
Suicide Prevention

MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



Believe

Everyone has a role to play in preventing suicide, a leading cause of death in the U.S. Evidence shows that offering support, talking openly, limiting access to means of self-harm, and following up with loved ones can save lives. A recent federal survey found 4 in 10 high schoolers feel “persistently sad or hopeless”, and 1 in 5 have considered suicide.

As children grow into teens, it can be hard for parents to recognize when typical ups and downs signal deeper concern. Learning the warning signs, risk factors, and ways to build protective factors is essential.

Protective Factors

Protective factors are personal and environmental traits that lower the risk of negative outcomes. Strong connections to family, community, and social institutions are key protective factors. By increasing protective factors, the risk of suicide decreases. Parents can help by building their child’s self-esteem, sense of purpose, and focusing on cultural, religious, or personal beliefs. Life skills like problem solving, coping, and adaptability also strengthen protection.

#BeThe1To make a difference!

5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain

1. ASK
2. KEEP THEM SAFE
3. BE THERE
4. HELP THEM CONNECT
5. STAY CONNECTED

How to have a #RealConvo

Talking to children about suicidal thoughts can be challenging. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention’s #RealConvo campaign offers resources to help parents and students start these important conversations. You don’t need to be an expert, real conversations can create a human connection and can save a life! Click [here](#) to learn more!

Together, We Can Help Prevent Suicide

Know the Warning Signs

Suicide risk in children and teens is often linked to mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and substance abuse. If your child is struggling with one of these disorders or you suspect they might be, don't hesitate to contact your pediatrician to ask for help! Other risk factors include:

- Sudden loss (death, break up, divorce, incarceration)
- Social pressures (sexual orientation, gender identity, racism)
- Depression and mental health struggles
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Alcohol and substance use
- Previous attempts
- Loss of someone to suicide
- Easy access to firearms or dangerous items
- Bullying, cyberbullying, discrimination
- Serious financial problems

What Parents Can Do

If you notice signs of mental health stress in your child, here are some ways you can help

- **Tune in** - Connect physically and emotionally; show interest in their life.
- **Listen** - Watch for changes in behavior, patterns, or social activities.
- **Don't dismiss comments** - Pay attention to alarming phrases like, "Nothing matters." or "Everyone would be better off without me."

For a more complete list click [here](#).

What resources should you use?

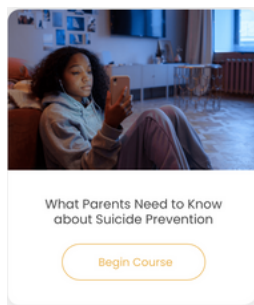
- Visit [ParentGuidance.org](https://www.parentguidance.org) for courses on suicide prevention and supporting your child.
- Talk to a school counselor or therapist if your child is struggling.

- Consult your general practitioner for mental health support or referrals.
- Check out mylifeisworthliving.org for an animated series on teen suicide. Watching this with your children can help them realize they are not alone.

Calling for Help - Who and When

Did you know you don't need to be in crisis to call a crisis lifeline? Anyone needing emotional support or guidance can call 24/7. Whether you're worried about a friend, family member, or yourself, crisis lines can help with issues like substance abuse, relationships, illness, depression, loneliness, and more. If you're concerned about yourself or others, don't hesitate to reach out!

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline offers free, confidential support 24/7 for those in crisis or emotional distress, with over 180 local crisis centers across the U.S.



Take a no-cost course at ParentGuidance.org

Take this course that helps parents understand mental health, recognize warning signs, and support suicide prevention.

For helpful parenting resources visit:
ParentGuidance.org



For works cited, view the newsletter online