Portage Ave.  
Winnipeg, MB.  
(204) 988-7440 • 1-800-263-7146  
www.childrensadvocate.mb.ca

# Youth Suicide Prevention Newsletter

Spring 2012

## Inside

### Facebook's "chat" service

Find out what the popular social networking site is

1

### Is talking about suicide harmful?

Learn more about this age-old question.

2

### Bullying and suicide

Help put an end to bullying.

3

### Suicide and suicide risk in gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth

Help create awareness.

### Important Phone Numbers

A list of crisis phone numbers and community resources.

4

## Facebook offers crisis counsellor "chat" service

The popular social networking site, Facebook, is making it easier for individuals expressing suicidal thoughts to get help. In December 2011, Facebook launched a program enabling users to connect with a crisis counsellor through the site's "chat" messaging system.

This new initiative allows an individual to report suicidal comments to Facebook by clicking a link next to the comment. Facebook will then send an email to the person who posted the comment encouraging them to call a hotline or click on a link to begin a confidential chat with a crisis counsellor.



The service is available to all Facebook users in Canada and the United States.



***Not asking an individual about their suicidality may increase the risk of suicide.***

## Is talking about suicide harmful?

The question whether we should talk to youth about suicide and ask about their suicidality is contentious. There are many reasons why people are reluctant to talk or ask about suicide. These reasons include a fear of suggesting or planting the idea of suicide, fear of normalizing suicidal behaviours, an absence of signs of suicide and therefore no reason to ask, and an uncertainty of how to respond.

However, research has found that asking youth about their suicidality does not upset the youth or increase their suicidal ideation. In fact, some research suggests that the most important or helpful thing an individual can do is ask about suicide. Although suicide is a difficult subject to discuss, talking to youth about their suicidality is important for a number of reasons, including:

Asking provides relief: Asking about suicide provides relief when the individual is heard, accepted and understood, and allows the opportunity for open discussion.

2) Increases awareness: Talking about suicide provides the opportunity to increase a youth's knowledge of the incidence of suicide, warning signs of suicide, and how to access help. Providing this information can serve to minimize the risk of contagion and prevent suicide.

3) Talking helps to sort through problems: Most youth are already familiar with the subject of suicide. An individual who is battling depression may have already considered suicide as an option. Asking and talking about suicide will assist them with sorting out problems.

4) Not asking may increase the risk of suicide: If an individual expressing suicidal ideation feels that others know of their suicidality but are fearful of asking, this may increase their feelings of despair and hopelessness. This increased feeling of hopelessness may put the individual at an increased risk of suicide.

***Some research suggests that the most important or helpful thing an individual can do is ask about suicide.***

## KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS



### IS PATH WARM

- I** Ideation
- S** Substance Use
- P** Purposelessness
- A** Anxiety/Agitation
- T** Trapped
- H** Hopelessness  
Helplessness
- W** Withdrawal
- A** Anger
- R** Recklessness
- M** Mood changes

**The Manitoba  
Suicide Line  
1-877-435-7170**



## Bullying and Suicide

Unfortunately, many children are familiar with bullying as they witness it at school, or are victims themselves. Approximately 1 in 7 Canadian children aged 11-16 are victims of bullying. Bullying can take many forms, including: verbal (name calling), social (excluding others from groups), physical (hitting), and cyber bullying (using the internet and other technology to harm others). Bullying can have a number of physical and psychological consequences such as headaches, stomachaches, disrupted sleep, panic attacks, pain, and humiliation. Research has noted that victims of bullying display more depressive symptoms, have higher levels of suicidal ideation, and are more likely to attempt suicide compared to non-victims. Bullying can easily be prevented through education and intervention. By increasing public awareness and by working to prevent bullying in your school or community, one can help save a life. To learn more about bullying and how to prevent bullying, visit:

[www.bullyingcanada.ca](http://www.bullyingcanada.ca)

[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

## Suicide and Suicide Risk in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Youth

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among adolescents. Youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) are at increased risk of bullying, physical assault, and suicide. Compared to their heterosexual counterparts, LGBT youth are twice as likely to attempt suicide. LGBT youth face a number of risk factors that may increase their risk of suicide. These risk factors include: emotional isolation, increased rates of depression and substance abuse, feeling unsafe at school, bullying and harassment, and a lack of support. Research has noted that LGBT youth are often at a disadvantage in regards to the support services available to them within schools. Many teachers and staff within schools are reluctant to discuss issues related to sexual orientation with students. This reluctance may stem from inadequate knowledge, fear of parent's reactions, and job security.

To learn more about the issues facing LGBT youth, or to learn how to support a LGBT youth, contact the Rainbow Resource Centre or visit:

[www.rainbowresourcecentre.org](http://www.rainbowresourcecentre.org)

## CRISIS LINES

Manitoba Suicide Line		1-877-435-7170
Kids Help Phone (National Line)		1-800-668-6868
Bullying Help Line (National Line)		1-888-456-2323
Klinic Crisis Line		(204) 786-8686 or 1-888-322-3019
Klinic Sexual Assault Crisis Line		(204) 786-8631 or 1-888-292-7565
<b>Winnipeg</b>	Seneca Help Line	(204) 942-9276
	MacDonald Youth Services Mobile Crisis Services	(204) 949-4777 or 1-888-383-2776
	Mobile Crisis Service	(204) 940-1781
	Youth Mobile Crisis Team	(204) 949-4777 or 1-888-383-2779
<b>Interlake (also services North Eastman)</b>	Interlake/North Eastman Mental Health Crisis Services (Selkirk, MB.)	(204) 482-5361 or 1-866-427-8628
<b>Brandon</b>	Child and Adolescent Treatment Centre and Crisis Line	(204) 727-3445 or 1-866-403-5459
<b>South Eastman</b>	24 Hr. Crisis Line and Mobile Crisis Service	(204) 326-9276 or 1-888-617-7715
<b>Parkland</b>	Parkland Mental Health Crisis Response Service (Dauphin, MB.)	1-866-332-3030
<b>Norman</b>	On Call Crisis (Flin Flon, MB.)	Daytime: (204) 687-1340 After Hours: (204) 687-7591
	On Call Crisis (The Pas, MB.)	Daytime: (204) 623-9650 After Hours: (204) 623-6431
<b>Burntwood</b>	24 Hr. Crisis Line (Thompson, MB.)	(204) 778-7273
	24 Hr. Cross Lake Crisis Line	(204) 676-3687
<b>Churchill</b>	Churchill Health Centre	(204) 675-8300

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba Ltd.	(204) 786-0987 or 1-800-263-1460
Addictions Foundation of Manitoba	(204) 944-6367
Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre (Winnipeg)	(204) 477-1804
Black Youth Help Line	(204) 253-7475
RAY—Resource Assistance for Youth	(204) 783-5617 or info@rayinc.ca
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre (Winnipeg)	(204) 958-9660
Youth Resource Centre	(204) 925-0300 or 1-800-962-6294
New Directions for Children, Youth, Adults, and Families	(204) 786-7051

\*The Office of the Children's Advocate tries to ensure that contact numbers are accurate at time of publishing; should you find a discrepancy, please notify us so that the correction can be made to our online edition. Thank you.

**Office of the Children's Advocate • 100 - 346 Portage Ave. Winnipeg, MB.  
Phone: (204) 988-7440 • 1-800-263-7146 • www.childrensadvocate.mb.ca**