IF SUICIDE IS IMMINENT – TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED WARNING SIGNS
- A severe drop in school or work performance
- Change in personality and/or appearance
- Having mood swings
- Losing interest in things once cared about
- Having trouble concentrating or thinking clearly
- Changing normal routines – eating, sleeping
- Withdrawal from social contacts – friends, family
- Deep sadness, feeling hopeless, worthless, overwhelming sense of shame or guilt
- Doing reckless or self-destructive things
- Increase alcohol or drug use

YOU MAY HAVE SUSPECTED
- Talking about suicide and/or making suicide statements such as: “sometimes I wish I could just go to sleep and never wake up,” “you won’t have to worry about me much longer,” “it would be better if I wasn’t here,” “the family would be better off without me,” “I want to die,” or “I don’t care anymore.”
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Saying goodbye to family and friends without explanation
- Giving away personal belongings or getting affairs in order with no logical explanation
- Preoccupied with death, dying, or violence
- Getting the means to take one’s own life, such as buying a gun or stockpiling pills
- Writing songs, poems, or letters about death, separation, and loss

BUT NOW IT MAY BE IMMINENT – DO NOT WAIST TIME – ACT

Do not leave the individual alone or out of sight

Find out whether the person is in danger of acting on suicide. Be sensitive. Do not be judgmental. Do not over react. Stay calm, but ask direct questions such as:
- How are you coping with what’s been happening in your life?
- Do you ever feel like just giving up?
- Are you thinking about dying?
- Are you thinking about hurting yourself?
- Are you thinking about suicide?
• Have you thought about how or when you’d do it?
• Do you have a gun or drugs?

If there is time seek assistance from a friend or family member to come immediately. Try not to handle the situation alone. Remember, do not leave the person alone or out of sight.

**IF WARRANTED, IMMEDIATELY:**

- Call 911
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255 to reach a trained counselor. Use the same number and press “1” to reach the Veterans Crisis Line
- Call the Colorado Crisis and Support Line (844) 493-8255
- If you have assistance, and think you can do so safely, take the person to the nearest hospital emergency room

**OFFER SUPPORT**

- Be respectful and acknowledge the person’s feelings. Don’t try to talk the person out of their feelings or express shock. Not respecting how the person feels can shut down communication.
- Don’t be patronizing or judgmental.
- Listen and offer reassurance that you are there and you care.

You are not responsible for preventing someone from taking his or her own life – but your intervention may help the person see that other options are available to stay safe and get treatment.

**REFERENCES, RESOURCES TO CONTACT & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Suicide & Suicide Thoughts – Mayo Clinic (http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/suicide/in-depth/suicide/ARY-20044707)
- Suicide & Suicide Thoughts: Teenagers – Mayo Clinic (http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/suicide/in-depth/suicide/ART-20044707?pg=2)
- 10 Things Parents Can Do to Prevent Suicide (https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/Ten-Things-Parents-Can-Do-to-Prevent-Suicide.aspx)