

## **The Elkhart Truth**

### **People's forum**

February 7, 2011

#### **SUICIDE PREVENTION**

##### **Services are available to help those in difficulty**

There were 186 suicides in Elkhart County between 2000 to 2010. The largest number of deaths (24) occurred in 2007 and the smallest (12) in 2004.

These are tragic losses of life.

Elkhart County is unique when it comes to death by suicide. In many other areas across the country, teenagers and the elderly are the age groups where a majority of the suicides occur. In Elkhart County, a majority of deaths occur between 25 to 55 years old. Of the 186 deaths, 116 were in this age range.

Many people believe that more deaths by suicide happen when the economy is sluggish and people lose their jobs. In Elkhart, the statistics show that the highest number of deaths (24) occurred in 2007 when the economy was still growing. In 2010, when the economy was still struggling with double-digit unemployment, there were 15. In 2008, when the economy almost collapsed, there were 14. Financial difficulties can play a role in a person's decision, but in Elkhart it appears not to be the major reason.

During the holidays, the number of suicides do not increase here.

The Elkhart County Suicide Prevention Coalition has a website, [www.elkhartsuicideprevention.org](http://www.elkhartsuicideprevention.org), where information is available for anyone looking for a list of local counselors who have experience in dealing with persons with depression and people experiencing suicidal thoughts. You can also call 211 for assistance or 911

if someone is in eminent danger of harm. Keep in touch with neighbors and friends who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. Persuade them to seek assistance with whatever problems they have and refer them to local mental health counselors or help them to make an appointment and go with them to make sure they keep it.

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