Suicide Awareness and Prevention

YOUTH MOVE MASSACHUSETTS

What You Can Do to Battle Suicidal Thoughts

Feeling suicidal or contemplating suicide isn't an unbeatable dilemma, and it's nothing to feel ashamed of. Thoughts like these are signs of a treatable problem, and help is available.

It's important to find someone you trust and feel comfortable talking with – whether that's a family member, a friend, a doctor, or a counselor. Practice expressing your emotions, thoughts, and feelings genuinely, and figure out where to go for help *before* you're in crisis.

Become familiar with your personal warning signs, and tell the people closest to you what they look like. Having others on the lookout for your mental health takes a lot of pressure off of you.

Crisis Lines

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

Behavioral Health Help Line
Call or text 833-773-2445

The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+ Support)
Call: 866-488-7386
Text: 678-678

MA Substance Use Help Line
Call: 800-327-5050
Text: 800-327

Try These Things

- Write lists of the people who are important to you, your hopes for the future, and the things that are special to you
- Reach out to your friends and family – spending time with them might feel overwhelming sometimes, but going out with them or allowing them to visit you keeps your connections strong. Connect with people in your community or religious organization, too – shared faith and cultural beliefs can be valuable supports
- Get exercise and spend time outside – staying physically healthy is good for your emotional health, too
- Stay away from drugs and alcohol, which tend to make us more impulsive
- Get a pet, even something small like a fish
- Maintain your sense of humor, hope, and optimism

Talking with someone about suicide WON'T make them consider it for themselves. It's a great relief to know someone cares, notices their pain, and wants to help.

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Warning Signs

Someone you know might be at risk for suicide if they...

- Talk specifically about how they would end their life
- Talk frequently about feeling helpless or hopeless
- Express approval over someone else's suicide
- Say goodbye to the people they love
- Don't seem interested in the future or can't envision a positive future for themselves
- Say things like, "I don't deserve to live"
- Lose interest in their hobbies, social activities, schoolwork, relationships with family and friends, etc.
- Miss a lot of school or allow their grades to slip
- Intentionally avoid friends and people they care for

Risk Factors

- Family history or exposure to suicide or mental health needs
- Abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, etc., or substance)
- Loss or difficulty dealing with loss
- Being a suicide survivor
- Lack of support structures at home or in the community
- Difficulty navigating sexual orientation
- Family disruptions
- Trauma or traumatic events
- Bullying or peer pressure (online or in person)
- Financial worries
- Stress over succeeding in school or in life

Remember: these things on their own don't mean someone will be suicidal, but they might contribute to suicidal thoughts or actions.

How to Talk with Someone Who Is (or May Be) Suicidal

The Trevor Project developed this acronym to remind us how to talk to someone struggling with suicidal thoughts. **For more information, check out their website: www.TheTrevorProject.org**

Y-CARE

Y: You are never alone. You are never responsible for anyone who chooses to take their own life. As friends, family, and loved ones, all you can do is listen, support, and assist the person in getting the help they need.

C: Connect the person to resources and to a supportive, trusted adult.

A: Accept and listen to the person's feelings and take them seriously.

R: Respond if a person has a plan to commit suicide and tell someone you trust.

E: Empower the person to get help and to call The Trevor Lifeline or another crisis line

PPAL
Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Inc.
www.ppal.net

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