

Rate of Suicide Calls To Police Spikes as Holiday Approaches

A joint press conference of the Durham Police Department and The Durham Center on December 12, 2008 brought attention to a recent spike in suicide calls. As of the press conference, seven suicides had occurred in Durham County within a span of about six weeks. In previous years the rate of suicides was about two per month.

DPD maintains a close working relationship with The Durham Center - the manager of Durham County's publically-funded mental health, development disability and substance abuse services. An outcome of the partnership is the development of a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program in 2007 that teaches police officers how to respond appropriately to individuals in mental health and substance abuse crisis.

The Durham Center recently launched a new Mobile Crisis Team service that is available to any Durham citizen experiencing a mental health or chemical dependency crisis. The round-the-clock service provides initial support and triage via telephone and a Mobile Crisis Team visit, if necessary. The number is **(919)560-7100** or **1-800-510-9132**.

Suicide Warning Signs

Persons displaying one of more of these signs should reach out for help:

- Threatening to hurt/kill oneself; talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, available pills or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risk activities, seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped, like there's no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends, family and society
- Feeling anxious, agitated or unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes
- Seeing no reason for living or having a sense of purpose in life

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273 TALK



Durham Adult System of Care Coordinator **Ann Oshel** and **CIT Officer Mark Morais**.



James Soukup, 911 Director



Sgt. Lori Ray

Right. **Deputy Chief B.J. Council.**

Far Right. **Lt. Howard Alexander** and Project Safe Neighborhoods Coordinator **Jennifer Snyder.**



