



# SPEA

Suicide Prevention  
Education Alliance

## MYTH vs. FACT ABOUT SUICIDE

MYTH	FACT	ACTION PLAN
Young people don't kill themselves.	Suicide is the number three cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 and 24.	Take the issue of youth suicide seriously.
People who complete suicide do not warn others.	Most, if not all people who kill themselves have given definite clues of their intentions.	Be aware of the danger signals for suicide.
People who talk about suicide are only trying to get attention. They won't really do it.	Few complete suicide without first letting someone know how they feel. Over 70% of those who do threaten suicide either make an attempt or complete the act.	Listen closely to talk of suicide, take it seriously, and get help!
Once someone has decided to complete suicide, nothing can stop him/her. Suicidal people clearly want to die.	Most suicidal individuals don't want death; they just want the pain of living to stop.	Help the person get treatment—if he/she refuses, get help anyway.
Young people who attempt suicide once won't ever try it again.	People who have attempted suicide are very likely to try again. Nearly half of all people who complete suicide have made at least one previous attempt.	Be aware that a previous attempt is one of the danger signals for suicide.
When a person shows improvement in mood, after a severe depression, the danger of suicide is over.	The appearance of "cheering up" may only indicate that the decision to end one's life has been made.	Remain involved and aware.
Talking about suicide will put the idea into the head of someone who is suffering from depression.	Discussing suicide openly helps the person sort through problems and generally provides a sense of relief and understanding.	Don't be afraid to ask directly, "Are you thinking of ending your life?"
The only people who attempt suicide are insane people.	Suicidal people are distressed, and often depressed, but not out of touch with reality.	Be aware that suicidal people are as sane as anyone else, but are in great pain.
Suicidal people just need to "look on the bright side."	Those contemplating suicide are unable to see hope in what they consider to be a hopeless situation.	Listen with concern and care to their feelings; avoid dismissing their pain.