

Montana Medicaid and Healthy Montana Kids *Plus* **MESSENGER**

Teen Suicide

**IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS AND WANT HELP,
CALL THE MONTANA SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE, 24/7, AT:
1-800-273-TALK
(1-800-273-8255)
OR TEXT "MT" TO 741-741**

Many teen suicides can be prevented if warning signs are detected and there is an appropriate intervention.

The reasons

No two teenagers are alike, but there are some common reasons they consider suicide.

Many teens who attempt suicide do so during an acute crisis in reaction to some conflict with peers or parents.

Such conflicts are common among teens, but those who attempt suicide are particularly reactive to them because they:

- Have a long-standing history of problems at home or school
- Suffer from low self-esteem
- Believe no one cares
- Are depressed
- Abuse alcohol or drugs
- Have experienced other acutely stressful events, such as an unwanted pregnancy, trouble with the law, or not meeting high parental expectations

Signs of trouble

Research shows that 9 out of 10 individuals who attempt suicide have a history of mental illness or substance abuse, making these extremely important risk factors.

The warning signs include:

- Noticeable changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Unexplained or unusually severe, violent, or rebellious behavior
- Withdrawal from family or friends
- Sexual promiscuity, truancy, and vandalism
- Drastic personality change
- Agitation, restlessness, distress, or panicky behavior
- Talking or writing about committing suicide, even jokingly
- Giving away prized possessions
- Doing worse in school



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HELP Members Update

On January 1, 2016, Montana added a new Medicaid plan that included more parents and adults. This new plan is called the HELP Plan. Blue Cross/Blue Shield managed much of the HELP Plan for the first two years. At the beginning of 2018, BCBS management ended and Montana Medicaid took over that duty. In late 2017, Montana Medicaid mailed letters and new membership cards to HELP Plan members whose plans were under BCBS management. The letters said Montana Medicaid will now oversee the premium payments for members who make payments. The benefits under the Montana HELP Plan have not changed, and members may still receive health services from any provider that accepts Montana Medicaid.

How to help

If you notice any of these warning signs in your child, you should take these steps:

Offer help and listen. Don't ignore the problem. What you've noticed may be the teen's way of crying out for help. Offer support, understanding and compassion. Talk about feelings and the behaviors you have seen that cause you to feel concerned. You don't need to solve the problem or give advice. Sometimes just caring, listening, and being nonjudgmental gives all the understanding necessary

Take talk of suicide seriously, and use the word "suicide." Talking about suicide doesn't cause suicide-but avoiding what's on the teen's mind may make that teen feel truly alone and uncared for. Tell the youngster that together you can develop a strategy to make things better. Ask if your child has a plan for suicide. If he or she does, then seek professional help immediately.

Remove lethal weapons from your home, such as guns. Lock up pills, and be aware of the location of kitchen utensils, as well as ropes, which can be used as means to commit suicide.

Get professional help. A teen at risk of suicide needs professional help. Even when the immediate crisis passes, the risk of suicidal behavior remains high until new ways of dealing and coping with problems are learned.

Don't be afraid to take your child to a hospital emergency room if it is clear the teen is planning suicide. You may not be able to handle the situation on your own.

(This article adapted from an article by Youth Connections, Helena, MT.)

10 Warning Signs that a Vulnerable Adult May Need Help

Adult Protective Services (APS) is a social services program with the state of Montana's Senior and Long-Term Care Division. Adult Protective Services works with older adults and adults with disabilities who need assistance because of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or financial wrongdoing. In Montana, APS receives and investigates reports of harm done to these vulnerable adults. APS and a wide variety of professionals work closely with older adults and adults with disabilities to maximize safety and independence.

The Federal Administration for Community Living has identified warning signs of which we should all be aware. Changes in physical and mental abilities that may occur with age can be difficult to detect—for older adults and their family members, friends, and caregivers too. To help determine when an older adult or adult with disabilities may need assistance in the home, there are 10 things to look for. Any one of the following behaviors may indicate the need to act. It is also important to inform the older adult's physician of these physical or psychological behavior changes.



Back to School Health Questions!

How do illnesses spread among school children?

Colds and flu are typically spread from person to person from respiratory droplets. Viruses enter the body through the eyes, mouth or nose. A sneeze can spray thousands of infectious particles into the air at 200 miles per hour, and they can travel 3 feet. If children don't cover their mouths and spray other children or an object, such as a doorknob, and other children touch it and wipe their noses or mouths, they're more likely to get sick.

What's the best way to help my child prevent picking up an illness at school?

It's important to teach kids to wash their hands before eating and after playing outside and using the restroom. Hand washing is one of the best ways to prevent illness. Parents can enforce this at home, and it can be reinforced at school. Talk to your kids about covering their mouths with a tissue when they cough and sneeze. Consider sending them to school with a bottle of antiviral hand gel and instructions to use it often. Also, the CDC recommends the flu vaccine for kids ages 6 months and older.

