

INFORMATION ABOUT SUICIDE FOR PARENTS

RISK FACTORS

Characteristics associated with an increased risk of having suicidal thoughts include:

- ❖ Mental illness: Depression, Conduct disorder, substance abuse
- ❖ Family Stress/Dysfunction
- ❖ Environmental Risks (Access to Firearms, dangerous weapons in the home)
- ❖ Situational Crises (Trauma, death of a family member, abuse in the home)

WARNING SIGNS

Observable behaviors that may signal suicidal thinking:

- ❖ Direct and indirect suicidal threats: “I am going to kill myself” (direct) or “I wish I would fall asleep and never wake up” (indirect)
- ❖ Suicidal notes and plans
- ❖ Previous suicidal behaviors
- ❖ Changes in behavior, thoughts, and/or feelings
- ❖ Preoccupation with death

WHAT DO I DO?

Students who feel suicidal are not likely to directly seek help from others; however, parents can recognize risk factors and warning signs to take appropriate and/or immediate action in order to keep our youth safe. When your child shows signs of suicide, the following actions should be taken:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Listen
- ❖ Do not judge
- ❖ Ask your child **directly** if he/she is thinking about suicide
- ❖ Focus your concern for their well-being and avoid being accusatory
- ❖ Provide constant supervision
- ❖ Remove means for self-harm

RESILIENCY!

Resiliency factors can lessen the potential of risk factors that may lead to suicidal ideation. If a student or child is considered at risk, families should work to build the following factors in and around their youth:

- ❖ Family support and cohesion
- ❖ Peer support and close social networks
- ❖ Easy access to effective medical and mental health resources
- ❖ Adaptive coping, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills

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RESOURCES

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386

Frontline Service, Mobile Crisis hotline: 216.623.6888
Fairview Hospital Emergency Room: 18101 Lorain Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44111

* Literature for families: <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/preventing-youth-suicide>