

## Resources

From immediate suicidal crisis to information about mental health, crisis centers are equipped to take a wide range of calls.

Some of the reasons to call a crisis line are:

- To speak with someone who cares.
- If you feel you might be in danger of hurting yourself.
- To speak to a crisis worker about someone you're concerned about.

## National Suicide Prevention Lifelines

**National Suicide Prevention Lifelines such as 1-800-273-TALK and 1-800-SUICIDE.** These twenty-four hour, toll-free suicide prevention services are available to anyone in suicidal crisis and the call is free and confidential. **Call 1-800-784-2433 or go to [www.hopeline.com](http://www.hopeline.com) to be connected with a crisis center in your area.**

## Local Crisis Lines

Scranton Counseling Center: (570) 348-6100

Northwestern Human Services: (570) 282-1732

Dial 911 for immediate assistance



## Website Resources

Center for Mental Health Services Knowledge Exchange Network/SAMHSA:

[www.mentalhealth.org](http://www.mentalhealth.org)

Mental Health America:

[www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net)

Mental Health Association in Pennsylvania

Children's Page: [www.pachildrensnews.org](http://www.pachildrensnews.org)

National Alliance on Mental Illness:

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

National Institute of Mental Health:

[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

Mental Health Matters:

[www.mental-health-matters.com](http://www.mental-health-matters.com)

Pennsylvania Youth Suicide Prevention

Initiative: [payspi.org](http://payspi.org)

## Mental Health Information and Advocacy



Local (570)342-7762

Toll Free 1-877-315-6855

[www.theadvocacyalliance.org](http://www.theadvocacyalliance.org)

**National Alliance for Mental Illness  
Scranton Area Chapter  
(570)342-1047**

[www.namipascranton.org](http://www.namipascranton.org)

**Lackawanna-Susquehanna  
Counties Mental Health/  
Mental Retardation Program  
(570)346-5741**

[www.lsmhmr.org](http://www.lsmhmr.org)

This information is provided as a complement to the Lackawanna County Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Grant Program.

**Like physical health,  
mental health  
is important.**



You recognize when your child needs physical health care. Can you recognize a problem with your child's mental health as well?

If you suspect you, your child, or a friend is experiencing depression this brochure will help guide you in getting help.



**A Mental Health  
Guide For  
Young Adults  
and Their Parents**





## Mental Health is Important

Mental health is how people think, feel, and act. It affects how people handle stress, enjoy life, relate to one another, and make decisions. Sometimes life events affect our mental health, sometimes our brain biology affects our mental health. Whatever the reason, good mental health is just as important as physical health and like physical illnesses, mental illnesses are medical conditions that are real and treatable.

Everyone has bad days and bad moods, but if a 'bad mood' lasts longer than two weeks you may be experiencing depression.

### What Makes Depression Different from Just Feeling Sad?

Depression is a serious medical condition that affects your body, mood, and thoughts. Teens and young adults with a depressive disorder cannot just 'snap out of it' anymore than someone could just snap out of diabetes.

When a mental health disorder such as depression goes unrecognized it cannot be appropriately treated. Systematic screening has been advocated as a means of improving detection, treatment, and outcomes of depression as well as improvement in overall health.

Screenings for individuals who suffer from depression or who are at risk for attempting suicide does save lives.

### How Do You Know if it is a Depressive Disorder or Just a Young Adult Being Moody?

Pay attention to the following warning signs and symptoms of adolescents' or young adults' depression.

#### Feeling:

- Sad, empty and hopeless for no reason, and these feelings last more than 2 weeks.
- Very irritable or angry most of the time
- Overreacting to things.
- Worthless or guilty often.
- Anxious or worried often.
- Unable to get over a loss or death of someone important.
- Extremely fearful or having unexplained fears.
- Constantly concerned about physical problems or physical appearance.
- Frightened that his or her mind either is controlled or is out of control.

#### Changes:

- Showing declining performance in school.
- Losing interest in things once enjoyed.
- Experiencing unexplained changes in sleeping or eating patterns.
- Avoiding friends or family and wanting to be alone all the time.
- Daydreaming too much and not completing tasks.
- Feeling life is too hard to handle.
- Hearing voices that cannot be explained.

#### Experience:

- Poor concentration and is unable to think straight or make up his or her mind.
- An inability to sit still or focus attention.
- Worry about being harmed, hurting others, or doing something "bad".
- A need to wash, clean things, or perform certain routines hundreds of times a day, in order to avoid an unsubstantiated danger.
- Racing thoughts that are almost too fast to follow.
- Persistent nightmares.
- Experiencing suicidal thoughts.

### Why Hesitate?



- Sometimes the stigma of seeking mental health treatment may stop someone from seeking the help they need. **It is important you understand that depression is a medical illness with physical causes, similar to diabetes or asthma.**
- Belief that the youth may be experiencing 'normal' adolescence. Clinical depression is not a normal part of life at any time. **Depression will cause ongoing problems in school, home, and with friends if not properly treated.**
- Hope that the youth will just get over it. **Depression, if left untreated, can result in suicide.**

### Next Steps...

**If you have any concerns about depression, ask your doctor for a screening. It is a series of questions and only takes a few minutes.**

**For families:** Be available to your child. If you suspect your child has depression now is the time to make sure your child does not have access to firearms. (Firearms were the most commonly used method of suicide for Lackawanna County youth.)

If treatment is needed a variety of effective treatments are available. To find the right services you can do the following:

- Seek referrals from professionals such as your family physician.
- Call your insurance company for a list of approved therapists.
- Ask questions about treatments and services.
- Talk to other families in their communities.
- Find family network organizations.