



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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SUICIDE: KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS--"WITH HELP COMES HOPE"

PATTY RITCHIE February 3, 2012

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Or [click this link](#) for more information.

When someone takes their own life, friends and family often realize only afterwards that their loved one was telling them they were at risk for suicide. Too many family members spend the rest of their lives wishing they'd listened when they heard what often turns out to be a cry for help.

I'm including this information on my website at the request of a constituent who, unfortunately, has had her life touched by the tragedy of suicide—the 10th leading cause of death in America. We can help change that statistic. Here's how:

KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself.
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun.
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated.
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
- Displaying extreme mood swings.

KNOW WHAT TO DO

Ask the person directly if he or she (1) is having suicidal thoughts, (2) has a plan to do so, and (3) has access to lethal means:

“Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

“Have you ever tried to hurt yourself before?”

“Do you think you might try to hurt yourself today?”

“Have you thought of ways that you might hurt yourself?”

“Do you have pills/weapons in the house?”

It's important to know that asking these questions *won't* increase a person's suicidal thoughts. It *will* give you information that indicates how strongly the person has thought about harming him- or herself. Then call the Lifeline to obtain help before a tragedy occurs: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION.](#)