

# The Blumenfeld Education Letter

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." HOSEA 4:6

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce those risks.  
"Without vision, the people perish."

## The Teenage Suicide Holocaust: Is Death Education the Cause?

Over 50,000 American teenagers have committed suicide since the introduction of death education in America's public schools in the early 1970s. According to *Education Week* (10/31/84), there are 18 teenage suicides a day in the United States, or about 6,570 per year.

In 1985, a half million teenagers tried to kill themselves (*Boston Herald*, 3/5/86). There is no reason to believe that this widespread death wish among teenagers has abated.

Teen suicide is now so common, that only the most spectacular tragedies get national attention. One such tragedy occurred last spring in Sheridan, Arkansas, where three high school students committed suicide within 24 hours of each other. The town, with a population of 3,200, is about 40 miles south of Little Rock. According to *Facts on File* (5/18/90):

"The suicides began April 30, when a 17-year-old student, Thomas Smith, walked to the front of his American history class at Sheridan High school, told one of the girls in the class he loved her and then shot himself

in the head with a .22 caliber pistol as his classmates watched.

"Later that evening, a friend of Smith's, Thomas M. Chidester, 19, was found shot to death at his home with a .45 caliber pistol, leaving a note that read, "I can't go on any longer." The next day, another Sheridan High student, Jerry Paul McCool, 17, was found shot to death at his home with a .22 caliber pistol. Police labeled the death a suicide, although McCool's parents insisted it had been an accident. The three deaths occurred in the wake of another suicide in Sheridan, by 17-year-old Raymond Dale Wilkinson, who had shot himself to death on March 28. Police said there appeared to be no link among the killings, other than the friendship between Smith and Chidester, and that none of the youths had been in trouble with the police."

### Cluster Suicides

We are now all too familiar with these bizarre cluster suicides that have shocked

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