

### What protects against suicide?

- ✓ Connections to friends, family, relatives, culture, and community
- ✓ Limited access to lethal methods (e.g., firearms, medications)
- ✓ Coping and problem-solving skills
- ✓ Access to physical and mental health care

Instead of saying,  
“committed suicide,” let’s  
say “died by suicide”

### Look for Signs

What are some of the warning signs you want to remember from our conversation?

### Empathize & Listen

What are some helpful things to say to show empathy?

### Ask about Suicide

Saying the word suicide will not put the idea in someone’s head. Practice inserting warning signs you see:

Sometimes when people are...

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

they’re thinking about suicide.  
Are you thinking about suicide?



- Isolating from friends
- Feeling alone / pushed away
- Upset after a breakup
- Hopeless about their future
- Feeling like giving up

**ASK** when you see multiple signs, big changes in a person’s life or when your gut tells you something is not right.

If they say NO, Ask them, “If you were thinking about suicide, who would you talk to?”

If they say YES to having thoughts of suicide...

- ✓ First, take it seriously and thank them for being honest.
- ✓ Ask them who they would want to know. This way it doesn’t feel like “everyone” has to be in on something so personal. Start by suggesting a school counselor, pediatrician or 24-hr crisis line.
- ✓ Explain that their safety and well-being come first - even it means being upset with you.

### Reduce the Danger

Reporting and/or restricting lethal means.

**Important follow-up questions** to help us understand the level of risk this person may be posing.

**Putting time & distance** between a suicidal person and the methods they may use can save their life!  
To help reduce the danger in my home I can...

Have you  
thought about  
how you might  
end your life?

Do you have  
access to those  
methods?

Have you  
thought about  
when you might  
do this?

## **N**ext Steps

Start by connecting this person to resources that can help keep them safe.


### During the crisis

- ✓ Do not leave your child alone
- ✓ Seek help immediately – connect them to a counselor/crisis line etc.
- ✓ Help remove any dangers

### Following the crisis


- ✓ Continue to check in and offer support
- ✓ Contact pediatrician, elders, relatives, etc.
- ✓ Speak with school counselors and community organizations about support
- ✓ Foster a culture of help-seeking

## Practicing the LEARN Steps



### Meet Alex

Alex is withdrawing and isolating from friends and family; including increased absences at school.  
Alex is struggling with the increased demands of school and a part-time job and is easily overwhelmed lately.  
Alex also has easy access to large quantities of medication.



Partner up & choose roles

→


Practice the LEARN steps

→

Change roles after 4 minutes

→

Download the full exercise here:



**A person in crisis is a family in crisis is a community in crisis.  
You can be a lifeline.**

**Call or text 988 or chat 988Lifeline.org if you or someone you know needs support.**



Add 24-hour crisis resources into your phone



Lock up/secure medications and/or firearms in your home



Check in with your child daily; listen with empathy



Seek out support - Connect with counseling staff, crisis lines etc.

Interested in helping us with suicide prevention efforts?  
Ask your trainer how you can get involved.



## Parent Role Play Practice Script

### Scenario:

Your teenager has seemed very anxious with all of the major events and changes this past year. They worry about the smallest of things. A few weeks ago, they started feeling very anxious about school. They aren't keeping up with schoolwork and don't appear to be face timing with friends. They've spent several weekends mostly sleeping. They've also been complaining about how tired they are.



*Remember: Asking about suicide will not put the idea in someone's head. Putting these skills into practice will help you feel more comfortable over time. Use this script or one of your own scenarios to practice.*

### Parent role is in bold

- **Hey, \_\_\_\_\_.** Can we talk for a minute?
- Yeah, what's up?
- **Well... it's been a while since we've talked just the two of us.**
- I know, but I'm kind of busy right now. I have a school project that needs to be turned in.

### LOOK FOR SIGNS

- **I've been thinking about how hard things have been during COVID. How much we all miss Grandma since she passed away. I know keeping up with your homework during COVID is so difficult and how disappointed you are to not have your senior year, especially your last volleyball season. You've been spending so much extra time in your room lately and not staying in contact with your friends. Is everything OK?**
- I'm fine, really. I do miss Grandma so much and can't believe she's gone. I try not to think about losing my Senior year to COVID – it's so depressing. I feel like I'm missing out on so much. It's hard to concentrate, I just can't get motivated with schoolwork and I'm not sleeping at night. It's hard to stay connected with friends when I can't see them.

