

What Should I Do If Someone I Know Is Considering Suicide?

Often, family and friends are the first to recognize the warning signs of suicide and can take the first step toward helping the person find help.

Remember:

- If someone is telling you that he or she is going to kill himself or herself, do not leave him or her alone.
- Do not promise anyone that you will keep his or her suicidal thoughts a secret. Make sure to tell a trusted friend or family member, or an adult with whom you feel comfortable.
- **Get help as soon as possible.**
 - Call 911 for emergency services and/or take the person to the nearest hospital emergency room.
 - You can also call **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, the toll-free number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL), which is available 24 hours a day, every day. The service is available to everyone. The deaf and hard of hearing can contact the Lifeline via **TTY at 1-800-799-4889**. All calls are free and confidential.
 - You can also chat with the NSPL online (<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>).
 - The Crisis Text Line is another free, confidential resource available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **Text "HOME" to 741741** and a trained crisis counselor will respond to you with support and information via text message. Visit <https://www.crisistextline.org>.
 - You can also visit the Lifeline's website at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.
 - SAMHSA's National Helpline, **1-800-662-HELP (4357)**, (also known as the Treatment Referral Routing Service) or **TTY: 1-800-487-4889** is a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.

What If Someone Is Posting Suicidal Messages Or Something Disturbing On Social Media?

If you see messages or live streaming suicidal behavior on social media, call 911 immediately, contact the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, or text the Crisis Text Line (**text HOME to 741741**).

Some social media sites also have a process to report suicidal content and get help for the person posting the message. Each offers different options on how to respond if you see concerning posts about suicide.

For example:



Facebook Suicide Prevention webpage can be found at www.facebook.com/help/ [use the search term "suicide" or "suicide prevention"].

Instagram uses automated tools in the app to provide resources, which can also be found online at <https://help.instagram.com> [use the search term, "suicide," "self-injury," or "suicide prevention"].



Snapchat's Support provides guidance at <https://support.snapchat.com> [use the search term, "suicide" or "suicide prevention"].

Twitter's Best Practices in Dealing With Self-Harm and Suicide at <https://support.twitter.com> [use the search term "suicide," "self-harm," or "suicide prevention"].



YouTube's Safety Center webpage can be found at <https://support.google.com/youtube> [use the search term "suicide and self-injury"].

Because help via these processes may be delayed, it is still important to call 911 if someone is posting suicidal messages or something disturbing on social media. People—even stranger—have saved lives by being vigilant. Be strong and save a day.

GADSDEN SCHOOLS PRESENTS



A GUIDE TO MENTAL WELLNESS



Introduction

The way adolescents spend their time can strongly influence their health later in life. For youth to maintain a healthy future, they need plenty of sleep; good nutrition; regular exercise; and time to form relationships with family, friends, and caring adults. Additionally, the time adolescents spend in school and in after-school activities with peers and adults can advance healthy academic, emotional, social, and physical development. The amount of time they spend on screens and in social media may also influence adolescents' overall well-being.*

*A Day in the Life of a High School Teen. (2019, October 3). Retrieved June 2, 2020, from <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/facts-and-stats/day-in-the-life/index.html>

A recent survey found 41% of female and 31% male students were consistently experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety during a 12-month period.** Keep in mind that the numbers in the table below reflect those who felt safe to answer the survey questions and the actual number of students experiencing symptoms could be higher. It is safe to assume that experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety are normal part of emotional and social development.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). 1991-2017 High School Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System data. Retrieved June 2, 2020, from <https://nccd.cdc.gov/Youthonline/App/Default.aspx>

What Is Depression?

Depression (major depressive disorder) is a medical illness that can interfere with your ability to handle your daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, or managing your school work. Depression is common but that doesn't mean it isn't serious. Treatment may be needed for someone to feel better. Depression can happen at any age, but often symptoms begin in the teens or early 20s or 30s. It can occur along with other mental disorders, substance abuse, and other health conditions. ***

***Teen Depression. (n.d.). Retrieved June 2, 2020, from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/teen-depression/index.shtml>

What Are The Signs And Symptoms Of Depression?

If you are wondering if you or someone you know may have depression, ask these questions:

- Do you constantly feel sad, anxious, or even "empty," like you feel nothing?
- Do you feel hopeless or like everything is going wrong?
- Do you feel like you're worthless or helpless?
- Do you feel guilty about things?
- Do you feel irritable much of the time?
- Do you find yourself spending more time alone and withdrawing from friends and family?
- Are your grades dropping?
- Have you lost interest or pleasure in activities and hobbies that you used to enjoy?
- Have your eating or sleeping habits changed (eating or sleeping more than usual or less than usual)?
- Do you always feel tired? Like you have less energy than normal or no energy at all?
- Do you feel restless or have trouble sitting still?
- Do you feel like you have trouble concentrating, remembering information, or making decisions?
- Do you have aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or stomach problems without a clear cause?
- Do you ever think about dying or suicide?
- Have you ever tried to harm yourself?

What Should A Student Do If They Have Depression?

If you think you know of a student who might have depression. Here are a few steps that student can take:

Step 1: Try talking to a trusted adult, such as their parent or guardian, their teacher, or a school counselor. If they don't feel comfortable speaking to an adult, they could try talking to a friend. If they are not sure where to turn, they can use TXT 4 HELP Interactive (www.nationalsafeplace.org/txt-4-help), which allows you to text live with a mental health professional. For more ideas and a list of health hotlines, visit www.nimh.nih.gov (search words: children and adolescents).

Step 2: If the student is under the age of 18, they should ask their parent or guardian to make an appointment with their doctor for an evaluation. Their doctor can make sure they don't have a physical illness that may be affecting their mental health. Their doctor may also talk to them about the possibility of seeing a mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, counselor, psychologist, or therapist. These practitioners can diagnose and treat depression and other mental disorders.

What Else Can A Student Do To Help Manage Depression?

Be patient and know that treatment takes time to work. In the meantime, they can:

- Stay active and exercise, even if it's just going for a walk.
- Try to keep a regular sleep schedule.
- Spend time with friends and family.
- Break down school or work tasks into smaller ones and organize them in order of what needs to get done first. Then, do what can be done.

Helpful Apps (Android and IOS)



SAM: Self Help for Anxiety Management provides information about managing anxiety. It's available for free on iOS and Android devices.

Depression Quest aims to help people with depression understand that they're not alone. It also illustrates how the condition can affect people.



TalkLife -For Individuals TalkLife is the world's largest global peer support network for mental health providing support for anyone battling with the ups and downs of life.

Luminosity uses games to strengthen players' cognitive abilities



SuperBetter aims to increase resilience. This is the ability to stay strong, motivated, and optimistic in the face of difficult obstacles.

What Can I Do If Someone I Know Might Have Depression?

If you think your friend might have depression, first help him or her talk to a trusted adult who can connect your friend to a health professional. You can also:

- Be supportive, patient, and encouraging, even if you don't fully understand what's going on.
- Invite your friend to activities, social events, or just to hang out.
- Remind your friend that getting help is important and that with time and treatment, he or she will feel better.
- Never ignore comments about death and suicide, even if it seems like a joke or overdramatic. Talking about suicide is not just a bid for attention but should be taken seriously. Talk to a trusted adult such as a parent, teacher or older sibling as soon as you can.