Suicide *can* be prevented. While some suicides occur without any outward warning, most people who are suicidal do give advance warnings. You may be able to reduce the likelihood of suicide by loved ones by learning to recognize the signs of someone at risk, taking those signs seriously, and then knowing how to respond to them.

**GENERAL WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE INCLUDE:**

1. Observable signs of serious depression:
   - Unrelenting low mood
   - Pessimism
   - Hopelessness
   - Desperation
   - Signs of Anxiety (including panic, insomnia and agitation)
   - Withdrawal from usual activities or loved ones
   - Sleep problems

2. Increased alcohol and/or other drug use.

3. Recent impulsiveness and taking unnecessary risks, reckless behavior.

4. Threatening suicide or expressing a strong wish to die.

5. Making a plan:
   - Giving away prized possessions
   - Sudden or impulsive purchase of a firearm
   - Obtaining other means of killing oneself such as poisons or medications

6. Unexpected rage or anger or any other dramatic mood change.

“The emotional crisis (or crises) that usually precede suicide is often recognizable and treatable. Although most depressed people are not suicidal, most suicidal people are depressed. Serious depression can be manifested in obvious sadness, but often it is rather expressed as a loss of pleasure or withdrawal from activities that had been enjoyable. One can help prevent suicide through early recognition and treatment of depression and other psychiatric illnesses.”

Larry Berman, Executive Director, American Society of Suicidology
• If a friend or loved one is threatening, talking about or making plans for suicide, these are signs of an acute crisis.

• People who talk about suicide do attempt suicide. Take them seriously. It is a myth that people who talk about suicide won’t attempt suicide.

• Do not leave the person alone.

• Remove all alcohol from the person or the home.

• Remove from the vicinity any firearms, drugs or sharp objects that could be used for suicide.

• Take the person to an emergency room or walk-in clinic at a psychiatric hospital.

• If a psychiatric facility is unavailable, go to your nearest hospital or clinic.

If the above options are unavailable, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or 1-800-SUICIDE