### EMPATHY

- **You've got so much going on. This time in COVID has been really hard on you, school feels overwhelming, you feel so isolated from your friends and we are all missing Grandma. Do you think you would be willing to talk to your school counselor?**
- That's embarrassing. People can find out.



## ASK ABOUT SUICIDE

- **I can see you're sad and struggling. Sometimes when people feel this overwhelmed, helpless and alone they are thinking about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?**
- I don't know... I'm just so tired of everything being so different this year. Nothing I do or say seems to help anyway. I really don't think anyone would notice if I weren't around anymore.
- **It sounds like things have gotten really bad, especially when you say no one would notice if you were gone.**
- Really, I'm fine. You don't need to worry.
- \_\_\_\_\_, **have you been thinking of suicide?**
- Okay, I have been.

## REMOVE THE DANGER

- **No, don't be sorry. I'm just so glad you told me. Have you thought about how you might end your life?**
- Not really, but it just keeps popping into my head.

## NEXT STEPS

- **Thank you for telling me. I can see you're in a lot of pain. I'm not even sure what our next steps are, but I know there is a crisis line and I think this might be a good time to call them.**
- Fine, whatever....
- **I also want to have someone at school to talk to. Who are the people at school we could talk to?**
- I guess my English teacher. She kinda knows I'm stressed out and having a hard time.
- **That's great. Having people to talk to will give us more strategies and help you to not feel so alone. I know this isn't easy. You don't have to do this alone. I care and love you so very much.**
- Yeah, I was afraid you'd think I was making too big of a deal out of all of this. I wanted to be able to handle it on my own.



# FOREFRONT SUICIDE PREVENTION LEARN® SAVES LIVES

## YOU CAN DO THIS! HELP PREVENT A SUICIDE.

# L

### LOOK FOR SIGNS

- Talking, joking about death; researching ways to die.
- Hopelessness, depression, anxiety, significant loss or shame; sleep or appetite issues.
- Isolation, withdrawing from friends & favorite activities; decreased work performance.
- Increasing use of alcohol or substances; chronic pain; family history of suicide.



# E

### EMPATHIZE & LISTEN

- Offer compassion, not advice. Avoid judgment and accept their feelings.
- Summarize what you heard: *"So, you're feeling...(alone, hopeless). This sounds overwhelming."*
- Acknowledge their suffering, *"I can see you're in a lot of pain. Thank you for telling me."*
- **Just listen.** Those who are really struggling say this helped them the most.



# A

### ASK DIRECTLY

- Asking about suicide will NOT plant the idea in someone's mind.
- If you see multiple troubling signs, ask directly about suicide.
- Ask calmly, in a straightforward way: *"Are you thinking about suicide?"*
- *"Sometimes when people feel...(alone, hopeless), they are thinking about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?"* OR *"Are you thinking about killing yourself?"*



# R

### REDUCE THE DANGERS

- If they say yes, ask *"Do you have a plan?"*  
If they say yes, ask *"Do you have a way to carry out your plan?"*
- Putting time & distance between someone at risk for suicide & lethal means can save a life.
- Remove or lock up firearms and medications. In crisis, lock up belts, ropes, knives, chemicals.
- Report concerning posts on social media. [Support on Social Media](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-someone-else/safety-and-support-on-social-media/) can be found at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-someone-else/safety-and-support-on-social-media/](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-someone-else/safety-and-support-on-social-media/)



# N

### NEXT STEPS

- Together, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or other resources below.
- If they don't agree to stay safe, stay with them as long as it is safe for you.
- Some community members aren't comfortable calling 911. You can call a faith leader, elder, trusted friend or family member. Call 911 only in emergency or as last resort.



Suicide Prevention Lifeline **800.273.8255**  
For Veterans Press **1** For Spanish Press **2**  
Crisis Text Line text **'HEAL'** to **741741**  
Washington Listens **833.681.0211**

Recovery Helpline **866.789.1511**  
Trans Lifeline **877.565.8860**  
Trevor Project - LGBTQ **866.488.7386**  
or text **'START'** to **678678**

[intheforefront.org/LEARN](https://intheforefront.org/LEARN)



### 24-hour CRISIS HELP

[Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) - 800-273-8255

[Crisis Connections](#) - 866-427-4747

[Crisis Text Line](#) - Text 'HEAL' to 741741

[Crisis Lines by County](#)

