



*Sedgwick County...*  
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COMCARE

**FACTS&details**

about Sedgwick County Government

August 2010

## Suicide Myths and Facts

### **Myth**

People who talk about suicide are just trying to get attention.

### **Fact**

People who die by suicide usually talk about it first. They are in pain and often reach out for help because they do not know what to do and have lost hope. Always take talk about suicide seriously. Always.

### **Myth**

People who talk about wanting to die by suicide do not try to kill themselves.

### **Fact**

People who talk about wanting to die by suicide often succeed in killing themselves.

### **Myth**

Suicide always occurs without any warning signs.

### **Fact**

There are almost always warning signs: depression, out-of-character mood swings, talking about suicide, previous attempts, etc.

### **Myth**

Once people decide to die by suicide, there is nothing you can do to stop them.

### **Fact**

Suicide can be prevented. Most people who are suicidal do not want to die; they just want to stop their pain.

### **Myth**

Suicide only strikes people of a certain gender, race, financial status, age, etc.

### **Fact**

Suicide and the symptoms leading to suicide can strike anyone.

### **Myth**

People who attempt suicide and survive will not attempt suicide again.

### **Fact**

People who attempt suicide and survive often will make additional attempts, especially if the root problem is not addressed.

### **Myth**

People who attempt suicide are crazy.

### **Fact**

People who attempt suicide are in pain, and probably have a chemical imbalance in their brain.

### **Myth**

People who attempt suicide are weak.

### **Fact**

People who attempt suicide are in pain and probably have a chemical imbalance in their brain. Many people who are very "strong" die by suicide.

### **Myth**

People who talk about suicide are trying to manipulate others.

### **Fact**

People who talk about suicide are in pain and need help. And telling them that they "just want something" or "are trying to manipulate" is both insensitive and ignorant. People often talk about suicide before attempting suicide. Always take talk about suicide seriously. Always.

### **Myth**

When people become suicidal, they will always be suicidal.

### **Fact**

Most people are suicidal for a limited period of time. However, suicidal feelings can recur.



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Public Safety

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### **Myth**

People who are suicidal want to die.

### **Fact**

The vast majority of people who are suicidal do not want to die. They are in pain and they want to stop the pain.

### **Myth**

You should never ask people who are suicidal if they are thinking about suicide or if they have thought about a method, because talking about it will give them the idea.

### **Fact**

Asking people if they are thinking about suicide does not give them the idea for suicide. And it is important to talk about suicide with people who are suicidal because you will learn more about their mindset and intentions, and allow them to diffuse some of the tension that is causing their suicidal feelings.

### **Myth**

When people who are suicidal feel better, they are no longer suicidal.

### **Fact**

Sometimes suicidal people feel better because they have decided to die by suicide, and may feel a sense of relief that the pain soon will be over. Talk to them first!

### **Myth**

Young people never think about suicide, they have their entire lives ahead of them.

### **Fact**

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for young people age 15 to 24. Sometimes children under the age of 10 die by suicide.

### **Myth**

There is little correlation between alcohol or drug abuse and suicide.

### **Fact**

Often, people who die by suicide are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **Myth**

People who are suicidal do not seek help.

### **Fact**

Many people who are suicidal reach out for help. Are you listening?

Source: [www.suicide.org](http://www.suicide.org)

### **For questions about suicide and suicide prevention:**

Contact COMCARE of Sedgwick County at 660-7500 or visit the Sedgwick County website at [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org).

COMCARE of Sedgwick County's Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Services take phone calls and walk-ins 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts or conversations, call 316-660-7500 or stop by 934 N. Water in Wichita. Services are confidential.

Lists of services and support groups for survivors of suicide are available by visiting the COMCARE and Suicide Prevention Coalition on the Sedgwick County website at [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org).