

Suicide Prevention Information



Written by [Anthony Martin](#) Posted in [Helpful Resources](#) last updated on September 27, 2019



Suicidal Behavior

Suicide causes immeasurable pain, suffering, and loss to individuals, families, and communities nationwide. On average, 112 Americans die by suicide each day. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds and more than 9.4 million adults in the United States had serious thoughts of suicide within the past 12 months. But suicide is preventable, so it's important to know what to do.

Warning Signs of Suicide

If someone you know is showing one or more of the following behaviors, he or she may be thinking about suicide. Don't ignore these warning signs. Get help immediately.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- [SAVE: Warning Signs of suicide](#)
- [Risk Factors and Warning Signs](#)
- [Recognizing Suicidal Behavior](#)
- [Suicide Warning Signs](#)
- [Recognizing Suicidal Behavior](#)
- [What To Look For: Suicidal Behavior](#)
- [10 Signs of Suicide](#)
- [Risk Factors and Warning Signs for Suicide](#)
- [Recognizing suicide warning signs](#)
- [Suicide Prevention – HelpGuide.org](#)

We all know someone who is struggling with post-traumatic stress, depression, or anxiety. Let us take this opportunity to evaluate how we respond to each other.

Do we really look into the eyes of those around us and recognize them as people-fellow human beings-with feelings, hopes, trauma, sadness, and love?

We *can* prevent suicides and attempts, but it is going to require the heart of every person willing to work at it. If it is true that the more important the answer, the more the answer comes from your heart, then, the answer to the question of suicide demands our hearts-the heart of each one of us to turn compassionately to ourselves and to one another so that we can all reach our ultimate potential.

If someone you know is showing one or more of the following behaviors, he or she may be thinking about suicide. Don't ignore these warning signs. Get help immediately.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

Someone may think of ending their life if one of the following situations happens:

- Major loss such as the death of a family member or friend
- Relationship break-up
- Family problems
- Sexual, physical or mental abuse
- Drug or alcohol problems
- School or work problems
- A mental health problem like Bipolar Disorder or depression
- A feeling of not belonging or of having problems that they can't solve

DEPRESSION makes people focus on their failures and all the negative parts of their lives. If you have severe depression you can't imagine that things will change or turn out well. A teen who is depressed may have thoughts of suicide as a way of escaping or of letting people know how unhappy they feel.

DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSE also makes you more at risk for thinking of suicide. Abusing substances can make depression worse. These substances also make it harder to judge risks, make good choices and figure out solutions to problems. Many suicide attempts happen when a person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

[BIPOLAR DISORDER](#) also makes people more at risk for suicide. This illness makes a person go through periods of extreme depression and other periods of extreme energy or agitation. These phases affect how they think, feel and the decisions they make.

If Your Friend Talks About Ending Their Life

If your friend says something about feeling suicidal or that they want to end their life, you must take it seriously. Even if you feel scared and unsure of what to do, you can help. You can make a difference in your friend's life.

Here are some ways you can support your friend:

- [Supporting someone who feels suicidal](#)
- [How to Help Someone Who is Suicidal](#)
- [Advice on Talking to Someone with Suicidal Thoughts...from Someone Who's Had Suicidal Thoughts](#)
- [Supporting someone with suicidal thoughts](#)
- [Suicide: What to do when someone is suicidal](#)
- [Helping a suicidal person](#)
- [How to Help Someone Who is Suicidal – Mental Health First Aid](#)

DON'T KEEP A SECRET. Your friend could get hurt or could die. This information is not something you should keep secret. You must tell an adult who can help keep your friend safe. Your friend's life could depend on it.

[CALL 1-800-LIFENET](#) OR [The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#). Explain what your friend is going through. They will give you advice on what to do. These calls are confidential.

LISTEN TO YOUR FRIEND. Be there to listen. Let your friend express feelings and show understanding and acceptance. Don't judge your friend.

TALK TO YOUR FRIEND. It's better to talk to your friend when they are calm and seem open to listening. It may be hard to think of what to say. You can say something like,

"I'm worried about you."

“You said you don’t feel like carrying on, you wish you were gone, do you still feel like that?”

“Even if you’re thinking about that, you don’t have to do it.”

