

Portland-ASAP

Portland Area Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Mission Statement

Portland Area Suicide Awareness and Prevention (Portland ASAP) is an open group of community members and professionals committed to increasing local awareness and understanding of depression and suicide prevention. We feel that information is our best defense against suicide and we work to promote the dissemination of information to raise public awareness of facts surrounding suicide as well as promote our community recourses. Life is invaluable; suicide prevention begins with a caring community.

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Phone Numbers

Ionia County Community
Mental Health Crisis Hotline

1-888-527-1790

Portland-ASAP Group Gaining Strength

The Portland-ASAP Group (Portland Area Suicide Awareness and Prevention) has gained a lot of steam throughout the Summer and Fall seasons. Portland-ASAP is a coalition of community agencies, businesses, churches, and concerned members of the community. Portland-ASAP was started in July of 2004 with about 7 participants and has grown to a core group of about 15 members and growing.

Topics discussed at Portland-ASAP include:

- Prevention efforts
- Awareness programs
- Mental and emotional health

It is the goal of Portland-ASAP to make residents of Portland aware of the very real dangers of suicide and depression and educate them on ways to spot depression and other factors that may lead people to commit suicide.

Warning Signs of Suicide

The strongest and most disturbing signs are verbal - "I can't go on," "Nothing matters any more" or even "I'm thinking of ending it all." Such remarks should **always** be taken seriously.

Other common warning signs include:

- Becoming depressed or withdrawn
- Showing a marked change in behavior, attitudes or appearance
- Behaving Recklessly
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Getting affairs in order and giving away valued possessions
- Suffering a major loss or life change

Protective Factors For Suicide

- Effective clinical care for mental, physical and substance use disorders.
- Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions and support for help seeking.
- Restricted access to highly lethal means of suicide.
- Strong connections to family and community support.
- Support through ongoing medical and mental health care relationships.
- Skills in problem solving, conflict resolution and nonviolent handling of disputes.
- Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support self preservation.

Facts of Life

Every day on average, more than 80 Americans take their own lives, and an estimated 1,500 more attempt suicide. Although rates for teens and young adults appear to be declining, deaths from suicide in these age groups are still more frequent than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia and influenza, and chronic lung disease combined. Americans 65 years and older have higher rates of suicide than any other age group, with the highest rate of suicide occurring among white men over the age of 85.

The Facts:

- Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the U.S. population. In 2000, 28,332 Americans died from suicide, a rate of 10 deaths for every 100,000 people.
- In 1999, the most recent year for which homicide data are available, there were nearly twice as many suicide deaths (29,199) as homicides (16,899).
- Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for adolescents and young adults, and in 1997 accounted for 12 percent of deaths in those aged 10-24.
- Young people age 12-17 who reported alcohol or drug use were more likely to be at risk for suicide, and only 36 percent of young people at risk received treatment or counseling.
- The most common method of suicide for both men and women is by firearms, accounting for 57 percent of all suicides in 1999.
- More than 90 percent of completed suicides occur in individuals with depression or another diagnosable mental or substance abuse disorder.
- People with a parent, sibling, aunt, uncle or grandparent who attempted or died from suicide are at increased risk for suicide and attempts.
- Suicide reporting in the media can contribute to suicide contagion: Newspaper and television reports of suicide have been linked to increases in suicide rates. The degree to which rates increase is a function of the amount, duration and prominence of media coverage of suicide.

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Child Family wellness Counseling Center
First Congressional Church
Grand Ledge Counseling
Ionia County Community Mental Health
Ionia County Health Department
Ionia County Sheriffs Department
Life Guidance Services
Links for A Healthy Community

Portland Area Ministerial Association
Portland Police Department
Portland Public Schools
Portland School Counselors
St. Andrew Lutheran Church
St. Patrick's Church
Two Rivers Counseling Service