

Helping your child survive thoughts of hurting themselves



Being a kid or teen isn't easy. There are personal, social and school pressures every day.

Handling these changes can be hard. Kids and teens who are also dealing with mental illness are more likely to have a tough time and may even have thoughts of taking their own lives. How can you support friends and your child in such a crisis?

FIRST, it's important to take all thoughts of harming oneself seriously.

REASONS

someone may want to end their life:

- Trying to escape feelings of rejection, hurt or loss
- Feeling angry, ashamed or a general sense of guilt
- Feeling victimized, unloved, unwanted or a burden to others
- Being down on themselves



Keeping secrets about suicidal thoughts or talk does not help anyone.

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)** or the **National Hopeline Network at 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)**. Counselors are there to help you all the time.

WARNING SIGNS

that a person is thinking about suicide:

- Talking about suicide, death or "going away"
- Giving away personal items
- Talking about feeling hopeless, sad or depressed
- Staying away from friends, family, activities
- Having trouble thinking clearly
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Engaging in risky behavior (drinking alcohol, taking drugs, cutting themselves)



How can you help?

Listen. Show that you understand what they are going through.

Ask if they have a plan. Be open and honest.

Don't ask why. Thoughts of harming oneself may be confusing to the person thinking them. Questions about why may upset them. They could get defensive.

Stay with them. If you feel they might harm themselves, do not leave them alone. Get help. Always call 911 in case of an emergency.

Take action. Keep any firearms, drugs or other means of suicide out of their way.

Get help NOW. Getting emotional support from a counselor or therapist can help teens stay healthy and safe. You can also call these numbers for additional help.

Member Services or 24-hour Nurse HelpLine:

1-844-406-2396 (TTY 711)

Source: <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml>

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Do you need help with your health care, talking with us, or reading what we send you? Call us toll free at 1-844-406-2396 (TTY 711) to get this for free in other languages or formats.

¿Necesita ayuda con su cuidado de la salud, para hablar con nosotros o leer lo que le enviamos? Llámenos a la línea gratuita al 1-844-406-2396 (TTY 711) para recibir esto gratuitamente en otros idiomas o formatos.

Èske ou bezwen èd ak swen sante ou, èd pou pale ak nou, oswa pou li sa nou voye ba ou? Rele nou gratis nan 1-844-406-2396 (TTY 711) pou w jwenn sa gratis nan lòt lang oswa nan lòt fòm.