**Student in Crisis (Suicide) – Quick Guide**

**College Student Suicide**

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for college students, according to the Center for Disease Control, behind only vehicular accidents. Sadly, so many suicides are preventable. And the number one cause of suicide for college student suicides (and all suicides) is untreated depression. A survey by the National College Health Association revealed that 7.1 percent of polled students had seriously considered suicide within the last 12 months. Not all of these students will actually attempt suicide, according to NCHS statistics, but that does not mean they are do not need help. Suicidal thoughts, even without follow-through, can invade and other aspects of life and are indicative of long-term depression.

Depression sufferers and their peers need to communicate. Isolation creates more danger, CDC studies show.

“Unwillingness to seek help because of the stigma attached to mental health and substance abuse disorders or to suicidal thoughts” is a key risk factor for suicide, according to the CDC report.

This stigma is harmful because it discourages people from seeking the help and services they need. Many fear being branded as someone with a mental disorder. This leads to a vicious cycle of deterioration.

In a 2017 survey of MCC students, the most frequently experienced conditions in the last six months were depression (35%) and anxiety (44%).

Going to college can be a difficult transition period in which students may feel lost, lonely, confused, anxious, inadequate, and stressed. And these problems may lead to depression. And again, untreated depression is the number one cause for suicide.

Studies indicate that college students who are suicidal are quiet, reserved, depressed, and socially isolated, and thus it is up to all of us to try to identify the suicide warning signs and get help for them.

Additionally, a survey indicates that one in five college students believe that their depression level is higher than it should be, yet only 6% say that they would seek help.

So if a depressed or suicidal student is withdrawn and is reluctant to get treatment, what will happen?

The student may die by suicide.

So if you see some one that needs help, reach out. Ask how they are doing. Be open. Be honest. Get help for them. And follow up.

**Know the Signs**

* Expressed hopelessness
* Easily agitated, extremely disruptive
* Increased use of drugs or alcohol
* Giving away belongings
* Withdrawal
* No sense of purpose
* Reckless behavior

**Assess for Suicide**

* Ask directly if the student has thoughts of killing or hurting themselves
* Ask if they have a plan to do it
* Ask if they have a method/means to do it

**Respond & Give Resources**

If the student answers **YES TO MORE THAN ONE** of the suicide assessment questions, call:

* **MCC College Police** – ext. 2-2222
* If off campus, call local police – **911**

If the student answers yes to only the first suicide assessment question(s), refer them to:

* MCC Advocacy or DSS Counselor
* Call [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/) - 1-800-273-8255
* BoysTown National Hotline - 24 hours / 7 days
* **1-800-448-3000**
* TTY - National Hotline

**1-800-448-1833**

* Contact the [Crisis Text Line](https://www.crisistextline.org/) by texting TALK to 741741.

**To Recap**

* Assess for risk of suicide or self-harm
* Listen non-judgmentally
* Provide reassurance
* Encourage appropriate professional help, self-help and other support strategies