[SAMHSA Helpline](#) - English & Spanish

### BIPOC / EQUITY / LGBTQI+

- [Find Multicultural Counselors](#)
- [Reach Out - Everything You Need to Know about Gender](#) / [Be True & Be You - LGBTQ Resource Guide](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance](#) / [Equity & Cultural Responsiveness](#) / [Learning Together UW](#)
- [Trevor Project](#) / [Trans Lifeline](#) - 1-877-565-8860

### BULLYING / EATING DISORDERS

- [Stop Bullying Now](#) - Information including how to respond
- Eating Disorders - [NEDA](#) / [Proud2Bme](#) - Youth changing how they talk about food, weight and body image
- [Know Bullying](#) - Boost your child's confidence & build strong relationships - free mobile app from SAMHSA

### HOMELESSNESS / OTHER SUPPORTS

- [Call 211](#) - Not sure where to turn? Check out this National Service available 24/7
- [Safe Place](#) - Shelter for teens in crisis, resources for families. Text "SAFE" + current location to 4HELP (44357)

### MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING / GRIEF

- [College & Career Transitions - JED](#) / [Changes Parent Support Network](#) - 1-888-468-2620
- [Find Treatment](#) / [Find a Therapist](#) / [Mental Health Topics](#) / [NAMI Support & Education Programs](#)
- [Grief & Addiction Resources for Children & Families - Eluna](#)
- [Mental Health Referral Service for Children & Teens](#) / [Parent & Family Guide](#) - Forefront
- [Parent Handbook on Depression](#) (also in Spanish) / [Discussion Guide](#) / [Teen Mental Health Curriculum](#)

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE / SEXUAL ABUSE & ASSAULT

- [Addiction & Grief Support for Children & Families - Eluna](#)
- [Learn About Treatment](#) - UW clearinghouse, resources, research and help for family and friends
- [Medicine Return - Take Back Your Meds](#) / [Stop Overdose - Good Samaritan Law](#)
- [Partnership for Drug-Free Kids](#) / [Start Talking Now](#) / [Talk, They Hear You](#) - Includes an interactive avatar app
- [RAINN](#) - Sexual assault support & resources / [Sexual Abuse](#) - Information & resources from NCTSN/SAMHSA
- [Recovery Helpline](#) - 1-866-789-1511 / [WA Warm Line](#) - Peer support for mental health challenges
- [You Can](#) - Learn more about marijuana's health effects, consequences and hear from inspiring teens

### SUICIDE PREVENTION & SUPPORT / FIREARM SAFETY

- In Washington, three in every four firearm deaths are suicides - See the UW [3 Interventions Toolkit](#)
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) / [Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide](#) / [Role of Teachers](#)
- [School Community Toolkit](#) - Dougy Center / [Social Media Support for Suicidal Individuals](#) - NSPL
- [Support After Suicide](#) - Crisis Connections [Care Package](#) & [Mentor](#) / [Support Group Locator](#) - AFSP
- [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#) / [Toolkit for Schools & Families](#) - Forefront

# FOREFRONT SUICIDE PREVENTION LEARN® SAVES LIVES FOR TEENS

USING THESE STEPS AND YOUR VOICE CAN TRULY HELP CHANGE LIVES. WE CAN ALL DO THIS!

L

## LOOK FOR SIGNS



- Researching ways to die; talking/joking about death—these signs are often ignored.
- Feeling hopeless, angry, depressed, ashamed, or like a burden to others.
- Changes in personality, outlook on life; sleep issues, withdrawing from friends/activities.
- Alcohol/other drug use, reckless behavior, self-harm/cutting, giving away possessions.

E

## EMPATHIZE & LISTEN



- Listen with compassion. Show them you care by giving your full attention.
- Acknowledge their pain and accept their feelings so they don't feel judged.
- Repeat back what they tell you, then say, *"I'm really sorry you're going through this."*
- **Just listen.** Those who are really struggling say this helped them the most.

A

## ASK DIRECTLY



- Experts agree. Asking about suicide will NOT plant the idea in someone's mind, so...
- Ask in a way that invites an honest answer. Mention any signs you've noticed.
- Be calm, courageous and direct. Say the word "suicide." Be prepared to hear a "yes." *i.e., "Sometimes when people feel hopeless and alone, they are thinking about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide? Or...are you thinking about killing yourself?"*

R

## REDUCE THE DANGERS



- Turn to trusted adults if you're concerned about someone—**never** keep this a secret.
- Regret is real. Better to have an angry friend who is safer because you told an adult.
- Parents/caregivers, teachers, counselors, coaches, elders, spiritual leaders can help.
- Let trusted adults know about access to lethal means; i.e., alcohol, firearms, drugs, medicines.
- Report concerning posts on social media. [Support on Social Media—Lifeline](#).

