

Warning Signs of Suicide and Strategies to Cope

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Why Talk About Suicide?

Evidence shows that providing support services, talking about suicide, reducing access to means of self-harm, and following up with loved ones are just some of the actions we can all take to help others.

Source: (National Suicide Prevention, <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>)

What Leads to Suicide

There's no single cause for suicide. Suicide most often occurs when stressors exceed current coping abilities of someone suffering from a mental health condition.

Depression is the most common condition associated with suicide, and is often undiagnosed or untreated. Conditions like depression, anxiety and substance problems, especially when unaddressed, increase risk for suicide.

Most people who actively manage their mental health conditions lead fulfilling lives. (Source: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)

Defining Suicidal Ideation & Behavior

Suicide Ideation

- Self-reported thoughts of engaging in suicide-related behavior

Suicidal Behavior

- A spectrum of activities related to thoughts and behaviors that include suicidal thinking, suicide attempts, and completed suicide.

Warning Signs

Something to look out for when concerned that a person may be suicidal is a change in behavior or the presence of entirely new behaviors.

This is of sharpest concern if the new or changed behavior is related to a painful event, loss, or change.

Most people who take their lives exhibit one or more warning signs, either through what they say or what they do.

Warning Signs

Talk	Behavior	Mood
<p>If a person talks about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being a burden to others• Feeling trapped• Feeling hopeless• Experiencing unbearable pain• Having no reason to live• Killing themselves	<p>Behavioral Signs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased use of alcohol or drugs• Looking for a way to kill themselves, such as searching online for materials or means• Acting recklessly• Withdrawing from activities• Isolating from family and friends• Sleeping too much or too little• Visiting or calling people to say goodbye• Giving away prized possessions	<p>Mood Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depression• Loss of interest• Rage• Irritability• Humiliation• Anxiety• Extreme mood swings

What are Risk Factors?

Those factors that make it more likely that individuals will develop a disorder; risk factors may encompass biological, psychological or social factors in the individual, family and environment.

Risk Factors

Health Factors	Environmental Factors	Historical Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health conditions: Mood Disorders, Depression, Anxiety Disorders, Bipolar disorder, Schizophrenia, and certain Personality Disorders• Alcohol and other substance abuse disorders• Serious or chronic health condition and/or pain• Hopelessness• Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stressful life events: death, divorce, job loss• Prolonged stress factors: harassment, bullying, relationship problems, and unemployment• Access to lethal means, including firearms and drugs• Local clusters of suicide• Exposure to others who have died by suicide (in real life or media)• Lack of social support and sense of isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previous suicide attempts• Family history of suicide attempts• Childhood abuse and/or trauma• Stigma associated with asking for help• Cultural or religious beliefs, such as suicide is a noble resolution for a personal dilemma

*LGB youth seriously contemplate suicide at almost three times the rate of heterosexual youth.

Self-Harm

The various methods by which individuals injure themselves, such as self-cutting, self-battering, taking overdoses or exhibiting deliberate recklessness.

While self-harm is not an indicator for suicidal behavior, it is a risk factor and indicator of the need for coping mechanisms.

What is Contagion?

A phenomenon whereby susceptible persons are influenced toward suicidal behavior through knowledge of another person's suicidal acts.

How do Schools Address Suicidal Ideation?

Concern about a student can come to the attention of a school team in many ways: a friend may express concern, a teacher notices changes, parents may call.

The school team will meet with the student and may complete a Risk Assessment, which includes a student interview and parent phone call, and may result in encouragement to seek support, possibly immediate support.

What is a Risk Assessment?

Risk Assessments determine the level of risk a student is for attempting suicide, including questions about suicidal thoughts; self-harm; plans, intent, means and methods for suicide; history of previous attempts; risk factors; and concludes with discussion of protective factors.

Protective Factors



There are protective factors that can lessen the effects of risk factors.

These can include family and peer support, school and community connectedness, healthy problem-solving skills, and easy access to effective medical and mental health services.

Suicide can be Prevented

Youth who are contemplating suicide typically give warning signs of their distress. Most important is to never take these warning signs lightly or promise to keep them secret.

What Can I do as a Parent?



ASK

Research shows people who are having thoughts of suicide feel relief when someone asks after them in a caring way. Findings suggest acknowledging and talking about suicide may reduce suicidal ideation.

Keep Them Safe

A number of studies have indicated that when lethal means are made less available or less deadly, suicide rates by that method decline, and frequently suicide rates overall decline.

Be There

Individuals are more likely to feel less depressed, less suicidal, less overwhelmed, and more hopeful by after speaking to someone who listens without judgment.

Help Them Connect

Studies indicate that helping someone at risk create a network of resources and individuals for support and safety can help them take positive action and reduce feelings of hopelessness.

Follow Up

Studies have also shown that brief, low cost intervention and supportive, ongoing contact may be an important part of suicide prevention, especially for individuals after they have been discharged from hospitals or care services.

Imminent Risk

A situation where a person's current risk status is believed to indicate actions that could lead to his or her suicide.

What Steps Do Schools Take?

Depending on the risk for suicidal behavior, schools may take the following steps:

Contact parent and discuss Suicidal Ideation and need for counseling services

Request parent remove student from school for the day and the need for counseling services

Request parent remove student and encourage immediate support from medical professionals, including a risk assessment

If unable to contact the parents and concerned for the student's safety and imminent risk of suicide, schools may contact: Mobile Crisis, Westlake Police Department/EMS, & escort students to Fairview Hospital

*(If the student is 18-years old, the Emergency Room treats them as adults and it may limit parent's ability to communicate with their child)

Local and National Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Frontline Service, Mobile Crisis hotline: 216.623.6888

Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386

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>

NATIONAL

SUICIDE

PREVENTION

LIFELINE

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

suicidepreventionlifeline.org



FrontLine
Service

Reaching out. Resolving crisis.

24/7 Crisis Hotline:

216.623.6888

Chat Online Now!

I Need Shelter!

Online chat is available
Monday through Friday
3:00 pm to 9:00 pm

FrontLine Service offers a 24/7 Suicide Prevention Hotline

for children and adults, including crisis assessment and intervention.

Mobile Crisis hotline:

216.623.6888 / 24 hours 7 days a week

Chat Online

Monday thru Friday 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Text "FLS" to 741741

1744 Payne Avenue, Cleveland OH 44114



We provide
crisis intervention
and suicide prevention
for
LGBTQ
youth



TrevorLifeline
1-866-488-7386

The TrevorLifeline is available
24/7/365.

Call now.

We hear you. We're here for you.



TrevorChat

Online instant messaging with
a TrevorChat counselor.

Available 7 days a week
between 3pm–10pm ET /
Noon–7pm PT



TrevorText

Text START to 678678.

Available Monday–Friday
between 3pm–10pm EST /
Noon–7pm PT

Standard text messaging rates
apply.

Fairview Hospital
18101 Lorain Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44111

*Fairview Hospital offers onsite risk assessments and short-term psychiatric care.

The SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) Unit is staffed by nurses specially trained to care for individuals of all ages who have experienced sexual assault or rape.

Patients are given a complete physical assessment and if needed, evidence is collected in a respectful and mindful manner. An advocate from the Rape Crisis Center can be contacted.

Free services 24/7

216.476.7080



Resources

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, <https://afsp.org/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

The National Association of School Psychologists, www.nasponline.org

Frontline Service, www.frontlineservice.org/our-services-2/

The Trevor Project, www.thetrevorproject.org

CDC. (2016). Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contacts, and Health Risk Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9-12: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.