

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Tool for Families



Asking these questions about suicide can save a life.

- » Have you been having thoughts of suicide or about dying?
- » Do you have a plan to take your life?

If yes to either of the above questions, take these immediate steps.

How do I keep my child safe?

- » Lock and store guns & ammunition separately.
- » Lock, dispose or hide narcotics and other medications.
- » Remove access to all sharp objects. (Kitchen knives, razors, pencil sharpeners, exacto knives)
- » Remove toxic chemicals. (Cleaning products, laundry pods, garage chemicals)
- » Increase supervision. (Visually check on your child every 10 minutes)

CRISIS SERVICES

24 Hrs 7 days/week

- **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**
Dial or Text 988
- **Crisis Chat:** 988lifeline.org/chat
- **OC Links Dial** (855) 625-4657
- **Trevor Line (LGBTQ Youth)** (866) 488-7386
- **Crisis Text for deaf and hard-of-hearing:**
text HEARME to 839863

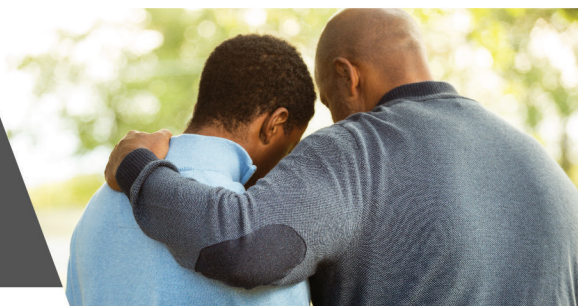
OTHER RESOURCES

- **The OC WarmLine** (877) 910-9276
- **Text** (714) 991-6412
- **OCNavigator.org**



SUICIDE PREVENTION

As children grow into teenagers, it becomes challenging for parents to know what they are thinking and feeling. It's important to learn about the factors that put a teen at risk for suicide.



1. Take action if your teen feels depressed or is anxious.

All children have bad days, but if your child seems upset for days or weeks at a time, check in with them. Let's not wait for children to come to us with their problems. Knock on the door, sit down, and say, "You seem sad. Would you like to talk about it? Maybe I can help."

2. Listen—even when your teen is not talking.

Most kids who are thinking about suicide give clues about their troubled state of mind through behaviors and actions. If your instinct tells you that a child might be a danger to themselves, follow your instincts and don't allow them to be left alone. Monitor and discuss any unusual social media activity.

3. Take any threat of suicide seriously.

A written or verbal statement of "I want to die," or "I don't care anymore" should be non-judgmentally taken into serious consideration. Whether your child is experiencing active intent to die or not, let them know that you are listening and caring for them and take their words seriously.

4. Seek professional help right away.

If your child's behavior has you concerned, get help. Call your local mental health crisis support team or go to your local emergency room. If your child is in danger for self-harm or if suicide seems immediate, call 911.

5. Share your feelings.

Let your teen know they are not alone. Without minimizing the anguish, reassure them bad times

won't last forever. Things will get better and you will help your child through counseling and other treatment to make things better for them.

6. Talk to your teen if they are isolating themselves from family and friends.

If your child pushes you away, don't take it personally. Ask who they would like to get support from, and let them know you are still available in case they change their mind.

7. Encourage exercise.

Physical activity can ease mild to moderate depression. Exercise causes a gland in the brain to release endorphins, a substance that can improve mood and ease pain. Exercise may make them feel better about themselves.

8. Teach your teen how to manage responsibilities and expectations of themselves.

If your child is overwhelmed, suggest they divide large tasks into smaller, more manageable ones and participate in favorite, low-stress activities. The goal is to rebuild confidence and self-esteem.

9. If your child is undergoing treatment, encourage them to be patient with results.

Talk therapy and/or medication usually take time to improve mood. Your child shouldn't become discouraged if they don't feel better right away.

10. If you keep guns at home, lock them away or remove them until the crisis has passed.

If you suspect your child might be suicidal, it is extremely important to keep all guns, ammunition, alcohol and medications locked or removed from the home.

