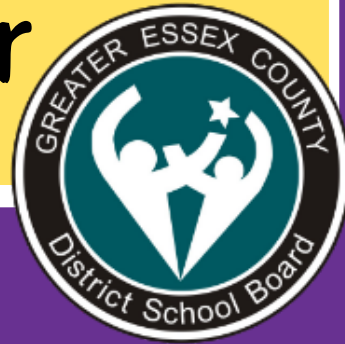


Family & Caregiver Mental Health and Well-Being Newsletter

Presented By the GECDSD Social Work and Attendance Counselling Team

GREATER Together

September's Topic: Suicide Prevention



September is World Suicide Prevention Month

September 10 is World Suicide Prevention Day

DID YOU KNOW?

Suicide is the second leading cause of death amongst youth and young adults.

Research has shown that talking about suicide DOES NOT increase a child's risk of suicide.



Know the Signs



- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Hopelessness about the future
- Talking or writing about suicide or wanting to die
- Conveying that they are feeling overwhelmed, helpless or out of control
- Goodbye gestures such as giving away belongings
- Changes in behaviour - poor grades, acting out, risk-taking
- Problematic or increased substance use
- Inattention to hygiene
- Negative mood or signs of depression - sadness, irritability, less enjoyment of previously enjoyed activities, difficulty sleeping or eating

If your student has a realistic suicide plan and intends to act on it right away or has already made an attempt, this is a mental health emergency. **DO NOT** leave your student alone. Immediately contact the **Suicide Crisis Helpline** by calling **9-8-8**, go to the nearest emergency room of your hospital or contact emergency services by calling **9-1-1**



Find local events for Suicide Prevention month [here](#).

Raising the topic of suicide with your student will make it easier for them to confide in you if they are having trouble in this area.

- Start the conversation: Begin by asking how your student is feeling. You might share some observations and ask questions, like "I've noticed you are spending a lot of time in your room and you seem sad. Are you okay?"
- Listen: It's important to give your student a chance to respond to your question. You might say, "Tell me more about that. It sounds important. I'm starting to understand better."
- Directly ask about suicide. If your student says "no", trust your instincts and follow up if needed.
- Respond: If your student says "yes", stay calm and reassure them that you will help them through this.

What to do if you are concerned

- Work with your student's school to set-up supports. Caring professionals are there to help
- Consult with your student's family doctor
- Try to make time for connection and low stress activities with your student each day
- Prioritize your own wellness so you can be there for them
- Educate yourself on local resources for help. Find more [here](#)



The GECDSD considers mental health and well-being to be a crucial part of our community's success. Our commitment is to provide a safe and supportive environment at the GECDSD. For more information about this commitment and for more resources check out publicboard.ca/mentalhealth or scan here