N

## NEXT STEPS



- Always ask a trusted adult to help. Be prepared to give them critical information.
- If an adult is not available, help connect this person to 24-hr crisis resources.
- Some people don't feel safe calling 911 so keep these resources nearby. Share with friends.
- It's OK to ask questions or just try out these resources so you know how they work.

Suicide Prevention Lifeline **800.273.8255**

Teen Link (6-10 pm) **866.833.6546**

Crisis Text Line text 'HEAL' to **741741**

Addiction Helpline **866.789.1511**

Trans Lifeline **877.565.8860**

Trevor Project - LGBTQ **866.488.7386**

or text 'START' to **678678**

[intheforefront.org/LEARN](https://intheforefront.org/LEARN)

## Resources for Teens & Young Adults



### 24-hour CRISIS HELP

[Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) - 800-273-8255  
[Boys Town](#) - Spanish & translation available  
[Crisis Connections](#) - 866-427-4747  
[Crisis Text Line](#) - Text 'HEAL' to 741741  
[Crisis Lines by County](#)  
[National Help Line](#) - 800-662-HELP

### CONNECT WITH A PEER

- [Teen Link](#) - 1-866-833-6546 - Talk with a trained teen 6-10 pm. [Where to Turn](#) - Teen Resource Guide

### BIPOC / EQUITY / LGBTQIA+

- [Black Lives Matter at School](#) - NEA / BIPOC youth text STEVE to 741741 / [LGBTQ+ Guide](#) - Be True Be You
- Gender identity - [Reach Out](#) / GSAs, policies, curriculum & educator support in schools - [GLSEN](#)
- [Trevor Project](#) / [Meet LGBTQ Friends](#) / [Trans Lifeline](#) / [It Gets Better](#) / [Lambert House](#) (ages 11-22)
- [We R Native](#) - Text "NATIVE" to 97779 - [You are Not Alone Native Network](#) / Youth Webinars - [Tele-Native](#)

### BULLYING / EATING DISORDERS

- Bullying/Cyberbullying and what your school can do - [Teens Against Bullying](#) / [Stopbullying.gov](#)
- Eating Disorders - Info, forums & ways to get involved - [Proud2Bme](#) & [Proud2Bme Activist Guide](#) - [NEDA](#)

### MENTAL HEALTH / MINDFULNESS / GRIEF

- [COVID & Mental Health](#) / [Mindfulness for Teens](#) - Guided meditations, Mindful Teen book, mobile apps
- [Teen Mental Health Guide](#) - Seattle Times
- [Teenage Grief Sucks](#) - Teen-run website about grief / [When a Friend Dies](#)
- [Transitioning out of High School](#) - JED / [Know Before You Go](#) - Teen Mental Health.org
- [Your Life Your Voice](#) - Real advice for real situations on all sorts of topics. Text, call, chat, get tips, mood app

### RELATIONSHIPS / SEXUAL ASSAULT / SHELTER / SOCIAL MEDIA

- [Domestic Violence Hotline](#) - 1-800-799-7233 / [RAINN](#) - Sexual Assault Hotline - 800-656 HOPE (4673)
- Everyday issues & trending topics - [Reachout](#) / Removing online videos/pictures - [Needhelpnow.ca](#)
- [Love is Respect](#) - Chat, text, quiz - Text "loveis" to 22522 / [Pressure to be Perfect](#) & [Seize the Awkward](#) - JED
- [Support on Social Media](#) - Worried about someone on social media? Reporting to supporting tips - NSPL
- [Safe Place](#) - Don't feel safe? Get shelter and resources. Text "SAFE" + current location to 4HELP (44357)

### SUBSTANCE USE / STRESS / GAMBLING

- [NIDA for Teens](#) / [Substance Abuse & Addiction](#) - JED / [Tobacco & Vaping](#) - American Heart Assoc
- [Recovery Helpline WA State](#) - 1-866-789-1511. Opioid/other drug abuse, mental health, problem gambling
- Stop Overdose - [Good Samaritan Law](#) / [Your Life Your Voice](#) / [Fentanyl](#) - [Laced & Lethal](#) overdose campaign
- [2Morrow Health](#) - Nicotine app 13+ yrs old / [Aspire MDAnderson](#) - Online cessation. [About Marijuana](#)