“If you hurt yourself, you’ll be hurting me too and all the people who care about you.”

ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIEND TO GET HELP. If you feel comfortable, suggest to your friend that you go with them to speak to a counselor, youth worker, teacher, or doctor. If your friend refuses to get help, keep encouraging your friend to speak to someone they trust about how they are feeling.

BE SUPPORTIVE. Tell your friend you care about them. Spend time hanging out with them. Go to the movies. Go for a walk together. Listen to music together. This will help your friend feel less alone.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF. If you’re worried about your friend, you may feel stressed out. You may feel like it’s your fault that your friend is not feeling better. Sometimes teens who make a suicide attempt, or who die as a result of suicide seem to have left no clues. This leaves friends and family feeling full of grief and guilt. But you should remember that you are not responsible for the actions of your friend. It’s not your fault.

Warning Signs of Suicide Risk

Most people who are feeling depressed or desperate enough to consider suicide give clues to how they’re feeling. You can be the first step towards help for someone you care about by learning to recognize these clues to suicide risk.

Verbal Signs

“I want to kill myself.”

“I don’t want to be here anymore.”

“No one understands me.”

“I can’t take it anymore.”

“Things will never get better.”

“I’m tired of being a burden to my friends and family.”

“No one would miss me if I were gone.”

Physical Changes

- [Losing or gaining weight quickly](#)
- Suddenly not caring about appearances or cleanliness
- Unexplained cuts, scrapes or bruises
- Appearing tired all the time

Acting Differently

- Changes in mood: more withdrawn, anxious or sad, or sudden mood lift after a down period
- [Changes in eating or sleeping habits](#)
- Suddenly taking more risks: not taking prescribed medication, drunk driving, ignoring physical limitations, having unprotected sex, using more drugs or alcohol
- Loss of concentration.
- Withdrawing from friends and family.
- Losing interest in things that used to be enjoyed.
- Not planning for the future
- Hurting oneself on purpose
- Thinking and talking about [death](#) a lot
- Unexplained good-byes or unusual personal expressions that have a sense of closure

Situations

- Recently having lost a loved one, relationship or job
- Having money problems
- Having questions or worries about being gay, bisexual or transgender
- [Previous suicide attempts](#)
- [Recent death of a loved one](#)
- Problems in an important relationship
- Problems at work or school
- Social isolation

Suicide Prevention Resources:

- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)
- [NIMH » Suicide Prevention](#)
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)
- [Suicide Prevention / SAMHSA-HRSA](#)
- [SAVE: Suicide Prevention, Information, and Awareness](#)
- [Suicide Prevention – American Psychiatric Association](#)
- [Suicide and Mental Health](#)
- [Suicide and Suicide Prevention: Risk Factors and Treatment](#)
- [Suicide Prevention – Mental Health](#)
- [International Association for Suicide Prevention \(IASP\)](#)
- [Suicide in America: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

For Teachers and Educators:

PREVENTING SUICIDE: HOW SCHOOLS CAN HELP PREVENT SUICIDE

Suicide prevention experts recommend using a multifaceted approach in which specific components are implemented in a particular sequence. These components [include](#):

- Protocols for helping students at risk of suicide, including:
 - » A protocol for helping students who may be at risk of suicide
 - » A protocol for responding to students who attempt suicide at school
 - » Agreements with community providers to provide behavioral health services to students
- Protocols for responding to suicide death, including:
 - » Steps to take after the suicide of a student or other member of the school community
 - » Staff responsible for taking these steps
 - » Agreements with community partners to help in the event of a suicide
- Staff education and training, including:

- »Information about the importance of suicide prevention for all staff
- »Training, for all staff, on recognizing and responding to students who may be at risk of suicide.
- »Training, for appropriate staff, on assessing, referring, and following up with students identified as at risk of suicide.
- Parent education, including:
 - »Information for parents about suicide and related behavioral health issues
 - »Strategies to engage parents in suicide prevention programs
- Student education, including:
 - »One or more programs to engage students in suicide prevention
 - »Integration of suicide prevention into other student healthy behavioral health initiatives
- Screening:
 - »A suicide screening program
 - »Parent, staff, and community mental health provider support for screening