

## WHAT IS THE STAR-CENTER?

Services for Teens at Risk (STAR-Center) was founded in 1986 by a Pennsylvania General Assembly subcommittee to investigate teen suicide. Since its inception, the STAR-Center's outpatient clinic has assessed and treated more than 7,800 adolescents who were at risk for suicide.

The STAR-Center specializes in preventing and treating suicidal behaviors, depression, and anxiety in teens and pre-teens through clinical services, educational outreach, professional training, support groups, and research efforts.



### STAR-CENTER WESTERN PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE AND CLINIC OF UPMC

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## STAR-CENTER SERVICES FOR TEENS AT RISK

A specialty clinical, training, and research program of Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC



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of UPMC

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## RECOGNIZING DEPRESSION

Suicide among teenagers has seen a dramatic rise in the past few decades. One way to combat teen suicide is to learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of depression.

Everyone has the blues now and then, and teenagers are no exception. But depression is much more severe than an occasional low mood. Adolescent depression is a chronic condition that often is linked to difficulties in school and personal relationships, drug and alcohol abuse, and/or suicide attempts or completed suicide by friends.

## LEARN TO RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

- inability to enjoy things that were once fun
- changes in sleep habits
- sad, low, or irritable mood
- difficulty concentrating
- withdrawal from family and friends
- feelings of guilt
- thoughts of death or suicide
- low self-esteem

If a teenager has shown these symptoms for two or more weeks, he or she may be suffering from depression. Without treatment, symptoms can last for weeks, months, or years. Or worse — he or she may see suicide as the only way out.

## TURN TO STAR FOR HELP

Teens and pre-teens who are at risk for suicide may be eligible for treatment at the STAR-Center.

## WHAT WE OFFER

### Assessment and Outpatient Treatment

Complete psychiatric evaluation, risk assessment, and comprehensive treatment program. Outpatient treatment with cognitive behavior therapy and/or pharmacotherapy for youth ages seven to eighteen with depression, anxiety, or suicidal behavior.

### Intensive Outpatient Program

The Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) is for teens who require a higher level of care than weekly individual therapy. Teens in the IOP attend three group sessions per week where they are provided with support and learn Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skills.

### Educational Support Group

Psychoeducational group for parents of teens with mood disorders.

### Community Awareness Education

STAR-Center offers on-site training programs and workshops designed specifically for school personnel, community organizations, and mental health agencies and groups.

### Postvention Activities

STAR-Center consults with communities and schools immediately following a suicide to help implement support services for students and faculty. This type of action is known as postvention because it happens after the incident.

### Survivors of Suicide

This support group is for family members who have lost a loved one to suicide. The group provides a safe environment for survivors to voice the painful feelings that suicide leaves in its wake.

### Children's Grief Group

This grief support group provides children who have lost someone to suicide the opportunity to share their experiences with others who have lost family members. The group leaders help children learn how to express their grief.

## OTHER RESOURCES

STAR-Center provides an array of educational materials about teen depression and suicide for families, educators, and professionals. The titles are listed below. Manuals may be downloaded at no charge by going to our website at [www.starcenter.pitt.edu](http://www.starcenter.pitt.edu) or you may purchase bound copies of the manuals. The order form can also be found on the website.

### For Families:

- *Child and Adolescent Anxiety: A Handbook for Families*
- *Living With Depression: A Survival Manual for Families*
- *Teen Handbook on Depression*
- *Understanding and Coping With Bipolar Illness: A Survival Manual for Families*

### For Professionals:

- *Postvention Standards Manual: A Guide for a School's Response in the Aftermath of Sudden Death*
- *Cognitive Therapy Treatment Manual for Depressed and Suicidal Youth*
- *Emotion Regulation, Interpersonal Effectiveness, and Distress Tolerance Skills for Adolescents: A Treatment Manual*
- *Survivors of Suicide: A Support Group Leader's Handbook*

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[www.starcenter.pitt.edu](http://www.starcenter.pitt.edu)

## HOW TO REACH US

### STAR-Center Outreach

Phone: 412-864-3346 (from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.)  
Fax: 412-246-5965

### STAR-Center Outpatient Clinic

Phone: 412-246-5619 (from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.)  
Fax: 412-246-5610

In an emergency, or evenings, weekends, and holidays, call the re:solve Crisis Network at **1-888-7-YOU CAN (1-888-796-8226)**.