Zamosky, Lisa, from "Ask the School Nurse: Parents' Top 9 Questions for Back to School," WebMD, Aug 9, 2011.

- 1) Changed eating habits, resulting in losing weight, having no appetite, or missing meals;
- 2) Neglected personal hygiene, including wearing dirty clothes and having body odor, bad breath, neglected nails and teeth, or sores on the skin;
- 3) Neglected surroundings, with a noticeable change in cleanliness and sanitation;
- 4) Exhibited inappropriate behavior, such as being unusually loud, quiet, paranoid, or agitated, or making phone calls at all hours;
- 5) Changed relationship patterns, causing friends and neighbors to express concerns;
- 6) Physical problems, such as burns or injury marks, which may result from general weakness, forgetfulness, or misuse of alcohol or prescribed medications;
- 7) Decreased participation in activities that were once important, such as bridge or a book club, dining with friends, or attending religious services;
- 8) Forgetfulness, resulting in unopened mail, piling of newspapers, not filling prescriptions, or missing appointments;
- 9) Mishandled finances, such as not paying bills, losing money, paying bills twice or more, or hiding money;
- 10) Unusual purchases, such as buying more than one subscription to the same magazine, entering an unusually large number of contests, or increasing purchases from television advertisements.

It is important for all Montana citizens to choose where we live and participate in our communities. As we work together, and watch out for each other, our communities gain strength.

If you feel someone in your community needs help please call Adult Protective Services at 1-844-277-9300 or go to our website www.aps.mt.gov. One of our staff along with our many partners in Senior and Long-Term Care, are nearby to help.

Home and Community Based Services for Adults with Severe Disabling Mental Illness

The Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Severe Disabling Mental Illness (SDMI) waiver is a recovery program that can serve up to 357 people a year. This program provides specialized services in addition to Medicaid services. HCBS SDMI waiver services are meant to keep the Medicaid eligible member in the community and out of a higher level of care such as the Montana State Hospital, or a nursing home.

To be eligible for the HCBS SDMI waiver program, members must:

- be eligible for Medicaid;
- be 18 years or older;
- meet a nursing home level of care as determined by Mountain Pacific Quality Health;
- have a qualifying SDMI diagnosis as determined by Mountain Pacific Quality Health; and
- **not** have dementia.

Easy Summer Snack Ideas

BLUEBERRY-LEMON SORBET

(low cholesterol, low fat, low saturated fat, and low sodium)

Ingredients:

- 3 cups fresh or frozen blueberries, thawed
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor; blend until smooth. Place berry mixture in freezer-safe container and freeze until hard, about 1 hour. Let stand at room temperature about 10 minutes before serving.

NOT recommended for children under 1 year old.

(makes 5 servings of ½ cup each)

FROZEN GRAPES

Wash and separate fresh seedless grapes and freeze overnight in freezer-safe container. Give small servings for a cool, refreshing and healthy snack. **NOT** recommended for children under 5 years old.



To remain eligible for the HCBS SDMI waiver program, members must:

- be in contact with his or her waiver case management team monthly;
- meet face to face with his or her waiver case management team quarterly; and
- set goals and review them quarterly.

Statewide services available through the HCBS SDMI waiver program include:

Adult Day Health	Homemaker Chore	Prevocational Services
Case Management	Life Coach	Residential Habilitation
Community Transition	Non-Medical Transportation	Respite
Consultative Clinical and Therapeutic Services	Nursing	Self-Directed
Environmental Accessibility Adaptations	Pain and Symptom Management	Personal Assistant Services
Habilitation Aide	Peer Support	Specially Trained Attendant
Health and Wellness	Personal Assistance Services	Specialized Medical Equipment
Homemaker	Personal Emergency Response System	Supported Employment

If you, or someone you know is interested in being screened for HCBS SDMI waiver services, contact Mountain Pacific Quality Health (MPQH) at 1-800-219-7035. More information about this waiver program can be found on our website at:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/mentalhealthservices/severedisablingmentalillness-sdmi-homeandcommunitybased-hcbs-waiverprogram>. Medicaid eligible members or providers with program questions may email Jennifer Fox, Program Manager at JenFox@mt.gov or call 444-4927. If you are currently enrolled in the HCBS SDMI waiver program and have questions, please contact your current waiver case management team.

Key Contacts

Medicaid/HMK Plus Member Help Line

For questions regarding benefits copayments, or Passport to Health:

1-800-362-8312

[MT Healthcare Programs](#)

Nurse First Advice Line

For questions when you are sick, hurt, or have health questions.

1-800-330-7847

[MT NurseFirst](#)

Montana Relay Service

For the deaf or hard of hearing.

1-800-253-4091 or 711

Montana Public Assistance Help Line

For eligibility questions.

1-888-706-1535

[MT Public Assistance](#)

Transportation Center

For questions regarding travel or approval. **Call before you travel or you may not be reimbursed.**

1-800-292-7114