

# Brown County Schools Suicide Prevention Policy

## Appendix A

### WARNING SIGNS for SUICIDE

#### Feelings

- Hopelessness: feeling like things are bad and won't get any better
- Fear of losing control, going crazy, harming himself/herself or others
- Helplessness: a belief that there's nothing that can be done to make life better
- Worthlessness: feeling like an awful person and that would be better off if he/she were dead
- Hating himself/herself, feeling guilty or ashamed
- Being extremely sad and lonely
- Feeling anxious, worried, or angry all the time

#### Actions

- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Talking or writing about death or destruction
- Aggression: getting into fights or having arguments with other people
- Recklessness: doing risky or dangerous things

#### Changes

- **Personality:** behaving like a different person, becoming withdrawn, tired all the time, not caring about anything, or becoming more talkative or outgoing
- **Behavior:** can't concentrate on school or regular tasks
- **Sleeping pattern:** sleeping all the time or not being able to sleep at all, or waking up in the middle of the night or early in the morning and not being able to get back to sleep
- **Eating habits:** loss of appetite and/or overeating and gaining weight
- **Losing interest** in friends, hobbies, and appearance or in activities or sports previously enjoyed
- **Sudden improvement** after a period of being down or withdrawn

#### Threats

- Statements like "How long does it take to bleed to death?"
- Threats like "I won't be around much longer" or "You won't be my friend if you tell!"
- Plans like giving away favorite things, studying about ways to die, obtaining a weapon or a stash of pills: the risk is very high if a person has a plan and the way to do it.
- Suicide attempts like overdosing, wrist cutting

#### Situations

- Getting into trouble at school, at home, or with the law
- Recent loss through death, divorce, or separation; the breakup of a relationship; losing an opportunity or a dream; losing self-esteem
- Changes in life that feel overwhelming
- Being exposed to suicide or the death of a peer under any circumstances

*From the Life Lines Curriculum, (Hazelden, 2011).*